

# Nordic Journal of Dance

– practice, education and research



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# Editorial

It is our great pleasure to present to you the second 2021 volume of the Nordic Journal of Dance.

Almost two years into the pandemic, we had hoped to leave behind the unprecedented and severe challenges our field has faced. Instead, we are seeing yet another wave of restrictions and cancellations, and we can only continue offering our warmest wishes to everyone and hope that 2022 will be a better year.

This issue contains one practice-oriented article, a report from the national seminar arranged by the Nordic Forum for Dance Research (NOFOD) in Oslo in October, and a paper written by one of the seminar's presenters. We have also included a book write-up and information on activities organised by SANS.

The practice-oriented article is written by Annakarin Simonson, a teacher in contemporary dance, choreography, and improvisation at the Royal Swedish Ballet School in Stockholm. Her article «Deconstructing Contemporary Dance Discourses by Acknowledging Elderly Female Bodies» is based on her master's thesis from the master's programme in Dance Education in Contemporary Contexts at Stockholm University of the Arts. Through a project working with elderly women in a dance production, she aimed to change normative ideas about the body of the ageing dancer. By making use of improvisation, somatic practices, and decolonising methodologies, she found that acknowledging older women's resources contributes to new perspectives on the ageing body in contemporary dance discourses.

Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen is a dance teacher and the director of the dance department at Trøndertun Folk High School. Her paper «Dansens dannende potensial» [The Liberal Learning Potential in Dance] presents her master's project from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology. In her project, she collected information from both students and her fellow dance teachers and investigated how an

education in dance may contribute to an education in human development.

Randi Frønsdal, former dancer, choreographer, and teacher, has written a book about Enrico Cecchetti's life, method, and impact on classical ballet. The book was presented at the NOFOD seminar, and we include a brief write-up by the undersigned.

The perspectives on the potential in dance presented in this issue's texts show examples of what dance can do for ageing women and for young students at the threshold of adulthood. These projects shed light on the importance of a continuous exploration of possibilities and, time and time again, challenge, evoke, and reawaken conceptions of the art of dance.

## Be inspired and enjoy reading!

*Elizabeth Svarstad*  
Issue Editor

## Deconstructing Contemporary Dance Discourses by Acknowledging Elderly Female Bodies

Annakarin Simonson

### ABSTRACT

This article uses a choreographic project to discuss the relationship between elderly women and contemporary dance. It focuses on how participating in the project is of artistic value to these women and what happens in the meeting between me as a master's student and researcher, the project itself and the women. The article is based on a master's project in dance pedagogy aimed at using action to change normative ideas about a dancer's body. The artistic practice is based on the women's lived experiences. Through improvisation and with a somatic approach as a choreographic performative practice, collaborative transformative learning emerged from the participants. By articulating and visualising the experiences of elderly women as a marginalised group, the meaning of the concepts of dance, body, and age was deconstructed and new insights were gained to challenge and broaden normative ideas about dance and the dancer's body. The discoveries presented in this article show that elderly women have the capacity to change through dance. By using a decolonising methodology, I argue that deconstruction can be achieved in interactions with others and experienced as artistry. In conclusion, I claim that age norms and bodily ideals in contemporary dance discourses can be challenged by taking the advantage of the resources of older women and by giving them access to contemporary dance.

### ABSTRACT

Denna artikel diskuterar relationer som uppstår i ett koreografiskt projekt mellan äldre kvinnor och samtida dans. Utgångspunkten ligger vid vilket värde projektet har för dessa kvinnor och vad som sker i mötet mellan mig som forskande masterstuderande, projektet och kvinnorna. Artikeln grundar sig i ett dansdidaktiskt masterprojekt med ambition att genom handling ändra normativa idéer om dans och kropp. Den konstnärliga praktiken baseras på kvinnornas levda erfarenhet. Med improvisation och ett somatiskt förhållningssätt som koreografisk performativ praktik har ett kollaborativt transformativt lärande uppstått mellan deltagarna. Genom att artikulera och synliggöra äldre kvinnor som marginaliserad grupp, har betydelsen av begreppen dans, kropp och ålder dekonstruerats och nya insikter har uppstått som utmanar och breddare normativa idéer om dans och kropp. De upptäckter som presenteras i artikeln visar att äldre kvinnor har kapacitet att förändras genom dans. Genom att använda dekoloniserande metodologi, argumenterar jag för att dekonstruktion kan uppstå i interaktion med andra, och upplevas som konstnärlighet. Sammanfattningsvis menar jag att åldersnormer och kroppsliga ideal inom samtida dansdiskurser kan utmanas genom att använda äldre kvinnor som resurs och göra samtida dans tillgängligt.

