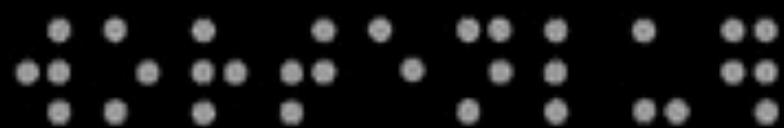




wortenlust



INTRODUCTION

If **wanderlust** is defined as a strong desire for travel and explore the world then,

what's **wortenlust?**

The original term of **wanderlust** derives from the German words *wandern* (to hike) and *lust* (desire). As this project is an expedition through language, more specifically through *die wrote* (the words) and its diverse ways of representation,

it emerges under the name of **wortenlust**.

The impact **globalisation** and **multiculturalism** are making in human life is the essence of this work, represented through dance, audio and visual effects on stage. Movements based on *Leitmotive*, noises and background voices or texts showing different

calligraphies are some of the tools that materialize and make this artistic idea become alive.

The main purpose of **wortenlust** is to awake a sense of wonder or an interest for the unknown into the audience. This representation of our "differences" pretend to abolish what human societies have been always looking for: a comfortable state of mind, manipulated by the mass media, where we are used to believe we already know everything just because we saw it on TV or in newspapers.

A 20 minutes performance piece in which the idea of the "other" is not a simply position on a scale of differences/resemblances with us but an integral part of an existing whole.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT

INSPIRATION

Inspiration of this project came from different places, at different periods: the interest on how words, phrases, dialogues or speeches can be represented through body movements arises from the beginning of my dance studies watching a dance video at University. This master piece of Sol Leon's and Paul Lightfoot's - *Shutters Shut*, opened my mind to a new ways of understand and represent a concept using the movement. The fact of breaking the bond between music and dance and use language instead was, from that point, something I have been always interested to work with.

On the other hand, the experiences living in the capital of UK and traveling around Europe these past years, have shown me how is like living in coexistence with multiple cultures in the same society. I then realized how people could understand, feel, think or even hear same things in a different way depending on their backgrounds, and I do realize especially through language.

What do we think about the cultures and how represent it thought movement?

How to represent the language/words though body shapes?

These questions and many more are some of the challenges to overcome within this project.

BACKGROUNDS

Several information sources agree that the most widely spoken and fastest spreading world language today is English even though there are more than 7,000 different languages spoken. 90% of these languages are used by less than 100,000 people, over a million people converse in 150-200 languages and 46 languages have just a single speaker. This fact, among many others, is an integral part of the world-problems currently and the starting point where this project begins to take shape. After a research I made to develop this work I consider important to write down some information about the subjects we are going to touch in here to promote a better understanding of the working process itself.

Multiculturalism Vs. Globalization

Following the UNESCO World Report, the “Cultural diversity has emerged as a key concern at the turn of a new century”. Some people see cultural diversity as a positive fact in which each of the world’s cultures unites us all in processes of exchange and dialogue. “For others, cultural differences are what cause us to lose sight of our common humanity and are therefore at the root of numerous conflicts. This second diagnosis is today all the more plausible since globalization has increased the points of interaction and friction between cultures, giving rise to identity-linked tensions, withdrawals and claims, particularly of a religious nature, which can become potential sources of dispute.”

“Globalization is often conceived as potentially antithetical to cultural diversity, in the sense of leading to the homogenization of cultural models, values, aspirations and lifestyles, to the standardization of tastes, the impoverishment of creativity, uniformity of cultural expressions and so forth.”

“The contemporary world is marked by strong attachments to national, religious, ethnic, linguistic, social, cultural and/or even ‘brand’ or consumer-based identities. Such identities have become the refuge for many individuals and groups who see globalization and cultural change as a threat to their ways of life and standards of living.”

“Human beings relate to one another through society, and express that relationship through culture. All of our actions, thoughts, behaviour, attitudes and material or intellectual creations imply a cultural relationship. In this fundamental sense, our similarities are more profound than our cultural differences. These differences, moreover, embody a positive potential, for it is through them that we complement one another in devising novel solutions for living together in our social and natural settings. Cultural diversity represents the sum of these solutions, and dialogue is the bridge between them.”

Stereotyping

Stereotyping is a way of demarcating one group from an alien ‘other’ and implicitly asserting its superiority. Stereotypes carry with them the danger that dialogue may stop short at difference and that difference may engender intolerance.

Any effort towards intercultural dialogue must be based upon the premise that all cultures are — and have always been — in continual evolution and are the result of multiple influences throughout history, both external and internal. From this perspective, the perceived fixed traits or identities that seem to isolate us from one another and plant the seeds of stereotype, discrimination or stigmatism should be seen not as barriers to dialogue but as the very ground upon which such dialogue can begin.

Language

The ability to create and use language is the most distinctive feature of humans. “Languages mediate our experiences, our intellectual and cultural environments, our modes of encounter with others, our value systems, social codes and sense of belonging, both collectively and individually. From the perspective of cultural diversity, linguistic diversity reflects the creative adaptation of groups to their changing physical and social environments. In this sense, languages are not just a means of communication but represent the very fabric of cultural expressions; they are the carriers of identity, values and worldviews.”

In human language, sounds are combined to refer to thousands of different things and experiences, which are the basis of an efficient and effective system of communication.

Do the languages we speak shape the way we think?

Do the merely express thoughts, or do the structures in languages (without our knowledge or consent) shape the very thoughts we wish to express?

