

**Embodied narratives: mapping a choreographic signature
through physical theatre practice**

Nicola Haskins
04303601

A mini-dissertation in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

MA Drama (Performance)

in the

Faculty of Humanities

Arts Cluster

Department of Drama

University of Pretoria

Supervisors: Prof Marié-Heleen Coetzee and Prof Marth Munro

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to document my emerging choreographic signature through a qualitative, practice-based autoethnographic approach. It describes and examines three of my choreographic works *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) to highlight traces, core images, themes and commonalities in my choreographic processes that provide markers for identifying signature trends in my choreography. As such, this is not a study in choreography *per se*. The study draws on the theoretical premises of embodied narratives to frame my signature. The study is located in the domain of physical theatre. The study identifies tropes of physical theatre and trends of embodied narratives in order to apply these as analytical tools to my choreographic works in order to define my emerging choreographic signature. Through this self-reflection, I will retrospectively articulate the artistic modes and choreographic preferences my work surfaces by identifying the points of convergence amongst the key choreographic signature trends.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank the following people:

- Professor Marié-Heleen Coetzee and Professor Marth Munro for their unwavering support, supervision and work on this dissertation-without you this would not have been possible.
- The University of Pretoria for granting me a post-graduate bursary to complete this degree.
- My devoted and loving parents Rodney and Wendy Haskins for supporting me and putting all they have into making me who I am today.
- Natasha Gordon for all her understanding, support and love she has offered.
- My business partner and best friend Bailey Snyman for all the support and inspiration.
- The performers in each of the choreographic works that embarked on this journey with me.
- Dr. L. Meyer for her unbelievable generosity.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	i
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. Main aim of the study.....	6
1.1. Sub-aims of the study.....	6
1.2. Research approach.....	6
1.2.1 Qualitative research paradigm.....	6
1.2.2 Practice as research.....	9
1.2.3 Autoethnography.....	10
1.2.3.1 Autoethnographic tools for data collection.....	12
1.2.3.2 Reflecting on three previous productions to trace my emerging signature.....	14
1.3 Phases in the research	15
1.4 Outline of chapters.....	17
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP.....	18
2.1. Embodied narratives.....	18
2.1.1 Body	18
2.1.2 Embodiment.....	21
2.3 Narrative	25
2.4 Embodied narratives	26
2.5 Constructing and creating an embodied narrative.....	29
2.6 The characteristics of embodied narratives.....	32
2.7 Choreographing the embodied narrative.....	33
2.8 Communicative devices in the choreographic process.....	36

2.9 Methods of instruction in the choreographic process.....	37
2.10 Personal movement style.....	38
CHAPTER THREE: MAPPING MY CHOREOGRAPHIC SIGNATURE.....	40
3.1 Sections to describe my choreographic process in <i>One-way</i>	41
3.1.1 Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source.....	42
3.1.2 Source material.....	43
3.1.3 Designing the space through utilising scenic devices in the choreographic process.....	44
3.1.4 Performer's role in the choreographic process.....	46
3.1.5 Generating movement material: reinterpreting source material into an EN.....	47
3.1.6 Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography.....	51
3.1.7 Creating a structure or framework.....	53
3.1.8 Refining and making choreographic choices.....	56
3.1.9 Music and sound in the choreographic process.....	60
3.1.10 Structural transitions	61
3.1.11 A summation and critical reflection	62
3.2 Mapping the choreographic process of <i>As night falls</i>	64
3.2.1 Describing my choreographic process.....	64
3.2.2 Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source.....	65
3.2.3 Source material: Helen Martins.....	66
3.2.4 Designing the space through utilising scenic devices in the choreographic process.....	68
3.2.5 Performer's role in the choreographic process.....	71
3.2.6 Generating movement material: reinterpreting source material into an EN.....	72
3.2.7 Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography.....	77
3.2.8 Creating a structure or framework.....	81
3.2.9 Refining and making choreographic choices.....	83
3.2.10 Music and sound in the choreographic process.....	87
3.2.11 Structural transitions	88
3.2.12 A summation and critical reflection	88

3.3 Mapping the development of my choreographic process: Chasing.....	90
3.3.1 Sections to describe the choreographic process.....	90
3.3.2 Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source.....	91
3.3.3 Source material: Ingrid Jonker.....	92
3.3.4 Designing the space through utilising scenic devices in the choreographic process.....	96
3.3.5 Performer’s role in my choreographic process.....	98
3.3.6 Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an EN.....	99
3.3.7 Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography.....	105
3.3.8 Creating a structure or a framework.....	110
3.3.9 Refining and making choreographic choices.....	114
3.3.10 Music and sound in the choreographic process.....	119
3.3.11 Structural transitions: the use of text	121
3.3.12 A summation and critical reflection	125
CHAPTER FOUR: DEFINING THE CHOREOGRAPHIC SIGNATURE.....	127
4.1 My emerging signature from the three choreographic processes.....	127
4.2 My signature choreographic trends that have emerged over the three processes.....	129
4.3 Core images across the works.....	133
4.4 Emerging motifs across the works.....	135
4.5 My signature choreographic devices.....	138
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION.....	143
5.1 Summation.....	143
5.2 Shortfalls.....	145
5.3 Possible research that can emerge from this study.....	146
5.4 Transferability.....	147

LIST OF TABLES	Page
Table 1: Overview of the source material for <i>One-way</i>	44
Table 2: Overview of the source material for <i>As night falls</i>	68
Table 3: Overview of the source material for <i>Chasing</i>	96
Table 4: A bird's eye view of all three choreographic processes.....	127

LIST OF FIGURES		Page
Figure 1:	The <i>Lyrical intimacy duet</i> from <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates the scenic devices utilised in the work. Photography by Andrew Gush, 2010.	45
Figure 2:	The quartet from <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates one of the configurations of the set. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	45
Figure 3:	The <i>Lyrical intimacy duet</i> . The image illustrates the choreographic device of proximity. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	49
Figure 4:	The <i>Strong intimacy duet</i> . The image illustrates the counter tension between the two male bodies. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	50
Figure 5:	<i>Scene 5</i> in <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates the wall constructed by the planks. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	51
Figure 6:	The trio in <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates her internal conflict. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	53
Figure 7:	<i>Scene 1</i> from <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates the opening of the work. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	56
Figure 8:	The <i>Lyrical intimacy duet</i> . The image illustrates the intertwining of the bodies. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	57
Figure 9:	The quartet in <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates the ideal heterosexual encounter. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	59
Figure 10:	The quartet in <i>One-way</i> . The image illustrates the lead woman's isolation. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.	62
Figure 11:	The final image of <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates the use of the umbrellas and lanterns. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	69
Figure 12:	The <i>Barn dance</i> in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates the use of the chairs as a scenic device. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	70
Figure 13:	Miss Helen's solo in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates the metal hooped skirt utilised in her solo. Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Amitie Lee, 2013.	70
Figure 14:	The opening scene in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates the line of mourning people in the background. Photograph by Nicola	71

	Haskins, 2011.	
Figure 15:	The duet between Miss Helen and Koos Malagas in <i>As night falls</i> . Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	74
Figure 16:	The duet between Miss Helen and the priest in <i>As night falls</i> . Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	75
Figure 17:	The <i>Dead duet</i> in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates how her movements are a reaction to his. Photography by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	76
Figure 18:	The sexual duet in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates the intimacy between the two bodies. Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Amitie Lee, 2013.	77
Figure 19:	The <i>Dead duet</i> in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates the priest dancing with her lifeless body. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	78
Figure 20:	Miss Helen's solo in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates her progression on the diagonal. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	80
Figure 21:	The <i>Barn dance</i> in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates her being seen as 'other'. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.	86
Figure 22:	The final scene in <i>As night falls</i> . The image illustrates his lament as he holds her lifeless body. Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Amitie Lee, 2013.	87
Figure 23:	The <i>Fragment scene</i> in <i>Chasing</i> . The image illustrates the four boxes utilised as scenic devices. Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Teigue Blokpoel, 2012.	97
Figure 24:	The end of the <i>Attachment duet</i> in <i>Chasing</i> . The image illustrates the large sheets of galvanised iron. Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Kirsten Makin, 2013.	97
Figure 25:	The image of the typewriter in <i>Chasing</i> . Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Teigue Blokpoel, 2012.	100
Figure 26:	The longing solo in <i>Chasing</i> . The image illustrates her sense of longing and desperation as we see the male figure foreshadowed. Photograph by <i>CuePix</i> Kirsten Makin, 2013.	105
Figure 27:	The trio in <i>Chasing</i> . The image illustrates the sultry and flirtatious	108

- side of Jonker. Photograph by *CuePix* Kirsten Makin, 2013.
- Figure 28: The *Fragment scene* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the confinement of the women to the boxes as well as the gestural material. Photograph by *CuePix* Teigue Blokpoel, 2012. 115
- Figure 29: *Scene 2* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the use of the newsprint to demarcate the floor. Photograph by *CuePix* Teigue Blokpoel, 2012. 117
- Figure 30: *Korreltjie sand* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the reference to Jonker's abortions through the use of sand. Photograph by *CuePix* Kirsten Makin, 2013. 124

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This study documents my emerging choreographic signature. I utilise a qualitative, practice-based autoethnographical approach to my research. In studying a body of my choreographic work in the genre of physical theatre, I identify and investigate the processes I use to reinterpret narratives as embodied narratives in the act of choreography¹. The field in which the study is situated is thus physical theatre (in a South African context). As such a brief explanation of the term and contextualisation of physical theatre in South Africa is necessary to foreground this study and to lay-out the notional demands of physical theatre as an art form.

Although heightened physicality in theatre has been prevalent historically in, for example, pre-Greek theatre and the *Commedia dell'Arte*, the term 'physical theatre' only seems to have been in use since the late 1960s (Murray & Keefe 2007:14,18) and only came to popular use to describe a genre of theatre in the 1980s (Sanchez-Coleberg 1996:46). Sanchez-Coleberg (1996:40) states that the term physical theatre in itself "denotes a hybrid character and is testimony to its double legacy in both avant-garde theatre and dance". Chamberlain (2007:119) argues that physical theatre had not two, but three developmental strands (lineages). The first being a French acting and mime lineage, the second being a Central European and American dance lineage and a third lineage in 20th century European and North-American theatre directors. An often unacknowledged, yet important influence on the development of physical theatre, is Eastern theatre traditions (Zarrilli 2006: xiii; Callery 2001:120-121). A discussion of the history and development of physical theatre and its antecedents falls outside the scope of this mini-dissertation. Rather, I will discuss my understanding of physical theatre in order to provide a broad framework for the mode of physical theatre I work with/in.

At a basic level the term "physical theatre" has been collectively used to denote works where the unfolding of narrative happens through physicalized events rather than through a verbal narrative (Sanchez-Coleberg 1996:40). The somatic impulse is thus privileged over the cerebral in the making and performance process. Gordon states (Finestone 1995:32) that physical theatre is: "not just another way of moving [or making], but a different approach to movement and to making theatre: a different philosophy". Gordon's thinking about the way theatre is made places physical theatre closer to a conceptual paradigm as opposed to a

¹ It is important to note that I do not explore choreography *per se* in my work, but rather my choreographic signature (as explained above).

specific form. This is reiterated by Callery, Murray and Keefe (2007:3) in their argument that physical theatre is identifiable rather by its conceptual anchors and tropes of physical and visual languages, rather than by the various forms it can take. These tropes include

- heightened and stylised gestural and vocal languages of performance;
- a resistance to the dramatic protocols of realism, and – often -in their place a predilection for the conventions of melodrama, clown and the grotesque, an explicit and celebratory sense of ensemble in both the process and making of performance, an expectation that performers will share in collective authorship of the work
- a readiness to draw upon strategies and methodologies of devising in the generation of material and rehearsal process, actors/performers possessing skill and disposition to transform their bodies into physical objects and other non-human and human forms, forms of representation which are more likely to draw upon archetypes rather than finely wrought psychological characterisation
- a willingness to explore the telling of stories in a non-linear manner where an audience is given the scope for interpretation, and expected to work at the construction of meanings

Callery (2001:3) parallels and Murray and Keefe’s tropes are essential to my understanding of physical theatre as a mode of performance and as an approach to theatre making and choreography.

Physical theatre is eclectic, political and live. It requires creative collaboration and a creative actor, leading to collective authorship of the work – challenging the “traditional hegemony of the play text as the main driver of performance composition” (Murray & Keefe 2007:33). In doing so, it does not function primarily on the activities of one artist; rather it consists of a collective or an ensemble that interacts through the choreographic/directorial process and through various improvisations and tasks structured by the choreographer/director. It is a primarily somatic practice that aims to engage the audience and offer a visceral experience, and confronts “notions of conventional theatre spaces” (Halley 2012:45). It marks a definite shift away from theatrical realism and its conventions in favour of setting up “a dialectic between theatre making *and* visual culture” (Murray & Keefe 2007:33) that foregrounds non-linearity, symbolic action and objects. The conceptual anchors and tropes of physical theatre (mentioned above) by Murray and Keefe (2007:33) and Callery (2001:3) is summarised as follows:

- it is eclectic
- it has a clear commitment to transformation

- the actor-as-creator
- the working process is collaborative
- it is primarily a somatic practice
- a stylised gestural/ vocal language of performance is utilised
- devising and task orientated processes characterise the creative process
- the telling of a story in a non-linear manner
- the primary expressive medium is the performer's body

This summary provides a brief explanation of the term 'physical theatre' and a contextualisation of physical theatre in the South African context is necessary to foreground the study. Physical theatre in the South African context is indebted to its Euro-American influences and to a rich indigenous performance heritage with a strong somatic emphasis (Alcock 1999:51) reflecting tropes of physical theatre. South African physical theatre echoes the notion of hybridity as characteristic of physical theatre by blurring the established boundaries between "drama, dance and physical mime" (Sichel 2010:44). It takes many forms, ranging from elaborate and stylised physical gesture combined with text to formal choreographed works (Fleischman 1997:175). South African Gary Gordon² arguably has been credited as the "father of the current local form of [physical theatre] training, practice and performance" (Sichel 2010:41) with the First Physical Theatre Company. The First Physical Theatre Company, established in 1993, was one of the first companies in South Africa to utilise the physical theatre label in identifying and characterising its work. I focus on Gordon's view on physical theatre as it is the basis of my training and is still the most dominant influence on/in my work.

Gordon (Finestone 1997:60) proposes collaboration and a 'holistic' theatre as the central manifesto for the First Physical Theatre Company:

...the idea of a holistic theatre experience, the notion of artistic collaboration, research and utilisation of source material and the mobilisation of the body.

Gordon views the act of choreography for physical theatre as an eclectic approach where "a visual, aural, sensual, conceptual, and e-motional landscape is created through the collaborative interplay of dance, movement, mime, acting, design, music, props and lighting

² The artistic director of The First Physical Theatre Company in South Africa.

(Finestone 1997:61). The idea of a ‘holistic theatre’ stands central to Gordon’s thinking and practice—a mode of theatrical engagement where collaboration, research and the use of source material features prominently. Finestone (1997:62) further states that choreography or physical theatre making requires a critical and careful process of research where the inspired artist becomes an archaeologist who discovers, digs and sifts through an evolving process of sourcing and research to eventually unearth the work. Being trained by Gordon, and having been part of *The First Physical Theatre Company*, Gordon’s work provides the practical and conceptual framework from which I work. A major influence into my choice of South African narratives stems from my studies at Rhodes University where Professor Gary Gordon encouraged looking to ‘history’ as source material for a choreographic work.³

It is important to acknowledge the influences that assist in shaping my choreographic signature, i.e. the mode of physical theatre that characterises the *First Physical Theatre* and the dance influence that features in my work. Physical theatre is the mode of choreographic expression that I utilise to reinterpret source material and translate into an embodied narrative and it is this process that unfolds my choreographic signature.

According to Blom and Chaplin⁴ (1982:136) a choreographic signature may be referred to as the “style” of a choreographer - specifically the signature of an individual at a specific period in time⁵. Style, or more specifically movement style, can further be defined as a “recurrent or qualitatively patterned way of moving, an identifiable manner or mode of physical expression” in relation to the “personal and artistic preferences that characterises the mode, manner, and content of one’s choreography” (Blom & Chaplin 1982:136). Consequently, as Chappell (2008:169) argues, a choreographic signature also refers to “the aesthetic glue” between various components of the choreographic work. Blom and Chaplin (1982:136) divide style or the choreographic signature into a number of categories including personal movement style, choreographic style, technique, theories of movement informing personal movement and choreographic style and genre and the historical context of the choreography. In highlighting traces, core images, themes, leitmotifs, commonalities and choreographic processes across a body of my choreographic work, I determine my personal choreographic style or signature. My research explores the above categories in relation to the main point of

³ Gary Gordon’s influence is mentioned above.

⁴ The reason I utilise such a seemingly ‘old’ source is Blom and Chaplin (1982) was a seminal reference in my choreographic training and key choreographic devices I utilise are drawn from this handbook.

⁵ I am aware that this source is dated; however, it has been my key source of reference throughout my training, development and career.

departure for my choreographic works, namely the embodiment of narratives: whether autobiographical, biographical or historical.

As a professional choreographer, the act of choreography is mostly intuitive and extra-cognitive for me. I work strongly from a personal sense of whether a choreography or part thereof ‘works’ or whether it ‘feels right’. I do not know why or how I make the choreographic choices that I do. Being able to articulate my artistic preferences in my choreographic signature and determining why my choreography or part thereof ‘works’ or ‘feels right’ may assist me in enhancing my choreography. In identifying points of convergence amongst the traces, core images, themes and leitmotifs, commonalities and choreographic processes across my body of work and in relation to Blom and Chaplin’s (1982) definition of a choreographic signature (or style), I can deliberately use and revisit that which I am accessing intuitively or extra-cognitively. This may enable me to access and apply the cognitive processes behind my creative decisions in order to gain insight into my own choreographic preferences, expand on my creative decisions, extend improvisational explorations, enlarge expressive possibilities through my choreography and broaden my choreographic scope.

In this study, I identify and articulate my choreographic signature through a practice-based, self-reflexive autoethnographic process⁶. Three of my previous works *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) are utilised as practical examples to trace the development of my choreographic signature. *One-way* deals with my personal narrative, *As night falls* deals with the life and work of Helen Martins and *Chasing* deals with the life and work of Ingrid Jonker. Through tracing a trajectory of my works I articulate some of the extra-cognitive knowledge surfaced in the creative process and in the product itself. In creating an embodied narrative through a physical theatre practice the body (and the body in space and time) can become a site/sight for generating new meanings. I use qualitative research tools such as DVD footage of all three productions, choreographic notes I made of my past two works and a journal of *Chasing* to generate a thick description of my choreographic process in order to determine traces of my choreographic signature.

⁶ I acknowledge that the work I discuss in my study lends itself to a feminist analysis and an engagement with notions of race. However, as my focus is on my choreographic signature as surfaced by my creative work, an engagement with feminist or critical race theories falls outside of the scope of this mini-dissertation. Please see page 147 for the shortfalls of this study.

1. Main aim of the study

The main aim of the study is to identify and articulate my emerging choreographic signature through a self-reflexive written document.

1.1 Sub-aims of the study

- To determine how I, as a choreographer, reinterpret source material and translate it into an embodied narrative in a physical theatre work;
- To do a review of scholarship on embodied narratives as theoretical background to my study;
- To revisit my choreographic documentation and choreographic processes in creating *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) to map traces, core images, themes, leitmotifs, commonalities, and choreographic processes in the DVD footage and in my choreographic notes;
- To retrospectively identify and articulate my choreographic signature and the logical trajectory of my work with reference to Blom and Chapman (1982) *The Intimate Act of Choreography*.

1.2 Research Approach

This research is located within a qualitative research paradigm. The section below traces the research trajectory from the research paradigm to the research methodologies that I apply in this study.

1.2.1 Qualitative Research Paradigm

The type of research stipulated in this specific choreographic exploration falls under qualitative research. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) define qualitative research as being “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world, it consists of a set of interpretive,

material practices that make the world visible: at this level qualitative research involves an interpretive...approach to the world”. Van Maanen (1979:520) explains that qualitative research is an umbrella term covering an “array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world”.

In order to fully understand the qualitative research paradigm, it is useful to understand its differences to the positivist underpinnings of quantitative research. The differences between quantitative and qualitative research are observed in the concentration, method and emphasis of the study. In Quantitative research the world is perceived as steady, rule bound and foreseeable (Denzin & Lincoln 2011:8). The approach stipulates that once the rules are revealed, they will apply in all parallel situations. The paradigm assumes that researcher can be distanced from the research to objectively come to conclusions. Qualitative research shifts away from the positivist paradigm towards a more ‘people-centred’ approach. The central position adopted in a qualitative research paradigm is that individuals living in the world experience the world in their own unique ways, referred to as ‘the lived experience’ (Wasser & Bresler 1996:6). People understand the world according to their own interpretations and form their own phenomenological perspectives⁷ of that world. Theories are used to assist in interpretations of this ‘lived experience’. There is a strong sense of subjectivity in the ‘lived experience’. As such we do not find ‘the truth’ in qualitative research but rather find ‘clusters of shared meanings’ (Myers 2000: [sp]). The result is that an interpretative approach governs qualitative research. The results of the research cannot be used to generalise across all parallel situations (and in my case, choreographic situations), but rather explain what is happening in that specific situation.

The data uncovered by qualitative researchers occurs when the researcher “puts brackets around a temporal and spatial domain of the social world” (Van Maanem 1979:520). This defines the map or territory in which the research will be investigated. Oldfather and West (1994:22) create a pertinent metaphor to understanding the nature of qualitative research in comparing it to jazz. They view the collaborative and independent nature of jazz as being similar to qualitative research - in both situations each improvisation is distinctive and bound to the exact context it occurs in. Qualitative research is thus an approach rather than a specific set of techniques (Morgan & Smircich 1980:491).

⁷ See “embodied narratives” in my scholarly survey.

Firestone (1993:16) discusses one of the main criticisms of qualitative research; being that it appears to be difficult to generalise the findings of a qualitative study to settings other than the one examined. Generalizability is not seen as one of the strengths of qualitative research but researchers can increase the applicability of their findings through thick descriptions. This can cause an eclectic approach to research, which is supported by the notion of generic qualitative research.

Generic qualitative research illustrates some of the various characteristics of qualitative research but rather than concentrating the study through the lens of a specific methodology, they attempt to “combine several methodologies or approaches, or claim no particular methodological viewpoint at all” (Caeilli, Ray & Mill 2003:3). Merriam (1998:11) states that generic qualitative research “simply seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, or the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved”. The focus of my study is then on understanding a specific situation or occurrence, namely my emerging choreographic signature in the context of a body of my work. In addition, as Thorne (1997:169) explains generic qualitative research is highly subjective and an interpretive approach which requires acknowledgement of its theoretical influences.

Caeilli, Ray and Mill (2003:9) argue that in order for generic qualitative research reports to receive credibility they must examine the following four areas: the theoretical positioning of the researcher, the congruence between methodology and the methods, the strategies to establish rigor and the analytical lens through which the data is examined. Theoretical positioning refers to the researchers’ intentions and personal history that guided them towards the particular study. Researchers must identify clearly what guided them towards the particular form of study as well as their assumptions and opinions on the particular topic (Ibid: 11). As Caeilli, Ray and Mill (2003:13) argue, “research choices made in any generic study are still informed by a set of assumptions, preconceptions and beliefs and it is these influences that need to be articulated by generic researchers”. The researchers need to examine and illustrate their assumptions that they bring to light on the research study, thus the researchers’ position. A researcher engaging in any qualitative research needs to clearly differentiate ‘methodology’ from ‘method’. Caeilli, Ray and Mill (2003:11) warn of this potential danger and state that methodology “reflects the beliefs about knowledge and existence that arise from the values in the philosophic framework that is to be employed”. Methodology also illustrates theoretical frameworks that define the research. Methodology speaks to the theory that the research design is based on. Kelly (2009:286) describes

“methods” as the technical tools that are utilised to conduct the research. The fourth element that Caeilli, Ray and Mill (2003:17) suggest for credibility in generic qualitative research is what they term the ‘analytical lens’: how the researcher interacts with their data.

These four issues stipulated by Caeilli, Ray and Mill (2003:17) stipulate the criteria around the use of generic qualitative research. These criteria are adhered to in this study as demonstrated by my research aims and the phases of my research. In this specific study drawing on generic qualitative research, I employ two methodologies, namely practice-as-research and autoethnography.

1.2.2 Practice-as-research

My research can be categorised as practice-as-research as the act of creation *per se* is one of the primary research tools. Snyman and Lambert (2010:312) argue that practice-as-research, as a methodology can provide the arts with the capacity to inform research at an in depth level: “rather than seeing the relationship between practice and theory as a dichotomy, there is now an evolution toward an interdisciplinary approach to academic and practical research”. Through the process of practice-as-research the researcher actively solves a problem or answers a question rather than merely using intuition. The data gathered is interpreted by the researcher. Thus the artwork as well as the written documentation is considered together. Through the making of the art, answers emerge as new discoveries are generated in the process. As such autoethnography is a very useful method in practice-as-research as there is no separation between subject and object.

Borgdorff (2006:7) refers to research in the arts as controversial as it does not assume the separation of subject and object and does not allow distance between the researcher and the practice of art. Borgdorff (2006:7) posits that the artistic practice itself is a vital ingredient of both the research process and the research results: “there are no art practices that are not saturated with experiences, histories and beliefs; and conversely there is no theoretical access to or interpretation of, art practices that does not partially shape that practice into what it is”. As offered before, the phenomenology of the artist and in this specific study the choreographer informs the process. In this specific autoethnographic approach the choreographic process is crucial to discoveries around the emerging choreographic signature. As an artist, I bring my own skills, knowledge and insights to the process.

Practice-as-research offers a way of understanding that is situated in “active, intimate, hands-on participation and personal connection: ‘knowing how,’ and ‘knowing who’” (Conquergood 1999:145). Borgdorff (2006:18) suggests that art practice qualifies as research when:

its purpose is to expand our knowledge and understanding by conducting an original investigation in and through art objects and creative processes. Art research begins by addressing questions that are pertinent in the research context and in the art world. Researchers employ experimental and hermeneutic methods that reveal and articulate the tacit knowledge that is situated and embodied in specific artworks and artistic processes. Research processes and outcomes are documented and disseminated in an appropriate manner to the research community and the wider public.

This research will utilise the methodology of practice-as-research in order to investigate the specific research question offered above.

As qualitative research, practice-as-research acknowledges that “many ways of knowing and inquiring are legitimate and (that) no one way is privileged” (Wall 2006:147). Not one correct form of knowledge exists, but rather multiple viewpoints are acknowledged and accepted. Duncan (2004:3) argues for “a more personal point of view by emphasizing reflexivity and personal voice and recognising the researcher as representative of a multilayered lifeworld, itself worthy of expression”. The researcher and the choreographic context and signature are the important elements in this investigation. The results of the research will inevitably speak to personal interpretation and investigation and highlight how the choreographer makes sense of the choreographic process through an autoethnographic approach.

1.2.3 Autoethnography

In this specific research, autoethnography is utilised to identify and articulate my emerging choreographic signature. Through utilising various autoethnographic tools, I determine how I reinterpret source material and translate that into embodied narratives. A clear delineation of the research approach of autoethnography, as such, is relevant to this specific research.

In an ethnographical study, the researcher is writing about someone else’s culture and cultural practices, and how that group understands and constructs meaning in (and of) their lives. When researchers engage in ethnographical research, “they study a culture’s relational practices, common values and beliefs, and shared experiences for the purpose of helping

insiders (cultural members) and outsiders (cultural stranger) better understand the culture” (Bochner, Adams & Ellis, 2010:[sp]).

By referring to “autoethnography” the “self” becomes the centre of examination, the self is the main source of data (Duncan 2004:2). This suggests that my own culture, values and meanings becomes the centre of the investigation. “Autoethnography is a reflexive means by which the researcher - practitioner consciously embeds himself or herself amidst theory and practice, and by way of intimate autobiographic account, explicates a phenomenon under investigation or intervention” (McIlveen 2008:13). Due to this, the emphasis is on the researcher’s self as the subject, autoethnography is a marginalised research approach (Wall 2008:47).

Autoethnography highlights the current movement towards personalised, qualitative research rather than quantitative research. Holt (2003:18) describes autoethnography as “highly personalised accounts where authors draw on their own experiences to extend understanding of a particular discipline or culture”. This method offers a system of uncovering personal experience for the purpose of developing sociological understanding (Wall 2008:38). Autoethnographers view reality as “neither fixed nor entirely external but is created by, and moves with, the changing perceptions and beliefs of the viewer” (Duncan 2004:4).

Art is developed out of the artist’s ‘lived experience’ and it is through embodied narratives that art can be created. McIlveen (2008:15) states the “prominent feature of autoethnography as writing about oneself as a researcher-practitioner, not an autobiography, but rather a specific form of critical enquiry that is embedded in theory and practice”. This co-existence of theory and practice is important to allow for reflection generated through the creation of art.

Bochner, Adams and Ellis (2010: [sp]) state autoethnography is both process and product. They acknowledge the various ways personal experience influences autoethnography as it “acknowledges and accommodates subjectivity, emotionality, and the researcher’s influence on research, rather than hiding from these matters or assuming they don’t exist”. Anderson (2006:373) states that in autoethnography the researcher is a complete member in the social world under investigation. “Autoethnography,... expands and opens up a wider lens on the world, eschewing rigid definitions of what we study, how we study it, and what we say about our topic” (Bochner, Adams & Ellis 2010:[sp]). Questions regarding ethics in autoethnography have rarely been raised and there is little guidance in the autoethnography

literature regarding ethics. “Personal experience methods, such as autoethnography, justify themselves by observing that individuals do not exist apart from their social context, and for this reason personal experience can be the foundation for further sociological understanding” (Wall 2008:49).

Through autoethnography, my emerging choreographic signature is documented. This may potentially provide the “existential we” (Spry 2011:711) with a choreographic manifesto. This documented choreographic signature may be used by aspiring choreographers as a reflexive source. Spry (2001:711) states “self-reflexive critique upon one’s positionality as researcher inspires readers to reflect critically upon their own life experience, their constructions of self, and their interactions with others within sociohistorical contexts”.

Reflexivity is crucial to an autoethnographic process as it speaks to the nature of its postmodern methodology. Wall (2006:3) discusses reflexivity in relation to autoethnography and offers that when the researcher “pauses for a moment to think about how his or her presence, standpoint, or characteristics might have influenced the outcome of the research process”. In research that aims to discover or research personal experience, a crucial relationship between the researcher and the participants develop and who better to understand or reflect on this process than themselves? These re-reflections do not only consist of the researcher’s and participants opinions but are also justified by other data that can confirm those opinions (Duncan 2004:5). Autoethnography provides reports that are based on multiple sources of evidence. Autoethnography does not follow a linear strategy or formula but is rather a complicated endeavour likened to being sent “into the woods without a compass” (Ellis 2004:120). Ellis (2004:120) encourages autoethnographers to embrace this uncertainty to take time to wander through the labyrinth it entails.

Wall (2006:9) discusses the various criticisms of the methodology and states

...those that complain that personal narratives emphasise a single, speaking subject fail to realise that no individual voice speaks apart from a societal framework of co-constructed meaning. There is a direct and inextricable link between the personal and the cultural. Thus, rich meaning, culturally relevant personal experience, and an intense motivation to know are what typify and strengthen autoethnography.

As I am utilising autoethnography as my method, I require multiple sources of evidence to validate the potential outcome of the project. Various methods or tools employed provide as much scope as possible.

1.2.3.1 Autoethnographic tools for data collection

As indicated before, within this specific research the emerging trends and choreographic processes need to be traced. Various autoethnographic tools are accessed in this process. Triangulation of these tools will lead to the thick description I seek to offer.

In qualitative research methods a “thick description” is essential for a variety of reasons. The term ‘thick description’ originates from the ethnographer Clifford Geertz who was working predominately in the fields of anthropology and ethnography but the term has been utilised in many other Qualitative research fields. Geertz (1973:4) invited a new understanding of culture and proposed a new interpretive social science where “man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of laws but an interpretive one in search of meaning”. Thus for Geertz ‘culture’ or more specifically the culture of a specific field of study and its analysis is to take cognisance that each ‘culture’ has its unique arrangement and therefore depends on the specific context. In the context of this study ‘culture’ refers to the culture of choreography and this determines the tools used to find the signature or ‘clusters of meaning’.

A “thick description” in qualitative research requires no simple description of the object but rather an approach that is as multidimensional as possible. We are dealing with the phenomenology of human beings. Geertz (1973:7) necessitates the pursuit of “multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render”.

The use of a “thick description” counteracts unmotivated subjectivity. Subjectivity of the researcher is part and parcel of the process of the research but the ‘thicker’ the description the more chance there is for a unique, unexpected and motivated interpretation of the data. “Thick descriptions” insist on attention to detail as well as ‘groupings of similar details’ or ‘clusters of meaning’. The process unfolds as follows: at first the researcher needs to observe the ‘lived experience’ as objectively as possible and then to describe what is being observed, secondly attempting to do it within the same time frame, then to document those experiences and finally the interpretation. Critical to this process is that the documentation and observation must occur at the same time, and the interpretation is after the fact. The reason

for this is that this process allows for a more detailed “thick description” and a process whereby crucial findings are not excluded (Shankman 1984:269).

Therefore the researcher needs to put specific methods in place that allow this “thick description” to occur in order to collect detailed and complex data. A journal/visual diary is a key component that can be utilised in order to document this data as the process unfolds and as close to the time of the actual occurrence as possible.

In order to utilise the notion of “thick description” in this specific research, a detailed journal/visual diary was kept throughout the choreographic process and entries made every time the choreographer worked on the project. The journal consisted of photographs, tasks, inspirations, interpretations and choreographic explorations of the process as well as in a text-based form to ensure that a “thick description” was provided of the choreographic process and choreographic thinking.

This is applied to all three works reflected upon in this study. This allows crucial understandings to emerge of how I interpreted and shaped narratives into an embodied narrative in physical theatre. Specific autoethnographic tools used are: choreographic journals and DVDs of the works.

1.2.3.2 Reflecting on three previous productions to trace my emerging signature

The initial step on the autoethnographic journey is to reflect upon process and product of three of my previous choreographic works. This reveals the various themes and choreographic trends that emerge in my work. It delineates the tools non-deliberately used during the process of creating the productions. This process provides clear documentation and reflection tracing perceptions, choices, and artistic preferences and as such, provides insight into the way I have previously approached choreography. This retrospective account of my previous works refers to choreographic journal entries as well as DVD footage of these productions. Knowledge gained from analysing the above mentioned works allows me to map traces, core images, themes, leitmotifs and commonalities in all three choreographic processes.

1.2.3.2.1 Journal

During the execution of the research, a detailed choreographic journal was kept of the process of *Chasing*. This allowed for clear documentation and reflection of the choreographic

signature. Journaling as a research tool allowed my inner decision making, intuitive choices and assumptions to be externalised into a written document. It steered me as the autoethnographic researcher to move between the non-deliberate use of choreographic tools and deliberately reflecting on these tools. It concretised my ideas regarding choices made in the choreographic process. Most importantly, it provided a record of the process and provided a trajectory of my choreographic process.

1.2.3.2.2 DVD recording of the choreographic works

All three of the choreographic works were filmed for documentation purposes. DVD's support and allow for in-process, post-process and post-production critical reflection regarding the artistic choices made. The DVD is analysed from my perspective to observe what I think I did in practice to provide a thick description.

2.3 Phases in the research

Phase 1

Phase 1(a) Drawing from the critical literature and scholarly survey to fulfil sub-aim 1: Define and discuss the concept of embodied narrative to gain an entry point into the ways in which I reinterpret source material and translate that into an embodied narrative.

Phase 1(b) Drawing from the scholarly survey to fulfil sub-aim 2: revisiting my choreographic documentation and processes in creating *One-way* (2010), *As Night Falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) to map traces, core images and commonalities in the choreographic process in relation to Blom and Chapman (1982).