The idea that language might shape thought was for a long time considered untestable at best and more often simply crazy and wrong. Now, a flurry of new cognitive science research is showing that in fact, language does profoundly influence how we see the world. The question of whether languages shape the way we think goes back centuries; Charlemagne proclaimed that “to have a second language is to have a second soul.” If people learn another language, they inadvertently also learn a new way of looking at the world.

All this new research shows us that the languages we speak not only reflect or express our thoughts, but also shape the very thoughts we wish to express. The structures that exist in our languages profoundly shape how we construct reality, and these several points of views are protagonist of a continuously confrontation between cultures.

"I will always be a translation." Nayyirah Waheed

*"Do you understand the sadness of geography?"
Michael Ondaatje*

But there is something we forget: we all came to the same roots from the same supercontinent: Pangaea which began to break apart about 175 million years ago.

MULTIMEDIA



VIDEO: <https://vimeo.com/181029004>

REFERENCES

INTO PRACTICE

There have been many dance companies who have introduced speech into their choreography to express the emotions of the text thought body movements. An example of it above-named, is the **Sol Leon's and Paul Lightfoot's** *Shutters Shut* piece. *Shutters Shut*, is a short study of the poem written and read by Gertrude Stein: "If I told him: A completed portrait of Picasso" written in 1923. In this piece of four minutes long, the dancers visualize the words of this poem using the body language. Setting the action to spoken words instead of music as this remarkable piece does has been the main reference to build up the choreography part of this project.

In *Same Difference*, another choreography by the Nederlands Dans Theatre's house choreographer's duo Lightfoot León, each of the seven dancers seem to represent a certain type of person who is constructed through the respective movements, clothing and speech of that specific dancer. At times the performers articulate solitary words or simple phrases in English, French and/or Spanish (the phenotext), but most of their utterances are made up of non-existing words and sounds (the genotext).

As a last example of choreographic work based on speaking words it's the **Alexander Ekman** masterpiece named "Cacti" in which we can see the dancers representing a spoken dialogue between two humans while a string quartet is playing. In this dialogue between a man and woman, there's a funny and intelligent interaction between voiceover and steps, with the dancers resting on each other's bodies in fluid and interesting ways.

These pieces are focussed on the text to build the choreography but each one is using different forms of narrative. Either the abstract poem of Gertrude Stein, the voice noises or the objective dialogue of a couple is represented perfectly and expressed with the body.

These pieces are some of the references and the starting point of the elaboration of **wortenlust**.

INTO WORDS

There are many articles and text about how words and language are influential into the dance field. Some of them are mentioned below.

Philipa Rothfield, Points of Contact

In this article, Rothfield discusses the model of language and linguistics within dance and other art forms from a structuralism and post-structuralism concept. Furthermore she creates a connection between language and the body. The article suggests that she argues that viewing dance from a linguistic perspective allows an audience to find more meaning and connect that with modern societal and cultural views.

Efva Lilja, Words on Dance

This book written by the Swedish choreographer and professor Efva Lilja includes a collection of texts written between 1996 and 2003 defined as an attempt of finding words to describe the process of making choreography, of making dance.

"Being limited to words is like suffering linguistic starvation. And yet it is this very journey, and its excitement, I want to put into words. A journey of exploration of what is in progress, of an inner necessity and an indomitable will. I am driven by a hunger for what has not yet been articulated. Having found a way to the very heart of language, to eavesdrop on its rhythm and see it take shape: in dance."

"Movement possesses a linguistic identity, which can also be deciphered in terms of cultural codes: gestures, our way of walking, our way of relating to the world around us. Dance provides a means to work through our connection to the past, to what once was."

On DANCE or the madness in the everyday Idyll March/April 1996

"If culture is defined as the form we give our social lives, art is vital for mutual understanding. We can decipher the state of culture in the way we express ourselves artistically. What is it like for you? We construct our identity in the awareness of cultural belonging. And so way we are all in motion.

I think that if we were all to devote ourselves more to movement as a source of language, we would understand ourselves better. Become better listeners... Not shut (lock) as many doors.

Dance encompasses as yet unguessed at opportunities."

DANCE in the Borderland

June 1997

"The society we construct is based on rational action. We set up systems to regulate our being together. We formulate laws: legal, ethical, moral (explicit and tacit)... all with the aim of maintaining these systems. We struggle so hard to acquire control, to have power over our lives. Verbal language forms part of this strategy. We learn the alphabet and grammar - we develop our skills at speech and writing. Some of us become skilled at expressing ourselves, others are continually misunderstood and come to seem incomprehensible in a frightening way. Our whole society is based on

this definition of comprehensibility. Words are given great weight and used to legitimise our actions, to define right and wrong. If you fail to have power over words, you will never be counted... and yet words amount to such a tiny part of our communicative resources. What is always there is movement. Our whole personality, our feelings, desires live in the body that makes the movement. What you are thinking can be seen... It is not what you say, but what you do, that provides you with an answer."

"Unlike words, movement cannot be controlled and regulated. An alphabet of movement is impossible as its variables are infinite and dependent on their bodily origin. This realisation contains an incredible freedom. We are our movements. The small child continuously reminds us of this. Movement is what communicates needs (hunger, despair, grief and laughter). Then the child grows older and through imitation learns to acquire words, the rules we have set up, it seeks to gain control. Acquiring knowledge becomes a matter of learning what is right and what wrong. The blueprint is one we have set. We who are adult and know... That's where things go wrong."

TECHNICAL RIDER

Stage

- Stage Dimensions: variations can be discussed
- Black velour surrounding performance space (Black Box)
- Projector screen

Light

- Projector light

Sound

- Sound equipment

Personnel

- A person with technical knowledge of the theatre