Phase 2

Phase 2(a) articulates with sub-aim 4, namely to retrospectively identify and articulate my emerging choreographic signature.

In conclusion this research utilises a qualitative, practice-based autoethnographical approach to documenting my emerging choreographic signature through studying a body of my choreographic works in the mode of physical theatre. My “style” (Blom & Chaplin 1982:136) as a choreographer is articulated through investigating the processes in which I use to reinterpret narratives as embodied narratives in the process of choreography. The “aesthetic glue” (Chappell 2008:169) that holds my choreographic works together is articulated and

discussed and the cognitive processes in my creative decisions are articulated. The act of creation is one of the primary research tools and in using autoethnography the “self” (Duncan 2004:2) becomes the main source of data. Through autoethnography my emerging choreographic signature is documented potentially providing the “existential we” (Spry 2011:71), as indicated above, with a choreographic manifesto.

1.4 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 consists of a contextualisation and an introduction to the study. In Chapter 1, I argue for, and demonstrate the necessity of, a study of this nature. The chapter provides an overview of the prior research in the field. The research question and problem statement, overview of the research aims and research approach is provided in this chapter.

Chapter 2 explores the scholarly survey regarding embodied narratives. Information in this chapter forms the bedrock for sub aim 1 and feeds into phase 1 (a). It provides a conceptual background for the study. Chapter 2 furthers my main research aim to identify and articulate my emerging choreographic signature through a self-reflexive written document.

Chapter 3 revisits my choreographic documentation and choreographic processes of previous works *One-way* (2011), *As Night Falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012). Information provided in this chapter forms the bedrock of sub-aim 2 and feeds into phase 1(b) and 2(a). Through reflecting upon these productions in retrospect my choreographic traces, core images, themes and leitmotifs will emerge. It draws information from Chapter 2 and illustrates how the various tropes of embodied narratives and physical theatre are prevalent in the choreographic process.

Chapter 4 serves as a reflection and evaluation of all three of the choreographic processes leading into a delineation of my emerging choreographic signature to form the bedrock of sub-aim 4. Through this self-reflection I will retrospectively articulate my artistic preferences and modes by identifying the points of convergence amongst the key choreographic signature trends.

Chapter 5 provides a summation of the study. It reveals possible shortfalls of the study as well as providing possible research that can emerge. It discusses the transferability of the study.

Chapter 1 set out the trajectory of my emerging choreographic signature. In Chapter 2 that follows, I will define and discuss the main scholarly survey of embodied narratives. I will identify the trends of embodied narratives in order to apply those to my choreographic works to define the emerging choreographic signature.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF SCHOLARSHIP

The purpose of this chapter is to explore embodied narratives as theoretical framework for this study. I identify trends of embodied narratives that I will use to read my choreographic works in order to define my emerging choreographic signature.

2.1 Embodied narratives

Defining the term ‘embodied narratives’ is a complex venture that requires a conceptualisation of the body as being socially constructed as well as an embodied way of being, as evidenced by amongst others, Barbour (2011), Maiese (2011), Kriegar (2005), Bresler (2006) and Carroll (2011). As such, a discussion of the notion of embodied narratives necessarily entails a discussion of the body and the concept of embodiment. Once these concepts have been deliberated upon, the concept of narrative is considered.

2.1.1 Body

Coetzee and Munro (2007:103) state that “the wealth of theoretical approaches to ‘the body’ approaches the body as a performative, as a politic, as interrelated with domains of socio-cultural activity” and as a material, corporeal entity. This is evident in the changing terminology used for the body: the corporeal body, the phenomenological body, the inscribed body, the politicised body, the signified body and the sexualised body, to name a few (Cancienne & Snowber 2003:238). These understandings of the body frame the body as not only a corporeal materiality but as a concept.

Fraser and Greco (2005:4) argues that the concept of the body can be understood in three distinct ways, namely “the body as something we *have* (the body as object), as something we *are* (the body as subject), and as something we *become* (the body as process and performativity)”. If ‘the body is considered as object’ in the literal sense or from an essentialist perspective, it means “the physical biological structure of a person” or the so-called objective reality of the person, which does not portray the intricate meanings of the body in the social sciences. (Carroll 2011:245). At the start of the seventeenth century, many western philosophers identified ‘the body’ as a physical object that contained anatomical and functional properties and adhered to scientific principles (Zarrilli 2006:48). The body was viewed as a physical entity through which experiences and actions were contained and which was controlled by the mind, constituting two separate entities of human experience: mind and body (Cancienne & Snowber 2003:238). The body is thus assumed as a fixed, objective,

material entity that is governed by rules of biological science (Csordas 1999:1) constituting what Kroger and Kroger (1987:20) refer to as a “bounded entity”.

This “bounded entity” perpetuates a dualist or Cartesian⁸ view of alienation, denying that humans are our bodies (Totton 2010:22). Totton (2010:22) uses a metaphor to describe this relationship: “the majority treat their body like a date picked up at the singles bar. They hustle it, punish it and try to make it give them things they want”. This view positions the body as object.

If the ‘body is considered as something we are’ (the body as subject) it is necessary to examine the strong reaction that occurred challenging the essentialist understanding of the body. This was followed by a paradigm shift in the early twentieth century, where the concept of body moved towards a more embodied approach: not a fixed state but rather an “ongoing process of embodying” (Totton 2010:23). Zarrilli (2006:48) states that Merleau-Ponty was at the forefront of this shift as he raised fundamental questions regarding the body’s static role in constituting experience and as a material object. He placed emphasis on the body as the site of knowing and engaging with the world. Zarrilli (2006:48) posits that:

rejecting the exclusive assumption of the natural sciences and modern psychology, which treated the physical body (*Körper*) as a thing, object, instrument, or machine under the command and control of an all-knowing mind, and thereby challenging the Cartesian *cognito*, Merleau-Ponty (re)claimed the centrality of the lived body (*Leib*) and embodied experience as the very means and medium through which the world comes into being and is experienced.

Merleau-Ponty rejected the mind-body dualism and foregrounded the centrality of the body and embodied experiences both in knowledge creation and in meaning-making processes. Merleau-Ponty in *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1962) posits that human bodies and the lived experience of these bodies deny the detachment of subject from object and mind from body (Reynolds 2001: [sp]). He expands the concept of body to allow the body to both think and perceive and coined the term ‘the lived body’. He refers to individuals as a body-subject where the body is re-conceptualised as the locus of experience (Carroll 2011:251). He states that “I am not in front of my body, I am in it or rather I am it...If we can still speak of interpretation in relation to the perception of one’s own body, we shall have to say that it interprets itself” (Merleau-Ponty 1962:150). This idea of the body interpreting itself or an

⁸ This Cartesian or dualist perspective originates from Rene Descartes, a seventeenth century philosopher, who in search for a method of thought declared the mind and body as separate entities (Edelman 1992:11). According to his view “the world consisted of *res extensa* (extended things) and *res cognitans* (thinking things)” therefore creating this dualism between the mind and the body (Edelman 1992:11).

experiencing agent in the world means that experiences are located within the body and therefore stored within it. Damasio (2012:20) substantiates this position as he acknowledges that the body is the foundation of the conscious mind and argues that human beings need a body to feel and think with. According to Damasio (2012:92) it is via body mapping⁹ that the body becomes the content of the mind process and *vice versa*. The body and the mind are woven together because the mind is all about the body and the body all about the mind. Damasio (2012:107) sums up the role of the body by positioning it as central to regulating life. This has important implications for embodiment as well as mind and body connection as everything that the mind and brain knows, it knows via the body.

Through acknowledging what the mind and brain know through the body, reveals the ‘body as process’. To understand the body as process is to take cognisance of the relationship between the brain, body and the world. Clark (1998:33) states “the brain, world and the body are locked together in the most complex of conspiracies.” It is this process or exchange through the body that supports Carroll’s (2011:254) understanding of the body as “a perceptual space, an organism, a cultural object, as the site of subjectivity, of transformation and process, and as the vehicle for all aspects of live communication.” It is this ‘body as process’ that takes cognisance of the complex interrelations between nature, culture and society. Bynum (1989:171) succinctly states “the body has a history” and it behaves in different ways at particular moments in time and needs to be understood in that way. The body is in a constant state of change and cannot be perceived as a stable entity but rather as a process. Totton (2010:21) posits “the experience of ‘having’ a body is intrinsic to human experience and a necessary component of ‘becoming’ a body”. The body is no longer seen as object or subject but rather as Budgeon (2003:50) suggest “as events that are continually in the process of becoming - as multiplicities that are never just found but are made and remade.”

If one considers the body as ‘events’, which are constantly in the process of *becoming*, this reveals the notion of the ‘body as performative’. Waskul and Vannini (2006:2) state “the body is always performed, staged, and presented; the theatres of the body are the raw materials by which the ritual dramas of our everyday embodied life are produced.” The

⁹Damasio (2012:63) defines this body mapping in the brain “when the brain makes maps, it *informs* itself. The information contained in the maps can be used nonconsciously to guide motor behaviour efficaciously, a most desirable consequence considering that survival depends on taking the right action.”

performative body is entrenched in social practices where the body is not something humans ‘have’ but rather something humans actively ‘become’ or ‘do’. Turner (1984:24) argues that the “human body has to be constantly and systematically produced, sustained, and presented in everyday life and therefore the body is best regarded as a potentiality which is realized and actualized through a variety of social regulated activities or practices”.

In conceptualising the body, in relation to this research, it becomes fundamental to understand that individuals concurrently *have* a body, *are* a body and *become* a body. The body becomes a living text that is constantly being written and inscribed by ways of being and engaging with one’s surroundings. It is this embodied way of being or embodied text that is investigated as the primary mode of expression through physical theatre. It is therefore necessary to discuss the notion of embodiment.

2.1.2 Embodiment

Embodiment positions the body as an active and engaged agent in shaping the relationship between themselves and the world (Kriegar 2005: 350). As such, an embodied way of being or embodiment refers to the interaction of the mind and body and how this facilitates engagement with the environment (Totton 2010:23). This embodied interaction with the world is how people come to understand themselves and generate meaning and understanding about themselves in, and about, the world - through the body. Featherstone and Turner (1995:2) suggest that significant amounts of literature address the importance of embodiment and the body as fundamental in the humanities and social science fields; for example, “embodiment is, by definition, a multilevel phenomenon, as it necessarily entails the interplay between bodies, components of bodies, and the world(s) in which the bodies live” (Kriegar 2005: 351). Furthermore, embodiment situates the body as a ‘lived experience’ that exists in a network of connections whereby sociality, history, culture and corporeality inform and mediate one another (Coetzee & Munro 2007:103).

Carroll (2011:255) speaks about how embodiment has recently been referred to as a process rather than a state; she uses a pertinent metaphor to elaborate on this idea of the “witnessing aspect of the mind rhythmically leaping like a dolphin above the sea of the body”. To her this metaphor demonstrates the intricate way in which a healthy mind shifts between observing and immersing itself in its experiential field. Even of more interest is the communication between mind and body that the metaphor speaks to, which are crucial to understandings in embodiment. This communication between mind and body is consistent with Blakeslee and

Blakeslee (2008:3) and Damasio's (2012:70) understanding of the mind where the body and mind interact constantly, using a flexible network of body maps that exist in the brain allowing interaction with the environment. Damasio (2012:70) defines the mind as "a spectacular consequence of the brain's incessant and dynamic mapping". These images or "mapped patterns constitute what we, conscious creatures, have come to know as sights, sounds, touches, smells, tastes, pain, pleasures, and the like" (Damasio 2012:70). This description of body mapping within the brain supports Carroll's (2011:225) metaphor of the process of embodiment revealing the complex communication between mind and body inherent in her metaphor. This complex communication positions the body as a moving entity and links to Shaw's (2003:33) description of embodiment as "a dynamic concept where the body is not rigid or unmoving, but a fluid entity which is inscribed with individual as well as cultural meaning". In order to understand this process of embodiment cognisance of the fluid, organic interchange it entails needs to be considered.

This organic interchange is evident in Barbour's (2011:69) discussion of embodiment which recognises individual differences:

I use the term 'embodiment' holistically to avoid the tendency to re-inscribe this biological /cultural distinction. I developed my articulation of embodiment as simultaneously and holistically cultural, biological, spiritual, artistic, intellectual and emotional, with recognition of difference in terms of race, gender, sexuality, ability, history, experience and environment.

In consideration of the above quote this embodied way of knowing or embodiment takes into account the importance and influence of 'who' a person is and values individual experiential ways of knowing. Barbour (2011:95) states "we individuals, using an embodied way of knowing, attempt to understand knowledge as constructed or created rather than existing as independent truths 'out there in the world' and, more importantly, as embodied, experienced and lived". Barbour (2011:69-95) highlights various ways of knowing, taking cognisance of the biological and cultural influences that impact on individuals and their difference in terms of gender, race and experience. She highlights the 'lived experience' of an individual, which is pivotal in understanding embodiment. In order to optimally engage with the notion of embodiment, I will address the notion of the 'lived experience', relating human experience from the inside out.

Phenomenological research¹⁰ describes this ‘lived experience’ of the body as central to being and knowing in the world (Cancienne & Snowber 2003:238). Brew (1998:39) states that research into the lived experience is a “process of deepening and extending the quality of our coming to know; a process of changing the way we understand the phenomena of our experience.” This re-conceptualisation of the human experience refers to what Winnicott (1966:516) called “in-dwelling”: requiring “active sensing of bodily sensation, impulse and affect; it implies a sense of ownership of one’s body and feelings, and a capacity for intersubjectivity” (Carroll 2011:251).

Embodiment as a concept, ties directly to subjectivity and identity of an individual. Sparkes (1999:19) discusses how individuals claim their identities through constructing past events and actions in personal narratives (personal narratives refer to the types of stories individuals tell to make sense of, and be an agent in, their lives). Kriegar (2005:350) argues that embodiment as a lived experience develops three critical claims:

bodies tell stories about - and cannot be studied divorced from - the conditions of our existence; bodies tell stories that often - but not always - match people’s stated accounts; and bodies tell stories that people cannot or will not tell, either because they are unable, forbidden, or choose not to tell.

The body is imprinted with stories that speak to the situation it exists in. Sparkes (1999:26) argues that one’s body is intertwined with stories of our individual lives from the environment the body exists in. In acknowledging that the stories of the body can’t be studied without cognisance of being in the world speaks to the embodied nature and ways of being and interacting in the world of all humans. Carroll (2011:254) states ‘the body’ on its own is meaningless and emphasises the “social cultural intersubjective field” that needs to be considered in understanding the stories of the body and its location within the world. This acknowledgement of the social and cultural through the subjective experience of the body posits the stories of the body as inseparable from the world in which it exists. Middelow (2013:11) states “the body is central to our participation and perception in and of the world around us. It is in and through the body that our experiences are shaped and given voice (physical and languaged), and vice versa”.

¹⁰ Phenomenological research is not concerned with explaining the world but rather in unfolding the ways in which humans experience the world (Cancienne & Snowber 2003:238). Grosz (1994:86) posits that phenomenological research places individuals as separate from the world but that as an individual one has knowledge of the body only by living through it.

In positioning the body as central to one's perception of the world highlights the subjectivity of experiences and furthers Kriegar's (2005:350) earlier claim. It is a result of embodiment that crucial information about the conditions of people's lives is discerned from their bodies. Sparkes (1999:20) discusses how stories people tell about their lives cannot be seen as clear reflections of their actual experience as people resort to a "mode of telling" that is familiar to them or as Blakeslee and Blakeslee (2008:41) offer "perception is an active construct". Sparkes (1999:20) states "in the very act of telling people engage in creating and constructing certain kinds of self in specific social contexts." Stories that people recount are then both personal and social simultaneously. Kriegar (2005:350) offers that through considering embodied stories it is possible to overcome what people are able or willing to retell, dead or alive. This acknowledges the claim "bodies tell stories that people cannot or will not tell, either because they are unable, forbidden, or choose not to tell" (Kriegar 2005:350). Embodiment allows one to consider the stories of the body in conjunction with those "recounted - or hidden or denied - by individuals" (Kriegar 2005:350). The stories bodies tell that do not match people's accounts, Kriegar (2005:350) contributes to socially accepted responses individuals feel are appropriate or fear related responses verses embodied information. These narratives are thus mediated.

These subjective experiences or stories of the body tie directly to embodiment. The model of embodiment that Menary (2008:75) draws upon offers that the embodied self is first and foremost to any constructed narrative. Initially there are experiences in and of the living body and those experiences are converted into a narrative: "the unity of the self is anchored in our embodiment - our experiences are embodied ones". Kriegar (2005:325) reiterates that:

our use of language, consumption of food, sexual practices and identities, types of recreation, use of psychoactive substances, use and experience of violence, and our experience of emotion: all of these are contingent upon and affect bodily practices, in ways that vary by social conventions and economic resources.

Experiences are embodied entities that are converted into stories of the body or narrative: "the self is, at least in part, a body and therefore minimally, to be a self, a person, is to be a subject of bodily experiences" (Menary 2008:79). It is not narratives that form experiences but more precisely it is experiences that construct narratives. This embodied way of being or process of embodiment focuses on the lived experience of the body, where experiences begin to construct personal narratives.

2.3. Narrative

To discuss the concept of narrative, I consider that it is a vast term with diverse interpretations. Bresler (2006:21) suggests narrative is often interpreted as discourse but most commonly narrative is associated with personal meaning. Relevant to this research is the definition of narrative as story. Rimmon-Kenan (2003:3) defines ‘story’ as a succession of events it “designates the narrated events, abstracted from their disposition in the text and reconstructed in their chronological order, together with the participants in these events”. Given that perspective Bresler (2006:22) offers that all forms of artistic expression (including dance), generate a narrative or story where a view of the world or of oneself is expressed through highlighting what is important to the individual. She states that these artistic expressions highlight a moment when the observer is invited to attend to the “arc of a narrative” (Bresler 2006:22). This “arc of the narrative” suggests what Egan and Ling (2002:96) state are “tools for orienting our emotions”. By orientating one’s emotions there is a personal connection that will allow “perceptions, conceptualisation, and meaning making” (Bresler 2006:22). This then refers to her conceptualisation of narrative as “an act of coming to understand the world empathetically, exploring and negotiating polysemic meanings”. Narrative is thus a concept indicative of how individuals subjectively experience the world through embodied understandings, interactions, engagements and relationships: a personal narrative. Richardson (1998:356) discusses narratives of the self as “highly personalised, revealing text in which an author tells stories about his or her own lived experience...using dramatic recall, strong metaphors, images, characters, unusual phrasings, pun, subtexts, and allusions”.

Hardy (1968:5) argues that “narrative, like lyric or dance, is not to be regarded as an aesthetic invention used by artists to control, manipulate, and order experience, but as a primary act of mind transferred to art from life”.¹¹ Hardy illustrates that it is experiences from life, those ‘lived experiences’ that artists use as the source to create narratives or art. It could then be argued that to investigate the ways humans experience the world is the study of narrative: “in order really to live, we make up stories about ourselves and others, about the personal as well as the social past and future” (Hardy 1968:5). To embody narrative is to reflect a life experienced, whether in reality or on stage.

¹¹ Hardy (1968:5) is utilised in the argument as it was an important Forum on Fiction at Brown University that had implications for the redefining of what narrative was or as he called it “towards a poetics of fiction: an approach through narrative”.

The importance of narrative in this research is around the lived, multi-sensory aspects of narrative and the embodied ways of knowing in the creation of embodied narratives. Bresler (2006:23) suggests that narrative inquiry in the social sciences is found in “auditory, kinesthetic, and aesthetic sensitivities, and embedded in the lived experience of constructing and attending to narratives.” This notion of the embodied narrative is asking for communication and meaning to be generated through bodies in time and space. Bresler (2006:25) states “an embodied narrative... is based on connection: connection between the narrator and his/her story.” This connection, in relation to this research, is crucial to embodied narratives.

2.4 Embodied narratives

An embodied narrative is constructed from the various elements discussed above: the socially constructed body, an embodied way of being, embodiment and the concept of narrative. The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how these various concepts interlink to create the construct of embodied narrative. It is important to take cognisance of the role that the body plays in the embodied narrative. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, individuals concurrently *have* a body, *are* a body and *become* a body and it is this ‘body’ that has the potential to become a living text that is inscribed by ways of being in the world. This process of embodiment or the ‘lived experience’ of the body allows for experiences to construct personal narratives. It is these personal narratives that could create the impetus for the creation of embodied narratives in physical theatre and dance.

Chappell (2008:160) states movement and “dance is fundamentally about creating an ‘embodied narrative’ in which the dynamics of the physical human form communicates meaning”. This suggests the physical form or the moving body is the medium for communication and expression in an embodied narrative. She attempts to unfold the intuitive nature of this encounter and suggests it occurs through knowing via lived bodies rather than textual encounters (Chappell 2008:160). It is through the body that the embodied narrative is expressed and experienced. Cancienne and Snowber (2003:242) pre-empt this idea by positing “bodies are contours of our emotions”. Beyond the agency of the body as discussed earlier on, the body is thus also embodying emotions. Young (1994:7) argues that emotions are transferred from the body and enter into other bodies. Meaning and emotion are thus shared through embodiment. Damasio (2012:109) acknowledges this and posits that an emotion is a result of motion or a reaction in the body when something happens to us:

emotions are complex, large automated programs of *actions* concocted by evolution. The actions are complemented by a *cognitive* program that include certain ideas and modes of cognition, but the world of emotions is largely one of actions carried out in our bodies, from facial expressions and postures to changes in viscera and internal milieu.

Thus emotions share a connection between the body and mind and are characterised by actions carried out and through the body. When generating embodied meanings/emotions it is vital not to be restricted by an understanding of narrative as a linear construct demonstrating unity of space, time and action (Chappell 2008:161). Chappell (2008:161) illustrates the possibility that a narrative may exist in dance that is not a logical progression of events but rather a narrative that “communicates a complex felt idea”- a complex embodied narrative. In dance, the embodied narratives are also intertwined with the choreographer’s “attitudes, preferences, emphases, interests” (Preston-Dunlop 1998:14). Although the dance may not be logical; “meaning is generated from this combination of different embodied narratives, attitudes, preferences, emphases and interests emerges, and is felt but is quite often difficult or impossible to put into words” (Chappell 2008:167). This is further expanded on by Chappell (2008:166) who explains that “although dance communicates the choreographer’s ideas, it also contains layers of meaning created by the participants in the event, including the performers... It is not a simple case of sending out a clear message to be received by one and all”. It is a tapestry or a web of connections.

To understand the notion of embodied narratives evident in dance and choreography one can draw from discussions of embodied writings as they share similar traits. Anderson (2001:83) discusses embodied writing as a means to reveal the lived experience of the body and introduced in research to describe human experiences more “closely to how they are truly lived”. Embodied writing brings the nuanced experience of the body to the art of writing “relaying human experience from the inside out and entwining in words our senses with the sense of the world, embodied writing affirms human life as embedded in the sensual world in which we live our lives” (Anderson 2001:84).

There seems to be a correlation between embodied writing and creating a dance or choreography in the process of physical theatre. Theodore (2003:36) states “to choreograph is to write a dance into space” or in other words to “write is to choreograph oneself on the page”. Thus creating a dance or choreography can be thought of as a form of writing. I argue that Anderson’s (2001:84) discussion of embodied writing can then be seen as a discussion on embodied choreography or choreography where an embodied narrative is generated.

Anderson (2001:84) discusses how embodied writing, or now embodied choreography, seeks to portray a “finely textured experience of the body” to invite the observer to encounter the narrative through a form of “sympathetic resonance”. The written text or choreography allows the observer to fully experience the narrative the “perceptual, visceral, sensori-motor, kinaesthetic, and imagined senses are invited to come alive to the images as though the experience were their own, akin to the way we might read fine poetry or prose” (Anderson 2001:84). Anderson (2001:84) then states that embodied writing or embodied choreography lets “the body speak”. This notion of the body speaking, through the choreographed text, is then what creates this sympathetic resonance in the observer. The ‘speaking body’ is a pertinent metaphor for embodied narratives where information is generated from the body through physical theatre as the form of expression.

This idea of the ‘speaking body’ suggests that it is an internal experience expressed through the body and that is how the narrative is generated. However it is important to take cognisance of how both internal and external influences play a role in the creation of an embodied narrative. Anderson (2001:88) discuss this feature of embodied writing that is applicable to choreography in its inclusion of both internal and external data in portraying experiences “internal (imagined, perceptual, kinaesthetic, and visceral data) known only by the experiencer and external sources (sometimes observable to others, but not always, such as sensori-motor reactions and context) of information”. It is through the combination of the internal and external data that the various layers of the embodied narrative are created, generating this ‘felt’ idea. Anderson (2001:89) continues to explain that the work is written specifically from the “inside out” and in choreography the body then speaks for itself from the inside out and “the body’s perceptual matrix guides the words [movements], impulse by impulse, sensation by sensation.” It is this sense of being present in each moment that is crucial to the unfolding of the embodied narrative.

Even though choreography, for me, can be seen as a form of writing, there is significant amount of literature on dance and physical theatre that illustrates that it is a challenge to put into words these complex embodied narratives generated through the body. It is the similar characteristics of embodied writing that echo with embodied choreography that are important in this research. It is the experience and the expression through the body that contributes to the generation of an embodied narrative where a sense of presence in each moment is suggested. An embodied narrative is generated in dance that portrays an experience of the body where the body ‘speaks’ and through this a narrative is generated.

2.5 Constructing and creating an embodied narrative

Not all choreographic processes will lead to constructing an embodied narrative. It is the process or approach that the choreographer uses that provides the potential for an embodied narrative to emerge. Barbour (2011:97) highlights seven general guidelines for art practitioners to refer to when engaging in embodied ways of knowing. She acknowledges their flexibility and leaves space for individual interpretation where a dialogue is possible. The seven guidelines Barbour (2011:97) suggests are: acknowledge, engage, play, learn from life, look again, be flexible and proceed. These guidelines could provide an approach for the choreographer during the choreographic process when choreographing an embodied narrative. She speaks about acknowledging the potential for anything to happen within the choreographic process and one must be open to various possibilities. An important element for Barbour (2011:97) is engaging in collaboration. It is through collaboration that a sense of play is important as the choreographer and performers begin to improvise with new ideas and questions. In collaboration, life experiences are drawn upon and one can look again through “trial and error, recognise, rehearse, redefine, re-create and reflect on themes, patterns, combinations and relationships” (Barbour 2011:97).

These seven guidelines provide a useful approach for the choreographer generating an embodied narrative through the body, in the practice of physical theatre or dance. It could provide the choreographer with guidelines for the choreographic process and an approach to working using the body as the medium of expression. The approach to create these embodied narratives needs to be investigated. One approach is improvisation which could generate narratives of and in the body. Kloppenberg (2010:199) discusses how improvisation cultivates “an embodied presence that is fresh, prepared, attentive, lively, receptive, responsive, and responsible”. It is a quality that performers and choreographers can sense, see and feel. This idea of ‘sensing’ and ‘feeling’ is at the heart of the discussion of embodied narratives. The reason is that the performers draw from their own perceptions or realities making the emerging narrative more personal and unique but at the same time universal. This ‘sensing’ and ‘feeling’ provides a continuous underlying current for the embodied self which should always be present when expressing or generating an embodied narrative. They use the metaphor of a ‘mandala’¹² for the body maps within the brain and it is this pattern that creates

¹² According to Blakeslee and Blakeslee (2008:13) a mandala is a “geometric pattern of images that symbolically maps out the universe from a human perspective”. They use this metaphor for the brain's complex networks of body maps. They state “following this analogy, the peripheral figures of the body mandala are your

the individual embodied self (Blakeslee & Blakeslee 2008:12). This embodied self deliberately engaging the various senses is echoed by Damasio (2012:109) as he suggests ‘feeling’ is a perception of mind/body being. Damasio (2012:109-110) argues that feelings of emotion is the individual’s subjective perceptions of what happens in the body and mind when experiencing an emotion. He refers to fundamental *primordial feeling* that is the foundation of a sense of being and subjectivity in the world (Damasio 2012:185). This sense of being and subjectivity in the world is directly linked to embodiment that produces the narratives of/for the body. The choreographer has to be able to access or draw from the primordial feelings in the body, in the choreographic process, as they can assist in the construction of an embodied narrative as they are the base of their individual experience.

This ‘sensing’ and ‘feeling’ crucial to embodied narratives that dance can generate refers to what Gendlin and Olsen (1970:221) call “inner sensing”. Victoria (2012:170) explains this ‘inner sensing’ as “opening awareness to the felt sense, or focusing of attention on internal body sensation and emotional state”. This has implications for the process of choreography or movement generation when creating embodied narratives. In order to generate an embodied narrative the choreographer needs to create emotionally motivated movement material. Victoria (2012:170) defines emotionally motivated movement material as “a movement sequence or series of sequences, also called movement phrases, which are generated from inner sensing, movement metaphor and expression of emotion that can be solidified into choreography”. This emotionally motivated movement material has the potential to express aspects of the inner experience thus focusing on the individual’s embodiment and subjectivity in the world.

These perceived experiences that are ‘felt’ and ‘sensed’ by the choreographer and performer points to exciting work in cognitive neuroscience that has shown that viewing movement triggers “mirror neurons” in the brain that produce emotional responses (Hagendoorn 2003:24). Kloppenber (2010:199) calls this “physical electricity”. Hagendoorn (2003:19) in his article “The Dancing Brain” describes his experience where an embodied narrative was at play “my thoughts seemed to have been translated into movement. What happened on stage seemed an embodiment of how my thoughts moved, connected, and organised themselves.” Hagendoorn (2003:24) explains that these “mirror neurons” could be a neural bridge between

many cortical body maps, the large and the small, all intricately interconnected. The central figure is their composite product: the seamless sense of a whole, indivisible, embodied self” (Blakeslee & Blakeslee: 2008: 13).

the action and the perception of that action: thus activating the body/mind of the performer/choreographer in an embodied narrative. This knowledge can assist the choreographer in constructing an embodied narrative as the choreographer needs to ‘feel’ and ‘sense’ the movement executed by the performers, there needs to be “physical electricity”. Blakeslee and Blakeslee (2008:166) describe these mirror neurons as a body map that creates a simulation of what other people’s body maps are doing. Mirror neurons allow humans to experience what other minds are experiencing. This interaction has implication for the performer and choreographer where the performers could become “moving metaphors” (Victoria 2012:169) of the choreographers inner emotional state or what the choreographer is portraying. Victoria (2012:169) defines movement metaphor as a way to express one’s inner feelings through embodied movement. The performers then bring their own lived experience to bare as a reaction to the impulse provided by the choreographer.

These so called “mirror neurons” have become an object of extreme debate and research. With regards to this specific research on embodied narratives, it could provide the explanation between how the embodied narrative is experienced through and within bodies. This “physical electricity” triggered by movements or an embodied narrative is literally ‘felt’ and sensed through the observer/ or choreographer from these “mirror-neurons”. As Hagendoorn (2003:34) elucidates if you are moving or observing movement “even when your limbs do not move, your brain will dance”. This ‘dancing brain’ can be seen as the direct result of an embodied narrative.

Dance and physical theatre where an embodied narrative is evident, can be described as a ‘felt’ experience with sympathetic resonance, felt through the senses and shared through embodied narratives. Understanding embodied narratives is an understanding from ‘within’, through the body, in an embodied way. Embodiment supports human life as entrenched in the sensory world in which lives are lived. It is through embodied narratives that humans can truly ‘see’ and understand human experiences and interaction, their world and themselves. In terms of this specific research documenting an emerging choreographic signature, the body becomes the site on/from/ through which these narratives are re-interpreted, and embodied, in physical theatre. My interest in embodiment and embodied narratives stems from my own life experiences as a dancer and choreographer where I find my body based understandings to be a place from which I can express through the body, in movement, in a physical theatre work. I always attempt to facilitate embodiment in my performers so that their ‘lived experience’ can be utilised when generating an embodied narrative. It is from my perspective important to

indicate that embodiment has to do with a deliberate and mindful awareness of physical responses - as a choreographer you are not asking the performers to make ‘empty shapes/forms’ with their bodies without any personal investment. It becomes necessary at this point to generate a clear conceptualisation or a researcher’s perspective on the characteristics of an embodied narrative. This will provide me with the key characteristics of embodied narratives that can be identified in my choreographic works. Through doing this my emerging choreographic signature can be defined.

2.6 The characteristics of embodied narratives

In order to generate an embodied narrative in the medium of physical theatre the body is viewed as being socially constructed (see 2.2) and the body’s “lived experience” is an intertwining of its sociality, history and the environment in which it exists. The body becomes layered with experiences creating a ‘living text’. This organic interchange speaks to a clear characteristic of the embodied narrative of the connection between the body and the mind where they are intertwined as the mind is all about the body thus a bodymind (Damasio 2012:107). This connection enables an embodied way of being in the world which facilitates engagement with the environment (Totton 2010:23) as an embodied way of being values individual experiential ways of knowing (Snowber 2012:53). This way of knowing is how the embodied narrative is generated through the physical form communicating a ‘felt’ resonance. Expression in/through/with/on the body is generated through the embodied narrative and is a ‘felt’ idea which is sensed. The embodied narrative is not a linear progression but rather a complex, multi - layered narrative that is intertwined with the performers and choreographers personal views, attitudes, interests and movement preferences (Chappell 2008:167) allowing the ‘body to speak’ (Anderson 2001:88). It is the scope and nature of the choreographic process that allows for an embodied narrative to be generated. It is how the above mentioned concepts interlink that creates the construct embodied narrative.

- the body is viewed as socially constructed
- it is generated by an embodied way of being
- it values individual experiential ways of knowing
- the physical form communicates meaning, the body is the medium of expression
- it communicates a ‘felt’ idea, ‘sensing’ and ‘feeling’ are crucial
- it is not restricted to a linear understanding of narrative

- it is intertwined with the performers and choreographers personal views, interests and movement preferences
- it contains layers of meaning, it is not one dimensional
- it allows the ‘body to speak’
- it is dependent on the choreographers approach and choreographic process

It is important to define the choreographic process as it is the specific focus or approach within that process, by the choreographer, that allows for the generation of an embodied narrative.

2.7 Choreographing the embodied narrative

In this research the choreographic process is conceptualised as the process of creating an embodied narrative through mapping bodies in time and space where movement is the primary medium of expression with the aim to communicate. Although choreography *per se* is not the focus of my research, it is necessary to briefly and broadly explain my understanding of choreography and my choreographic process to better frame my discussion of my emerging choreographic signature. My understanding of choreographic processes is strongly shaped by my training; studies and my work with the First Physical Theatre Company (see Chapter 1). Gordon views the choreographic process for physical theatre as an eclectic experience where a “visual, aural, sensual, conceptual, motional and e-motional landscape is created through the collaborative interplay of dance, movement, mime, acting, design, music, props and lighting (Finestone 1997:61). An important part of the choreographic process is generating a specific movement vocabulary for the work. Through generating a selected movement vocabulary that is structured into movement phrases, the use of choreographic devices, scenic devices and utilising selected source material (amongst others), a physical theatre work is created. Choreographer Anna Halprin (1969:50) discusses the nature of a choreographic process and suggests that technical skills of craftsmanship can be learned but warns that these must not become formulas that hinder the unknown element of the process. Klein’s (2007:1082) definition of choreography is a “creative act of setting the conditions for things to happen, the choreographer as the navigator, negotiator and architect of a fluid environment that he/she himself, herself is part of”. The choreographer is the facilitator of the choreographic process and it is the specific approach or the specific tasks utilised within the process that will allow for the generation of an embodied narrative.

Bannerman (2010:474) and Autard (2010:123) speak about a lack of literature by choreographers on their processes and credit this to the fact that choreography is already seen as a form of inscription or writing. They suggest more is written on the creative process of an art work but less that relates specifically to choreographic processes. Autard (2010:124) discusses the unique elements of the choreographic process: the choreographer interacts with performers and each performer thinks and responds in a unique way due to their own 'lived experience'. Thus each choreographic process will provide a unique situation. The performers contribute to the process and influence the shape and form. Roche (2011:105) speaks about dancers as "a fluid and mutable body-in-flux with the creative potential to significantly influence the outcome of the choreographic process". This approach by the choreographer challenges traditional relationships between performer and choreographer as the choreographer relies on the performers 'lived experience' as a contributing factor.

Another defining feature of the choreographic process that Autard (2010:124) speaks about is the ephemeral nature of movement and performance. The performance of a work disappears the minute after it is performed and thus resides in the memory of the choreographer and the performer. Finestone (2011:117) posits the idea of presence and absence through the body and suggests it is one of the defining moments of the choreographic process. Finestone (2011:130) states "the choreographic process, in its evolving path from concept to concert, echoes the mysterious alchemy of the dream, performing its presence in a series of disappearances." This evolving path from concept to conception is the journey of the choreographic process. The choreographic process is not a linear event but rather an intertwined, interactive process. Snowber (2012:57) describes the choreographic process as one of shaping, probing, sifting, making and remaking. This making and remaking is a place of unearthing where various possibilities exist.

The act of discovery in the choreographic process of an embodied narrative is not formulaic but to unpack it, one can consider some of the processes that occur. Lavender (2009:72) discusses the choreographic process and states there are four creative operations of dance making. She uses the acronym of IDEA: improvisation, development, evaluation and assimilation. She suggests this acronym is a map of the processes the choreographer goes through during the choreographic process and to acknowledge this helps choreographers identify their choreographic signature and approaches. I will refer to each of Lavender's acronym IDEA below.

Improvisation is an important element in the process towards generating an embodied narrative. Meekums (1993:132) states:

the substance from which the dance emerges is a product of the dancer and choreographer's improvisations, their openness and receptivity as they play with images and ideas, the limitations of their bodies including their flexibility and their expanding movement vocabulary, the style of the choreographer and the choreographers willingness to subtly play with conscious, active decision-making whilst remaining open to possibilities.

It is this sense of being open to possibilities during the choreographic process that maps the way for the embodied narrative to emerge. Through utilising improvisation dance educator Snowber (2002:23) utilises the concept of 'body narrative'. She suggests the necessity of utilising the body as a source material. Snowber (2002:23) has combined the art of autobiographical narrative and dance, developing a choreographic process called "body narratives". Through using improvisation, she performs personal narratives of her life as a way of creating material. This is allowing the 'body to speak' and it is through improvisation that this is achieved. The use of improvisation in the choreographic process allows the choreographer access to movement potentials that would be hard to create cognitively. Carter (2000:182) discusses the reason for improvisation:

there is the hope that one will discover something that could not be found in a systematic preconceived process. Improvisation is thus a means of assuring a constant source of fresh materials and avoiding stagnation. Moreover improvisation invites examining a situation from various angles that can be invented in the very process of creation.

By using improvisation with the performers and through setting various tasks a range of possibilities is available to be discovered as the 'lived experience' of each performer is part of the choreographic process. Once the movement material has been generated through improvisation one considers Lavender's (2009:72) second creative operation 'development'. In order to develop the movement material knowledge of the craft is necessary or as Autard (2010:8) refers to as the construction stage. This is the stage where the process of composing is applied. Autard (2010:73) discusses eight methods of construction the choreographer utilises in order to develop the choreographic work: motif, repetition, variations and contrasts, climax, proportions and balance, transition, logical development and unity. The choreographer needs to have an understanding of choreographic devices and methods of construction in order to develop the work. These choreographic devices speak to the process

of composing where the material is shaped and developed (Predock-Linnell & Predock Linnell 2010:195).

If one considers Lavender's (2009:72) third creative operation 'evaluation' this speaks to the process the choreographer goes through in evaluating the composition and its performance. Autard (2010:138) suggests evaluation in the choreographic process is crucial from the initial improvisations to the final product. This speaks to Predock-Linnell and Predock Linnell (2010:195) concept of critical consciousness where they emphasise the critical nature of choreography. In order to make a choreographic work, one must constantly make aesthetic decisions that form the work, reflect on decisions and creative work, as well as through creative work. Predock-Linnell and Predock Linnell (2010:195) suggest dance making (and in my view physical theatre making) is simply three things combined: improvising, composing and criticising. It is this critical awareness that plays a role in the development of the work.

Lavender's fourth creative operation 'assimilation' refers to the integration of all the choreographic elements in the work. It is the choices the choreographer makes in combining the elements or as Chappell (2008:169) refers to as the "aesthetic glue"¹³ of the choreographic work. Autard (2010:124) discusses the uniqueness of the choreographic process as it utilises other art forms or mediums specifically music. It is the assimilation of the various elements or specifically the music and movement that reveals the choreographic signature.

It is not only the approach of the choreographer in the choreographic process that enables an embodied narrative to be generated but how the choreographer communicates with the performers.

2.8 Communicative devices in the choreographic process

Kirsch (2009:189) states "when creating a dance in the contemporary tradition, choreographers communicate with their dancers in diverse physical ways" and he refers to these as 'communicative devices'. It is necessary to briefly mention some key communicative devices that I use when working with the performers in the construction of an embodied narrative. Kirsch (2009:189) discusses the obvious modes of talking, gesturing, and using the body or moving to a position in space in relation to other people. I find myself in the process

¹³ The idea of "aesthetic glue" is tangentially mentioned in Chapter 1.

demonstrating or trying to use as many modes of communication as possible in order for the performers to gather as much information. A lot of time outside the rehearsal space is spent communicating with the performers as to what I envisage the work to be like, what is the feeling I want them to feel: the sensory experience. I am open in rehearsals about my ‘lived experience’ so that they can have a sense of kinetic and emotional empathy or connection with my experiences and their own to use in the work.

Kirsch (2009:190) discusses the non-obvious communicative mechanisms of touch and sound that is common to choreographic processes where an embodied narrative is generated. In the choreographic process, I utilise touch with the performers as it functions as an effective mode of communication and allows a connection between my body and the performer’s bodies. I find myself holding different parts of their bodies in order to help them initiate the movement from a certain part. By holding, propelling and shifting their bodies with touch, I am able to communicate with them the dynamics of the movement I am investigating. Kirsch (2009:190) speaks about the sounds choreographer’s make calling them ‘sonifications’ or vocalisations and how these help to communicate “the shape, emphasis or dynamics of the phrase” (Kirsch 2009:190). I am constantly calling out the dynamics of the movement phrase I am working with by “daaar am, boom, da, taaaaaa”. This allows me to communicate through sonifications and create the dynamics of the phrase. Within the choreographic process these sonifications become a ‘language’ that the performers begin to understand and embody through their bodies.

2.9 Methods of instruction in the choreographic process

Kirsch (2009:192) speaks about a successful choreographer who anonymously elucidates on his choreographic process highlighting the results of setting a choreographic task:

by assigning the dancers problems to solve they stretch their repertoire more effectively- they discover new ways of moving themselves; he, the choreographer, has the opportunity to see new things that the dancer can do, and therefore, he may use those dancers differently in the future or ‘make-on’ them differently; he believed that if a movement originated as a solution to a problem, the dancers are likely to imbue it with greater intentionality; they will find the phrase easier to remember; and they will have intellectual ‘anchors’ that can serve as reference points in the phrase later.

I find that the tasks I set for the performers allows them to discover new ways of moving that they were not aware of as they are focused on solving the task rather than generating original

movement. These intellectual ‘anchors’ function in my work as the performers are aware of the source or what the phrase originated from and that stays with them as they execute the movement. The interesting thing about setting tasks for the performers is that each one has their own interpretation to the task drawing on their own embodied narratives which allows me a variety of options and perspectives to work with. The main reason I use tasks is it allows me to see possibilities I would not have been able to think of cognitively without the specific task. It seems to be a way to move from source material to movement as Kirsch (2011:1) indicates the performers think with their bodies and this deliberate process can be referred to embodied cognition.

Kirsch (2011:1) discusses embodied cognition in the context of contemporary choreography and how it provides an understanding into creative processes that rely on utilising the power of the sensory systems. He furthers this by saying when dancers are trying to create new movements they use their bodies as a “cognitive medium”. This situates the body as vital and the forefront of movement generation. Kirsch (2011:3) discusses how both choreographer and dancer “rely on imagery in the visual, somato-sensory, tactile, and motor systems to create novel movement”. This generation of novel or a personal movement language through various methods of instruction could allow for a personal movement language to emerge.

2.10 Personal movement style

Roche (2011:111) proposes a ‘moving identity’, which she refers to as the contemporary dancer’s ‘way of moving’ which could be perceived as the combination of a variety of influences including training influences, choreographic movement traces and bodily structure. Crucial to this ‘moving identity’ in relation to creating an embodied narrative is the individuals ‘lived experience’. Roche (2011:111) further defines this ‘moving identity’ as that “which holds traces of past embodiments that are also available to the dancer to be re-embodied...and highlights the underlying sense of consistency in how the dancer moves and could be regarded as the movement signature that the dancer forms throughout a career path” which is a direct result of their ‘lived experience’. This is relevant to this research as this ‘moving identity’ or what Blom and Chaplin (1982:136) refer to as ‘movement style’ is a clear influence and trace in my work and of my choreographic signature. The ‘moving identity’ also refers to the “social and psychological realms of the dancer’s experiential terrain, creating potentialities for the dancer to interrogate her practice through revealing personal narratives.” Considering my own ‘moving identity’ is relevant to this research as it

plays a role in the ‘aesthetic glue’ or choreographic environment created in my work. I have a specific way of moving that has been influenced by my ‘lived experience’, training and by the choreographers and teachers that I have worked with.

Defining my ‘moving identity’ one needs to consider the approach to which I was taught movement and choreography by the specific practitioners. Throughout my Dramatic Arts Degree, at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, three key practitioners were influential to my choreographic signature and ‘moving identity’: Professor Gary Gordon, Juanita Finestone-Praeg and Andrew Buckland. Professor Gordon, head of the Drama Department during my degree, fostered an atmosphere of investigation, collaboration and creative research in the department through his teachings of physical theatre and choreography. Gordon (1994:11) explains that “physical theatre by its nature requires the collaboration of creative and performing artists. It cannot function solely on the endeavours of one artist. Physical theatre is made by artists working as a collective”. Finestone’s expressive, visceral and strong emotional teachings are connected strongly with body memory and presence and how the body is the site of investigation. I was influenced heavily by her emphasis on a strong emotional connection with the body in performance. Andrew Buckland’s focus is on mime technique and new mime which had a clear influence on my ‘moving identity’. The body was emphasised as generating a narrative where a strong focus on still points and gestures was highlighted. The idea that the body could generate a narrative was the focus of my investigation under Buckland, thus the connection to the notion of embodied narratives. All of these elements contributed to my ‘moving identity’ that was fostered and nurtured under these inspirational teachers. They enabled me to investigate the movement qualities that are my preferences and develop myself physically, emotionally and conceptually fostering my development as a thinking performer.

My ‘moving identity’ unpacks an element of my emerging choreographic signature as it is drawn from my ‘lived experience’ and forms my movement signature (Roche 2011:11). By unpacking the choreographic process and illustrating the potential for the creation of an embodied narrative through my various communicative devices and methods of instruction, I unfold another layer in my choreographic signature. To understand the choreographic signature in depth I now discuss each of my previous works and provide a detailed description of the choreographic processes involved in the generation of the embodied narrative.

CHAPTER 3: MAPPING MY CHOREOGRAPHIC SIGNATURE

In the previous chapter, I discussed the scholarly survey of embodied narratives and the choreographic process with my communicative devices, methods of instruction and my ‘moving identity. I examined the mode of choreographic expression that I utilise to reinterpret source material and translate into an embodied narrative. I now trace, define and discuss the choreographic processes of *One-way*, *As night falls* and *Chasing* to identify strands in the emerging choreographic signature that I will discuss in Chapter 4. Information provided in this chapter forms the bedrock of sub-aim 2 and feeds into phase 1(b) and 2(a).

My aim is to articulate the tacit knowledge and subconscious processes that occur during my choreographic process in order to articulate why or how I make the choreographic choices that I do, in order to define the emerging choreographic signature. To articulate this knowledge the choreographic process and choreographic work needs to be interpreted and translated. Finestone (2001:117) reiterates: “within this research process, the role of the researcher becomes one of *translation-* to change in form, to transform, to decipher and unravel the choreographed text.” I unravel the choreographic process by tracing core images, themes, leitmotifs and the development of the choreographic text. Through reflecting on the three productions in retrospect, my choreographic traces, core images, themes and leitmotifs emerge. This includes what is discussed in Chapter 2 as making up the embodied narrative. I apply this knowledge to each work illustrating how elements of an embodied narrative are present

- the idea of a connection (Bresler 2006:25)
- how the physical form communicates meaning (Chappell 2008:160)
- how the embodied choreography portrays a textured experience of the body (Anderson 2001:84)
- how my senses are activated when observing the images
- the inclusion of both internal and external data in portraying experiences (Anderson 2001:88)
- how the bodies become present in each moment
- how individual life experiences are drawn upon\
- how emotionally motivated movement material is generated from “inner sensing” (Victoria 2012:170)

- how the body becomes source material and the “self” is the main source of data (Snowber 2002:23)

These elements that are present in different ways in each work, illustrates how the embodied narrative, for me, is communicated through physical theatre. It is important to take cognisance that each element of the choreographic process is not linear nor exists in isolation, but rather is seen as an interrelated process, similar to an embodied narrative, where a symbiotic and often rhizomatic relationship between the various components is formed. This view of the choreographic process and the embodied narrative is pertinent in my understanding of the choreographic signature through physical theatre practice.

I map the productions of *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) in a trajectory from 2010 to 2012 to begin the translation process in my choreographic journey to provide the bedrock for the emerging choreographic signature. The process of translation in the choreographic process, of all three works, is unfolded by dividing it into sections in order to describe the process. These sections that follow below were based on descriptions of choreographic processes provided by Smith-Autard (2010:5).

3.1 Sections to describe my choreographic process in *One-way*

1. Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source
2. Source material
3. Designing the space through utilising specific devices in the choreographic process
4. Performers role in my choreographic process
5. Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative
6. Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography
7. Creating a structure or framework
8. Refining and making choreographic choices
9. Music and sound in my choreographic process
10. Structural transitions
11. A summation and crucial reflection

3.1.1 Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source

In the choreographic process of *One-way*, I was asked by the University of Pretoria Drama Department and Tshwane University of Technology's Dance and Musical Theatre Department to create a work, for the National Arts Festival, that drew inspiration from the idea of a 'refugee'. This idea sparked, for me, a connection with myself as I had felt a sense of isolation or 'homelessness' from my own body from my personal experience of being homosexual. The experience of my body or my 'lived experience' was that it did not belong to me. This personal narrative is relevant to my research as it was the primary source material that was interpreted into an embodied narrative through physical theatre as the mode of expression and performance. In reflecting on the production I utilised Snowber's (2002:23) choreographic process of 'body narrative' where personal narratives are combined with dance to generate source material and it is through this process that *One-way* was generated. My personal experiences, feelings, fears and bodily experience is the source material for the generation of the embodied narrative. Snowber (2002:23) states:

I repeatedly dance the narratives of my own life and the questions and responses from my students as a way of accessing, developing, chiselling, editing, and creating material. As I listen to my own body data, I am given the impetus for the paint on my canvas, the notes of my instrument, the sounds of my flesh.

This choreographic process of 'body narrative' is allowing the 'body to speak' and it is through using the body's stories and feelings that the work is generated. The 'lived experience' is the focus of the choreographic process of 'body narrative'.

In a world dominated by heterosexuality, homosexual people have been previously marginalised and stigmatised (Ruangwanit 2009:137) and it is this sense of marginalisation that *One-way* explored. For a long period of my life I have lived with the knowledge that I am homosexual but have been ashamed and afraid to admit it to my friends and family. It was something that I did not want to confront and felt that I did not belong or need to be labelled 'homosexual'. For me, being homosexual was outside my frame of reference and a road less travelled. I spent many years running away from this path and, in a sense, from myself. The idea of a refugee became a metaphor for the 'lived experience' of my body. I investigated my personal narrative or inner experience of my individual embodiment in the world and the road to acceptance with the prolonged denial of my sexual preference in *One-way*.

I felt a sense of disassociation from my own body, almost as if I did not belong inside it. It was something alien to me and I could not find any sense of connection with my body. This was surprising as my career was physically orientated. I felt as if I was not inside my own body, running frantically but never actually getting anywhere. *One-way* was based on the personal narrative of the questions raised around the idea of disassociation and alienation from my own body and how this disassociation is the result of the boundaries and restrictions that society places on individuals, with specific reference to homosexuality.

3.1.2 Source material

Heteronormative norms and conventions marginalises people, ideas, and experiences that deviate from these conventions and frames such ideas or experiences as ‘alien’ or ‘other’. As Stamelman (1993:118) states “on and of the Outside, to whom all communal acts, all common activities, the most simply human verbs - to have, to belong, to speak - are foreign”. This alienation or othering manifests itself in the body resulting in a sense of disconnection from the self, a blocking or disassociation of a person’s feelings (Pierrakos 1961: [sp]). It was this sense of being estranged from my own feelings that made me become isolated from my own body.

Much of the research on marginality emphasised the individual’s reactions to an oppressing social structure rather than considering their individual perception of being marginalised through their specific ‘lived experience’ (Krieger 2005& Menary 2008). Grant and Breese (1997:196) discuss how the theory of marginality began to be refocused to include the concept of self-identity with a sociological angle. Grant and Breese’s (1997:196) findings suggest that the theory of marginality is perceived, interpreted and experienced differently according to each individual. This suggests that each person’s ‘lived experience’ of the world is unique and each interpretation of marginality or being seen as ‘other’ is specific to the individual and the context. *One-way* thus centred on my personal experiences and feelings of marginality and spoke to the status of being seen as ‘other’.

The Other is an individual who is perceived by the dominant group as not belonging and in being different in some essential way. The dominant group sees itself as the norm and judges those who do not fit into that norm negatively-setting up centre-margin relations. The Other is almost always seen as being lesser or inferior in some way- on the margins or periphery. Staszak (2008:2[sp]) defines Otherness as the consequence of a discursive process by which the dominant group conceptualises one or many non-dominant groups by stigmatising a

difference providing the motive for possible discrimination. The result being as posited by Onbelet (2000: [sp]):

Otherness has been associated predominantly with marginalized people, those who by virtue of their difference from the dominant group, have been disempowered, robbed of a voice in the social, religious, and political world. Difference, in literature is often articulated as either some kind of weakness or superior strength or intellect depending on the sympathies of the dominant cultural voice.

In the case of living in predominately heteronormative society, I stand on the margins as a homosexual woman. It is this sense of being ‘other’, in conjunction with my feelings and experiences of being marginalised that were so pertinent to my personal narrative of being homosexual. Through the choreographic process I utilised my personal feelings and anxieties around my homosexuality to generate an embodied narrative in the genre of physical theatre. The central sentiment was that there is only one way of being or one way of sexual engagement with the world that is acceptable in my community- a sentiment that provided the title for the production. It was a challenge to investigate my deepest feelings around such a sensitive and pertinent issue in my life.

Table 1: Overview of the source material for *One-way*.

Key moments in my ‘lived experience’	Key themes	Key symbols/images
My sexual experiences with woman	Forbidden love/ a conflict between myself and my feelings	Trying to be with another woman. A sense of overcoming a barrier or ‘wall’
A sense of isolation or ‘homelessness’ from my own body due to being homosexual	A conflict between my body and mind: the idea of a refugee as a metaphor for my ‘lived experience’	The motif of running from myself but getting nowhere
Felling rejected from the heteronormative society I exist in	A feeling of isolation and “otherness”	Standing on the periphery Isolated from the group
My accepting of my sexual preference	A sense of connection with myself	A road to travel

3.1.3 Designing the space through utilising scenic devices in the choreographic process

The visual element in my work played a pivotal role in the imagining of the theatrical experience. How I made aesthetic decisions on whether a piece of choreography or part thereof ‘works’ had to do with the visual composition and the integration of the scenic devices. In creating *One-way* (2010) I aimed to transform the space so the embodied narrative

unfolded in a symbolic world. In order to transform the space I utilised six solid wooden boxes that could be used to build platforms, pathways and roads. These structures provided me with the visual image of building bricks that could be constructed in a variety of ways to create different spaces (for example the scene where the boxes where used to create an enclosed space).



Figure 1: The *Lyrical intimacy duet* from *One-way*. The image illustrates the scenic devices utilised in the work. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

To further enhance the set there were six wooden planks that could balance across the boxes to link the road and provide a structure that the performers could balance on. These planks could also be lifted and placed in various configurations to create a wall as well as demarcate the space on the floor.



Figure 2: The quartet from *One-way*. The image illustrates one of the configurations of the set. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

The set functioned as building blocks and panels that could be reconfigured to create various structures. These became metaphoric of the different aspects of me that eventually built to create my pathway or road that I would travel. The opening image was a road moving across the space which the performers could walk across, move underneath and slide through. This road was symbolic of the ‘one-way’ everyone had to walk in their lives. The image that the audience was presented with seemed fixed and immovable similar to the way I saw my path through life. The road reconfigured when the two planks were lifted and utilised to separate the two women. In removing that link or changing its course the ‘one-way’ I had to travel was altered. A further sense of disruption was created when all the planks were removed off the top of the boxes and utilised to create a wall. The wall dissolved into a pathway that the woman had to walk. In the next scene the boxes became a structure at the back of the stage similar to two beds on top of each other, an intimate space but isolated from each other. The woman was positioned in between this structure while the quartet (representing the ideal heterosexual encounter) unfolded. Following the quartet the boxes were reconfigured to create two structures on either side of the stage, similar to two pillars almost disconnected from each other. Finally a road or pathway was created from one pillar to the other using the performer’s bodies and this was the path the woman had to traverse or journey that lead to her final acceptance of being homosexual. She is filled with a sense of connection and peace after completing the journey, accepting her homosexuality.

3.1.4 Performer’s role in the choreographic process

An audition process is conducted and half the students are selected from the University of Pretoria and the other half from Tshwane University of Technology’s Dance and Musical Theatre Department (TUT), speaking to the collaboration between the two institutes. This provides an interesting dynamic for me as the choreographer as these individuals have not worked together before. The University of Pretoria students have a strong skill in Drama and Theatre where as the TUT students have an exceptional technical dance training. This collaboration is exciting to have performers with a vast array of skills in both dance and drama. It provides the potential for a holistic theatre experience if I utilise the performers correctly and highlight their relevant skills. I select performers who are willing to engage in bringing their own life experiences around their sexuality to the process. I further set a task during the audition process for them to create sexually intimate duets between the same sexes. Firstly this allows me to see if they are comfortable enough performing a duet of this nature and if they can portray my “finely textured experience of the body” (Anderson

2001:84) related to homosexuality. I decide on nine performers that I feel can portray my ‘lived experience’ through their bodies.

Throughout the process the performers are asked to bring their own life experience of otherness and marginality and discover how it affects their bodies. All of the performers have experienced a sense of otherness in various forms and draw on those experiences when responding to tasks and generating movement material. I use the performers ‘lived experience’ of otherness allowing each of their bodies to ‘speak’ to generate an embodied narrative. I want the performers to have a sense of connection with my personal narrative so that they were able to create and perform emotionally motivated movement material generated from inner sensing (Victoria 2012:170). This idea of connection between me and the performers is crucial in this process as it is a personal narrative and I want the observer to encounter the narrative through a form of “sympathetic resonance” (Anderson 2001:84).

3.1.5 Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative

I will discuss the creative tasks and movement generating tools utilised in the making of *One-way*, where my personal narrative is reinterpreted through the body. In this choreographic process I wanted to create a movement phrase that could be the initial movement stimulus and from this phrase, through choreographic devices and choreographic manipulation, other material could be generated. I generated a movement phrase with my feelings of struggle and the sense of being a refugee from my own body, trying to articulate what it felt like inside my body: my ‘lived experience’. There was a clear sense of conflict within myself, an internal battle that I was faced with every day. I had an image of myself standing alone, surrounded by darkness, while I slowly sank into the ground; the sound of my heartbeat ever increasing. Inner conflict and trying desperately to find a sense of stability and control was my overall feeling. I could not verbalise my feelings clearly around such a sensitive issue so I allowed my body to ‘speak’. I moved with inner sensing (Victoria 2012:170) listening to my body, attempting to express through movement my deepest feelings into a phrase. Gestures of grasping and trying to hold onto something found expression. This links to what was tangentially mentioned by Blakeslee and Blakeslee (2008:3) and Damasio (2012:70) in relation to embodiment where an interaction between the mind and body occurs through body maps where the body is a fluid entity inscribed with individual and cultural meanings (Shaw 2003:33) and meaning and emotion are shared through embodiment. There was the idea that I

was trying to go somewhere but could not get there: it became my *Struggle phrase*. It was contained spatially with attempts to get away but always a sense of being pulled back. This became the movement motif for *One-way*. Smith-Autard (2010:43) discusses how the initial motif begins to embody the idea and the following phrases created need to re-echo this statement so as to create what Blom and Chaplin (1982: 106) refer to as unity-variety-contrast.¹⁴

In the first encounter with the performers I set them a task of writing from their body's perspective what it felt like to be 'other' or how it felt for them to have something they believed was fundamentally 'wrong' with who they were. Each performer drew from their personal experience of "otherness". I gave them a structure to follow to allow their bodies to 'speak'.

Inside my body is.....

My mind says.....

My body feels.....

My stomach says....

I feel the sensation of....

My impulse is to.....

From the performers written response each one created their own movement statements that embodied their personal feelings around being seen as 'other'. This task was a way to access their bodies 'feeling' during the experience of being an outsider, Other. It was a crucial experience as I wanted them to embody that feeling in the work. I taught the performers my *Struggle phrase* to allow them a sense of kinetic empathy with my experience and how I portrayed that through movement. I set a task to increase the spatial trajectory of the *Struggle phrase* allowing them to intertwine sections of their movement statement with mine. The task was whenever a gesture was executed in the phrase the performer had to extend that into a larger abstraction of the gesture that travelled through the space, and utilise parts of their movement statement. I wanted a version of the phrase that travelled as a contrast to the more static *Struggle phrase* but contained the same gestural language or an abstraction of the

¹⁴ Blom and Chaplin (1982:106) state that when a dance evolves it contains this unity-variety-contrast. This occurs organically as the motif is developed. "There's unity in that it all came from the same motif; variety stemming from the different ways the motif was manipulated; and contrast occurring when two opposing ends of the continuum of a given manipulation (forward/retrograde, big/small) are used, or when two separate and independent motifs (and their assorted manipulations) are combined in a single dance."

language. I concurrently used the choreographic device of size to enlarge the phrase. Smith-Autard (2010:47) discusses how to achieve repetition of movement content through development and variation of a motif and one of the options is a variation in space pattern: extension of the motif in space. Each performer interpreted the movement language and increased the size of the phrase. I joined their interpretations; editing what material I felt did not ‘work’, with my own to create a longer *Travelling struggle phrase*. This process speaks to Lavender’s (2009:72) discussion of the choreographic process, tangentially mentioned, where four creative operations of dance making occur: improvisation, development, evaluation and assimilation. In the initial choreographic task I had used all four processes to generate the longer movement phrase. This allowed me ample movement material for later phases in the choreographic process¹⁵.

I wanted a duet between two woman that encapsulated the intimacy and tension that I had experienced: the feelings of wanting something but knowing the risk of a homosexual encounter. This was an important duet as it needed to embody my sensations, moment by moment, of being with a woman. I used the *Struggle phrase* as source material and used proximity as a choreographic device: both performers did the phrase as close to each other as possible.



Figure 3: The *Lyrical intimacy duet*. The image illustrates the choreographic device of proximity. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

¹⁵ This is a similar process to the one in *Chasing* as I joined all the performers’ phrases to create one longer movement motif to be utilised later on in the process.

The device of proximity allowed for the intimacy of my ‘lived experience’ to be revealed. I incorporated a task of “do that” for the performers to work with as a possibility for movement creation. Using tasks in the choreographic process is a way of discovering new and exciting kinetic responses. Lee and Pollard (2004:74) elucidate further “when the dancers first respond to a workshop task [...], I have what I anticipate seeing; together with the memories, hunches, schemas and images that fed me to give that task; and I look forwards, imagining if the task could become choreography.” In this task, each performer took the other’s hand and placed it on their body getting them to “do that”, in a way that embodied an intimate sexual experience. I found moments from the sensory touch where they supported each other creating a sense of security and intimacy, where their bodies were present in each moment as they had the tactile visceral experience. Through tracing their arms and slow embraces that suspended a sense of intimacy and connection was created in the *Lyrical intimacy duet*.

I felt that being homosexual, although a personal issue of struggle was also an issue that men had faced and to highlight the experience I created a duet between two men. They used the *Struggle phrase* as movement material and the same intimate task of “do that”. I wanted the male duet to be more aggressive and utilise more physical strength than the lyrical female duet so I incorporated more strength into their movements. I thus consciously played into gender stereotypes with these duets as I wanted it to be similar to the heterosexual duet. I highlighted moments of counter tension between the two male bodies as this spoke to the tension in my experience. This became the *Strong intimacy duet*.



Figure 4: The *Strong intimacy duet*. The image illustrates the counter tension between the two male bodies. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

In order to articulate the disassociation and isolation from my own body, I felt a sense of violence and physical trauma on the performers bodies would speak to that experience. I utilised the six planks of wood to create a scene where the two central women would be forcefully separated. I wanted them to be seen as ‘other’ and isolated from the rest of the performers. I set a task for the two women to try and get to each other while the rest of the company, using two planks, had to separate them. I wanted the sense of them being forcefully separated from each other. The scenic device generated the movement language for the *Separation scene* as it provided the impetus for movement. The woman tried desperately to get to each other and the other performers, representative of society, violently prevented them from making contact.

3.1.6 Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography

The form was starting to emerge and the scenic device of the six planks furthered the development of this phase. I wanted to create a wall utilising the performers to hold up the planks and form a visual image of a boundary between two people.



Figure 5: *Scene 5* in *One-way*. The image illustrates the wall constructed by the planks. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

This was metaphoric of the ‘wall’ or barrier within me, the battle of being homosexual. I improvised with the planks to create as many different ways of constructing a wall or constricting image that the performers had to negotiate. The first wall had two women on either side with the other performers holding up the planks, separating them. Each of the woman performed the *Travelling struggle phrase* and at the same time attempting to break

through the wall. The wall kept reconfiguring as each of the performers attempted to climb over bodies and break through to the other performer. The scene was linked by finding visually interesting ways for the planks to move from one representation of the wall to another.

The next scene that I created was a quartet to show the ‘ideal’ heterosexual encounter. I made the quartet by creating two duets that would occur simultaneously. I used the *Travelling struggle phrase* as the material. The woman executed the material while the men found parts of their bodies to hold staying in contact with them. Moments of lifting, travelling and supporting were highlighted as the woman executed the material. I wanted the quartet to be visually appealing and have an intimate connection between the bodies as this was the experience I had so badly wanted to conform to.

In *Scene 9* the fear and trauma of my experience was the focus. I had people hurling themselves through the air, violently jumping into each other, with a frantic sense of trying to escape. I used the idea of running and interspersed that with powerful jumps and hurling of bodies from one partner to the next. I paid attention to the spatial relationship of the nine performers in the scene, using a floor pattern as inspiration for the choreography. Smith-Autard (2010:51) refers to asymmetric floor patterns where lines and curves are not repeated or symmetrical in any way. I constructed nine asymmetric floor patterns for each dancer and they followed those as they executed the movement material. The reason I used these asymmetrical floor patterns was because I wanted a sense of chaos and uncertainty that could speak to my feeling of fear and loneliness.

In my experience, there was a sense that I had to force myself and my body to be with men. My feeling was if my body had an experience it would be translated to my mind and fundamentally change ‘who’ I was. This left me feeling empty and with a sense of being pulled from one thing to the next. I created a trio that revealed the two inner pulls of my experience: something propelling her to go this way and then another way.



Figure 6: The trio in *One-way*. The image illustrates her internal conflict. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

I wanted the scene to illuminate her inner turmoil and battle with herself. It was significant that two men executed the trio with the woman revealing her internal conflict with men in her life. The woman executed her *Struggle phrase* while the men's task was to force her in different directions. This symbolised her lack of control and feeling of helplessness in her life. They echoed her movement material as they used different body parts to shift and move her, back and forth.

3.1.7 Creating a structure or framework

I began to create a structure for the work from reinvestigating the main idea of the marginalisation that I felt. I focused strongly on the idea of being a refugee from myself and my body, relaying my 'lived experience' from the inside out. My bodily experiences become the primary focus of the work, how it felt and sensed for me. I wanted the embodied narrative to follow one lead woman as she experienced this sense of being an 'outsider', the Other. I started on my own trying to access my feelings around being homosexual and how my body 'felt', specifically my body 'knowing'. Through accessing those feelings, or a resistance to them, I tried to externalise them and create a structure for the work. I utilised Snowber's (2002:23) "body narrative" where I combined the art of autobiographical narrative and dance as the body became the source material for the narrative.

Structure 1

Scene 1

A woman standing alone...surrounded

Running

Trying to escape

Perhaps her body held up

Scene 2

An intimate duet between two women

Slowly touching

Exploring each other's body

Forbidden love

Scene 3

Travelling struggle phrase

Traffic

Bodies moving in and out of each other

The world keeps moving and she is stuck...running but going nowhere

Scene 4

Violent separation

Planks pushing them apart...the outsider

Scene 5

The wall that separates the couples

Fighting to break through

Shards

Scene 6

Strong intimacy male duet

Scene 7

The heterosexual quartets

The woman watches

The tension

Scene 8

The woman interrupts them

The argument between the two women

Suspended, floating...in limbo

Scene 9

Frantic moment of fear and anxiety

Bodies hurling through space

Running

Scene 10

The trio highlighting the final tension that she faces

Pulled one way and another

Scene 11

Her final acceptance

A sense of closure

A road less travelled

This was the first structure that I used to begin the choreographic process and through the development of the piece, a second structure was created with more detail and clearer scenes. Some of the order of the scenes were changed in order for the embodied narrative to be revealed as poetically and as true to my feelings as possible, revealing my ‘lived experience’ and the experience of my body. I concentrated on how the physical form communicated meaning (Chappell 2008:160) and redefined the scenes so that a relationship was built between the scenes.

Structure 2

Scene 1

A woman standing alone...surrounded by the others
Running on the spot: going nowhere
The others begin to gaze at her: the ‘other’.
She does her solo statement: *The struggle phrase*

Scene 3

Everyone moves away from her and into a group
Moving fast and in and out of each other: Traffic
The hustle of life while she is running on the spot
Over, under through the boxes and planks...as they reconfigure
Travelling struggle phrase

Scene 2

An intimate duet between two women
Slowly touching
Exploring each other’s body
Forbidden love
The embrace

Scene 4

Violent separation
Planks pushing them apart...they fight to get to each other

Scene 5

The wall that separates the couples
Fighting to break through
The bodies become part of the wall.

Scene 6

Strong intimacy male duet
Echo’s female duet

Scene 7

The heterosexual quartet
The woman watches
The tension

Scene 8

An argument between the two women
Suspended on the boxes
Flinging each other off and on
Moments of tenderness

Scene 10

Frantic moment of fear and anxiety
Bodies hurling through space

Running

Scene 11

The trio highlighting the final tension that she faces
Pulled one way and another

Scene 12

Her final acceptance

A sense of closure

A road less travelled

Structure 2 was followed and reinvestigated in the refining phase where I began to focus on the overall feeling of the work and how the observer would experience my embodied narrative through a form of “sympathetic resonance” (Anderson 2001:84) where their senses were invited to come alive to the images as through the experience was their own.

3.1.8 Refining and making choreographic choices

I began this phase by focusing on creating *scene 1* as I wanted a powerful visual and physical image that encapsulated all that I felt in a physical embodiment. I wanted a sense of contrast between the woman and the other performers: as the lights revealed them all standing facing forward she was facing the side, in a slow sustained motion she begins to run on the spot moving but getting nowhere. She stops as the others hinge forward in a circle, suspended in space and time.

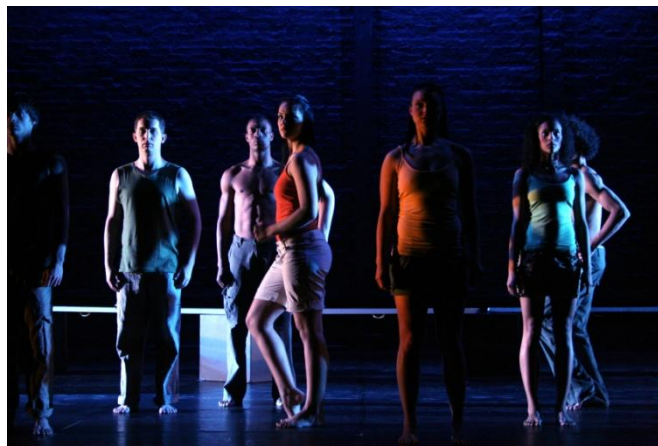


Figure 7: *Scene 1* from *One-way*. The image illustrates the opening of the work. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

Her running speeds up until she is frantically trying to get away from herself. The male figure echoes her running. Slowly, the others move away and she is left alone as the ‘other’ and

begins her solo, *the Struggle phrase*. The woman articulates her inner turmoil with gestures of longing and trying to hold onto something, while the others form a group upstage of her.

My inspiration for *Scene 2* was my bodily sensation and feeling that I was halted and not able to move forward but everyone else around me was living their lives. This principle of contrast gave me the metaphor of traffic verses my static experience. *Scene 2* begins as the performers move in unison walking, jumping over and through the boxes while the woman stands on the spot slowly trying to run. I constructed the scene through utilising the *Travelling struggle phrase*. Through a combination of trios, a solo, a quartet and finally the performers in unison, the scene unfolds as the performers move in and out of each other, filling negative spaces, executing the *travelling struggle phrase* in front of the metaphoric structure representing a road. A sense of people shifting in and out of each other contrasts the woman standing on the spot. A barrage of sounds: hooting and a busy street are heard. Slowly the fast paced choreography slows down and one woman is left executing the *Travelling struggle phrase* but very slowly to entice the lead woman. There is a sensation for the lead woman as if time stops and she is mesmerised by the lyrical movements of the woman. She cautiously follows the woman along the planks as the others watch with suspicion.

Scene 3 begins with the women touching, intertwining and sensing each other's bodies as their *Lyrical intimacy duet* unfolds.



Figure 8: The *Lyrical intimacy duet*. The image illustrates the intertwining of the bodies. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

The refining in this scene was to have the other performers surrounding the duet and watching with a sense of disapproval at this homosexual encounter: society's critical gaze. This could motivate the following *Scene 4* where the women would be separated by the planks. As the duet concluded in an intimate embrace, the performers hurled the planks between them forcefully separating them. The refining that happened within the separation scene was to focus on how both woman and the people holding them back, with the planks, worked in relation to each other. There needed to be a sense of movement coherence between both groups in order for the scene to be visually effective. The images created in both the groups needed to echo each other or be in contrast to each other, with a clear spatial relationship illustrating they were trying to get to each other. Smith-Autard (2010: 61) highlights this by stating that dance (and in my view physical theatre) "is a visual art: if the movement were stopped the relationship of the dancers should be as apparent as a visual picture." I focused on the visual pictures created with both groups in relation to each other. Another choreographic choice was to have both groups continuously moving as the separation occurred creating a volatile and turbulent effect. This reflected my 'lived experience' and bodily sensations of fear and anxiety.

This choice was in contrast to the choice made for *Scene 5* where the wall was still while the two performers tried to get to each other. There was a clear boundary or obstacle that they had to overcome to be together. The structure moved when it reconfigured into another obstacle or metaphor of a wall. The refining in this scene was to make the transitions between the various walls as smooth as possible so that the focus was on the performers trying to get to each other. Two men were the last performers to attempt to get across and as they hurled themselves at the wall it began to dissolve into a pathway between them, a bridge they had to cross to be with each other.

Scene 6 was the *Strong intimacy duet* and the refining here was to have the duet start while the planks were slowly laid down onto the floor, referencing a pathway. As they moved precariously to each other it became metaphoric of the path they had both chosen to walk. A strong, intense embrace was the start of the duet and as it unfolded, the boxes and planks were reconfigured into a structure foreshadowing them. As the duet ended in an embrace, two sultry woman came to pry them apart seducing them and suspending their bodies. I created a sense of the men being drawn to each other and the woman at the same time, so as to highlight my internal battle. This was the opening image of *Scene 7*: the quartet which represented the ideal heterosexual encounter. The quartet started and the lead woman

watched pensively as it unfolded. There was a sense of tension as this was the woman she had first experienced a homosexual encounter with.



Figure 9: The quartet in *One-way*. The image illustrates the ideal heterosexual encounter. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

Scene 8 was the embodiment of an argument between the two woman. I created this volatile duet on top of the boxes that joined together to create a raised platform. I wanted a sense of them being suspended or raised, a space of limbo; which created a sensation of precariousness. I created the duet by utilising their *Lyrical intimacy duet* and completely changing the quality and dynamic of the movement. I made the movement impactful and strong, using a rebound rhythm to create the physical tension. The duet transformed into aggressive moments of holding and throwing each other as they battled to deal with their ‘lived experience’ of being homosexual.

I wanted *Scene 9* to embody the feelings of fear and alienation that I felt in my body. I refined the idea to a sense of frantic energy and frustration of being so isolated and unable to connect with myself and this became the focus when creating the scene. In retrospect it was Anderson’s (2001:88) idea of the internal perceptual data of the body that I focused on in creating the scene. Volatile and violent physical contact was utilised as the performers run at each other hurling their bodies through the air. It is through the combination of the internal and the external data that the embodied narrative was created, through a ‘felt’ idea (Anderson 2001:88). In the refining and making choreographic choices phase of *One-way* a sense of

contrast, combining and reducing phrases, a change in pace and quality and a consideration of visual aesthetics features. Blom and Chaplin (1982: 106) state:

When a dance or study evolves, it ideally incorporates the concept of unity-variety-contrast. The motif-and-development approach achieves this organically. There's unity in that it all came from the same motif; variety stemming from the different ways the motif was manipulated; and contrast occurring when two opposing ends of the continuum of a given manipulation (forward/retrograde, big/small) are used, or when two separate and independent motifs are combined in a single dance.

This unity-variety-contrast began to emerge in *One-way* at the end of this phase in the choreographic process. The final scene in the work was my sense of acceptance of being homosexual and the realisation that I had my own way to walk through life. I created a road with the boxes from upstage right to upstage left. The other performers transported and supported the woman as she began to take this journey. Their bodies formed part of the obstacle as she began to move across them. There was a sense of acceptance and finality as she moved slowly and consciously along. The final image of her, suspended high above the road looking forward and to the next pathway, left me with the sense that I had found my one way.

3.1.9 Music and sound in the choreographic process

The sound score was an important element for me in the choreographic process of *One-way*. It was a crucial part of the 'felt' experience as it contributed to how the physical form generated meaning. Belec (1998: 29) states "our impressions of a choreographer or choreographic style are strongly influenced by how the choreography and music are related in a work of art and by the range and type of music employed." In searching for the music and sound for *One-way* I looked for music that triggered an emotional response in me, some kind of somatic inner experience. I wanted to use a range of contemporary music from 2010 in *One-way* to contextualise the work in a specific time frame. Belec (1998:30) states: "the task of the contemporary choreographer lies in combining a range of dance and musical styles in such a way that both can be respected as two streams of expression [that] breathe in and out of phase with each other" (Belec 1998:30). This was my task in *One-way* to find this breathing space within the soundtrack. I used the sound of traffic juxtaposed with the sound of a heartbeat as the sound leitmotif throughout the work. The sound of a heartbeat gave the feeling that in amongst the hustle and bustle of people was a single voice, a woman. Her heartbeat racing as her fear increased and her intimate feelings were revealed. The sound of

her solo was similar to that of a clock ticking or an intense rhythmic pulsation highlighting her internal ambiguity and fear.

I used the English band *Sade* from her album *Soldier of love*. The lyrics spoke to the theme of the work and I felt a connection with her music. Myself, a refugee, a soldier of love, battling with myself to find who I am and accept my homosexuality within my body. *Sade's* lyrical music and pertinent vocals suggested the tone of the work as well as giving it a contemporary feel. I used two of her songs *Morning Bird* and *Bring me Home* as the lyrics echoed my feelings giving my bodily sensations a sound. *Sade's* music resonated with me subconsciously: through my body's 'knowing' and that body "has a mind of its own" (Blakeslee & Blakeslee 2008:2).

3.1.10 Structural Transitions

In the choreographic process of *One-way* I created the transitions from one scene into the next with a sense of relentlessness so that the moment the work began there was no stopping it. It felt, for me, that there was no 'blackout', no moment when I did not think about my experience or feel relief from it. I wanted the piece to start and continue ruthlessly. I utilised the lead woman to link all the scenes with her emotional state or how her body felt. Her feelings became a movement metaphor (Victoria 2012:170) for my bodily sensations of how my 'lived experience' felt. How I did this was to take the emotional state she had experienced in the previous scene and use that as the driving force for the next scene. Her isolation and feeling of being seen as 'other' was the feeling I used to link various scenes. She stands isolated from the group as her sense of intrigue is highlighted as the woman draws her into the *Lyrical intimacy duet*. Her feeling of being with someone and knowing the risk of this encounter is highlighted as she is violently separated from the woman. Her tension and anguish is highlighted as the heterosexual duet unfolds in front of her. The work is held together as her physical form communicates her bodily experience of being homosexual. Her embodiment and body knowledge allows her 'lived experience' to unfold through the physical form.



Figure 10: The quartet in *One-way*. The image illustrates the lead woman's isolation. Photograph by Andrew Gush, 2010.

3.1.11 A summation and critical reflection

My main intention when creating this work was to give expression to my body sensations and feelings using a personal narrative and create an embodied narrative where I generated a 'felt' idea through physical theatre practice. My initial impulse or "ideational stimulus" was the notion of a refugee. I found the "added shade of meaning" or 'spine' and this became the alienation and disassociation I felt from my own body from my personal experience of being homosexual. From using a personal narrative of being homosexual, I created scenes around my own bodily and 'lived' experiences. My personal narrative was reinterpreted through the body as the main site of investigation and embodied to create a multi-layered theatrical environment and experience through the use of movement, music and scenic devices.

The visual element played a key role in the imagining of the theatrical experience. How I made aesthetic decisions on whether a piece of choreography 'worked' or whether it 'looked right' had to do with the visual composition. Crucial to the visual composition or what I saw unfolding in front of me when I was choreographing, were the use and integration of the various scenic devices. In *One-way*, I designed the space through the use of scenic devices utilising six wooden boxes with six wooden planks that could link to form a road. The emotional component played a key role in the imagining of the work as the bodily experience and 'lived experience' of the lead woman was a prominent focus.

The next step in the process was to move from source material into a movement language. In the movement generating phase I began by exploring a phrase that could form the ‘motif’ of the work: the *Struggle phrase*. The next stage in the process was to increase the spatial trajectory of the phrase into a larger travelling phrase: the *Travelling struggle phrase*. Next in the process, was to create a duet between two woman that encapsulated the intimacy and tension I had experienced: the *Lyrical intimacy duet*. To generalise the experience, I then created a duet between two men: the *Strong intimacy duet* as well as the *Separation scene*. In the forming and shaping phase, the planks were the device that furthered the process. After creating the various scenes I had to find a way to string them together in a way that created a narrative that was in some way chronological. My first structuring of the piece is never the final one that is chosen. Even though I have a clear choreographic intent, the ordering and shaping of the intent is not clear at first. The work is mostly in an order that does not illustrate the choreographic intent and a new structure is always created that unfolds the embodied narrative in the most effective way. In the process, two structures were created and *Structure 2* was selected and further refining and choreographic choices were made. Through making choreographic choices, the work began to generate its own kinetic logic where a sense of unity-variety-contrast was evident. Music was an important element in the choreographic process as the sound of the work was crucial to the experience of the embodied narrative and in attempting to stimulate an emotional experience in the viewer. The music of *Sade* as well as the sound of a heartbeat juxtaposed with the sound of traffic provided the sound score and began to suggest the overall tone of the work. In the choreographic process of *One-way*, I wanted the work to start and continue so that there was no sense of individual scenes¹⁶. Through the choreographic process, each element or medium utilised became an integral component of the work adding a layer of meaning to the embodied narrative being explored. This links with Chappell’s (2008:167) understanding of an embodied narrative dance creates.

In reflecting on the choreographic process of *One-way*, there is a clear sense of artistic collaboration between me, the designer and the performers and the working process is collaborative, speaking to a physical theatre practice (Callery 2001:5). The practice of creating the embodied narrative is primarily a somatic one where a stylised gestural language of performance is generated, echoing Murray and Keefe’s (2007:3) tropes of physical theatre. A clear sense of devising and task orientated processes characterise the choreographic

¹⁶ The choice of having no individual scenes is specific to *One-way* (2010) and does not feature in *As night falls* (2011) or *Chasing* (2012).

process placing it within the physical theatre approach (Murray & Keefe 2007:3). The work is not restricted to a linear understanding of narrative and is drawn from a personal narrative. This links to Chappell's (2008:160) discussion of embodied narratives as the physical form communicates meaning and the work contains layers of meaning and is not one dimensional.

The choreographic process of *One-way* is described above uncovering the tacit knowledge and subconscious processes involved in creating the work. To further my main aim of documenting my emerging choreographic signature, I continue to describe my second work *As night falls* (2011) below.

3.2 Mapping the choreographic process of *As night falls*

In order to unravel the choreographed text of *As night falls* I consider what is tangentially mentioned as making up the embodied narrative¹⁷ and apply it to the work illustrating how elements of an embodied narrative are present. These elements illustrate how the embodied narrative is communicated through physical theatre. The process of translation in the choreographic process is unfolded by dividing it into sections in order to describe the process. The same sections used to describe *One-way* are used to describe *As night falls* and *Chasing* to create a sense of commonality in the description process and to further the main aim of documenting the emerging choreographic signature.

3.2.1 Describing my choreographic process

1. Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source
2. Source material
3. Designing the space through utilising specific devices in the choreographic process
4. Performers role in my choreographic process
5. Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative
6. Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography
7. Creating a structure or framework

¹⁷ the idea of a connection (Bresler 2006:25), how the physical form communicates meaning (Chappell 2008:160), how the embodied choreography portrays a textured experience of the body (Anderson 2001:84), how my senses are activated when observing the images, the inclusion of both internal and external data in portraying experiences (Anderson 2001:88), how the bodies become present in each moment, how individual life experiences are drawn upon, how emotionally motivated movement material is generated from "inner sensing" (Victoria 2012:170), how the body becomes source material and the "self" is the main source of data (Snowber 2002:23).

8. Refining and making choreographic choices
9. Music and sound in my choreographic process
10. Structural transitions
11. A summation and crucial reflection

3.2.2 Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source

This choreographic work for the University of Pretoria Drama Department was presented at the Fringe Festival of the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown in 2011 and 2013. The production won a Standard Bank Ovation Award¹⁸ in 2011. I came to the title *As Night Falls* without a clear idea of what the work would be about. I was intrigued by the idea of night and darkness as a starting point for investigation. I wanted to find a way to embody ideas of mystery, death, dreaming, sleeping and surrealism that darkness symbolised, through an embodied narrative. Osborn (1967:117) states “darkness (and the night), bring fear of the unknown, discouraging sight, making one ignorant of his environment...one is reduced to a helpless state, no longer to control the world”. Darkness was a potential starting point and highlighted for me the contrast: light. This idea of sight and light as opposite to darkness was where the potential for mystery lay. I needed to find the “added shade of meaning” that Humprey (1987:35) speaks about when considering a source material or as Tharp (2003:145) refers to as a ‘spine’. The ‘spine’ is another layer, or the core, in the form of an idea, a visual image, a thought or a metaphor to make the choreographers intention clearer (Tharp 2003:145).

The ‘spine’ became the interplay between darkness and light which reminded me of the work and life of Helen Martins.¹⁹ Her obsession with bringing light to her life was pivotal as she felt a sense of foreboding with darkness enveloping her as she started to go blind (Boddy-Evans 2011: [sp]). This darkness drawing near or similarly ‘as night falls’ was the metaphor for Helen Martins life. In order to investigate how I re-interpreted Helen Elizabeth Martins (1897-1976) story into an embodied narrative, it is cardinal to re- review existing material on her life and work. Such a review provided me with source material that I re-interpreted in creating *As Night Falls*. It is important to note that as Martins provided the initial stimulus,

¹⁸ Sichel (2010:[jsp]) discusses The Standard Bank ovation awards and states innovative and cutting edge productions of the National Arts Festival will be recognised . The award celebrates “innovation and excellence on the Fringe programme of the National Arts Festival by putting the spotlight on cutting edge-work that is strong, diverse and original” (ibid).

¹⁹ Emslie (1997:21) discusses how biographic details about Helen Martins life are sparse. Helen Elizabeth Martins (1897-1976) was born on the 23 December as the youngest of ten children, although only six survived infancy (ibid).

and what I am describing here as source material is just that: source material and not an in-depth historical explication or documentary evidence of her life and work. I describe here what I found interesting and what I thought could best assist me in drawing and dramatising images, themes and symbols from my reading towards my choreography.

I (freely) re-interpreted Helen Martins' narrative for choreographic purposes and created an embodied narrative that spoke on the issues of being seen as an 'outsider' or being marginalised in a South African context. This idea of Martin's as an outsider will be addressed below.

3.2.3 Source material: Helen Martins

Helen Martins, or 'Miss Helen' as she was known amongst some in her community, has been considered one of South Africa's most valuable and foremost "Outsider Artists" (Boddy-Evans 2011:[sp]). Outside Art was first recognised by the French artist Jean Dubuffet, who coined the term 'Art Brut', or Raw Art, and described it as "fantastic, raw, visionary art created by individuals often maladjusted, with no art training, who work outside the mainstream of the art world" (Boddy-Evans 2011: [sp]).

Miss Helen created her Owl House around 1945 which was a spiritual quest to bring light and colour into her home and garden using cement, glass and wire to decorate the interior and later the exterior into a shrine with cement figures all facing east towards Mecca. Inspired by a vision, she decorated the walls of her house with broken glass creating a beautiful and calming effect while reflecting the candle light she preferred. Her environment was viewed as a place of mystery, fear and suspicion in the Calvinistic Karoo town of Neu Bethesda (Collins-Queen 2003: [sp]).

Suffering an unhappy relationship with her father for many years, a failed marriage and seventeen years of caring for ailing parents in Nieu-Bethesda left her with few prospects (Helen Elizabeth Martins:[sa]). Her crippling arthritis, the effect of her work on her physical appearance, the nature of her art work and her immediate relationships impacted on her increasing reclusiveness in her later years. Isolated from her local community, she was considered a strange and rather unusual person who neglected herself and squandered money on useless artefacts (Collin-Queens 2003: [sp]). In 1964 she employed Koos Malgas, a shepherd, to help her make over 300 figures from cement-and-glass of wise men, camels and owls: which would fill her Camel Yard outside her house and become her Mecca. Malgas

was not the first person she employed to assist her in her artistic endeavour, but Koos Malgas became her companion, and remained by her side for the last 12 years of her life (Collins-Queen 2003: [sp]). This close relationship with her mixed race assistant was viewed with great suspicion and rumours of sexual interactions between them surfaced to the dismay of both parties (Randall 2010: [sp]).

According to Collins-Queen (2003: [sp]), Martins' art was greeted with derision and suspicion from the townsfolk. Her work draws inspiration from Christian and Middle Eastern philosophies and particularly the Bible. Her visions of the East and Mecca speak to her longing for spiritual and mental enlightenment. Miss Helen was especially fond of owls and considered them a totem animal associated with intuition and insight and wisdom. Martins was viewed as an idol worshiper and recluse who shunned the Calvinistic and Apartheid thinking of the time.

Her affair with a married man and rumours of an abortion did little to better the relationship between her and her community. All of the above frames her as Other. Miss Helen's eyesight began to fail and in 1976 she took her own life by drinking a mixture of caustic soda and crushed glass in olive oil. The greatest theme in her life and work was light and Miss Helen feared that by going blind her life's work would be taken away from her. She suffered immense agony and died 3 days later on 8 August 1976 (Boddy-Evans 2011: [sp]). Miss Helen's narrative spoke to so many issues around freedom, loneliness, racism, rebellion, society, spirituality, empathy and religion thus providing a multi-layered source from which to draw.

The production *As Night Falls* explores the tension between Miss Helen and her art, between her and the society she existed in (outsider, marginalised) and explored the dynamics of her relationships with others (including Malgas, her married lover and the town's central religious figure) that intensified her isolation and ostricisation from her community. *As Night Falls* drew inspiration from her obsession with light and darkness and her search to find light in her life as she felt that life had become grey. The image of her moving towards darkness literally and figuratively was the focus of the reinvestigation. Owls, creatures of the night, are a prominent feature of her camel yard and serve as the central visual symbol and organising principle in *As Night Falls*.

I concentrated on Miss Helen's life and her work as source material to start my choreographic process. I decided to identify key periods in her life, themes and symbols and utilise those as

organising principles for the choreographic exploration. I interpret key periods as her love affair with Koos Malagas and the priest of the town, her rejection from society, and finally her suicide. These key periods became the conceptual framework around which I drew inspiration for the creation of the embodied narrative, influencing my choice in movement material, choreographic structuring, theatrical devices and the ‘feel’ of the work. These key periods in her life brought about the central themes, for me, from her life: a feeling of isolation and “otherness”, an obsession with light and darkness, a sense of mystery and spirituality, feelings of rejection and depression. The prominent themes in her life are a result of the experiences she had so the periods and themes become intertwined. Another pivotal theme is her visions of the East and Mecca and the connection with spiritual enlightenment and eastern philosophy, which is directly linked to her Owl house. These key periods, themes and symbols created the starting point for the beginning of the choreographic process.

Table 2: Overview of the source material for *As night falls*.

<u>Key periods</u>	<u>Key themes</u>	<u>Key symbols/images</u>
Her love affair with Koos Malagas	Forbidden love/ a conflict between her affection and apartheid laws	Trying to get to each other. A sense of moving closer and moving away.
Her love affair with the priest	A conflict between her religion and her affection	Her visions of the East and Mecca
Being rejected from the community she lived in	A feeling of isolation and “otherness”	Standing on the periphery Isolated from the group
Her creation of the Owl House	A spiritual quest to bring light into her life	Camels, owls, beer bottles, pathways, light and dark Candle light
Losing light in her life and beginning to go blind	A sense of darkness enveloping her	Light versus dark
Her suicide	Death	Darkness

3.2.4 Designing the space through utilising scenic devices in the choreographic process

When I began the choreographic process of *As Night Falls*, I wanted to use as many objects or scenic devices that spoke to the theme of light and darkness and provided the atmosphere for the embodied narrative to unfold. The reason for this was that in my previous works I usually utilised one main scenic device and integrated that into the work, perhaps utilising many objects would provide new and interesting options. I used lanterns that the performers could carry and hang from umbrellas to transform the space.



Figure 11: The final image of *As night falls*. The image illustrates the use of the umbrellas and lanterns. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

These scenic devices also directly engage with the idea and image of light/darkness-contrast. The lanterns created a slightly blurred atmosphere and mood that enhanced the mystery of the work. Another important light source was the use of small headlights that could create shards of light and focus the scenes. They formed the main device for the nightmare scene where Miss Helen was assaulted by figures of light. The headlights were utilised in the opening scene to create pin-spot images that evoked Miss Helen's world (for example, using the lights in a blackout to create a walking camel and a flying owl). The use of candle light also functioned as a light source to cast a shadow of Miss Helen as she moved along a pathway of tiny pin-spots on the floor. At times, the lights became an extension of the performer's emotional landscape, carving the choreography into the space.

The scenic device of seven chairs was used to transform the space where performers shifted them, moved over them and across them. They formed the main device for the Barn dance scene where all of the performers had a chair except Miss Helen, highlighting her isolation and 'otherness' - standing on the periphery.



Figure 12: The Barn dance in *As night falls*. The image illustrates the use of the chairs as a scenic device. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

Miss Helen was enclosed in a hooped metal skirt that constricted her movement and highlighted her as ‘other’ visually and in terms of movement vocabulary. The sound of the hoops banging against each other provided the sombre mood of the scene.



Figure 13: Miss Helen’s solo in *As night falls*. The image illustrates the metal hooped skirt utilised in her solo. Photograph by CuePix Amitie Lee, 2013.

Visually striking and evocative are the six lace umbrellas that echoed throughout the work evoking a sense of safety and security for the town’s folk as they stood gazing at Miss Helen-positioning her as ‘other’. They were utilised from the opening to form a line of mourning people, creating a lace shadow over the town’s people. They continued to be utilised as

lanterns were hung from them in the closing image, providing silhouettes. The scenic devices created the atmosphere for the embodied narrative to unfold in and transformed the neutral space to one of contrasting images of light and dark highlighting Miss Helen as ‘other’.



Figure 14: The opening scene in *As night falls*. The image illustrates the line of mourning people in the background. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

3.2.5 Performer’s role in the choreographic process

I wanted the embodied narrative of *As night falls* to be communicated through a form of “sympathetic resonance” (Anderson 2001:84) with my interpretation of Miss Helen’s narrative. This was important in this specific process as I felt a deep sense of connection and empathy for Miss Helen. I wanted the audience to feel her ‘lived experience’ through the physical form. I needed performers who could allow that encounter to occur through a sense of connection with her narrative (Bresler 2006:25) and their own narrative and ‘lived experience’. An audition process was conducted and consisted of setting a task for the performers to generate a movement phrase in response to visual images from Miss Helen’s Owl house. I wanted to see how the performers could transform her form of expression into a movement language. I encouraged them to create a movement language that would invite the observer’s senses to come alive to the images they created (Anderson 2001:84). I selected eight students who I felt connected with Miss Helen’s images and found a way to translate them into a movement language. I wanted the performers to generate a movement language

that allowed my senses to be activated “impulse by impulse, sensation by sensation” (Anderson 2001:89) through a body ‘knowing’.

3.2.6 Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative

I will now discuss the creative tasks and movement generating tools utilised in the making of *As Night Falls*. In this choreographic process, I wanted to create a movement phrase that could be the initial movement stimulus. From this phrase, through choreographic devices and choreographic manipulation, other material could be generated. I began with the idea that Miss Helen made all her sculptures in her Owl House face east- symbolising a longing for spiritual enlightenment. I set a choreographic task or what Kirsch (2009:191) refers to as a ‘choreographic problem’ for each performer to take the word ‘east’ and first write a cognitive response and then create a somatic response with the focus on light and darkness. The reason I assign a ‘choreographic problem’ or task is that it stretches the performer’s movement language and I am able to see the performers moving in a different way to a choreographic problem. The reason, for me, is that the ‘choreographic problem’ provides them with something to respond to. Kirsh (2009:192) states:

if a movement originated as a solution to a problem, the dancers are likely to imbue it with greater feeling, affect or quality-what some call greater intentionality; they will find the phrase easier to remember; and they will have intellectual ‘anchors’ that can serve as reference points in the phrase later.

The cognitive anchor that the performers had was the word ‘east’. The reason I began with the performers creating a written response points to how Allsopp and Lepecki (2008:1) understand choreography as “a suturing and fusion of two apparently incongruous terms- movements and writing” or as Bannerman (2010:474) states as “the form of bodily inscriptions carved into space”. This carving or sculpturing into space provided a suitable starting point with Miss Helen as her form of expression was her sculptures in the Owl House. The performer’s created their own movement poems²⁰ and began generating their kinetic response that they ‘carved’ into space, letting their bodies ‘speak’. Kirsh (2011: [sp]) speaks about this embodied cognition and how “dancers use their body as a thing to think with and their sensory systems as engines to simulate ideas nonpropositionally”. I created my own written response or movement poem and then generated my somatic response

²⁰ A movement poem is what I use to describe poems where words are created that have the potential for movement, action words. By using action words the dancer is inspired to move and create a movement phrase.

thinking through my body and letting it ‘speak’, trying to feel as she felt, creating this connection between myself and Miss Helen (Bresler 2006:25). My response below illustrates the cognitive or written response to the word ‘east’, which was used as my inspiration for a movement phrase.

Movement generating task

Below is my cognitive response to the word ‘east’. It provides my interpretation of how Miss Helen felt

Every night the candle light moves me in flickers and shadows...lost

All I touch...feel...sculpt is inside of me...a light

Solitary, dark and searching for the pathway that leads to the light

Towards a place of mystery and fear...owls with open eyes ...so much darkness but light

I wanted to embody Miss Helen’s ‘lived experience’, relaying her experience from the inside out, through my body. After writing my response, I allowed my body to respond as I read it out loud. I began to internalise the words as my body moved finding a way for my body to ‘speak’. I moved instinctively to the sound of the words and the imagery they conjured inside of me, “impulse by impulse and sensation by sensation” (Anderson 2001:89). I carved the space with articulations of pathways, sculpting and creating this sense of darkness from within me. I created a movement phrase that would form the ‘motif’ for the work: the *Darkness ‘motif’*. The eight performers generated their own ‘sculpture’ in space, through their bodies thinking non-propositionally, with my facilitation. Through observing their phrases, they contained a sombre, gestural landscape that I began to highlight as I wanted an intricate gestural language to form a part of the choreography, the reason being “when gestures are used as a movement motif and developed, they become abstractions and a rich resource for the choreographer” (Blom & Chaplin 1982:130). The gestural language was developed and highlighted by adding gestures that had religious reference and integrating them within the movement phrase. The reason I utilised religious gestures was that Miss Helen was strongly influenced by spirituality and religious icons played a role in her construction of her Owl House (Collins-Queen 2003: [sp]). I linked all of the eight phrases, made by the performer’s, into one long movement phrase. Through executing and ‘feeling’ the movement I called this movement phrase: the *Funeral phrase*. It gave me the sensation of

people at a funeral sending away the soul to a place of light or darkness: gestures of closing eyes, the cross, praying, and contemplation were generated. The woman's phrases were more gently, light and buoyant while the men's phrases were more direct, expansive and weighted. The weighted or heaviness of the men's phrase I experienced as "dark". Due to the different qualities that emerged, I decided to link the woman's phrases into one phrase and the men's into another: becoming the *Light phrase* and the *Dark phrase*. Through this initial task I had generated a *Darkness motif*, the *Funeral phrase* and both a *Light phrase* and a *Dark phrase*. The movement phrases were generated from the same source (the choreographic task of responding to the word 'east') which allowed the movement material and gestural landscape to echo in all four phrases, providing a leitmotif.

I decided to create duets next in the movement generating phase as I wanted to find a way to embody Miss Helens two controversial relationships with Koos Malagas and the dominee.



Figure 15: The duet between Miss Helen and koos Malagas in *As night falls*. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.



Figure 16: The duet between Miss Helen and the priest in *As night falls*. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

I made an artistic decision making the dominee a priest, as I thought it would read more clearly to have a priest's costume as (Dutch Reformed Church) dominee's have no specific dress that signifies their religious title. As I offered a free (re) interpretation rather than a documentary account, the artists license I took and the broad symbol of religionare justified. I paired up each of the woman with a man and two women together. I was not sure what scenes these duets would fall into yet but I decided to generate contact duets using the *Light phrase* and *Dark phrase* as source material. At first the initial impulse was to 'play' and improvise with the movement language and qualities to see what possibilities could emerge. Foster (2003:4) suggests that "improvisation presses us to extend into, expand beyond, and extricate ourselves from that which is known...to be taken by surprise". In the duets the woman used the *Light phrase* and the men used the *Dark Phrase* as their material: creating the idea of a contrast between qualities. Four duets were being created at the same time, in the same rehearsal.

In the first duet the prominent idea that began to emerge was the woman was being controlled by the man: her movements seemed to be a reaction to his movements.



Figure 17: The *Dead duet* in *As night falls*. The image illustrates how her movements are a reaction to his. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

This is what Bannerman (2010:205) refers to as a “compositional prompt” which gives the choreographer the option of making a critical choice about the form and structure of the movement that is revealed. I was “taken by surprise” and began to explore this further by focusing on his movement causing a reaction in her. He was the initiator of the movement impulse and hers was the response. At this point in the process, I was unsure of which duet this could be but left it to be refined later in the process.

The second duet that emerged was a sexual duet and I felt that it was between Miss Helen and Koos Malagas.



Figure 18: The sexual duet in *As night falls*. The image illustrates the intimacy between the two bodies. Photograph by *CuePix* Amitie Lee, 2013.

I am aware of the gossip around this relationship, even if Miss Helen denied such a relationship but what actually happened was intriguing for me (Boddy-Evans 2011: [sp]). I began to generate the duet around the inter-play between being intimate and knowing that this type of relationship was forbidden due to the Apartheid laws. I kept highlighting those two contrasts and counter tensions within the duet. Belec (1998:24) states “ultimately, meaning and expression evolve through a network of contrasts rather than an isolated movement or experience”. In giving the performers two contrasting intentions within the duet, meaning was generated.

3.2.7 Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography

The form was slowly emerging after the focus of the movement generating phase through creating the two duets with Miss Helen and further decisions needed to be made in order to progress. Blom and Chaplin (1988:21) state “form supports the intent and content, forcing decisions. It needs to be fulfilled yet it also needs time for relevant tangents. But the form drives; properly honed, it generates a forward motion toward unity and wholeness.” At the start of this phase, I wanted to investigate Miss Helen’s funeral as this could form the opening of the work. There is nothing written about her funeral or even if there was one, but what is fact and what is fiction is the intrigue, for me. I wanted the work to embody this sense

of mystery. There were several rumours that she had a sexual relationship with a *Dominee*, and this propelled the idea of having the *Dominee* (changed to a priest as explained earlier) at her funeral ‘dancing’ with her lifeless body.



Figure 19: The *Dead duet* in *As night falls*. The image illustrates the priest dancing with her lifeless body. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

This image embodied a macabre feeling for me. I used the duet where the man was manipulating the woman and began generating what I called the *Dead duet*. I used the physical instruction of the man having to support, move and hold Miss Helen who was unable to initiate any movement but could move in response to the man’s movement. This provided an interesting movement impulse to play with.

I made the decision to have the end of Miss Helen’s life at the beginning of the work to create a non-linear narrative. It was more important for me to show why she killed herself rather than the act itself. The funeral scene was created initially through using the *funeral motif* and exploring the material through various choreographic devices: space²¹ and time²². I had the six people involved in the scene starting at the back of the stage and as the phrase developed encroaching into the space as they executed the movement material. I played with the spatial formations²³ as they moved in and out of each other: creating oppositional pulls. I made the

²¹ Space as defined as “an expanse extending in all directions” (Turner 1971: 126)

²² Time as defined as “relative tempo, duration, and intensity of movement” (Turner 1971:126)

²³ Blom and Chaplin (1982:189) define this as when working in a large group as a unit that overall shape is considered.

intention²⁴ behind the movement material confrontational as it spoke to the people's reaction of Miss Helen as 'other'. The scene was further developed by using the choreographic device of fragmentation²⁵ and from selecting various parts of the *Funeral motif* that performers executed in unison within different spatial formations. As the scene progressed, a duet occurred at the same time as a quartet and moved into two trios simultaneously. There was no physical contact in the scene and the material built to climax through reconfiguration of the spatial arrangements, ending finally in unison before the performers were still slowly forming the gestural leitmotif of a cross.

The next scene that I started to develop was the *pub scene* as I wanted to highlight the feeling of the local pub and the Calvinistic Afrikaans context surrounding Miss Helen. It was this culture that isolated her and saw her as Other. I utilised beer bottles as the scenic device that could be use in the bar and thrown and integrated into the choreography illustrating the bar culture. I created a unison movement phrase with the bottles trying to find the embodied language in a pub: the *Bar phrase*. I utilised the *Bar phase* as a source for a trio with the men, where they did the movement phrase facing each other. The performer's task was to incorporate the bottles and make the phrase travel through space as much as possible around each other, while interacting in the pub. I worked with the *Bar phrase* and created two duets and a trio that occurred around each other in unison: the same movement phrase was used but they had to circle each other as they executed the movement phrase. This created the social vibe and interaction of the pub. I structured the scene by starting with everyone in the pub doing the *Bar phrase* in two duets and a trio, followed by the boy's trio and finally all the performers in unison facing the front. The scene developed to a climax of cheering and throwing bottles back and forward as they executed the unison *Bar phrase*.

I generated a solo phrase for Miss Helen from my *Darkness motif*. I wanted the solo to start downstage left and progress to downstage right along the diagonal. The reason was that I wanted a sense of travelling and yearning: speaking to her longing for Mecca. I wanted to show her struggle and played with the movement quality²⁶ to create this tension. The *Darkness motif* was interspersed with moments of sudden movements contrasting her reaching and pushing gestures.

²⁴ Intention refers to imbuing movement with "an interpretation, an attitude, a purpose" (Blom & Chaplin 1982:8).

²⁵ Fragmentation is defined by Blom and Chaplin (1982:104) as using only a part of the movement phrase.

²⁶ Movement Qualities is defined by Blom and Chaplin (1982:73) as distinctly observable attributes or characteristics produced by dynamics and made manifest in movement".



Figure 20: Miss Helen's solo in *As night falls*. The image illustrates her progression on the diagonal. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

The choreographic device that I utilised was choreography by numbers²⁷: which was utilised by Professor Gary Gordon (and used in my training with him) as a systematic way of creating echoes within the movement material. I took the *Darkness motif* and the entire motif is separated into sections and each section is given a number 1-5. Then a diagram is drawn:

1234

5123

4512

3451

2345

The performer then dances the movement vertically, 1,5,4,3,2,2,1,5,4,3,3,2,1,5,4,4,3,2,1,5. This becomes the order of the movement and as illustrated, there is repetition of movements, echoing the motifs. This allowed the solo to create a sense of relentlessness that Miss Helen was experiencing.

²⁷ Choreography by numbers was utilised by Gary Gordon and I assume his inspiration was from the chance techniques of Merce Cunningham. He designed a device that could be utilised by choreographers to generate a longer movement phrase that had moments of repetition within it.

At the end of this phase, I had generated the *Dead duet*, the *Funeral scene*, the *pub scene* and a solo for Miss Helen. There seemed enough material to begin creating a structure.

3.2.8 Creating a structure or framework

I began to create a structure of the work from reinvestigating the key periods, themes and symbols in Miss Helen's life. Spending time with the source material and finding an empathetic connection with her, I drafted my first structure. I concentrated on the physical form and how that could communicate meaning (Bresler 2006:25).

Notes from my choreographic journal: **Structure 1**

Scene 1

The dead duet:

The priest touches

Miss Helen is a figure...light...suspended...dead

Scene 2

The funeral

The priest holds her

The town's people show their disgust and outrage

The rumours...the questions

Scene 3

Miss Helen and Koos

Washing her feet in milk

Sexual duet where they begin to sculpt each other's bodies

Scene 4

Pub scene

With beer bottles

People are getting drunk: Miss Helen watches

There is a volatile encounter between her and the men

Scene 5

Her search for Mecca

Her moving towards a single beam of light

Broken

A priest is breaking the glass and crushing the olive oil she finally drinks

Lanterns are the only light

Scene 6

A Nightmare

Hallucination...lights flashing

Owl sounds..Islamic overtones

Scene 7

Duet between Miss Helen and a man and they are separated by glass/Perspex

It breaks

Scene 8

The barn dance

Referencing Langarm

A church hall...

Scene 9

Priest and Miss Helen
Olive, mortar and pestle
Incantation
Anointing her...Alluding to suicide and baptism

Scene 10

Garden scene: beer bottle skirts
Trying to get them to face east.

Scene 11

Back at the funeral
Woman with hoop skirts
Her final solo death in sand or ash
A rite of passage
She is stuck in concrete
Facing east
Koos standing with a candle.

This was the first structure that I used to begin the choreographic process and through the development of the piece, a second structure was created with more detail and clear scenes. Some of the order of the scenes was changed in order for the embodied narrative to unfold more clearly where the embodied choreography seeks to portray her “finely textured experience” (Anderson 2001:84). The various scenes that I had created in the forming and shaping phase also influenced the new structure.

Notes from my choreographic journal: **Structure 2**

Scene 1

The interplay of light and darkness:
Create images of her Owl House
Her wanting to fly away

Scene 2

The dead duet:
The priest touches
Miss Helen is a figure...light...suspended...dead

Scene 3

The funeral
The priest holds her
The town's people show their disgust and outrage
The rumours...the questions

Scene 4

Miss Helen and Koos
Washing her feet in milk
Sexual duet where they begin to sculpt each other's bodies

Scene 5

The barn dance
Referencing Langarm

A church hall...

Scene 6

Her search for Mecca

Her moving towards a single beam of light

Broken

A priest is breaking the glass and crushing the olive oil she finally drinks

Lanterns are the only light

Scene 7

A Nightmare

Hallucination...lights flashing

Owl sounds...Islamic overtones

Scene 8

Dynamic fast scene where she is hurled and thrown

The embodied narrative of being an 'outsider'

Scene 9

Bar with beer bottles

People are getting drunk: Miss Helen watches

There is a volatile encounter between her and the men

A woman is violated/ a black woman seen as 'other'

Scene 10

Duet between Miss Helen and the black woman who was violated in the bar

Scene 11

Praise him: Koos in a beer bottle skirt

Priest and Miss Helen

Olive, mortar and pestle

Incantation

Anointing her...Alluding to suicide and baptism

Scene 12

Koos's solo and lament of Miss Helen.

Structure 2 was followed in refining the choreographic choices and to further develop the embodied narrative of the work.

3.2.9 Refining and making choreographic choices

When I am refining the work, it consists of making aesthetic choices and decisions, which Predock-Linnell and Predock-Linnell (2010:198) state is fundamental to making a work of art as they view choreography as both a 'thinking' and 'feeling' process. These aesthetic choices reflect my personal values and beliefs about movement²⁸ and reveal my intention for the work. One of my main intentions was to highlight the emphasis of light and darkness in Miss Helen's life making it a leitmotif in the work. After getting the scenic device of the headlights, I began to create an opening scene. I set myself clear instructions to create images

²⁸ Discussed in Chapter 2 under my influences and personal movement style where my "moving identity" is discussed Roche (2011:111).

with the lights from Miss Helen's Owl house. I scripted these before the rehearsal so there was a clear structure to work from. I wanted a scene that was a visual experience highlighting her obsession with light and dark, told through the body.

Structure to create opening light/dark scene

Everyone create an opening line with the lights

Hands rustle

Create an owl

Create a camel moving

Create a pathway of light (a road to Mecca)

Birds flying (freedom and imagination)

Cacophony of lights flashing...moving

Sun rising in the East moving to the West (Time passing)

The choreographic task was for the performers to create the images in a black-out state, and the only light was the light from their individual headlight. I sat in the auditorium and gave instructions of different possibilities they could use in order to present the images more clearly. I was able to see the visually stimulating images that could be created with the lights, using their bodies. I wanted the opening scene to introduce as many of the images in her life: owls eyes were created to speak to the totem animal that featured so prominently in her Owl House, a camel travelling, a pathway of lights that she walked through with a candle, a bird flying: the imagination, the ostrich referencing the Karoo and finally flashing red lights as a foreboding. I linked the shapes that were created through darkness. As the lights came up into the next scene the image of the priest suspending Miss Helen dead body was revealed.

The refining that happened in the *Dead duet* was to incorporate the other performers behind the duet in a line, with lace umbrellas, as the people of the town at her funeral. The reason I utilised umbrella's was aesthetically it resonated with me as well as symbolising the 'closed' minded attitude of the town's people sheltering themselves from the outside world. Their disapproving gaze was cast on Miss Helen and the priest as the duet unfolded. I used the

choreographic device of size²⁹ to make the *Darkness motif* as small as possible so that throughout the duet the town's people could execute the gestures of the phrase in canon³⁰. In using canon it "re-creates the lost moment, re-creates the lost moment, re-creates the lost moment" (Blom & Chaplin 1982:11). This slowly developed until they were in unison. The final image was the people seated holding their umbrellas as the priest tried to lift Miss Helen's lifeless body to touch him. In the *Funeral scene* the duet was placed just off the stage so while the priest stood over Miss Helen the scene would unfold. This gave the performers a focus as they executed the choreography.

The refining that happened in the sexual duet was that I incorporated one of the chairs and a washing bowl where Koos would wash her and slowly as his hands moved across her the intimacy would develop. The symbol of water and washing spoke to cleansing and a ritual sense of washing away impurities giving the context for the duet. I concentrated on the tension between the sexual feelings and the fact that it was forbidden to be with a man of colour in those times, creating the dynamic³¹ of the duet.

The next scene that I created was the *Barn dance* where I utilised the *Darkness motif*. The phrase was transferred onto the chairs and done in unison while Miss Helen moved in and around the cast: positioning her as an 'outsider'. Throughout the scene, she executed fragmented sections of the phrase in a slow sustained time while the others executed the phrase to full speed. This contrast between the movement qualities isolated her from the group as she wondered desperately trying to be included. The performers mocked her and moved into different formations, with the chairs, to isolate her.

²⁹ Blom and Chaplin (1982:103) define size: condense/expand and further state "take the motif and do it as small as you can. Try it even smaller. Now take the movement and make it bigger, as big as you can."

³⁰ Blom and Chaplin (1982:111) speak about canon as being one of the most pleasing forms because it has unity and variety built right into it. They define it as "a single theme executed at different times".

³¹ Dynamics can be defined as "the interaction of forces of movement and motion that produce contrast" (Turner 1971:29).



Figure 21: The *Barn dance* in *As night falls*. The image illustrates her being seen as ‘other’. Photograph by Nicola Haskins, 2011.

I created a pathway that she walked through which shifted into a semi-circle and eventually a circle that surrounded her. The scene’s climax was the performers enclosing her and stripping her of her nightdress, pushing her forward in a petticoat with a metal hooped skirt. This constricting image of a woman bound by the society she exists in highlighted her as ‘other’.

The following scene was Miss Helen’s solo. The refining that took place was the performers entered with lanterns and held them straight out in front of them. They entered along the diagonal, as she yearned and undulated towards the priest at the end. The sound of her metal skirt and the mortar and pestle crushing her final glass and olive oil provided the sombre mood. As the solo progressed the rest of the cast forced her closer and closer to her death using the lanterns and shaking them at her. It was light ironically that pushed her towards darkness.

In the final scene a solo of lament was created while Miss Helen’s body lay lifeless with the surrounding performers still and observing. They held their umbrellas with lanterns hanging from them with their bodies turned away. The material that generated the solo was a combination of the *Darkness motif* and the *Dark phrase*. Both phrases were intertwined and through concentrating on a slow, suspended relationship to time the phrase was articulated. Interspersed with the movement phrase the performer kept returning to the body as a point of focus. The final image was Miss Helen’s lifeless body surrounded by the town’s people standing in disapproval while Koos Malagas moved from a darkness and grief within him.



Figure 22: The final scene in *As night falls*. The image illustrates his lament as he holds her lifeless body. Photograph by *CuePix* Amitie Lee, 2013.

3.2.10 Music and sound in the choreographic process

In researching a sound for *As Night Falls* I came across the Brazilian musical group *Uakti*. They consist of Marco Antônio Guimarães, Artur Andrés Ribeiro, Paulo Sérgio Santos, and Décio Ramos who are known for utilising custom made instruments built by the group themselves. This resonated with Miss Helen as her Owl House was constructed by her hand made sculptures. Composer Phillip Glass collaborated with them on an album called *Agua da Amazonia* (2006). When I listened to the sound of this album, I was transported to the Owl House, it sounded as if the statues and glass of Miss Helens structures were creating the sound through my body ‘knowing’. The sound embodied, for me, how she must have felt: her ‘lived experience’. It left me with the sensation of being in the open Karoo, searching: alone. The sound was hollow yet full, dark yet light, filled with air but had substance, supporting the contrast that I used. It was the sound of *As Night Falls*. To add layers to the sound of the work, I wanted to use owl’s hooting as it was a prominent symbol in Miss Helen’s Owl house. The sounds of owls and the howling wind featured as a prominent sound score throughout the work linking the tracks to create cohesion as well as giving the feeling of the open plains of the Karoo surrounding New Bethesda.

3.2.11 Structural Transitions

In the choreographic process of *As Night Falls*, the scenes were created in isolation and there was no sense of transition from one into the next. The reason for this is I find it easier to create scenes in isolation and then find a way of linking them. As the main leitmotif was light and darkness I utilised light as the main tool in creating transitions between the scenes. The opening scene was created through the use of light and I made the choice to use darkness as the transition into the *funeral scene*. Darkness was utilised to transition into the duet between Koos and Miss Helen. Some of the scenes flowed into each other through the use of the lanterns or the headlights further reiterating the leitmotif or contrast between light and dark. Another element that played a role in creating the transitions was the sound of howling wind and owls. This created the feeling or set the scene for the embodied narrative to unfold in.

3.2.12 A summation and critical reflection

In reflecting on the choreographic process of *As night falls*, my main intention was to create an embodied narrative of my interpretation of Miss Helen's 'lived experience'. I wanted the senses to come alive to the visual images evoked in the work as though the experience were one's own (Anderson 2001:84). My initial impulse in *As night falls* was the notion of light and darkness. I found the "added shade of meaning" (Humprey 1987:35) or 'spine' (Tharp 2003:145) and this became the interplay between darkness and light which reminded me of the work and life of Helen Martins. This darkness drawing near or similarly 'as night falls' was the metaphor for Miss Helen's life. I identified key periods, themes and symbols of Miss Helen's life and utilised those as organising principles for the choreographic exploration. These became the structural framework that I concentrated on influencing my choice in movement material, structuring, scenic devices and the 'feel' of the work. I basically selected themes/images that represented the most important aspects of her life for me. The selected narrative of Miss Helen was reinterpreted through the body as the main site of investigation and embodied to create a multi-layered theatrical environment and experience through the use of bodies, music, lighting and scenic devices.

The visual element in *As night falls* played a key role in the imagining of the theatrical experience. How I made aesthetic decisions on whether a piece of choreography 'looked right' had to do with the visual composition and specifically the use of light and dark. Crucial to the visual composition or what I saw unfolding in front of me was the integration of the various light sources. In *As night falls*, I designed the space through the use of scenic devices

generated from the source material utilising headlights, lanterns and chairs to create the symbolic world for the embodied narrative to unfold in.

The next step in the process was to move from source material into a movement language. In the movement generating phase, I began by exploring a phrase that could form the ‘motif’ of the work: the *Darkness motif*. The next stage in the process was to create further movement phrases using the same task as the first motif: *the funeral phrase*, a *light phrase* and a *dark phrase*. Next in the process was to create duets that explored two controversial relationships Miss Helen experienced. In the forming and shaping phase I explored various scenes: *the funeral scene*, *the dead duet*, *the pub scene* and a solo for Miss Helen. After creating the various scenes or ‘scenarios’ I had to find a way to string them together in a way that created a narrative that was in some way chronological. My first structuring of the piece is never the final one that is chosen. Even though I have a clear choreographic intent, the ordering and shaping of the intent is not clear at first. The work is mostly in an order that does not illustrate the choreographic intent and a new structure is always created that unfolds the embodied narrative in the most effective way. In the process, two structures were created and *Structure 2* was selected and further refining and choreographic choices were made. Through making choreographic choices, the work began to generate its own kinetic logic where a sense of unity-variety-contrast was evident. Music was an important element in the choreographic process as the sound of the work is crucial to the experience of the embodied narrative and the emotional experience of the viewer. The music began to suggest the overall form and mood of the work as the music of *Uakti* embodied, for me, how Miss Helen felt.

In the choreographic process of *As night falls*, the scenes were created in isolation and there was no sense of transition from one into the next. I utilised light as the main tool in creating transitions between the scenes. Through the choreographic process, each element or medium utilised became an integral component of the work adding a layer of meaning to the embodied narrative being explored, echoing Chappell’s (2008:167) understanding of an embodied narrative. A clear sense of artistic collaboration between me, the designer and the performers emerged as the working process was collaborative. The narrative that emerged in *As night falls* was communicated through the body of the performers and was primarily a somatic one where a stylised gestural language of performance was generated, echoing Murray and Keefe’s (2007:3) tropes of physical theatre. A clear sense of devising and task orientated processes characterised the choreographic process. The work was not restricted to

a linear understanding of narrative. The physical form communicated meaning and the work contained layers of meaning.

The choreographic process of *As night falls* (2011) is described above uncovering the subconscious processes involved in creating the work. To further my main aim of documenting my emerging choreographic signature, I continue to describe my third work *Chasing* (2012) below.

3.3 Mapping the development of my choreographic process: *Chasing*

I will now provide a description of the choreographic processes of *Chasing* to identify similar traces in my emerging choreographic signature. In order to unravel the choreographed text of *Chasing*, I consider, as before mentioned, making up the embodied narrative and applying it to this work, illustrating how elements of an embodied narrative trace through the work. The process of translation, as in both previous choreographic processes, is unfolded by dividing it into sections in order to describe the process.

3.3.1 Sections to describe the choreographic process

1. Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source
2. Source material
3. Designing the space through utilising specific devices in the choreographic process
4. Performers role in my choreographic process
5. Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative
6. Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography
7. Creating a structure or framework
8. Refining and making choreographic choices
9. Music and sound in my choreographic process
10. Structural transitions
11. A summation and crucial reflection

A choreographer writing about their process is unique as it is informed by both somatic and cognitive considerations “which arise from a thinking bodily practice” (Bannerman 2010:474). I began this choreographic process from a somatic and cognitive space where I utilised Ingrid Jonker’s life and poetry as source material to translate into an embodied

narrative in a physical theatre work. South African history and specifically historical South African woman intrigue me as source material for choreographic processes³². A very important feature of my choreographic process in *Chasing* was work done on my own, away from the rehearsal space, where I emerged myself into Jonker's poetry and listened to music that inspired me to 'feel' what she had felt, to embody her and provide me with a sense of empathetic engagement with the source material. This was an ongoing process that I did from early on in the creation of the work³³.

3.3.2 Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source

This choreographic work for the University of Pretoria Drama Department was presented at the Fringe Festival of the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown 2012 and 2013. My main intent when creating *Chasing* was that I wanted a work that utilised the medium of physical theatre to create Jonker's world, I wanted observers to feel as Jonker must have felt. This narrative is reinterpreted through the body as the main site of investigation and embodied to create a multi-layered theatrical environment and experience through the use of bodies, music, lighting and scenic devices. The beginning of my choreographic process for *Chasing* was filled with exploring various avenues and theatrical possibilities. My main aim was to bring together creative sources, scenic devices and movement to create a bodily expression of the image or the vision that I 'see' or 'feel' internally. In finding a concept, Humprey (1987:31) states "choreography...begins with the most important step- the decision as to the basic idea from which the dance will spring. All else flows from this". In this choreographic work, I came to the title *Chasing* without any idea of a specific concept. I was simply intrigued by the notion of 'chasing something'³⁴. The idea of wanting something that I can't obtain and how the more I chase the 'thing', the more invested I become and the more elusive that which I am chasing becomes. The idea of 'chasing something' has urgency about it and a potential for movement that interested me. Humprey (1987:35) states the importance of selecting a choreographic theme that has "motivation for movement" or a sense of "action" where she believes that this "action...must bring some revelation, some comment, some added shade of meaning to a theme, which cannot be found in its original state".

³² A strand-or 'through-line' in the choreographic signature emerges with the use of South African females with Helen Martins in *As night falls*, Ingrid Jonker in *Chasing*, as well as myself in *One-way*.

³³ This exploration on my own, away from the rehearsal space is a commonality in all three choreographic processes.

³⁴ A strand in the choreographic signature emerges as both *Chasing*, *As night falls* and *One-way* I start with an impulse or idea. In *Chasing* there is the idea of 'chasing something', in *As night falls* there is the idea of light and darkness and in *One-way* there is the idea of a refugee.

Through my research, I needed to find this “added shade of meaning” or metaphor for this kinetic notion of ‘chasing’. The idea of someone ‘chasing’ something reminded me of Ingrid Jonker, as she was ‘chasing’ her whole life. This emerges as a strand in the choreographic processes as in *As Night Falls* and *One-way* there was the original idea or impulse which progressed into the narrative of a woman. In order to elaborate on my initial “ideational stimulus” (Humprey 1987:35), I began to research Jonker... “Uit hierdie Valkenburg het ek ontvlug en dink my nou in Gordonsbaai terug”³⁵ (Metelerkamp 2012:64). Who was this elusive woman and what was she running from? The intensity of her work and the tragic course of her life spoke to me. In order to re-interpret Jonker’s story into an embodied narrative, it is cardinal to review existing material on her life and work. Such a review provides me with source material that I can utilise as a starting point for the creation of an embodied narrative. It is important to note that as Jonker provided the initial stimulus, and what I am describing here as source material is just that-source material and not an in-depth historical explication or documentary evidence of her life and work. I describe here what I found interesting and what I thought could best assist me in drawing and dramatising images, themes and symbols from my interpretation of Jonker.

3.3.3 Source material: Ingrid Jonker

In interpreting and researching Jonker, it must be acknowledged that no document or biography written on her is objective (Viljoen 2012: 13). Both André Brink and Jack Cope have written extensively on Jonker and have their own agendas in publishing work as both had intimate relationships with her. It is for this reason that as the researcher I acknowledge the context from which they write and proceed with caution. The following section does not aim to provide a detailed biographical narrative of Jonker’s life. Rather, I discuss that which interested me when I read up on her life.

South African poet Ingrid Jonker can be described as a complex, contradictory, emotionally volatile and rebellious poet with a wild spirit that found solace in her poetry. The daughter of Abraham Jonker and Beatrice Cilliers was born on the 19 September 1933 on her grandmother’s farm near Kimberley in the Northern Cape (Metelerkamp 2003:23). Her childhood, characterised by turbulence, unsettledness, poverty, death, abandonment and

³⁵ Translation by (Brink & Krog 2007:39) “From this Valkenburg have I run away and in my thoughts return to Gordon’s Bay”.

illness, was a prelude to her adult life in which emotional setbacks, failed love, sexual intrigue and a tenuous grip on reality featured prominently (Joyce 1989: [sp]).

Ingrid and her sister, Anna, moved to their father's house after the death of their mother, where he had rebuilt a new life with his third wife and their children (Joyce 1989: [sp]). Ingrid always felt like an outsider in her father's house and this was to create a shadow over the rest of her life. All these experiences profoundly influenced her poetry.

Jonker was constantly searching for meaning in her life and Brink and Krog (2007:11) states that for Ingrid the Bible was a major framework of reference for her writings, not only in the subject matter but also in the imagery, style and wording, "it provided the dark and light, the dread and the exultation, the fear of hell and the expectation of heaven, as an answer to Ingrid's need to find a mythology of her own." This mythology of her own or how she saw her life seemed destined for a tragic end (Metelerkamp 2003:54). Another influence in her life was her Grandmothers elaborate commentary and this took the form of "thoughts for the day", which was written in a small book that Ingrid cherished (Brink & Krog 2007:12).

Her first volume of poems, *Ontvlugting* (Escape) was published in 1956 when Ingrid was 23 and she dedicated it to her father, National Party politician- Abraham Jonker who was responsible for censorship laws on the arts (Viljoen 2012: 35). His reaction to this was reported to have been that he hoped there was something of value between the covers and that he would look at it later, expecting her to have disgraced him with its content (Viljoen 2012:40). Jonker was, in her own way, a political activist and further, a part of the protests against censorship. This was in confrontation with her father's beliefs and public profile. In 1963 Bartho Smit published the anthology *Rook en Oker* (Smoke and Ochre) that included Jonker's work. The anthology won the Afrikaans Press-Booksellers Literary Prize and awarded Jonker funds that she used to travel through Europe (Viljoen 2012:87). On receiving the prize she called her father, offering to pay for his ticket to the award ceremony in Johannesburg, which he rejected (Brink & Krog 2007:19).The constant barrage of disapproval and resistance from her father that Ingrid came up against had a tremendous impact on her life. Her disagreement with her father's political views and work did little to better their relationship.

Throughout her life, Ingrid would search for her father's recognition and approval often replacing him with the affections of much older men (Randall 2010: [sp]). A failed marriage, rumours of abortion, love triangles, depression and destructive relationships characterised

much of her adult life. By early 1965, Ingrid was on a self-destructive path that served as a precursor to her suicide on 19 July 1965 at Three Anchor Bay in Cape Town (Viljoen 2012:3).

The idea of intimacy and sexual volatility emerges as a theme in Jonker's life for me. Brink and Krog (2007:13) reveals how he experienced this with Jonker:

time and time again we would break up, sometimes with a whimper, often with a bang. Time and time again we would dive back into the love which beckoned like a dark and dangerous current. It could not possibly last.

Jonker can be described as a vortex of chaos moving from experiences of extreme highs to deep depression. She found herself experiencing life at both extremes with abandoned passion. Love, the despair of beauty and death are constant themes in her life and poetry that will inform central organising principles in my choreography.

Ingrid's character and complex nature is difficult to define and Cope states (1966:13):

it has been said for and against her that she was many things: that for all her luminous mind and awareness she was childlike and immature-she was childlike... That she was careless of appearances, bohemian, rebellious – rebel. That she deserted her faith, her people, her 'volk'. That knowing no distinction between life and poetry she betrayed both. Her life was an affirmation as well as a denial.

Jack Cope concludes "when all is said, the definition of her character slips from the mind's grasp and she remains elusive" (Cope 1966:17). This 'slipperiness' and 'in between-ness' will form central metaphors in my choreography. Joan Brink (in Metelerkamp 2012: 95) states "Ingrid lived many lives in one person swivelling from ecstasy to despair and you see this all so clearly in her prose and poetry". This idea of living many lives in one person will form a central image in my choreography as I will utilise four women to portray Jonker. Jonker's story is a complex intricate portrayal of the human need to be accepted and loved. My interpretation of her story was that throughout her life she 'chased' love and this was the pull to choosing her as the source material for the work: her psychological "chasing" became an interesting narrative metaphor to my initial response to the kinetic experience of chasing.

I concentrated on her life, images and specific poems as source material to start my choreographic process. At first, my idea was that each of the women would perform a poem before or after their scenes either introducing the idea explored or reflecting on it. I began by identifying key poems that dealt with key periods, themes and symbols in her life that I was

exploring: *Ontvlugting*³⁶, *My omhelsing het my verdubbel*³⁷, *Korreltjie sand*³⁸, *Gesig van die liefde*³⁹, *Alles wat breek*⁴⁰ and *Wagtyd in Amsterdam*⁴¹ (Human & Rousseau 1994:17-116). I decided to identify key periods, themes and symbols and utilise those as organising principles for the choreographic exploration. I interpret key periods as her childhood, her rejection from her father and men, her experience overseas and in mental institutions and finally her drowning. These key periods became the structural framework that I concentrated on in the choreographic work, influencing my choice in movement material, choreographic structuring, theatrical devices and the ‘feel’ of the work. Key themes, for me, from her life were: the constant need for love: “gesig wat ek lief het, die gesig van die liefde”⁴² (Jonker 1994:95), a feeling of isolation, an obsession with death and depression: “My lyk lê uitgespoel in wier en gras op al die plekke waar ons eenmaal was”⁴³ (Jonker 1994: 17), a longing for her childhood, constant feelings of rejection: Jonker’s one act play *Ek is Simon*⁴⁴ (Metelerkamp 2012: 95) deals with this theme, and her complex relationship with her father. Another pivotal theme is her feeling of being censored and banned from expressing herself through her poetry. A crucial symbol in her poetry and life were mirrors and her constant obsession with her own reflection: “kyk you oë verdwaas na die spieël van jou lyf”⁴⁵ (Jonker 1994:116). These key periods, themes and symbols created the starting point for the beginning of the choreographic process. I selected themes/images that represented the most important aspects of her life for me and created ‘scenarios’ or scenes around them. Again, I offer a free interpretation of Jonker’s life, rather than a biographical or documentary account.

³⁶ Escape (Brink & Krog 2007:39).

³⁷ My embrace redoubled me (Brink & Krog 2007:114).

³⁸ Little grain of sand (Brink & Krog 2007:79).

³⁹ Face of love (Brink & Krog 2007:97).

⁴⁰ All that breaks (Brink & Krog 2007:113).

⁴¹ Waiting in Amsterdam (Brink & Krog 2007:117)

⁴² Face that I love the face of love (Brink & Krog 2007:97)

⁴³ Washed out my body lies in weed and grass in all the places where we once did pass (Brink & Krog 2007:39).

⁴⁴ I am Simon (Brink and Krog 2007:35)

⁴⁵ Your eyes gaze astounded at the mirror of your body (Brink & Krog 2007 114).

Table 3: Overview of the source material for *Chasing*.

<u>Key periods</u>	<u>Key themes</u>	<u>Key symbols/images</u>
Her childhood	A longing for her childhood, nostalgia	Mirrors and her constant obsession with her own reflection
Her rejection from her father and men	The constant need for love or ‘chasing’ love	The image of running and chasing, a rope attaching her and a male figure
Her experiences overseas and mental institutions	A feeling of isolation and “otherness”, constant feelings of rejection	Standing on the periphery Isolated from the group
Censorship	Her feeling of being banned from expressing herself through her poetry	Blank rolls of newsprint
Her drowning	An obsession with death and depression	A large sheet of plastic, men’s jackets

3.3.4 Designing the space through utilising scenic devices in the choreographic process

The visual element in my work plays a key role in the imagining of the theatrical experience. How I make aesthetic decisions on whether a piece of choreography or part thereof ‘works’ or whether it ‘looks right’ has to do with the visual composition. Crucial to the visual composition or what I see unfolding in front of me when I am choreographing, is the use and integration of the various scenic devices. In *Chasing*, I designed the space through the use of scenic devices generated from the source material. These scenic devices form a central image that creates the choreographic environment that enables me, as a choreographer, to create a ‘world’ for the embodied narrative to unfold in. The scenic device also aids in generating and extracting the stories of the body and act as a method and inspiration for movement generation.

I wanted the space to be transformed through the use of scenic devices. The designer proposed the idea of four boxes that would be built, and could isolate Jonker. The boxes were proposed to the workshop but we had to continue the process of creation while waiting for them to be built. The boxes motivated the idea that Ingrid had a constant feeling of being isolated and alone and provided a physical enclosing of the performers.



Figure 23: The *Fragment scene* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the four boxes utilised as scenic devices. Photograph *CuePix* Teigue Blokpoel, 2012.

The floor of the boxes was made of galvanised iron, creating a mirror effect reflecting the image of the performers. This spoke to Jonker's obsession with mirrors which Viljoen (2012: 77) states reveals Jonker's need to have her existence affirmed constantly.

Another scenic device that echoed this idea of reflections were three large sheets made from galvanised iron that appeared as large mirrors. Brink (2007: 20) elucidates "Ingrid had always been obsessed with mirrors, with the need to see herself reflected. There was nothing narcissistic...what she needed, more and more, was the constant reassurance that *she was there.*"



Figure 24: The end of the *Attachment duet* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the large sheets of galvanised iron. Photograph by *CuePix* Kirsten Makin, 2013.

The galvanised iron created an effect of Jonker being slightly blurred. This spoke to my interpretation of Jonker's perception of herself as being slightly blurred and to her sense of insecurity.

Men's jackets were a core image in the work and functioned as a scenic device. The male figure was important in her life and it is what she was constantly chasing. It was often an empty experience for her. It is for this reason that there was the core image of people with jackets covering their faces. This formed a leitmotif in the work of faceless bodies.

A rope was utilised that connected Jonker and a male figure. This metaphor spoke to the idea that Jonker could never overcome her relationship with her father. To me, it was the emotional baggage that held her back. It was something she always lived with, the constant pull of these male figures in her life. In my opinion this push and pull characterised her life and became a central metaphor in the choreography.

The push and pull or the metaphor of ebb and flow of water became a metaphor that inspired the use of an industrial sheet of plastic. This formed the scenic device in the final scene that was utilised and functioned as a pivotal image as it highlighted her obsession with life and death. The sheet of plastic took on the quality of water and highlighted her final suicide.

3.3.5 Performer's' roles in my choreographic process

An audition process was conducted and seven students from The University of Pretoria were selected. In my choreographic works, as previously mentioned, the performers are crucial to the process as they require a physical intelligence. By the term 'physical intelligence' I refer to what Finestone (2010:31) in an interview with Gary Gordon articulates as "an insistence on an embodied presence". This embodied presence in the performer is visible, to me, through the performer's relationship to space, time, weight and flow. It is the understanding of their body and the way in which it moves that articulates an 'embodied presence'. This embodied presence was crucial to this specific choreographic process as my main aim was to generate an embodied narrative through a physical theatre work. I chose performers who demonstrated an 'embodied presence'. How I determined this ability was in the audition, I gave them the opportunity to create their own movement phrases and through their responses, I was able to see if an 'embodied presence' was articulated. I wanted performers that responded to my movement qualities and taught them a movement phrase that I created. I

looked for how they embodied or internalised the movement phrase creating a thinking bodily practice or how they made sense of the movement phrase through their own bodies.

3.3.6 Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative

At this point in the process, I had the title, an idea and the narrative of Jonker. It was the next step in the process to move from source material into a movement language. The creative tasks and movement generating tools utilised in the making of *Chasing*, where the narrative is reinterpreted through the body, will be discussed. At the beginning of the movement generating process, I did not come with an exact idea of what I wanted to do, demonstrate or say. I began by attempting to find connections between things that began to emerge. This was the attitude that I adopted on my first encounter with the cast. One of the key ideas vital to my choreographic process in *Chasing* was ‘trying’. I gave the performers and myself the opportunity to explore the movement possibilities available. Tufnell and Crickmay (2004:41) highlight this idea of ‘trying’ by stating:

creating becomes a conversation when we enter a dialogue with whatever we are doing. In this conversing we are drawn along in the moment by moment flow of sensation, interchange and choice, rather than following a predetermined intention or idea. Conversations grow as we listen and explore-a constantly shifting process of discovery that changes in momentum, rhythm, clarity or chaos as we work.

This shifting process of discovery is characteristic of my movement generating process as I am constantly trying to remain open to what emerges. This links to Barbour’s (2011:97) general guidelines for engaging in embodied ways of knowing where she suggests this idea of sensing and being open in the approach. Similar to both processes of *As night falls* and *One-way*, I began by exploring a movement phrase that could form the ‘motif’ of the work. The idea of censorship, being blocked or banned was the impetus or the source material I used for generating movement material or the motif. The reason I started with this theme was that I felt it was pivotal to Jonker’s feelings with her father and the time she existed in. On my own, I created a movement phrase moving from my internal feelings of being blocked and slowly instinctively trying to reinterpret the idea and make sense of it through my body to embody these feelings. My aim was to unfold the ‘lived experience’ and move from the “inside/out”, to feel as she felt and express that in a movement phrase. Blom and Chaplin (1982:19) discuss this idea of movement phrasing: “movements will naturally tend to collect around an impulse, a breath, or an intention, with relevant material forming a self-contained

unit or phrase.” Through starting and stopping, moving and thinking, I began to piece together a movement phrase that was an expression of my feelings of being censored. Through creating this “self-contained phrase”, I was left lying on the studio floor with a pivotal image: Jonker at the typewriter with blank pages being ripped from it and floating in the air. It felt to me that this image had just ‘popped’ up in my mind but reflecting on it, it must have been an image created from a combination of my readings as well as moving. Tufnell and Crickmay (2004:53) reflect upon this kind of experience:

...as I move, associations, memories, phases, pictures...may drop into my mind, and I let them in and out again. They are glimpses of imagery for which I am not yet ready, and which, if I follow at this point, will draw me away from the present moment. Later these images may re-emerge in my writing or making.

I held onto this image, as I saw a typewriter as a symbol in the work and this idea of blank paper that perhaps floats or levitates in the work. The idea of having blank paper spoke to my interpretation of Jonker, even though she had expressed herself through her poetry and used words to articulate her feelings, she felt empty/blank. The idea of floating or levitating spoke to a sense of limbo that I felt she was in. I had begun the movement generating process and created an initial movement phrase that could be utilised in the work.



Figure 25: The image of the typewriter in *Chasing*. Photograph by *CuePix* Teigue Blokpoel, 2012.

In this choreographic process, I wanted to create a movement phrase that could be the initial movement stimulus for performers to start exploring and improvising around it, and from this phrase, through choreographic devices and choreographic manipulation, other material could be generated. The reason for this was that I am always intrigued as to how much possibility

one movement phrase can provide. I created the movement phrase by setting myself a choreographic task around the idea of being blocked or banned. I first wrote how this felt for me:

I begin to say...to be stopped

I feel from inside...it's wrong

I move quickly...to be stopped

A feeling of being enclosed

An emerging embodied narrative is evident here and links to Damasio's (2012:109) discussion of an individual with a sense of feeling and embodiment as he suggests feeling is a perception of mind/body being. I spoke these words out loud and responded to them physically to create a movement phrase. I concentrated on a sense of moving quickly to be stopped and halted abruptly. This principle of contrast was where the interest in the movement phrase emerged to me. I was 'moved' by the intense and fast tempo the phrase contained and it left me with the sense of having 'chased' something and I termed the phrase: the *Chasing motif*. This movement phrase became the motif for the construction of the work.

In the initial rehearsals, I taught the *Chasing motif* and started getting the performer's familiar with the movement material, getting them to execute the material and highlighting the contrasting principles of stopping and starting. The reason I start with teaching the performers one of my phrases is that it gives them the opportunity to get 'inside my head' as much as possible, to follow the movements of my body. It also allows them to become familiar with the types of movement qualities that inspire me. In this specific motif it was the contrasting movements of stopping and starting that was investigated. This spoke to the experience of being banned or blocked, as the movement started it was halted. I am constantly expressing how I am feeling about the movement and how I see it evolving, so as to allow them as much connection to me as possible: my lived experience. Blom and Chaplin (1982:23) refer to this as "kinetic empathy" which is how one sees another person's movement and comes to know it in the mutual experience of movement. It is through empathy that a common ground is established from which to engage. From this common point of engagement, a task was set in order for the performers to improvise a movement phrase or *Chasing motif* around the same idea of being unable to express themselves. The improvisational task was to use their bodies to express this sense of being stopped or banned. I gave the performers a movement poem as

inspiration as Tufnell and Crickmay (2004:65) illustrate “words offer us a shared means of expression a common language” and this enabled me to communicate with them, in a somatic and cognitive way, the type of movements I was interested in generating. These words enabled me to express geometry of space or spatial direction: their *Chasing motif* would contain a fast tempo and utilise the space similar to the kinetic notion of “chasing”. The reason I chose this specific task in the choreographic process is that I wanted to deal with my initial idea of ‘chasing’ something which could later on be developed into Jonker’s constant chasing of love.

Movement generating task

Improvise movement as I say these words aloud

Run fast
Stop
Change direction
Someone stops you
You are trapped
It’s endless

You fall
Someone pulls you

On their own, the performers began to develop their responses to the task and were encouraged to examine what Blom and Chaplin (1982:103) call “tempo: fast/slow/stop”. I wanted their *Chasing motifs* to reflect a sudden change, emotionally or physically, as I felt this was characteristic of what I interpret to be Ingrid’s volatile character. I was trying to unfold what it would feel like to be her, to create an empathetic engagement with her turmoil, to embody her and imaginatively enter the world I understood to be hers ‘as if’ it was ‘real’ to me. After they had generated their individual movement phrase, I set a further task. They had to look at how fast or slow movements were executed in their phrases. Blom and Chaplin (1982:56) elucidate “when the tempo constantly increases or decreases, it produces intriguing phenomena which can be used effectively in choreography. Increasing speed has its uses (a chase, the building intensity of a fight, or the simple speeding up of a movement or phrase repeated many times).” Through concentrating on the tempo and refining each individual phrase, seven dynamic movement phrases or *Chasing motifs* were created. If I consider Jonker and this idea of tempo, it seems to speak to the idea of ups and down, starting and stopping, which is characteristic of her life.

As the movement phrases were created from the same source, I decided to incorporate the performer's phrases and my own phrase into one long movement phrase that would be the vocabulary or *Chasing motif* for the work⁴⁶. I did this in this phase of the process so there is ample material available during the choreographic process to fall back on. As Blom and Chaplin (1982:23) elucidate "in a dance, phrases are grouped together into larger phrases, then built into longer sequences, and formed into sections. Often a particularly striking one is used repeatedly, like a verse in poetry, or as a motif for development. It is within this context that phrasing functions in building dances". This motif is not continuously repeated without variation, rather variations in terms of tempo, space, size, performers (amongst others) assist in developing and progressing a choreographic narrative. Later in the process, this *Chasing motif* could be manipulated and fragmented with choreographic devices applied to it so that further movement could be developed for each specific scene. I cleaned and refined the longer *Chasing motif* by taking any unnecessary movements out and by highlighting the rhythm of the phrase so that it was clear for the performers and they were able to get the material into their bodies and experience the motion of this 'chased' body.

The next stage of the movement generating process was to create duets focussing on intimacy⁴⁷ as the intimacy Jonker experienced with a variety of men was pivotal to her 'chasing' love or the need to be loved. I wanted the duets to have a sense of urgency to them and a sexual volatility to embody her desperation and need to be loved. Jonker's yearning for love and her 'chasing' a dangerous current created an image for me of wanting to be held and protected. This visual and physical image of being held or supported was what I utilised as the starting point for creating duets. I had the performers improvise and at the sound of a clap find a partner to support a body part and then deciding how to release and move away.

I developed the idea further by improvising what I termed *desperation duets*. Three couples were paired up and I read them simple instructions to be interpreted in a duet. The words that I used were taken from a selection of Jonker's poems and highlighted some of her supposed feelings about love and intimacy. Through using her words, it was a way of getting inside "her head" or a sense of empathy. To live her imagined emotions through the performers body, to embody her "lived experience". The movement poem that I constructed functioned as a cognitive and somatic way of inspiring the performers to feel what it felt like to be her.

⁴⁶ This emerges as a choreographic strand in all three works in the movement generating phrase where phrases are combined to create a longer movement phrase.

⁴⁷ A choreographic strand emerges in all three choreographic processes as the idea of intimacy is common to all three.

Task for the building of duets

Move them
Touch their face
a double game
I repeat your body
Confuse them
I repeat you
Try grabbing an arm
Hold one down
Move through their legs
Embrace them
A playful trick
Reject them
Search for the way of their body
Without beginning or end

Three *desperation duets* were created and as I watched, they seemed as if they were one duet. After observing them and considering this idea, I made the choice to combine all three duets. They were built from the same source so each of the *desperation duets* had recurring movement elements. After combining the duets, three couples all knew the same, longer, *desperation duet* and it made me consider that instead of just allowing one of the couples to perform the duet, that perhaps all three couples could do the same *desperation duet* in unison. Through doing this, the experience Jonker had with men could be multiplied. I did not know what scene the *desperation duets* would occur in, so I left it to be incorporated later on in the structuring/ forming process.

As I was utilising six performers in the process of creating these duets, I was left with one performer which sparked the idea or choreographic device to generate solo movement material. I could use the women's movement material in the duet and transform that into a solo movement phrase. The material from the female role in the duet was then manipulated and utilised to create what I termed a *longing solo* phrase. The ideas of desperation and longing were linked together for me, as the more you long for something, the more desperate you become.



Figure 26: The *Longing solo* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates her sense of longing and desperation as we see the male figure foreshadowed. Photograph by *CuePix* Kirsten Makin, 2013.

In the movement generating phase, I had created one long movement motif: *Chasing motif*, a *desperation duet* and a *longing solo phrase*. This would provide the movement material for later stages in the choreographic process. How the movement material is combined, edited or juxtaposed creates the overall feeling and experience of the work. This is the form of the work or the shape and structure of the work. Smith-Autard (2010:7) suggests that the idea or emotion that the choreographer is exploring becomes embodied in the overall form and how the choreographer puts the material together in a structure creates the overall impression of the choreographic work.

3.3.7 Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography

The form was slowly beginning to emerge and at the start of this phase, I wanted to tackle the idea of her drowning as it was the final moment in her life and perhaps would be the final image in the work. The idea of drowning also embodied what, I imagined, to be her emotional state ‘drowned’ by her feelings of rejection in her life. I did not want to create it last so I investigated it early on in the forming and shaping process. The reason that I wanted to create it here is that I wanted to know what I was working towards, what the final moment or image of the work would be. I was aware of Humphrey’s (1987:159) statement that “a good ending is forty percent of the dance”. As the visual element of my work combined with the emotional element plays a key role in my work I consulted with the designer Bailey Snyman. He suggested that we use a huge industrial sheet of plastic that could offer

interesting movement possibilities. The plastic was a metaphor for the ocean and illustrated its power, strength and created the sound of the ocean. The plastic gave me a scenic device which I explored, played with and re-envisioned to create the feeling of the ocean. I made the decision that one woman would play Jonker, and the rest of the cast could be metaphoric of the water. The reason for this choice is that I wanted the experience to be focused on one woman and to show how the other performers would manipulate and push her creating a sense of ebb and flow. I created the scene from the outside instructing the performers to find ways of enclosing and wrapping Jonker, with the plastic, to create this sensation of drowning. The focal point of the scene was the woman (Jonker) and the other performers worked together to create the ebb and flow of the ocean. I wanted the performer playing Jonker to embody the sensations of drowning and the imagined, emotional, lived experience of that event. This *drowning scene* was created through utilising what I saw unfolding in front of me, as the performers moved and manipulated the plastic, physical images emerged that resonated with her drowning. I wanted to embody the feeling of drowning and Jonker's bodily sensations as she drowned interwoven with my interpretation of drowning.

Halfway through the rehearsals, I made the choice that as I had four women each one could physically play an aspect of Ingrid as she was so multi-faceted. The reason that I had chosen four women in the audition process was that I wanted a strong female influence in the cast, as I was dealing with such a multi-faceted woman as Jonker. Metelerkamp (2012:95) quotes Cope (1959) in a letter to Krige saying "Ingrid is essentially feminine, but she has not reconciled her position as a woman, as a poet, as a mother." They could each somatically portray an aspect of her in the work and highlight a specific theme. I started shaping a scene with each woman as the focus.

There was a constant barrage of disapproval and resistance that Jonker came up against with her father⁴⁸. It was something that Ingrid never overcame in her life. In her final suicide letter she wrote: "I've been rejected by my father...and all the men in my life" (Metelerkamp 2003:185). To articulate this experience, I created a duet, which explored the difficult relationship between Jonker and her father. I utilised a rope that would connect the two throughout the duet to generate movement that would articulate the idea of them being connected and how this obstruction impacted on Jonker. I reinterpreted the idea of her being emotionally attached to her father to a physical metaphor of being attached. I played with the

⁴⁸ There is a strand that emerges in the choreographic signature of dealing with binaries or antithesis in the works. It seems to be crucial to the conceptual themes of all three choreographic works.

idea of her being pulled constantly by her father as if emotionally she could not get away from him: calling this the *attachment duet*. Originally, I wanted it to be clear that it was her father but the more I played with the ambiguity between father and lover, the more it interested me. It became the archetype of the male figure in Ingrid's life and her seeming search for a paternal figure in her life. This moved me towards the concept of faceless men, as this could be a metaphor in the work of how, I felt, she perceived the men in her life. She felt that all the men in her life were the same, all leading to heartbreak. In her poem *This journey* Jonker (1994:135) writes

I have placed two swallows under your armpits
and drawn a secret cross on your face
For the man

Out of all Jonker's interludes with men, I chose to explore the love triangle she experienced with André Brink and Jack Cope. The reason for choosing this experience was it spoke to Jonker's constant pushing and pulling away from men and ebb and flow that characterised her life for me. The love triangle she experienced during 1963-1964 was explored through a trio. Jonker was involved with writer André Brink and Jack Cope simultaneously. Brink (2007:18) describes it as follows:

a fatal pattern was established: I would rush down to Cape Town in a frenzy of longing and desire, only to find, within a day or two, that in my absence she had been with Jack again-sometimes because he would not leave her in peace, just as often because she could not bear to be alone.

I wanted a scenic device that could be a metaphor⁴⁹ for all the men and the constant feelings of emptiness she experienced. This idea was echoed in the choice of men's jackets. I created a trio with a man's jacket that could be central to the scene in order to demonstrate how she was always searching and trying to 'hold' onto this jacket or the men in her life and how men became a central feature in, and of, her life. At the same time, I wanted the trio to highlight the idea of playing and teasing men and highlight my idea that Jonker could be sexually/flirtatious and sultry. I chose the music first for this scene and then created the movement to the rhythm of the song *Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps* by Doris Day. The reason I chose the music first was I wanted to break my pattern in the choreographic process, so starting with the medium of music and then generating the choreography. As previously, I allowed myself

⁴⁹ There emerges a choreographic strand in the signature in all three works the scenic devices emerged from a metaphor of the female's experiences.

to subconsciously choose the music relying on my body ‘knowing’. Doris Day’s lyrics of *Perhaps, Perhaps, Perhaps* (1965) spoke to the idea of chasing love and the uncertainty Jonker faced:

You won’t admit you love me
And so how am I ever to know?
You always tell me
Perhaps, perhaps, perhaps

As all the movement material I had created thus far did not fit this scene, I decided to generate a new movement phrase that we could utilise and which would epitomise Jonker’s flirtatious side. The source for the creation of the phrase was strongly from the tempo and rhythm of the music, as these factors (for me) aurally encapsulated the qualities and meanings related to sexuality, flirtation and sultriness that I tried to re-create. Through the form of a trio, which Blom and Chaplin (1982:180) define “as a weaving of three people”, I played with the idea that one is always left out and that shifting tensions between people can be created. What added to the choreography of the trio, was integrating the jacket as a central image of these men in her life. I played with the idea that she constantly moved from one man to another, following the jacket, to illustrate this notion of a love triangle between her, Brink and Cope.



Figure 27: The trio in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the sultry and flirtatious side of Jonker. Photograph by *CuePix* Kirsten Makin, 2013.

I already had the *attachment duet* between Jonker and her father and wanted a *second intimacy duet* that could encapsulate the experiences that Jonker had with André Brink. I wanted the duet to fluctuate from moments of intense passion to aggression. I found a pertinent quote from Brink before I created the duet and used this as source for the duet. The main images that stood out for me was the unpredictability of Jonker and her rapid change of moods and expressions. Brink (2007:9) states:

in the course of the weekend I saw her eyes move through an amazing range of expressions, from cool and objective to flashing with ferocity, from serene to exuberant to apathetic to disillusioned to eager, from brazenly challenging and defiant to outraged to contemptuous, from widening with childlike wonder to burning with passion, from quietly content to scathing and vicious.

I wanted the *intimacy*⁵⁰ *duet* to highlight the volatility that she experienced and speak to the heightened emotional state that love perpetuates. This was an important duet as it needed to embody her ideas of “chasing love”. Her constant sense of emotional volatility with men through the games she would play of reeling them in and then not committing to them or to a relationship with them. I began generating this *intimacy duet* through contact improvisation⁵¹: finding intimate connections between the bodies in space. I wanted to explore how the two bodies could intertwine and release in the most organic way. I used the song *Nightbook* composed by Ludovico Einaudi to stimulate the performer’s in finding this organic interchange with each other. This piece of music was layered with both intensity and a feeling of serenity speaking to the intimacy and volatility that I was exploring. Contact improvisation is a useful tool for a choreographer as Marks (2003:135) states “I use it as a kind of net...a way to discover what the dance will be about...dance is found in between people, in the moment, and often in the places where I least expect to find it.” In using contact improvisation and the specific piece of music, the ‘net’ was placed for the *intimacy duet* that dealt with both contrary elements of intimacy and volatility that characterised Jonker.

One of the central images or ideas for me was that Ingrid felt alone, depressed and isolated from the world. By early 1965, Jonker was on a self-destructive path of alcohol on top of her medication and admitted to Valkenburg for yet another breakdown and preceded to spiral into

⁵⁰ Intimacy emerges as a theme in all three of the choreographic works.

⁵¹ Contact Improvisation is a dance form started by Steve Paxton in 1972. It deals with a” form based on exchange of energy, weight, and momentum between two (or more) people” (Albright 2003: 186). Gibbs (2003:185) describes contact improvisation as follows “it requires the dancers to coordinate and cooperate as they lean against and balance each other, give support or are supported by each other”.

a deep depression (Randall, 2010: [sp]). It was this idea that formed the inspiration for a solo where I wanted to bring to the surface her feelings of desperation and suicidal thoughts: a sense of the world closing in on her. This feeling created a metaphor or spoke to one of the main themes with the oceans ebb and flow, where people surrounded her and then drew back. I wanted the idea of running-chasing to be a central movement leitmotif in the work and could be utilised in this ebb and flow. To create the *isolation*⁵² *solo*, I utilised the *Chasing motif* and confined it to a small space. The reason I used space was that I wanted the *isolation solo* to happen inside one of the boxes. By restricting the space, new movement possibilities emerged and began to create an *isolation solo* highlighting her instability.

By the end of the forming and shaping phase of the choreography, I had created the *Drowning, the Attachment duet, the Love trio, the Intimacy duet and the Isolation solo*.

3.3.8 Creating a structure or framework

After creating the various scenes or ‘scenarios’, I had to find a way to string them together in a way that created a narrative, that was in some way chronological or had a sense of juxtaposition. I needed to find the structure or framework for the piece. Smith-Autard (2010:96) defines a dance framework as being the order of the sections and how they relate to each other, the important element being that it has a beginning, middle and an end that contains “variety and contrast, develops logically and achieves coherence of form”. This refers back to the embodied narrative and the idea of connection (Bresler 2006:25). I had generated enough movement material and scenes to begin the structuring of the work, what Blom and Chaplin (1988:90) refers to as sequencing: where the choreographer considers what the order is that is most expressive of the choreographic intent or where a unified and total shape of a work is created. They state “sometimes the order suggests itself. Sometimes it takes a little experimenting and rearranging until the right sequence is found” (Blom & Chaplin 1988:90). During the choreographic process of *Chasing*, I went through a series of rearranging, reordering and restructuring before the order that best suited the choreographic intent was found. This refers to the characteristics of the choreographic process where an embodied narrative is created and Lavenders (2009:72) acronym IDEA: improvisation, development, evaluation and assimilation. The form for me was the best way the scenes were strung together that embodied the themes and images of Jonker that I was dealing with.

⁵² The idea of isolation appears as a theme in the work and emerges as a choreographic strand in my other two works.

After the first rehearsal, I sat with my choreographic journal and revisited the key images, symbols and themes in her work. I broke these down into sections for myself: her sense of being unable to express and the symbol of her typewriter, her sexual experiences and specifically her love triangle, her complex relationship with her father, her obsession with mirrors, her longing for her childhood, her sense of being rejected, her madness and experience in mental institutes and finally her drowning. Through reinvestigating the source material, I notated a scene by scene break down of what I possibly wanted.

Notes from my choreographic journal: **Structure 1**

Scene 1

Petals in the background...falling... a black butterfly
Ingrid is typing...pulling paper...ink marks
Rolls of news print...blank...Projections of words
A rose is formed in the background
Ink pours from her mouth

Scene 2

A sexual love duet
Touching
Her jack and Andre...perhaps a trio
Lying in a room
Isolated

Scene 3

I've been rejected by my father...and all the men in my life
A volatile duet between father and daughter
A rope connects them....umbilical cord
Never escaping...ontvlugting

Scene 4

Reflections of herself
I saw you yesterday
She sees herself all over
Mirrors on her hands

Scene 5

Girl on a swing
In a playground...games we play
Stockings around their ankles
Korreltjie sand

Scene 6

Rejections
She is pregnant and sand pours out of her
Pours into her

Scene 7

Her madness
Being pulled into the floor and disappearing
Alone...suspended

Scene 8

Her drowning
Slowly...breathless
Back at her typewriter

I am constantly putting scenes together with a vague sense of what they could be and others that just work without realising why at that stage. Visual patterns are important to me, and what it looks like aesthetically, thus, I focused on bodily images and shapes in space in relation to the scenic devices. When it comes to the structuring phase, I tend to get clear on final structure much later in the process. My first structuring of the piece is never the final one that is chosen. Even though I have a clear choreographic intent, the ordering and shaping of the intent is not clear at first. The first breakdown just seemed randomly strung together so I revised the original structure and created a new framework with another possible order:

Notes from my choreographic journal: **Structure 2**

Scene1:

Poem

Isolation solo: Ingrid alone

In a box with rope lights around the edge and inside are leaves

Transition: She argues with herself

Words coming out of her

Scene 2

Blank paper perhaps newsprint rolls

Her madness...running

Transition: boys roll away newsprint and women remain lying on the floor with jackets over their heads.

Scene 3:

Her love trio with the various men

She has the jacket

Scene 4:

Attachment duet and the rope: She is saying what her father said to her.

She is seated at the typewriter

Scene 5:

Korreltjie sand

Transition: Typewriter is broken and sand pours out of it

She stands on the chair and sand/salt pour out of her.

Scene 6:

Mirror reflection scene (still need to make)

People appearing and disappearing

Scene 7:

Intimacy Duet

There is a jacket and she is left with it

Scene 8:

Chasing motif scene

Desperation duets

Scene 9:

Fragment: 4 solos in the boxes filled with leaves

Scene 10:

The final drowning.

The cast performed the work, which I filmed⁵³. By watching my work on film, I tried to distance myself from the work in order to look at it critically or with what L Predock-Linnel and J Predock-Linnel (2001:195) refer to as with a “critical consciousness”. They refer to this as “the ability to describe, analyse, interpret, evaluate, and imagine/implement revisions” on your own work. What was observed was that the narrative or choreographic intent was unclear. There needed to be a clearer choreographic point of view in each scene and the transitions clearly used to link each scene to develop choreographic intent. It became obvious that the choreography demonstrated a series of events/experiences and that Jonker killed herself. There was not a clear choreographic point or view on the narrative or a statement made about that which the choreography demonstrated. Furthermore the emotional and qualitative aspects of her life and work that stimulated me initially, was not present in the dynamics of the choreography or in my choice of soundscape. I was trying to get away from an illustrated historical lecture to a work that makes meaning of the historical information and presents an artistic interpretation and a choreographic point of view.

As a collective, drawing from the knowing body, we discussed the structure and how they felt the narrative was read and being revealed as they performed it. I set the cast a task of restructuring the choreography in a way that, for them, would optimally reveal the narrative and bring across a choreographic point of view on Jonker’s life and work. The reason I involved the performers in such decision making was that I wanted their perspective from inside the work, they were performing the work so they could possibly have ‘felt’ something different to me. We numbered each scene and then each had a chance to re-order the scenes, which we negotiated through discussion and experimentation. The newly negotiated **Structure 3** was as follows

Scene 9:

Fragment:

Scene 4:

Attachment Duet and the rope

Scene 2:

⁵³ A choreographic strand emerges in the filming of the work as this was done in *One-way* and in *As night falls*.

Her madness...running....newsprint

Scene 6:

Mirror scene: reflections: galvanised iron sheets

Scene 3:

Love trio with the various men

Scene 7:

Intimacy duet

Scene 5:

Korreltjie sand

Scene 8:

Chasing scene

Scene 1:

Isolation solo

Scene 10:

The final drowning.

This new restructuring set me off on a path where I began to concentrate on the choreographic point of view and how the narrative was unfolding. Jonker's poetry is not linear or chronological and I wanted *Chasing* to have a similar structure. I wanted the work to feel the same way her poetry felt to me, a sense of cohesion with seemingly unrelated ideas. An episodic structure was more suitable as her life seemed to occur in various episodes. I focused strongly on the choreographic point of view and refining the movement material in each scene in order to generate the 'kinetic logic' of the work. I systematically reinvestigated and refined each scene in **Structure 3** adding, highlighting, contrasting and removing movement material that was not needed in each scene. There seemed to be too much movement material that was saying the same thing and not developing in each scene.

3.3.9 Refining and making choreographic choices

Blom and Chaplin (1982:25) state "by manipulating the movement, embroidering and embellishing it, we find out more about it, nudging into the cracks, penetrating its core and seeing what indeed it is all about." I began this refining process by penetrating the *longing solo phrase* to create the *fragment* scene. The reason I started with the *longing solo phrase* was it had become Jonker's movement motif, to me. I developed the *longing solo phrase* by using one of Blom and Chaplin's (1982:103) choreographic device of size: condense/expand. I used the idea of condensing and making smaller as I wanted to confine the movement phrase to one of the boxes. The reason for this was that I wanted the *fragment* scene to take place inside the boxes positioning Jonker as isolated and alone. I reconfigured the solo phrase and distilled it to fit inside the box. In doing so a series of gestural movements emerged as I made the movement material smaller. The reason I chose four women to do the solo was that

I needed a scene that could illustrate that all of the women were playing Jonker (refer to source material earlier in this discussion). I wanted a solo but with four women all executing the movement at the same time: a solo quartet. This would speak to the multi-faced aspects of Jonker's personality. In the *fragment* scene, I made the choice to have all four boxes on a strong diagonal from upstage right to downstage left as the visual composition was interesting to me. A diagonal is a strong line "as it makes the most powerful visual... impact" (Blom & Chaplin 1982:52).



Figure 28: The *Fragment scene* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the confinement of the women to the boxes as well as the gestural material. Photograph by *CuePix* Teigue Blokpoel, 2012.

I felt I had to add an opening image to intrigue the audience and set the scene for the work to unfold in. The opening image of the work is Jonker at her typewriter (downstage right), her face highlighted by a shard of light, frantically engrossed in the creative process of creating a poem. A shadow of a male figure looms in the fore-front and we slowly become aware of a rope that connects the two figures. The image of her typing is abstracted and we see her hands floating above the typewriter as if still typing and the words she creates are pouring out of her into the space around her, which becomes her canvas. A dialogue between her and the male figure hints at a lost love. She slowly emerges from her table and typewriter and is drawn (upstage left) towards the male figure. Her image is multiplied as three women slowly appear behind her following the same journey and walking into their individual boxes: each one alone but Jonker multiplied.

At first, the four solos (in the *fragment scene*) were done in unison, but through observing the scene there needed to be more choreographic exploration. The reason was that it just looked like movement material in unison. I did this by using time as a choreographic device. The reason I chose to look at time was that I wanted to show that the woman were all portraying Jonker but different aspects of her. So by using the device of time I was able to isolate woman in certain moments positioning them as Jonker. I played with the idea of stillness and pause. Through using the contrasting principle of movement and stillness, I had one woman still while the others moved creating a sense of “hesitation, a caught breathe, savouring the present...anticipating the future...a hint and promise of what is to come, a memory or what was-stillness, a moment tattooed” (Blom & Chaplin 1982:70). The scene was created with the woman all starting in unison and as the solo developed, one at a time; they would be still while the other three continued the movement material. The solo ended with all women back in unison, highlighting the fact that they were all Jonker.

I decided to follow **Structure 3** as it ‘worked’ the most for me as a choreographic point of view was emerging of why Jonker committed suicide. In following **Structure 3** the *Attachment duet* between Jonker and her father followed. The performer furthest downstage did the entire Fragment solo with the rope attached to her waist to symbolise the connection between Jonker and her father. To refine the *Attachment duet*, I played with the idea of her being pulled out of the box and frantically trying to get back inside. This reiterated the theme of the push and pull in her life with men. The three women echoed her movements creating a shadow or reflection which, again, illustrated all the women were playing Jonker. I created the choreography for the three women in the boxes, not attached to the rope, by taking the movement material of the woman in the *Attachment duet* and transforming it into still images that occurred in relation to the duet.

To further develop the idea of running and chasing as a central motif, I looked closely at the next scene in **Structure 3** with newsprint. I created three pathways demarcated with the newsprint where the choreography unfolded. The reason why I demarcated the floor space was that it visually appealed to me. It made me view the scene as if Jonker was literally running in between her own lines of her poetry. I used the *Chasing motif* as the material for the scene interspersed with the idea of running and chasing. I had the woman frantically chasing one man at a time until eventually through the momentum of the scene; all three men were being chased by different woman. This multiplied Jonker’s continual ‘chasing’ of the men in her life. I choreographed moments of contact where the woman desperately tried to

grasp and hold onto the men. I used the idea of stillness to provide a contrast: one woman would move or walk slowly across the newsprint while running and chasing happened around her. Her image became the focal still point within the choreography. This is important in my choreography, as I think it gives the viewer something to focus on in relation to what else is happening on stage. It also illustrated, to me, even though Jonker was still, perhaps her thoughts were still ‘chasing’. By the end of the scene the paper and men had disappeared and the four women were left.



Figure 29: *Scene 2 in Chasing*. The image illustrates the use of newsprint to demarcate the floor. Photograph by *CuePix* Teigue Blokpoel, 2012.

Following **Structure 3**, the scene with the galvanised iron sheets, symbolic of mirrors, followed. I played with the idea of the mirrors being held up by the men and four women moving in and out: their reflections appearing and disappearing. I used the *Chasing motif* as source material and I translated the material to create a mirror image of the movement: one performer did it on the left-hand side and the other on the right-hand side. I created the material with the performers facing each other, and then I translated the material to face the mirrors. This was further developed by playing with the performers moving from the mirrors towards the front. This created a mirror image of the performers as they executed the movement, further a mirror image of the performers was cast on the galvanised iron and of the performers on the psyche. This idea of Jonker’s reflection being multiplied spoke to her multi-faced personality as well as her constant need to see her reflection. I put the scene

together and played with how many women were seen, varying it from one to all four. I used the choreographic device of repetition and slowly the movement phrase would accumulate until it was completed.

The love triangle trio followed in **Structure 3**. I wanted to use the remaining cast to highlight an image while the trio was happening. I created a group of them with jackets covering their faces and created simple choreography based on the rhythm of the “cha, cha, cha”. This would create the background to the trio and develop as they moved behind the boxes slipping their jackets off and pulling wine glasses out of their pockets. This provided a context for her sultry and flirtatious side to unfold in. A stylised gestural language was created for them, in unison, portraying people laughing and drinking in a bar. This choreography set the tone for the trio.

The *Intimacy duet* in **Structure 3** was already choreographed. The refining that happened was that I chose to have three of the performers hold up the galvanised sheets at the back of the duet and the boxes placed in order to confine the space to illustrate a private room where the duet could take place. Jonker writes “in a room far away, behind the spilled autumn, your eyes gaze astounded at the mirror of your body” (Brink & Krog, 2007: 114).

*Korreltjie sand*⁵⁴ is next in **Structure 3**. I used the lyrics of the song and the rhythm to create a gestural language. Originally, I created the scene in unison all facing the front. It was only later after developing the detailed fast gestural language and getting that into the dancers’ body, that I began to play with the spatial orientation of the bodies in space. I utilised the configuration of childhood games as inspiration for the spatial orientation to develop the choreography. The reason I used the idea of childhood games was that it spoke to the theme of her childhood which was so pivotal for her. I incorporated the four boxes into the scene and used them as playful things to be moved, jumped into and out of to create the playground where this scene would take place. The integration of the scenic devices proposed choreographic choices and I allowed the device to propose the performers position in space.

In the next scene in **Structure 3**, I experimented with both the *longing solo* and the *desperation duets*. I had the solo occurring in front of the duets. This was very interesting as it gave me the sense of the woman/Jonker being isolated and her experiences with men highlighted behind her. The refining that happened in the scene was that the boxes were

⁵⁴ Little grain of sand (Brink & Krog 2007:79)

utilised to demarcate the scene into two parts: the solo and one duet in the forefront and the other two duets in the background space.

Following **Structure 3**, was the *isolation solo* in the box with the other performers being drawn in around her. I added more to the feeling of desperation and the contemplation of suicide. I did this by executing the solo with contrasting staccato movements that were much faster which gave a feeling of desperation. I choreographed the other six performers in a circular formation around the box, being drawn in and out echoing the pull of the ocean and emphasising the spiralling of her downwards towards her final death.

Following **Structure 3**, the quality of the final scene with the plastic was refined so as to create the power of the ocean. I wanted to show Jonker's vulnerability as she was engulfed. I did this by making sure the movements of the woman in the plastic were a reaction to the movement of the performers wielding the plastic. A sense of action/ reaction was closely examined.

Through refining the movement material and making choreographic choices by following **Structure 3**, the work began to generate its own kinaesthetic logic. The unity-variety-contrast was evident in the work after the refining process of the choreography where I concentrated on developing the *Chasing motif* and manipulating it, contrasting the variations and finding conceptual leitmotifs that illustrated a clear choreographic intent.

3.3.10 Music and sound in the choreographic process

Music is always a very important element in all of my choreographic processes. I am constantly searching for new composers and interesting music to utilise for my works. This is a deliberate process where I allow my 'knowing' body to influence my choice. The sound of the work is vital to the experience of the embodied narrative and emotional experience as well as the construction of the entire soundtrack and how it is put together. By creating the medium of sound or music in the work, the embodied narrative is framed in a certain way for the audience to experience. What they are hearing and seeing has a direct impact on how the embodied narrative will be experienced. One of the composers I came across in my research was Ludovico Einaudi. The intensity of his music and various layers of sounds were intriguing and as soon as I heard the sound it felt 'right' for Jonker. The reason it felt 'right' was that it had a layered-ness to it but also the contrasting elements of volatility and serenity. Originally, I wanted the sound score to have the feel as if there was a 'chase'. I searched for

composers with an intense and dark sound. I subjectively respond to a piece of music allowing it to ‘speak’ to my ‘knowing body’- a sympathetic resonance (Anderson 2001:84). The work of Hans Zimmer also felt as if it suited the work as his music has a sombre, driving element to it. I came across the composer Abel Korzeniowski and his piece *Clock Tick* (2010) immediately spoke to me. It had this monotonous ticking sound as well as a driving feel to the music almost like constant waves of emotion. I collected as many pieces of music that I felt could provide the sound score to the work. I always create a soundtrack early on in the process so that the element of music is integrated into the work. Another reason for doing this early on in the process is that the music dictates choreographic choices: such as the length of the scenes, quality of movements and the overall visual impression. Looking back at the music selection process and seeing that in total there were 67 versions of the soundtrack before I settled on the final version shows the ongoing process of music in my works.

Smith-Autard (2010:29) discusses the intimate relationship of music and dance and how music suggests the mood, style and overall form of the work. Once **Structure 1** was generated, I began finding a sound for *Chasing*. My initial music choices had urgency and a sombre feeling to it. I wanted to emphasise the impending despair that she felt throughout her life that eventually resulted in her suicide. I wanted a sound leitmotif that you would hear from the beginning and that would finally tie into her death. I chose the sound of the ocean as this intrigued me: as the ocean is both soothing and destructive. Brink (2007: 11) speaks of Jonker’s connection in her life and poetry to the ocean “the sea became the background music to her poetry”. The ocean is a pertinent theme in her poetry and eventually became her grave. I felt that this sound could function as the sound that underscored her life and pulled her towards her death: “my lyk lê uitgespoel in wier en gras, op al die plekke waar ons eenmaal was”⁵⁵ (Jonker 1994: 17).

Through my research, I came across the Afrikaans musician Chris Chameleons’ album *Ek Herhaal Jou*⁵⁶ (2005). I was interested to hear his interpretation of Ingrid’s poetry and how he had translated her poems into music. His interpretation of *Korreltjie Sand*⁵⁷ was intriguing as originally when I encountered the poem I found it extremely sombre. The poem speaks to Jonker’s experience of an abortion and he has managed to create a playful approach to this topic. I was excited by the tempo of the song speaking strongly to her playful energy and

⁵⁵ Washed out my body lies in weed and grass in all the places where we once did pass (Brink & Krog 2007:39)

⁵⁶ I repeat you (Brink & Krog 2007:54)

⁵⁷ Little grain of sand (Brink & Krog 2007:79)

childhood influence. It felt exactly ‘right’ for the work as I began to realise that to create this unity-variety-contrast, I needed a playful scene to contrast the serious and volatile scenes that I had already created. The playful scene of *Korreltjie Sand* was contrasted by the moment afterwards as Jonker climbed onto the table and salt began to pour from inside her. The visual and aural impact of this image portraying an abortion was in contrast to the previous scene. I wanted to keep a sound leitmotif so I used his version of *Fragment* for the opening *Isolation solos*. This also meant that her poem, *Fragment*, was the text that was heard through the music in the scene. This was one of the poems I had concentrated on and spoke to the themes I was dealing with.

3.3.11 Structural Transitions: the use of text

I wanted to utilise Jonker’s poems in the work as she is an iconic poet and her passion and form of expression is through poetry and more specifically words. My passion and form of expression is through choreography and more specifically, through movements. By combining this cognitive and somatic form of expression, a multi-layered embodied narrative could emerge. Her poetry was the source material for generating ideas on movement language, scenic devices, the structuring of the choreography and a strong influence throughout the choreographic process. Even though her poetry had an influential role in the process, I made the choreographic choice to explore the possibility of utilising specific poems as transitions⁵⁸ in the work.

Blom and Chaplin (1982:87) discuss the notion of a transition as an important aspect in choreography “that flows with its own inner kinetic logic”. I began to play with her poetry to create the inner kinetic logic of the work as a whole. The overall form of **Structure 3** illuminated the spaces where transitions were required. As Blom and Chaplin (1982:88) state “transitions between major sections are determined by the overall form or dramatic necessity”.

The key concept in the work is the idea that Jonker ‘chased’ love and *Gesig van die liefde* or *Face of love* connected with this idea. It highlighted what Anna Jonker, Ingrid’s sister, recounts in her memory of Jonker when she states how their mother said “How could he (Abraham Jonker) say she isn’t his child...she has that same broken-heart look in her eyes” and it was for this reason that her grandmother always called Jonker her “heartache chid”

⁵⁸ Transitions can be defined by Blom and Chaplin (1982:87) as an organic form “of natural evolvment from one thing into the next”.

(Metelerkamp 2012:27). Through focusing the narrative of her as a “heartache child” chasing love, I made the choice to have it as the opening text between Jonker, at the typewriter, and the man attached to her. It could form the transition between the opening kinetic scene of Jonker typing and the following *Fragment scene*. The opening line “your face is the face of all the others” made the reference that the men in her life, that she chased, were all reflections and eluded to a commonality in her experiences in love. This created the male figure as an archetype of all the men in her life.

This archetype of the male figure was alluded to in the *Attachment duet* between her and her father. I wanted to have her father’s voice or his voice inside of her head of what he had said to her. “As is well known, Ingrid’s relationship with her father was disastrous and had many ramifications. The development of her inner perception of the opposite sex was severely affected, which influenced all her relationships, especially with men” (Metelerkamp 2012:115). The transition between the *Attachment duet* and the *Chasing scene* needed to illuminate her instability and conflict with herself. I explored the idea of an argument with herself, the voice inside her head shouting instructions to her, things that had been said to her: “type...jy moet skryf⁵⁹ ...they going to take your child away from you...Ingrid where are you going?” This verbal bantering in her mind was the transition into the next scene.

I made the decision to write my own poem and cognitive response to Jonker as a transition into the mirror scene. The reason for this is that I wanted to present a choreographers perspective or point of view.

The door opened
burnt in water and crests of golden green
the mirror reflected me back to you and I knew where you had been felt and seen
uncertainty held
bitterbessie dagbreek sang to me
the waves called Ingrid
and I knew this was meant to be
the mirror looked back
the men became vacant and still
the mirror called and I knew you still

⁵⁹ Type you must write is the English translation

My response formed the organic link of the physical action of the performers and the concepts being explored in the scene. As the mirrors floated up and out of the space, a transition was needed between the mirror scene and the love triangle. I played with Jonker's *Wagtyd in Amsterdam* which was written for both André Brink and Jack Cope, the two men in her love triangle. It introduced the idea of her waiting for a lover, anticipating him before the chase. I utilised the performers to create the spatial patterns for both the man and woman to find each other as they argued. The performer's spatial configuration created the lanes and tram stops Jonker spoke of: people with jackets lifted up, covering their faces became her "galg van trane". This set the scene of the trio to be interpreted in a slightly surreal way where the observer is conscious of her loneliness and desperation in her attempt to sexually play with two men at the same time. The playfulness of the *love trio* was juxtaposed by the next *Intimacy duet* with her poem *My omhelsing het my verdubbel*⁶⁰. The poem created the feeling of two people "in a room far away" (Brink & Krog 2007:114) that created an introspective space of intimacy which the duet explored. Jonker's *My embrace redoubled me* created the emotional landscape of the kinetic logic of the duet.

In order to juxtapose the *Intimacy duet*, I played with Jonker's *Korreltjie Sand* (Jonker 1994:75) as the next transition. Jonker begins to type the poem on her typewriter as it begins to float up into the air, followed by her chair: both herself and the typewriter buoyant and moving along the diagonal. Jonker struggles to speak the words of her poem. Both women are trying to type the words when the typewriter jams and sand begins to pour out, from inside it. The song *Korreltjie sand* begins to play as they begin the playful gestural choreography. As the scene concludes, a woman gets up onto the table and sand pours out from inside of her, alluding to her various abortions which are referred to in the poem.

⁶⁰ Translation is: My embrace redoubled me.



Figure 30: *Korreltjie sand* in *Chasing*. The image illustrates the reference to Jonker's abortions through the use of sand. Photograph by *CuePix* Kirsten Makin, 2013.

Metelerkamp (2012:96) quotes Marjorie Wallace: "Ingrid's many abortions-usually at least four." The woman attempts to catch the sand and stop it from falling, illustrating Jonker's battle within herself, as she begins the poem *Alles wat breek*⁶¹ which formed the transition into the next scene.

Alles wat breek pre-empt the volatile and dynamic experience of the *Desperation Duets* and *Longing solo* referring to the spiral towards the end. Cope (1966:12) states "enchantment twined in her wild, hopeless yearning; singer of love and exultant life, given to death. Enduring, knowing, feeling all these contradictions bred a sensitivity that carried her beyond to regions where she suffered along, where she believed that for her there was no mercy." There is a sense of no mercy for Jonker as performers hurl themselves at each other in contact duets while her sense of suffering, alone, is highlighted by the solo. The scene elucidates the idea "because everything shaped, completed or begun-like life begotten in the womb-has no other fulfilment than the tomb." (Brink 2007:113).

The final *Drowning* ends with Jonker in the plastic, suspended, floating and peaceful as the performer vocalises *Ontvlugting* as the final image. The text was spoken by all four of the woman and one man and what became clear was that having four voices was disjointed- for

⁶¹ All that breaks (Brink & Krog 2007:113)

me, as an observer. I made the decision to focus on one central voice for Jonker. The other three women would still physically play aspects and reflections of Ingrid but I would only hear one voice.

3.3.12 A summation and critical reflection

My main intention when creating *Chasing*, utilising the medium of physical theatre, was to create a symbolic “world” for Jonker’s narrative to unfold in. My initial impulse or “ideational stimulus” in *Chasing* was the notion of ‘chasing something’. I found the “added shade of meaning” or metaphor for this kinetic notion of ‘chasing’. The idea of someone ‘chasing’ something reminded me of Ingrid Jonker, as she was ‘chasing’ her whole life. I wanted the observer to encounter Jonker’s narrative through a form of empathy (Anderson 2001:84) and to feel her ‘lived experience’. I identified key periods, themes and symbols of Jonker’s life and poetry and utilised those as organising principles for the choreographic exploration. These became the structural framework that I concentrated on, influencing my choice in movement material, structuring, scenic devices and the tone of the work. I selected pivotal experiences in Jonker’s life that, to me, represented the most important aspects of her life and created ‘scenarios’ around them. The selected narrative of Jonker was reinterpreted through the body as the main site of investigation and embodied to create a holistic theatrical environment and experience through the use of bodies, text, music, lighting and scenic devices.

The visual element in this work played a key role in the imagining of the theatrical experience. Crucial to the visual composition, or what I see unfolding in front of me when I am choreographing, is the use and integration of the various scenic devices. In *Chasing*, I designed the space through the use of scenic devices generated from the source material where the performer’s connection with the devices generated a ‘felt idea (Anderson 2001:89).

The next step in the process was to move from source material into a movement language. In the movement generating phase, I began by exploring a phrase that could form the ‘motif’ of the work: the *Chasing motif*. The next stage in the process was to create duets using specific tasks: *desperation duets* and an *intimacy duet*. A solo movement phrase was created: a *longing solo phrase*. In the forming and shaping phase, I explored various scenes: *drowning scene*, *attachment duet*, *the love trio*, *intimacy duet* and the *isolation solo*. After creating the various scenes, I had to find a way to string them together in a way that generated a narrative that was in some way chronological. Even though I had a clear choreographic intent, the

ordering and shaping of the intent was not clear at first. The work was in an order that did not illustrate the choreographic intent and a new structure, as discussed earlier, was created that unfolded the embodied narrative in the most effective way. In the process, three structures were created and *Structure 3* was selected and further refining and choreographic choices were made. Through making choreographic choices, the work began to generate its own somatic logic where a sense of unity-variety-contrast was evident. Music was an important element in the choreographic process as the sound of the work is crucial to the experience of the embodied narrative and the emotional experience of the viewer. The music began to suggest the overall form and mood of the work. I utilised Jonker's poems in the work as structural transitions and this added another layer to the work. Through the choreographic process, each element or medium utilised became an integral component of the work adding a layer of meaning to the embodied narrative being explored, generating this 'felt idea' (Anderson 2001:88).

In reflecting on the choreographic process of all three pieces, there is a strand or 'through line' with the use of South African females as source material for the creation of an embodied narrative. A clear sense of artistic collaboration between me, the designer and the performers emerges as the working process is collaborative. The practice of creating the embodied narrative is primarily a somatic one where a stylised gestural and vocal language of performance is generated. A clear sense of devising and task orientated processes characterise the choreographic process. The work is not restricted to a linear understanding of narrative as Jonker's poems are not linear or chronological and an episodic structure was utilised. The physical form communicates meaning and the work contains layers of meaning and is not one dimensional.

Chapter 3 provided a description of the choreographic processes of *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) to identify the key trends and choreographic commonalities within the choreographic process to articulate the emerging choreographic signature. These three descriptions together, provide a thick description out of which the signature can be defined. The 'aesthetic glue' (Chappell 2008:169) or how my choreographic works are held together can be traced through the description provided in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 4: DEFINING MY CHOREOGRAPHIC SIGNATURE

Chapter 4 serves as a delineation of my emerging choreographic signature to form the bedrock of sub-aim 4 and phase 2 (a). Through this self-reflection, I retrospectively articulate my artistic preferences by identifying the points of convergence amongst the key choreographic signature trends demonstrated in my work.

4.1 My emerging signature from the three choreographic processes

The ‘aesthetic glue’ (Chappell, 2008:169) or how my choreographic environment is held together to form my choreographic signature is identified in *One-way*, *As night falls* and *Chasing* to highlight the traces, themes, core images and leitmotifs in the works. In unravelling and unpacking the choreographic environment in each work and finding commonalities between them, my emerging choreographic signature is defined. By identifying these commonalities across a body of my choreographic work and the methods of instruction and choreographic processes, I determine my emerging personal choreographic style or signature. This provides me with insight into the processes that I use to reinterpret narratives as embodied narratives in the act of choreography. In order to identify the significant trends within the choreographic signature, I provide a table with a bird’s eye view of the three choreographic processes that I discussed in Chapter 3.

Table 4: A bird’s eye view of all three choreographic processes

Subdivision	One-way	As night falls	Chasing
Beginning my choreographic process: finding a source	Inspiration: ‘refugees’ My personal narrative Contrast in the narrative: normative sexuality verses alternative sexuality My ‘lived’ experience	Inspiration: night darkness Martin’s Narrative Contrast in the narrative: society verses other Martin’s ‘lived’ experience	Inspiration: ‘chasing’ Jonker’s narrative Contrast in the narrative: inner conflict: personal desires and values clashes with immediate external environment Jonker’s ‘lived’ experience
Source Material	Experiential: personal reflection Tension Outsider/ othering Marginalisation due to heteronormativity Belonging and longing Disconnection from myself	Visual images: Owl House Tension Outsider/ othering Marginalisation due to her way of being and personal beliefs in the world Belonging and longing Suicide	Visual images of Jonker’s life Tension Outsider/ othering Marginalisation due to her way of being and personal beliefs in the world Belonging and longing Suicide
Designing the space through utilising specific devices in the choreographic process	Symbolic world for the embodied narrative Scenic devices to transform the stage space Scenic devices becomes a metaphor for my emotional	Symbolic world for the embodied narrative Scenic devices to transform the stage space The scenic devices become metaphoric of Miss	Symbolic world for the embodied narrative Scenic devices to transform the stage space The scenic devices become metaphoric of Jonker’s

	landscape Through making use of light and darkness Overlay of visual imagery: contrast	Helen's emotional landscape Through making use of light and darkness Overlay of visual imagery: contrast	emotional landscape (her obsession with her reflection, men and love) Through making use of light and darkness Overlay of visual imagery: contrast
Performers role in the choreographic process	Co-creators, their 'lived experience' (otherness and sexuality) Cognitive and somatic responses to tasks to generate movement material: inside/out Thinking bodily practice Kinetic empathy with my 'lived' experience Embodied presence	Co-creators, their 'lived experience' (otherness and sexuality) Cognitive and somatic responses to tasks to generate movement material: inside/out Thinking bodily practice Kinetic empathy with Martin's 'lived' experience Embodied presence	Co-creators, their 'lived experience' (otherness and sexuality) Cognitive and somatic responses to tasks to generate movement material: inside/out Thinking bodily practice Kinetic empathy with Jonker's 'lived' experience Embodied presence
Generating movement material: reinterpreting the source material into an embodied narrative	Movement 'motif': <i>Struggle Phrase</i> Choreographic problems/tasks Movement poems Solos, duets, Trios, group sections Choreographic devices to create contrast: size, proximity, "Do that"	Movement 'motif': <i>Darkness motif</i> Choreographic problems/task Movement poems Solos, duets, Trios, group sections Choreographic devices to create contrast: phrases linked together	Movement 'motif': <i>Chasing motif</i> Choreographic problems/task Movement poems Solos, duets, Trios, group sections Choreographic devices to create contrast: tempo: fast/slow/stop
Beginning the forming and shaping phase of the choreography	Scenic devices/ movement generating phase propel this phase Create new specific scenes Two counter tensions in the narrative Symbolism and metaphor	Scenic devices/ movement generating phase propel this phase Create new specific scenes Two counter tensions in the narrative Symbolism and metaphor	Scenic devices/ movement generating phase propel this phase Create new specific scenes Two counter tensions in the narrative Symbolism and metaphor
Creating a structure or framework	Unity/variety/contrast Rearranging/ reordering/ restructuring to find choreographic intent Visual patterns Non-linear narrative 2 possible structures	Unity/variety/contrast Rearranging/ reordering/ restructuring to find choreographic intent Visual patterns Non-linear narrative 2 possible structures	Unity/variety/contrast Rearranging/ reordering/ restructuring to find choreographic intent Visual patterns Non-linear narrative 3 possible structures
Refining and making choreographic choices	Aesthetic choices and decisions Intention of the work Principle of contrast: visual and narrative Visual composition Transitions Running Quality and dynamics Internal perceptual data of the body	Aesthetic choices and decisions Intention of the work Principle of contrast: visual and narrative Visual composition Transitions Running Quality, dynamics, size and fragmentation Internal perceptual data of the body	Aesthetic choices and decisions Intention of the work Principle of contrast: visual and narrative Visual composition Transitions Running Quality, dynamics, size and fragmentation Internal perceptual data of the body
Music and sound in the choreographic process	Soundscape to create dramatic tension 'knowing' body 'felt' experience somatic inner experience Sound leitmotif: sound of	Soundscape to create dramatic tension 'knowing' body 'felt' experience Sound leitmotif: sound of owls hooting and howling	Soundscape to create dramatic tension 'knowing' body: sympathetic resonance 'felt' experience Sound leitmotif: sound of

	traffic juxtaposed with heartbeat	winds	the ocean
Structural transitions	Scenes created in isolation Transitions: Lead woman: emotional state Sound of traffic and heartbeat	Scenes created in isolation Transitions: light and darkness Sound of howling winds and owls hooting	Scenes created in isolation Transitions: Jonker's poems Sound of the ocean

In summary, this bird's eye view reveals my work is always about the 'lived' experience of a woman. I always utilise a contrast in the narrative of my work. There is a sense of belonging and longing for the woman who is positioned as 'other'. The space is designed through the use of scenic devices, where a symbolic world is created for the embodied narrative. The scenic devices always function as a metaphor for the women's emotional landscape. Constantly when I am creating a choreographic work, I look for visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic/ action in a choreographic stimulus. In all of my works, there is an overlay of visual imagery. The performers always function as co-creators using a thinking bodily practice. A movement 'motif' is created in all of my works and developed through the use of choreographic devices. In creating a structure or framework, I always use a non-linear narrative where a sense of unity-variety-contrast is the focus. When I am refining the work and making choreographic choices, the principle of contrast and visual composition plays a significant role. The soundscape of the work is consistently used to create dramatic tension with a clear sound leitmotif. These similarities in my choreographic works reveal themselves through this bird's eye view.

4.2 My signature choreographic trends that have emerged over the three processes

It is clear that in my work, there is always a conflict between a normative and an alternate way of being. My own or another's 'lived experience' is the focus of the embodied narrative. There is always the use of a metaphor in relation to the original starting point. The woman is positioned as 'other'. The commonality of the 'other' reveals the theme of individual versus society. The woman is always isolated. There is a commonality in the woman's 'lived experience' of intimate and sexual encounters. I provide more detail on each of these choreographic trends below.

Normative verse alternate way of being

Across the works, all three women are highly individualistic with a non-normative approach to life. It is this aspect of their 'lived' experience that contributes to using them as source

material and where the crux of the embodied narrative could lie. Two conflicts emerge in all the women and in the embodied narratives between an inner conflict (their personal values and desires) and the immediate environment in which they exist. A normative⁶² versus an alternative way of being in the world creates a binary that exists for all three women as they sit in between the social world's expectations and values and their own. There exists a tension between that which they desire and what they are presented with, who they want to act or live as and how they are expected to act or live. It is this binary tension between centre and margins, as well as the way in which they try to navigate the binary that is prominent in my choreographic works. It is my and their futile attempts to reconcile these binaries that create a sense of longing and belonging in their 'lived' experience and these manifest in the embodied narrative. These inner conflicts within themselves cause them to oscillate between the opposing poles of the binary, between centre and margin. Their failure to comply with the expectations of the centre, positions them as marginalised (as discussed in 3.1.2) and lacking agency. They need to be accepted and loved: yearning to belong in the(ir) world. It is this conflict that is of interest to me, as a choreographer, and forms the driving force for the creation of the embodied narrative through the physical theatre medium. Where this conflict lies and where the rupture happens between these two binaries of normative versus alternative, is the crux of where the embodied narrative lies: the narrative intervention.

My own or another's 'lived experience'

In the choreographic works, a trend is that either my own or another's 'lived experience' is the focus of the exploration through/in the body. As discussed in 2.6, this approach to my work or the embodied narrative resonates with an embodied way of being referring to the interaction of the mind and body and how that facilitates engagement with one's environment (Totton 2010:23). The embodied narrative created in all of my works then becomes an interplay or a network of connections between the stories residing in the body and the environment in which it exists. It emerges that I engage in a constant shift between the inside/out and the outside/in during my choreographic process as revealed in 3.1.1, 3.1.5, 3.2.6 and 3.3.6 in specific movement generating tasks. This process of moving from inside/out and outside/in through the body links back to my discussion in Chapter 2 of how the body is conceptualised in relation to this research that individuals concurrently *have* a body, *are* a

⁶² In the context of this study I use 'normative' as referring to what is expected in a specific social cultural paradigm. For me, in my works the norm seems to be what the male dictates, I place anything against that as 'other'.

body and *become* a body (Fraser & Greco 2005:4). It is this ‘body’ that becomes a living/ breathing/ interacting text that is constantly being inscribed with ways of being. This embodied text or the bodies ‘lived experience’ is drawn on and investigated in the choreographic process as the mode of expression through a physical theatre practice. As discussed in Chapter 2, the body is intertwined with stories that speak to the situation it exists in and (Sparkes 1999:26) these stories are utilised in my choreographic process to generate movement material (see 3.1.5). Through either my own ‘lived experience’ or that of another’s, the choreographic signature finds stories that form a layer of the embodied narrative. As a choreographer, I see individuals as body-subject where the body is the focus of experience (Carroll 2011:251) and use the experiences that are located within the body and stored within it as source material when creating a choreographic work (see 3.3.6). It is this “in-dwelling” (Winnicott 1966: 516) as discussed in 2.1.2 within the body that is crucial to my view of the body as a choreographer. It provides the framework for how I see the body’s role in the choreographic process where an active sensing and feeling is crucial to it interacting moment to moment. This sensing and feeling characteristic of an embodied narrative is reflected in my work in 3.1.4, 3.1.5, 3.2.5, 3.2.6, 3.3.5 and 3.3.6.

The use of a metaphor in relation to the original starting point

In all three works, a trend established is the use of a metaphor in relation to the original starting point. This metaphor is part of the emerging choreographic signature as it allows the concept of the work to be further investigated and developed. In all the works, I start by finding a stimulus or idea (visual, auditory, tactile or kinesthetic) and then further the idea by finding an “added shade of meaning” (Humphrey 1987:35) or metaphor (see 3.1.1, 3.2.3, 3.3.2 and Table 4). A metaphor is a figure of speech which illustrates a similarity between two things or as Carroll (2011:251) states “it confers a symbolic meaning rather than a literal one”. In utilising a metaphor in relation to the original idea or source can provide another layer to the concept and to the embodied narrative. This resonates with Gordon’s view on physical theatre where an inter-play exists between various elements of the live performance as discussed in Chapter 1 (Finestone 1997:62). This idea of layering or inter-play is a trend within the embodied narrative/physical theatre and the choreographic signature as conceptually, the works have layers that form a part of the embodied narrative that is a ‘felt’ idea through the body. More possibilities are available as Kirsch (2011:6) posits adding a metaphor creates more associations and opens up further avenues for choreographic exploration. This opens a landscape of possibilities, images and source material to be utilised

in the choreographic process towards generating an embodied narrative (see 3.1.1, 3.2.2, 3.3.2).

The other

In examining the works thematically, there is a commonality of a sense of the ‘other’ (discussed in 3.1.2) or marginalised woman as source material due to their ‘lived experience’ or stories within their body. These marginalised narratives: whether autobiographical or biographical are the main sources that are *interpreted* to generate an embodied narrative. This notion of ‘interpretation’ is fundamental to this autoethnographic research and physical theatre as I re-interpret narratives of marginalisation to provide the main catalyst for the process and creation of the work. It is this notion of the excluded, forgotten or in the margin that is a common theme in all three choreographic works (see 3.1.2, 3.2.3 and 3.3.3). Source is drawn from Individuals in the “out-group”, untold stories and experiences and the need to express and reinterpret them is relevant to my emerging signature. It is through the act of interpreting as a choreographer and by the performers, through the body, that is significant to the choreographic signature and characteristic of the embodied narrative.

Individual versus society

The commonality of the ‘other’ leads into a theme of individual versus society that emerges in the choreographic signature. This theme is prevalent in the source material (see 3.1.2, 3.2.3 and 3.3.3) and in the choreography of the works. In *One-way*, the isolated woman is seen in direct contrast with the performers who represent societies view and judgement (see Figure 7). In *As Night Falls*, Miss Helen is seen continuously as separate and isolated from society where she is mocked and judged by the performers (see Figure 21). In *Chasing*, Jonker is seen as separate and different to the society she existed in. All of the lead women are positioned in the work as isolated and ‘other’. This refers back to a normative versus a non-normative approach to life as discussed earlier.

Isolation

This reveals the theme of isolation as prevalent in the choreographic signature as the lead women are seen as different to the other performers and alone. In the choreography, the lead woman is positioned alone and this brings the theme of lost love/ unrequited love as a clear feature to the choreographic signature. There is a sense of the woman in all of the works searching/ longing for love and affection and battling with the resulting turmoil (see Figure

26). In *One-way*, the lead woman is battling with her sexuality and has experiences of unrequited love with another woman. In *As Night Falls*, Miss Helen is seen as having a relationship with her coloured helper and the trauma of losing that relationship. In *Chasing*, Jonker is constantly searching/longing for love and is in a perpetual cycle of unrequited love and continues to chase or long for love.

Intimate and sexual encounters

There is a commonality in the women's 'lived experience' of intimate and sexual encounters that trace through the choreographic signature and reveal the use of romantic and sexual relationships as a trend in the choreographic signature (see Figures 1,3,4,10,14,15, 18, 22 and 27). These encounters fluctuate between a sense of intimacy and a sense of sexual violence. This reveals itself through either duets with a visceral and sexually volatile nature or group scenes where violence is inflicted on the isolated woman. As a choreographer, I find myself 'choreographing' love where sexual tension and innuendo form a part of the signature.

Thematically, the choreographic signature finds commonality in selecting a stimulus or idea and further developing that through an "added shade of meaning" or a metaphor that becomes the main source material for the work. Prominent in the source material, is a conflict between what the women desire and what their immediate environment presents them with. It is their futile attempt at reconciling these conflicts that creates a sense of longing and belonging in the world. Due to this, these individuals are seen as 'other'. The choreographic signature finds further development in the themes of individual verses society, isolation, unrequited love and sexually volatile encounters.

4.3 Core images across the works

The visual element plays a pivotal role in the imagining of the theatrical experience or how I overlay visual imagery. The designs of the works all share a trend of organic or fluid moveable set pieces (see 3.1.3, 3.2.4 and 3.3.4). The fact that they are moveable contributes to the fluidity or organic integration of the various elements which forms a part of my choreographic signature. The visual composition or overlay of the visual composition in relation to the choreography is how I come to make aesthetic/choreographic/design decisions about whether the embodied narrative is being expressed or not through the body. The main trend in the visual composition of my work is the use of scenic devices. There is the commonality where I transform the space through the use of scenic devices which support the

choreography and create a theatrical or symbolic ‘world’ for the embodied narrative to unfold in. These devices form layers that form a part of the ‘aesthetic glue’ (Chappell 2008:169) that binds the choreographic works together. A place/space emerges where an atmosphere is provided for the creation of an embodied narrative through mapping the bodies in time and space where movement in the primary medium of expression.

Scenic devices

The scenic devices that I use in my work need to be integral to the movement language and the performer’s bodies so that they become an extension of the performer’s emotion/physical and cognitive/somatic expression. Blakeslee and Blakeslee (2008:4) reiterate this and state that any object in contact with your body becomes mapped within your brain and a part of your personal space. This complex communication between the scenic devices and the performer’s mind and body reiterates the body as a moving entity (Shaw 2003:33) as discussed in 2.1.2. In my work, the scenic device becomes an object for the body to dialogue with where through improvisation a connection is formed between the body and the scenic device (Tufnell & Crickmay 2004:121). This constant dialogue between objects or scenic devices and the performers, in my works, creates the landscape and mood for the embodied narrative to unfold in and speaks clearly to a physical theatre practice as discussed in Chapter 1. It adds to the visual dimension of the choreography as the embodied narrative is ‘felt’ and experienced in relation to the objects. It creates the environment or place where a conversation occurs between the performer and the objects. It is this connection (Bresler 2006:25) between the performers, scenic devices and the narrative that allows the embodied narrative to unfold through the body in a physical theatre medium. The creation of the environment with the scenic devices allows for interesting movement possibilities to emerge as the performer negotiates/ interacts with the devices. It is this interacting with the scenic devices and the role they play within the choreography that forms a clear trace within the choreographic signature.

Running

The core image of running traces through all the works and emerges as a trend within the signature. The use of running in my choreography provides a sense of frantic energy and dynamic in the scenes and forms a part of the “aesthetic glue” (Chappell 2008:169). As a choreographer, I use running to provide a climax or dramatic tension and a sense of relentless energy that features in the choreographic signature. This sense of relentless energy features as

a strong image in the choreographic signature and is further developed by a differentiation in time. The differentiation in time features in the signature as there is a strong focus on fast movement contrasted with slow movement or stillness. The image that is constantly seen within the choreography is either one performer still or moving slowly in contrast to others moving at a fast pace. It seems that running and the role it plays within the choreography forms a clear trace with the choreographic signature.

4.4 Emerging motifs across the works

An emerging motif in the choreographic signature is the process I use to move from the source material into a movement language. This is important to a choreographer as it is the process from source material into the embodied narrative. I usually choreograph in ‘distinct units’ illuminating aspects of the main choreographic idea (see 3.1.7, 3.2.8 and 3.3.8). Through various tasks, I move from the concept into a movement language, where the narrative is interpreted through/in/on/around the body.

Movement ‘motif’

A commonality in the movement generating phase is that an initial movement ‘motif’ was generated at the start of each of the processes. This movement phrase was used as the basis from which all the other movement material was generated and developed. In *One-way*, there was the *Struggle phrase*, in *As Night Falls*, there was the *Darkness motif* and in *Chasing*, there was the *chasing motif*. There is a commonality in the task I set in each process in order to generate the initial movement ‘motif’. All three tasks were based on the performer’s somatic response to a cognitive response to something I had written that was relevant to the source material, reiterating the process from inside/out and outside/in discussed earlier. The performers moved to the sound of the words and the imagery conjured inside of them as source material for a movement phrase: cognitive to somatic or inside/out. Taking their cognitive response, they had to create a somatic response using their bodies and movement as the form of expression. It was through this specific task in all three processes that the initial ‘motif’ was created. This links to Klein’s (2007:1082) definition of choreography where he sees the choreographer as the architect of the pliable environment where the creative act of choreography can take place. This motif was then reconfigured, re-imagined into various other movement possibilities. The movement ‘motif’ was developed in all three works through the use of choreographic devices. Choreographic devices play an important role in the development of the embodied narrative and movement ‘motif’ in my work.

Choreographic devices

Looking at the three works, there are commonalities in the choreographic devices that I use in order to create contrast in the movement material. A strand emerges with the choreographic device of combining phrases to create longer movement ‘motifs’ so that ample movement material is available during the process. The choreographic device of size was utilised in all the processes either making the movement ‘motif’ bigger or smaller, providing a contrast. The device of tempo (fast/slow/stop) was utilised to create phrases with different dynamics, providing variety in the material. Two choreographic devices emerge, to me, as particularly interesting and effective. Firstly the device or task, I constructed, of “do that” or “don’t do that” that I used in *One-way* and continue to use currently when making work. In the task of “do that” the performer takes a body part of their partner and gets them to “do” something to them and they respond according to the action executed. Similarly in the task of “don’t do that” the performer responds more aggressively or uncomfortably to the action the other performer has executed. The reason, to me, that this task or device works effectively is there is a constant sense of action and reaction in the duets that are developed. It becomes effective as the intention in the duet is clear as both performers are reacting to each other. The main reason this device works so effectively is because it provides contrast in the movement material. Secondly, the choreographic device that seems to create a sense of unity-variety-contrast (Blom & Chaplin: 1982, 106) is the device of choreography by numbers. The reason that I use this device when creating a work is that it enables a substantial movement phrase to be created, as well as providing it with a sense of movement leitmotif, so the same movements are echoed throughout the phrase creating a sense of unity/variety/contrast. It emerges as a choreographer that the main purpose of using choreographic devices within the process is to generate further movement material as well as providing a sense of contrast and dynamic within the material.

Duets

In the movement generating phase, a motif that emerges in all three choreographic processes is once the movement ‘motif’ has been created, the next phase is to create duets. As a choreographer, I am intrigued by the duet form as I feel it enables me to express the nature of the relationship I am dealing with in the work. As intimacy features as a choreographic strand within the signature, duets are a prominent choreographic form that I utilise. It becomes evident that the duet form is an important motif within the choreographic signature and

features clearly in unfolding the embodied narrative of the work. It emerges that through the duet form, I choreograph ‘love’ and relationships clearly in my work. This also links back to idea of longing and belonging that features in the signature and perhaps through the duet form this is the most clearly articulated.

Presenting a clear choreographic point of view in a non-linear narrative

A motif emerges in the forming and shaping phase of the choreographic process. The focus of this phase in all three works is integrating the narrative or source material of the work with the movement material or the specific scenes created. As a choreographer, I find myself trying to get away from a historical lecture but rather towards a work that makes meaning of the information and presents a clear choreographic point of view in a non-linear narrative. I focus strongly on making creative/visual/aesthetic/structural decisions in order for the embodied narrative to progress to find a way for the work to generate a sense of unity and togetherness where the ‘felt’ idea is expressed through the body. In all three works, I look for creative interpretations of line/form/contrast/variety/relationships and a sense of movement in the life stories. It is this phase in the choreographic process that is interactive and where a sense of intertwining/shaping/shifting/making and remaking occurs (Snowber 2012:57). Through this process, the embodied narrative begins to emerge and becomes intertwined with my personal preferences and interests (Preston-Dunlop 1998:4).

Subconsciously choosing a structure relying on my bodily knowing

A choreographic strand emerges in creating a structure or framework in all three choreographic processes. The way I order the sections and how they relate to each other is an important element in creating the embodied narrative and in creating a tapestry of connections within the narrative. My role as a choreographer, is to find a way for the works to develop logically with a sense of variety and contrast that reveals the embodied narrative. In all the choreographic processes I reinvestigated/reconsidered/re-imagined the source material before notating a structure. This echoes with Lavender’s (2009:72) acronym IDEA: improvisation, development, evaluation and assimilation as discussed in 2.7. It is clear that the first structure is never the final one that is utilised. The works are mostly in an order, at first, which does not illustrate a clear choreographic intent or unfold the embodied narrative in a poetically interesting way. Either two or three structures are created (see 3.1.7, 3.2.8 and 3.3.8) that focus on the overall feeling of the work and how the observer would experience the embodied narrative through a form of “sympathetic resonance” (Anderson, 2001:84).

This is something I always do. It becomes clear that I allow myself subconsciously to choose the structure relying on my bodily ‘knowing’. It is an instinctive process where I allow how I feel to influence the structure of the embodied narrative that is generated.

Unity-variety-contrast

A choreographic motif emerges in the refining of the choreographic process. I see the process as a ‘thinking’ and ‘feeling’ process where I make aesthetic choices and decisions (Predock-Linnell & Predock-Linnell, 2010: 198) about what I have made so far and how it will all fit together as a whole through my body ‘knowing’. In this phase, in all three processes, I focused on unity-variety-contrast (Blom & Chaplin, 1982:106) with all the scenes that I had made and how they would hold together to reveal the embodied narrative. The movement ‘motif’ was utilised to create further scenes and a sense of unity emerges as the material comes from the same phrase. Variety emerges in the choreography as various choreographic devices, tangentially referred to above, are utilised to develop the movement material. A sense of contrast emerges as various choreographic devices were used from the same movement ‘motif’. It is through the process of intertwining /reinvestigating and combining that the multiple layers of the embodied narrative are constructed.

4.5 My signature choreographic devices

Defining a choreographic style is always a complicated issue and perhaps a part of the definition of my choreographic style comes with the process that I take in choreographing the embodied narrative. It is evident that all three works utilise a stylised movement language within a symbolic theatrical world where the process of creating the embodied narrative is through mapping bodies in time and space with the purpose of communication. The mode of representation or style is not based on realism but rather on a more abstracted mode. A heightened and stylised movement language is created through abstracting gestures as the foundation of the movement language. It is how I abstract gestures within the choreographic process that forms an important element in the choreographic signature.

Gestural Landscape

A prominent trace in my “aesthetic glue” is this gestural landscape. The movement material that I generate normally derives from the abstraction of body language. Choreographer Pina Bausch was a prominent influence in my studies in choreography, with her use of gesture. During my studies in mime technique under Andrew Buckland, a strong focus was on

gestures and their application for performance. We looked closely at how everyday pedestrian movement could be transformed into movement material for an embodied narrative. In all three processes, the types of gestures that were generated were drawn from the task at hand or the source material. They were either the performer's interpretation of the task or the movement language that I generated. The clear gestural language that runs throughout the works focuses on gestures with the arms and hands where they become the focus and the rest of the body is still integrated into the movement. The gestures become larger than a mimetic movement.

Principle of contrast

A key principle or trace in all the works that forms a part of the “aesthetic glue” is the principle of contrast. Belec (1998:22) states “in essence, we cannot know or express a movement quality, such as bound flow, unless we know its contrasting part.” Belec (1998:23) further highlights this point by describing the choreographic work of Robert Ellis Dunn and how he gets at the principle of contrast is that “when portraying the roles, mood, or theme of a dance, one must design the movement vocabulary and major movement contrasts between each person, section of the dance, and/or within the movement phrasing itself”. In examining all of my works, I noticed that instinctively this principle of contrast was at play. This was not a conscious choice during the creation process but looking objectively at the work, I see the principle of contrast in the narrative, mood, structuring, movement vocabulary, set design and music of the work. The mood of *Chasing* shifts from Jonker's intense, volatile feelings of isolation to more romantic sexual experiences. We see the idea of chasing or running versus moments of stillness. Serious emotional scenes are followed by light-hearted ones. Light pieces of music are interspersed with heavier ones. In *As Night Falls*, I used the contrasting ideas of light and darkness. The mood of the work is sombre and mysterious revealing Miss Helen's strange and macabre world interspersed with light and jovial scenes. The movement motifs are a *Light phrase* and a *Dark phrase*. Choreographically, Miss Helen's solo is foreshadowed by still individuals holding lights while she moves in a frantic, longing way in front of them. In *One-way*, the feeling of me struggling and the sense of being a refugee from my own body was contrasted with my desperate challenge to find a sense of stability.

Repetition

A choreographic trace in my work and a choreographic device is the use of repetition. Movement images are repeated and ideas re-echoed as the works continue. Repetition is a

choreographic device that I use when generating movement material and it creates a sense of movement leitmotif throughout the work. Klein (2007:1084) states “the simple structural tool of “repetition” as commonly used by composers and choreographers, is deeply embodied in the repetitive cycles of day and night, ebb and flow and the calendar’s seasons”.

Role of the performers

An important trace in the choreographic signature is the role the performers play in the choreographic process as co-creators. The specific performers in each work play a vital part in the creation and execution of the embodied narrative and this reiterates a physical theatre practice (Callery 2001:5). Each performer requires a sense of creative responsiveness and physical intelligence. Physical Intelligence or “an insistence on an embodied presence” (Finestone, 2010: 31) is revealed, for me, through the performer’s relationship to their body and to time, space, weight and flow. It is through an understanding of their body and how it moves that articulates an ‘embodied presence’. Finestone (2001:124) further reiterates the performer’s role in the process

the physical vocabularies found, are often created from and by the *performer’s own bodies* thus providing a space for creative collaboration and contributing to an enriching experience for the performers...they are not docile bodies ...but actively participating in the creative process of translating ideas into the physical or the physical into the visual.

It is evident that I chose performers in my work that show a willingness to become these translators and play an active role in the choreographic process and the unfolding of the embodied narrative.

Methods of instructions

It then becomes clear that how I enable them to work within the process is important within the choreographic signature. Kirsch (2009:190) speaks about ‘methods of instruction’ in the choreographic process and examining mine can highlight an important element of my choreographic signature and how the embodied narrative is generated. The first one he identifies as “show a phrase to the whole group”. Reflecting on all three of my choreographic processes, this forms an element of my process. This is important as the phrase I will normally teach in the process of creating the embodied narrative will become the ‘motif’ of the work.

The second method of instruction Kirsch (2009:191) speaks about is “make a phrase on a target dancer (solo), duo, a trio or quartet” what he terms a ‘make-on’. He describes this as “using the bodies of specific dancers as targets on which to shape the form and dynamics of a move or phrase. This method is common in my choreographic process as it allows for the possibility of new movements or phrases to appear as the phrases have been specifically made on the performer’s bodies. Additionally, I try to create the movement material that suits the performers’ bodies and they interpret my instructions and recreate it through and with their bodies. I avoid generating movement that is compulsory for the performers, I am always open to adapting the movement to what suits their body’s best but at the same time pushing their personal movement style.

The third method of instruction Kirsch (2009:191) speaks about is “task or choreographic problem” where the “choreographer assigns ‘choreographic problems’ for the dancers to solve or choreographic ‘tasks’ for the dancers to complete. This method of instruction is the most common tool that I utilise in my choreographic process. If we reflect back to the movement generating phase of all three choreographic processes and the specific tasks utilised in order to generate movement material, we see that the tasks require the performers to shift between somatic and cognitive modalities. In *As Night Falls*, the performers are required to take the word ‘east’ and generate a statement beginning with each letter. This statement allows them to generate a visual image for themselves from what they have written. My example from *As night falls* was E: Every night the candle light moves me in flickers and shadows...lost. The performer as Kirsch (2011:5) states then visualises the object, in this case the flickering moving candle, and then transforms the visual image into a movement image: “they are first trying to draw creative insight from a visual solution before moving to a bodily solution”.

Choreographic tasks

Reflecting on all three choreographic processes, it becomes evident that I create new choreographic tasks for the performer to work with (see 3.1.5, 3.2.6 and 3.3.6). This choreographic task can take the form of a visual image, a somatic sensation, a scenic device that is incorporated into the movement language, an obstacle between two bodies, a movement poem or various verbal instructions to promote movement. It is this approach as a choreographer that is a defining feature of my emerging choreographic signature.

Improvisation

A clear choreographic method that is utilised in the making of my works is the method of Improvisation. Meekums (1993: 132) states “the substance from which the dance emerges is a product of the dancer and choreographer’s improvisations, their openness and receptivity as they play with images and ideas, the limitations of their bodies including their flexibility and their expanding movement vocabulary, the style of the choreographer and the choreographers willingness to subtly play with conscious, active decision-making whilst remaining open to possibilities.” As posited in Chapter 2, Carter (2000:182) discusses the reason for improvisation “there is the hope that one will discover something that could not be found in a systematic preconceived process. Improvisation can be a means of assuring a constant source of fresh materials and avoiding stagnation, but not always. Moreover improvisation invites examining a situation from various angles that can be invented in the very process of creation.” By using improvisation with the performers and through setting various tasks, a range of possibilities is available to be discovered.

All of these elements form a part of the “aesthetic glue” that creates the environment for the choreography to unfold and to be experienced. This emerging choreographic signature has its own internal aesthetic logic and this will continue to develop as I continue to choreograph and discover new and different ways of working and thinking ‘through’ the body to create an embodied narrative. A feature of my work is that I emphasise embodied narratives. This forms the emerging signature that is utilised when I create a choreographic work but the elements of mystery and chance occurrences and the elements that take place moment to moment are not easily expressed. Through choreographing, answers present themselves as new possibilities and discoveries are made in the process.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summation

This study retrospectively documented my emerging choreographic signature by using a qualitative, practice-based, autoethnographical approach to reading a selection of my choreographic works in the domain of physical theatre. I used *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) to explore how I, as a choreographer, (re)interpret source material and ‘translate’ it into an embodied narrative. I made specific reference to my work in the context of a South African physical theatre paradigm. I investigated these works by highlighting commonalities amongst traces, core images, themes, leitmotifs and choreographic processes across the selected body of my choreographic work; I aimed to determine my personal choreographic style or signature. My research explored the above in relation to the main point of departure for my choreographic works, namely the embodiment of narratives.

In Chapter 1, I contextualised and introduced the study. I argued for the necessity of a study of this nature and explained my research approach. I proposed to use qualitative research tools such as DVD footage of all three productions, choreographic notes that I made of *One-way* and *As night falls* and a journal of *Chasing* to generate a thick description of my choreographic process in order to determine traces of my choreographic signature. I provided my research question, problem statement and an overview of the research aim. Chapter 2 of this study explored embodied narratives as theoretical framework for the study and the point of departure for my choreographic works. Embodied narratives for the purpose of this study was defined and constructed through the interlinking of the various trends referred to in 2.6. I identified trends of embodied narratives that I used to read my choreographic works in order to define my emerging choreographic signature. Furthermore in Chapter 2, I broadly and briefly unpacked the choreographic process and illustrated the potential for the creation of an embodied narrative through various communicative devices and methods of instruction. I looked at structural and conceptual tools provided by existing scholarship and how they differentiated ways in which these tools are applied and can assist a choreographer to identify his/her choreographic signature.

Chapter 3 traced and documented my emerging choreographic signature through the qualitative, practice-based autoethnographic approach that I identified in Chapter 2. Three of my previous works *One-way* (2010), *As night falls* (2011) and *Chasing* (2012) were utilised

as practical examples to trace the development of my choreographic signature. *One-way* deals with my personal narrative, *As night falls* deals with the life and work of Helen Martins and *Chasing* deals with the life and work of Ingrid Jonker. Through reflecting on these productions in retrospect, my choreographic traces, core images, themes and leitmotifs (as surfaced in Chapter 2) emerged. In tracing a trajectory of my work, I articulated some of the extra-cognitive knowledge surfaced in the creative process and in the product itself. Chapter 3, drawing on information from Chapter 2, illustrated how the various tropes of embodied narratives and physical theatre were prevalent in the choreographic process. I utilised qualitative research tools that I identified in Chapter 2, such as DVD footage of all three productions and choreographic notes that I made during the process, to provide a thick description of the choreographic process. Chapter 4 served as a reflection on all three of the choreographic processes, leading into a retrospective delineation of my emerging choreographic signature. Through this self-reflection, I articulated my artistic preferences and modes by identifying the points of convergence amongst the key choreographic signature trends.

The main aim of the study was to identify and articulate my emerging choreographic signature through a self-reflexive written document evident in Chapter 4. The “aesthetic glue” (Chappell 2008:169) that holds my choreographic works together was defined and discussed and the cognitive processes in my creative decisions was articulated. In summary, the three works that I studied in this mini-dissertation is about the ‘lived’ experience of women and I utilised a contrast in the narrative to reinterpret and re-tell their stories. A sense of belonging and longing for the woman who is positioned as ‘other’ is a signature trend. The space is designed through the use of scenic devices where a symbolic world is created for the embodied narrative. The scenic devices function as a metaphor for the women’s emotional landscape. When I am creating a choreographic work, I look for visual, auditory, tactile and kinesthetic/ action in a choreographic source and I manifest these in my work to provide a sensory experience. In all my works, there is an overlay of visual imagery. The performers function as co-creators using a thinking bodily practice. A movement ‘motif’ is created in all my works and developed through the use of choreographic devices. In creating a structure or framework, I use a non-linear narrative where a sense of unity/variety/contrast is the focus. In the refining of my work and making choreographic choices, the principle of contrast and visual composition plays a significant role. The soundscape of the work is consistently used

to create dramatic tension with a clear sound leitmotif. The above mentioned trends are the commonalities across the three choreographic works.

In utilising autoethnography as a research approach, I used selected tools (as articulated in Chapter 2) to create distance between myself and the work that I created. In doing so, I acknowledged a personal point of view and I was continually aware of ‘myself-as-researcher’ where I represent “a multilayered lifeworld, itself worthy of expression” (Duncan 2004:3) reading my work. The self was the main source of data and the meanings that I read into and created through my work, together with the way in which I translated these into choreographic works are the focus of the research (Duncan 2004:2). As a researcher, I consciously embedded myself in theory and practice and provided a personal autobiographical choreographic account of my work (McIlveen 2008:13) whilst at the same time, used research tools to distance myself from the reading of my work. I thus oscillated between immersion and reflection in the process of reflecting on my work. Autoethnography is both process and product: my choreographic works are the process and this choreographic manifesto is the product (Bochner, Adams and Ellis 2010: [sp]).

5.2 Shortfalls

A possible short fall is that I have only analysed or taken three works into account in this autoethnographic study. I could have analysed and discussed previous choreographic works in relation to my emerging signature. Perhaps, by analysing and discussing every work that I have made, I could have provided more commonalities in my emerging signature. I could have requested other people within the choreographic field to analyse my works and reflect on my choreographic signature, or to compare their reading and analysis of my work to my own findings. This could have provided another perspective to consider when analysing my work. Their interpretation or reading of my work could have provided other choreographic trends within my signature. I could have used a specific theoretical approach to analyse my work for example Viewpoints or Laban Movement Studies (LMS), however, my choice was for a more structural and conceptual approach to reading my work. I could further have considered a different ‘baseline’ interpretation of the choreographic process (thus other than Blom and Chapman, 1982) to obtain further choreographic insight into my process. This leaves room for further research into my choreographic signature.

All three works that I used as choreographic examples, used performers that were students from the University of Pretoria’s Drama Department and perhaps making a choreographic

work on professional performers could have allowed me to work with a more complex movement vocabulary that could have articulated other elements in the emerging choreographic signature. In using professional dancers, I might have been able to push my choreography to a more complex level and perhaps broadened the movement vocabulary that I used. In all three works, my role was as the choreographer and not as a performer. Perhaps in performing in one of my works another perspective of the choreographic signature could have been articulated from being inside the work. I could have ‘felt’ the choreographic signature through my body. A further limitation to the study is the research lends itself to a feminist analysis and an engagement with notions of race. However, as my focus is on my choreographic signature surfaced by my creative work this falls outside the scope of this mini-dissertation.

5.3 Possible research that can emerge from this study

As a professional choreographer, I am aware of where I stand within my choreographic journey after analysing my work. I have a clearer understanding of how or why I make the choreographic choices that I do and where I can extend these choices in future work. This choreographic manifesto has enabled me to articulate my artistic preferences in my choreographic signature. Through identifying points of convergence amongst the traces, core images, themes and commonalities across my work, I am able to access what I do intuitively when I am choreographing. As a human being, I am constantly shifting and this manifesto has enabled me to see where I am at the moment. I have gained insight into my own choreographic preferences and creative decision making. This awareness can only broaden my choreographic scope in future choreographic projects. Being aware of my creative decision making can help me to expand on and enlarge my expressive possibilities through my choreography.

In further choreographic works, I could either utilise this manifesto as a guideline to create work in a similar way to concretise the emerging signature, or challenge what I have done (as articulated in this study) choreographically. Thus, it would be interesting to create another work and follow the similar signature traits and see what emerges choreographically or I could also consciously contrast my choreographic signature. For example my next choreographic work could focus on the ‘lived’ experience of a man rather than using a woman. I could also generate an embodied narrative that is not related to a specific individual’s experience. The narrative could focus on a variety of emotional states or

feelings. Another option would be to create a work where no scenes were made in isolation and the work was created in a linear progression. I could incorporate other professional choreographers in a choreographic collaboration. I could choreograph a work with another choreographer so two choreographic signatures are at play. A possibility for further research lies in a feminist analysis and an engagement with notions of race. This could provide further in depth research.

This choreographic manifesto helps with the self-evaluation process as I was committed to critical reflection within my choreographic process. Being able to evaluate myself and my choreography, enables questions and answers to emerge that could provide a larger scope for creative invention.

5.4 Transferability

The documenting of my emerging choreographic signature is an important part of my choreographic journey and makes me question what I am doing instinctively when I am choreographing. This enabled me to access the cognitive processes behind my creative decisions in order to gain insight into my own choreographic preferences so that I can apply these cognitive processes to my choreographic processes to expand on my creative decisions, extend improvisational explorations in my choreographic processes, enlarge expressive possibilities through my choreography and broaden my choreographic scope.

This intuitive understanding of my choreographic world could be transferable to other choreographers as they define their choreographic signatures and expand on their choreographic processes. As this study required a scholarly survey of embodied narratives with multiple sources, it may be a valuable research tool and a starting point for others interested in choreographically approaching embodied narratives. In a choreographic course, this manifesto could be utilised as source material for emerging choreographers as it would provide them with a structure to work from in creating their own works. They could follow the process through which I mapped my emerging signature as a guideline to see what is revealed in their own work. As emerging choreographers begin to develop their own signature, various questions and answers could be provided to them through this manifesto. This manifesto might provide them with a structure to work from/against/with in their personal choreographic journey. This may potentially provide the “existential we” (Spry 2011: 711) with a choreographic manifesto to be utilised through their choreographic

exploration. As a researcher utilising, the personal experience of my choreographic journey thus far there is worth in knowing my own experience and in sharing that knowledge.

SOURCES CONSULTED

- Albright, C.A. 2003. *Steve Paxton*. In Bremser, M., & Sanders, L. (Eds.). (2011). *Fifty contemporary choreographers*. Routledge.
- Allsopp, R and Lepecki, A. 2008. *Editorial on Choreography*. Performance Research 13. P1-6.
- Anderson, L. 2006. *Analytical Autoethnography*. Sage Publications Vol. 35, No 4: 373-395.
- Anderson, R. 2001. *Embodied writing and reflections on embodiment*. Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 33 (2), 83-98.
- Bannerman, H 2010, 'Choreographers' Reflexive Writing – A Very Special Practice', *Forum For Modern Language Studies*, 46, 4, pp. 474-487, Academic Search Premier, EBSCOhost, viewed 11 January 2013.
- Barbour, K.N. 2011. *Dancing across the page: Narrative and embodied ways of knowing*. Intellect Books.
- Belec , D.M. 1998. *Robert Ellis Dunn: Personal Stories in Motion*. Dance Research Journal 30.2. 18-38.
- Blakeslee, S & Blakeslee, M.2008. *The body has a mind of its own: how body maps in your brain help you do (almost) everything*. Random House Publishing Group.
- Blom, L & Chaplin, L. 1982. *The Intimate Act of Choreography*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Boddy-Evans, A. 2011. 'Miss Helen', *South Africa's Foremost Outsider Artist*. [O]. Available: www.africanhistory.about.com/od/biography/p/owlhouse.htm
Accessed 2012-05-15
- Borgdorff, H. 2006. *The Debate on Research in the Arts*. Sensuous Knowledge 02. Bergen: Bergen National Academy of the Arts: 1-17.
- Bresler, L. 2006. *Embodied Narrative Inquiry: A methodology of connection*. Research Studies in Music Education, 27: 21-43. Sage Publications.
- Bresler, L. 2006. *Embodied Narrative Inquiry: A Methodology of Connection*. Research Studies in Music Education 27:21. Sage Publications.
- Brew, A. 1998. *Moving beyond paradigm boundaries*. In Higgs, J (Eds). *Writing Qualitative Research*. Sydney, Australia: Hampden Press p29-45.
- Brink, A & Krog, A. 2007. *Ingrid Jonker: Black Butterflies*. Cape Town: Human and Rousseau.
- Budgeon, S.2003. *Identity as embodied event*. Body and Society, Vol 9, p35-55.

- Bynum, C. 1989. *The Female Body and Religious Practice in the Later Middle Ages*. Fragments for a history of the Human Body, Part 1. New York: Zone Books: 160-219.
- Caelli, K, Ray, L & Mill, J. 2003. Clear as Mud: Towards greater clarity in generic qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2 (2). Article 1: 1-17.
- Callary, D. 2001. *Through the body: A practical guide to physical theatre*. Great Britain: Nick Hern Books.
- Cancienne & Snowber. 2003. *Writing Rhythm: Movement as Method* .Qualitative Inquiry 9: 237-253.
- Carroll, R. 2011. *In search of a vocabulary of embodiment, Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*. An International Journal for Theory, Research and Practice, 6:3. P 245-257. Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group.
- Carter, C.L.2000. *Improvisation in Dance*. In *The Journal of Aesthetics and Arts Criticism*. 58.2. 181-190.
- Chappell, K. 2008. *Embodied Narratives*. In Parry, S, Nicolson, H & Levinson, R (Ed.) *Creative Encounters*. Wellcome Trust: 160-173.
- Clark.A.1998. *Being there: Putting brain, body and the world together again*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Collins-Queen, N. 2003. *Helen Martins....South African Gaudi*. [O]. Available: www.authorsden.com/visit/viewArticle.asp?id=7892
Accessed 2012-05-15
- Conquergood, L. D.1999. *Performance Studies: interventions and radical research*. The Drama Review, No. 46: 145-156.
- Cope, J and Plomer, W. 1988. *Ingrid Jonker: Selected Poems*. Cape Town: Human and Rosseau.
- Cope, J. 1966. *In Memoriam Ingrid Jonker*. Cape Town: Human and Rosseau.
- Csordas, T. J. Ed.1994. *Embodiment and experience: the existential ground of culture and self* (Vol. 2). Cambridge University Press.
- Damasio, A. 2012. *Self comes to mind: Constructing the conscious brain*. Random House LLC.
- Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y (Eds.) 2011. *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications.
- Duncan, M. 2004. *Autoethnography: Critical appreciation of an emerging art*. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 3(4), Article 3: 2-14.
- Edelman, G.M 1992. *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind*. BasicBooks: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc.

Egan, K. & Ling, M. 2002. We Begin as Poets. In *The Arts in Children's Lives* (pp. 93-100). Springer Netherlands.

Ellis, C, Adams, T, Bochner, A. 2010. *Autoethnography: An Overview*. Forum Qualitative Social Research, North America. [O]. Available: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php>. Accessed 2012-05-15

Ellis, C.2004. *The ethnographic I: a methodological novel about autoethnography*. Ethnographic Alternatives. United Kingdom: Rowan Altamira Press.

Emslie, A.1997. *A Journey Through The Owl House*. Penguin Books

Featherstone, M &Turner, B. 1995. *Body and society: An introduction, Body and Society*. London: Sage: 1-12.

Finestone, J. 1997. *First Physical Theatre Company: The Art of Physical Intelligence*, enquiries into physical theatre. Vol. 3: 60-67.

Finestone, J.1995. *Unhomely Houses: two South African choreographers contesting exile...* The Politics and Poetics of Choreography. The Art of Physical Intelligence. Vol 3: 32-51.

Finestone-Praeg, J. 2001. *Physical Imaginings: the translation of memory in the danceplays of First Physical*. The Art of Physical Intelligence: enquiries into Physical theatre. 3.1 116-132

Finestone, J 2010. *Intimate revolts –some approaches towards pedagogy and performer training in Physical Theatre: In conversation with First Physical Theatre Company's Artistic Director: Gary Gordon*. South African Theatre Journal Vol 24. Issue Editors: Marie-Heleen Coetzee and Marth Munro.

Finestone, J.2011.*Reflective (a)musings on 16 kinds of emptiness: re-framing research for practice*. South African Theatre Journal Vol 21. Issue 1: Routledge

Firestone, W.1993. *Alternative Arguments for Generalizing from Data as Applied to Qualitative Research*. Educational Researcher, Vol. 22, No 4: 16-23.

Fleishman, M. 1997. Physical Images in the Theatre of South Africa. South African Theatre Journal Vol 11(1&2):109-124

Foster, S.L. 2003. *Improvisation in Dance and Mind*. An essay in Albright, A.C and Gere, D. A Dance Improvisation Reader: Wesleyan University Press. Middletown, Connecticut.

Fraser, M & Greco, M. 2005. *The body: A reader*. London: Routledge

Fugard, A. 1988. *The Road to Mecca*. New York: Theatre Communications Group California.

Geertz, C .1973. *Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture*. In The interpretation of cultures: selected essays. New York: 3-30.

Gendlin, E.T., & Olsen, L. 1970. *The use of imagery in experiential focusing*. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice*, 7(4), 221.

Gibbs, R.W.Jr. 2003. *Embodied Meanings: Performing, interpreting, and Talking and Dance Improvisation*. In Albright, A. C., & Gere, D. (Eds.). 2003. *Taken by surprise: A dance improvisation reader*. Wesleyan.

Gordon, G. 1994. *Motion Arrested: Body Politics and a Struggle for a Physical Theatre*. Inaugural Lecture presented at Rhodes University August 1994: 1-24.

Gordon, G.2012. *Gary Gordon*. [O]. Available:
www.ru.ac.za/firstphysical/aboutus/people/managment
Accessed 2012-05-15

Grant, G.K and Breese J.R. 1997. Marginality Theory and the African American Student. *Sociology of Education*, Vol 70, No 3: 192-205.

Grosz, E. A. 1994. *Volatile bodies: Toward a corporeal feminism*. Indiana University Press.

Hagendoorn, I. 2003. *The Dancing brain*. *Cerebrum: The Dana Forum on Brain Science*,: Vol 5, No2: 19-34.

Halley, C. 2012. *A Visual voice: communicating without spoken language*. [O]. Available:
<http://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/10996/research%20report.pdf?sequence=2>
Accessed 2012-05-20

Halprin, A. 1969. Intuition and improvisation. In M. Van Tuyl (Ed.) *Anthology of impulse: annual of contemporary dance*. New York: Dance Horizons Incorporated.

Hardy, B. 1968. *Towards a Poetics of Fiction: An Approach through narrative. A forum on fiction*. Novel Corp: Brown University. Vol. 2, No.1 (autumn): 5-14.

Hauptfleisch, T. 1987. Beyond Street Theatre and Festival: The Forms of South African Theatre. *Maske und Kothurn* 33, 1-2: 175-188.

Hauptfleisch, T.2012 (ed). *The Encyclopaedia of South African Theatre and Performance (ESAT)*[O]: Available :
<http://esat.sun.ac.za/>

Hauptfleisch, Temple 1997. *Theatre and Society in South Africa: Reflections in a Fractured Mirror*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Helen Elizabeth Martins.[sa]. [O].
Available:www.sahistory.org.za/people/helen-elizabeth-martins
Accessed 2012-05-15

Holt, N. 2003. *Representation, Legitimation and Autoethnography: An autoethnographic writing story*. *International Journal of Qualitative Research Methods* (2). Winter: 18-28.

Humphrey, D. 1987. *The Art of Making Dances*. University of California: Princeton Book Company, Publishers POB 57.

Jonker, I. 1994. *Versamelde Werke*. Human and Rousseau.

- Joyce, P. 1989. *Ingrid Jonker*. [O]. Available:
www.intranet.parklands.co.za/archive/...12.../ingrid%20Jonker%/201.html
Accessed 2012-05-15
- Kelly, M. 2009. The role of theory in qualitative health research. Institute of Health Science. London: Queen Mary University of London. Vol 27, Issue 3: 285-290.
- Kirsh, D 2009. *Choreographic methods for creating novel, high quality dance*. In *Proceedings, DESFORM 5th International Workshop on Design & Semantics & Form*, pp. 188-195. 2009.
- Kirsh, D.2011. *Creative Cognition in Choreography*. Appearing in: Proceedings of 2nd International Conference on Computational Creativity. Cognitive Science Department. University of California, San Diego.
- Klein, M.2007.*Choreography: A Pattern Language, Kybernetes*, Vol: 36. No. 7/8. UK: Emerald Publishers.
- Kloppenber, A.2010. *Improvisation in process: "Post-control" choreography*. *Dance Chronicle*, 33(2), 180-207.
- Krieger, N.2005. *Embodiment: a conceptual glossary for epidemiology*. Community Health. Department of Society Human Development. London: Harvard School: 350-355.
- Kroker, A & Kroker, M. 1987. *Body Invaders: Panic Sex in America*. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Lambert, R & Snyman, B. 2010. *Crossing boundaries: forging innovative theatrical and research content*. South African Theatre Journal, Vol. 24. Special Issue Movement and Physical Theatre in South Africa: 311-326.
- Lavender, L. 2009. Dialogical practices in teaching choreography. *Dance Chronicle*, 32(3), 3.
- Lee, R and Pollard, N. 2004a. *Delving and doubled seeing: on a choreographer's practice*: Digital creativity, 15:2, pp 71-75. Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group
- Linnell, L.P and Linnell, J.P. 2001. *From Improvisation to Choreography: The critical bridge*. Research in Dance Education, 2:2, 195-209, Routledge.
- Maiese, M. 2011. *Embodiment, emotion, and cognition*. New directions in Philosophy and Cognitive Science. Palgrave Macmillan: St Martin's Press.
- Marks, V. 2003. *Against Improvisation: A postmodernist makes the case for choreography*. In Albright, A. C., & Gere, D. (Eds.). 2003. *Taken by surprise: A dance improvisation reader*. Wesleyan.
- McIlveen, P. 2008. *Autoethnography as a method for reflexive research and practice in vocational psychology*. Australian Journal of Career Development, 17(2): 13-20.
- Meekums, B. 1993. *Research as an act of creation*. London. Jessica Kingsley Publishes.
- Menary, R. 2008. *Embodied Narratives*. Journal of Consciousness Studies 15, No. 6: 63-84.

- Meriam, S.B. 1998. *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*. Revised and Expanded from "Case Study Research in Education." Jossey-Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St, San Francisco.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. 1962. *The phenomenology of perception*. London: Routledge.
- Metelerkamp, J. 2003. *Ingrid Jonker: Beeld van 'n digterslewe*. Publishers Hemel and See Vermont: Hermanus.
- Midgellow, V.L. 2013. *Sensualities: Experiencing/Dancing/Writing*. New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing. 10:1, 3-7. London: Routledge.
- Morgan, G & Smircich, L. 1980. *The Case for Qualitative Research*. The Academy of Management Review, Vol. 5, No. 4: 491-500.
- Munro, M & Coetzee, M .2007. *Mind the gap: beyond whole-brain learning*. South African Theatre Journal 21: 92-108.
- Munro, M., & Coetzee, M. H. 2007. Mind the gap: beyond whole-brain learning: theatre and education. *SATJ: South African Theatre Journal: Dramatic Learning Spaces: Special Issue, 21*, 92-108.
- Murray, S & Keefe, J. 2007. *Physical Theatres: A Critical Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Myers, M.2000. *Qualitative Research and The Generalizability Question: Standing Firm with Proteus. Qualitative Report, Vol 4. Numbers 3/4*. [O]. Available: <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4.3/myers.html>
Accessed 2012-05-21
- Oldfather, P & West, J. 1994. *Qualitative Research as Jazz*. Educational Researcher. Vol. 23: No. 8. American Educational Research Association: 22-26.
- Onbelet, L: *Imagining the other: The use of narrative as an empowering practice*. [O]. Available: www.mcmaster.ca/mjtm/3-1d.htm. Paternoster Press, 1978
Accessed 2012-05-15
- Osborn, M. 1967. *Archetypal metaphor in rhetoric: The light-dark family*. *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 53, no. 2: 115-126.
- Pierrakos, E. 1961. *Self alienation: the way back to the real self*. [O]. Available: www.awakentruth.org/lectures/95selfalienation.html
Accessed 2012-05-15
- Preston-Dunlop, V. 1998. *Looking at Dances: A Choreological perspective on choreography*. London: Verve Publishing.
- Randall, M.2010. *Ingrid Jonker, The Escape*. [O]. Available: www.about-south-africa.com/home/culture/46-ingrid-jonker-the-escape
Accessed 2012-05-15
- Reynolds, J. 2001. *The Other of Derridean Deconstruction: Levinias, Phenomenology and the Quest of Responsibility*. Internet journal of Philosophy. [O]: Available:

www.minerva.mic.ul.ie/vol15/derrida.html

Accessed 2012-05-15

- Richardson, L. 1998. *Writing: A Method of inquiry*. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S Lincoln (eds). *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage pp345-371.
- Rimmon-Kenan, Shlomith. 2003. *Narrative fiction: Contemporary poetics*. Routledge.
- Roche, J. 2011. *Embodying multiplicity: the independent contemporary dancer's moving identity*. *Research in Dance Education*, 12:2, 105-118. London: Routledge.
- Ruangwanit, N. 2009. *Living in Double World: Harmonizing Homosexuality and Masculinity Through Symbolic Consumption in Private Spaces*. *Advances in Consumer Research*. Volume VIII. Thammasat University: Thailand: 137-143.
- Sanchez-Coleberg, A. 1996. *Altered States and Subliminal Spaces: Charting the Road towards a Physical Theatre*. *Performance Research* 1 (2): 40-56.
- Shankman, P. 1984. *The thick and the Thin: On the Interpretive Theoretical Program of Clifford Geertz*. *Current Anthropology*, Vol 25, No. 3: 261-280.
- Shaw, R. 2003. *The embodied psychotherapist*. Hove: Brunner-Routledge.
- Sichel, A. 2010. *Grappling with physical theatre*. *South African Theatre journal* Vol.24: 41-50.
- Smith-Autard, J. M. 2010. *Dance composition: A practical guide to creative success in dance making*. A&C Black.
- Snowber, C. 2002. *Bodydance: Enfleshing soulful inquiry through improvisation*. In C. Bagley and M. Cancienne (Eds). *Dancing the Data*. New York: Peter Lang Publishers.
- Snowber, C. 2012. *Dance as a way of knowing*. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, (134), 53-60.
- Sparkes, A.C. 1999. *Exploring body narratives*. *Sports, Education & Society*: Vol 4 Issue 1. P17-30.
- Spry, T. 2011. *Performing Autoethnography: An Embodied Methodological Praxis*. *Qualitative Inquiry*, Vol. 7, No. 6. Sage Publications: 706-732.
- Stamelman, R. 1993. *The Strangeness of the Other and the Otherness of the Stranger: Edmond Jabes*. *Yale French Studies*, No.82, *Post/Colonial Conditions: Exiles, Migrations, and Nomadisms*, Volume 1: 118-134.
- Staszak, JF. 2008. *Other/Otherness*. *Publie dans International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*, Elsevier: [O] Available: www.unige.ch/ses/geo/collaborateurs/publications/other
- Tharp, T. 2003. *The creative habit: Learn it and use it for life: A Practical guide*. New York: Simon and Schuster Paperbacks.

- Theodores, D. 2003. *Being There and Strangely Not*. In *Choreographic Encounters Vol 1*, Ed M. Brady. Cork, Ireland: Institute for Choreography and Dance: p36-40.
- Thorne, S. 1997. *Interpretive description: A noncategorical qualitative alternative for developing nursing knowledge*. *Researching in Nursing and Health*, 20: 169-177.
- Totton, N.2010. *Being, having, and becoming bodies, Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*. *An International Journal for Theory, Research and Practice*, 5:1. 21-30
- Tufnell, M and Crickmay, C.2004. *A widening field: journeys in body and imagination*. Hampshire. Dance Books Ltd.
- Turner, Bryan. 1984. *The Body and Social Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Van Maanem, J. 1979. *Reclaiming Qualitative Methods for Organizational Research*. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 24, No. 4: 520-526.
- Victoria, H.K.2012. *Creating dances to transform inner states: A choreographic model in Dance/Movement Therapy, Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*. *An International Journal for Theory, Research and Practice*, 7:3. p167-183. Publisher Taylor and Francis.
- Viljoen, L.2012. *Ingrid Jonker*. Jacana Media (Pty). Auckland Park South Africa.
- Wall, S. 2006. *An autoethnography on learning about autoethnography*. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5 (2), Article 9: 2-12.
- Wall, S. 2008. *Easier Said than Done: Writing an Autoethnography*. Department of Sociology. *International Institute for Qualitative Methodology*: 38-53.
- Waskul, D.D & Vannini, P. 2006. *Body/Embodiment: Symbolic Interaction and the Sociology of the body*. Minnesota State University. Ashgate Publishing Company.
- Wasser, J.D & Bresler, L. 1996. *Working in the interpretive Zone: Conceptualising Collaboration in Qualitative Research Teams*. *Educational Research*, Vol. 25, No. 5: 5-15.
- Westlake-Lapsey, 1988. *Film and Theory: An Introduction*. London: Manchester University Press.
- Winnicott, D. W. 1966. The location of cultural experience. *The International journal of psycho-analysis*, 48(3), 368-372.
- Young, K.1994. *Whose Body? An Introduction to bodylore*. *Journal of American Folk-lore*, 107 (432):3-8.
- Zarrilli, P. 2006. *Senses and Silence in Actor Training and Performance*. In: S Banes and A Lepecki (Eds). *The Senses in Performance*. New York: Routledge.