# Deconstructing Contemporary Dance Discourses by Acknowledging Elderly Female Bodies

Annakarín Simonson

## Introduction

After many years of practicing and teaching dance, the need to use dance to express myself artistically has grown even stronger. This is something I expected would decrease as my body changed with age. When reflecting on the assumption that an ageing body would be equivalent to a reduced desire to express oneself artistically through dance, I found that this seemed to be a normal perception of the relationship between dance and age. I started asking myself how an ageing female body without virtuosity could be significant in the context of contemporary dance.

In this article, which is based on my master's degree in contemporary dance, I discuss how acknowledging the ageing female body can be considered a resource in the context of contemporary dance. I discuss how contemporary dance discourses can be deconstructed using a decolonising methodology and to what extent women experience their artistic values by dancing together.

My dance training originates from a Euro-American contemporary dance standpoint which is youth-oriented and focused on «ability» and «disability» of the dancer's body (Brandstetter and Nakajima 2017). Against this background, the research originates from a personal interest in age, body, and dance, as well as an ambition to disrupt contemporary dance discourses in an academic context and change normative ideas about the dancer's body (Simonson 2021). I wanted to investigate how these normative dance discourses could be problematised from a critical age perspective and explored through an action-based production of knowledge derived from dancing.

I was curious to find out the extent to which contemporary dance was valuable to elderly women with no previous dance experience, what dance could do for elderly women who do dance, and what would happen between me, the dancers, and the choreographic project I was facilitating. To examine this, I invited 13 women between 55–67 years of age to participate in a choreographic project and share embodied experiences together.

## A project with an activist agenda

The project started by gathering voluntary participants. A flyer was published on social media to attract participants with a desire to express themselves artistically through dance. Curiosity, imagination, and exploration were emphasised. I named the project *Women who want to DANCE.*, emphasising the concept of free will and action with a creative direction. The dot (.) in the title held a symbolic value in taking a stand for women who want to change through action and be part of a transformative process, including an activist aspect (Simonson 2021, 11). There was ambition to change by using a decolonising perspective and resisting normative assumptions about women and age. To apply decolonising methodology means in this context to critically examine how the western worldview reproduces knowledge (Fensham 2008, 2–3), while also exploring new methodologies for thinking about and experiencing dance.

The participants represented themselves by resisting normative values about age and dance instead of representing assumptions of the group of

elderly women. Consequently, the dancers were given the opportunity to re-establish their dancing bodies by articulating an artistry and dance of their own, as opposed to considering traditional norms ascribed to elderly feminine bodies.

## **Lived Experiences as Bearer of the Project**

One of my main intentions was to highlight elderly women's experiences in the context of contemporary dance in order to distinguish dance as an artistic activity as opposed to a training activity. My intention was to provide a space to dance for the sake of the dance, thereby exploring dance and artistry without focusing on increased physical ability or achieving results. This was done to shift the focus away from the concepts of health and well-being that are usually promoted when discussing ageing and dancing (Krekula et al. 2017, 42).

Eight workshops were conducted and designed around different themes related to the body and ageing. In order to emphasise artistry, the dancers were encouraged to use their lived experience to examine their dancing. For me as the researcher, it was important to offer a safe and non-hierarchical atmosphere without judgement. By using open instructions like, «Let the skin be in contact with the air» instead of «Move your body like this,» the dancers could investigate their own personal experience and generate feelings of having and using imagination and creativity. While exploring one of the themes, to meet, the dancers and I considered the distance between the feet meeting each other and the experience of the skin meeting the air around us. To meet each other by resting in someone's gaze could be scary at first, but after a while, it created the feeling of being seen in a real and authentic manner. Being confirmed by another dancer enhanced the sense of being visible.

The workshops were built through the contribution of the lived experiences of bodily stories, emotional moods and memories. By using emotional

and subjective incentives, the content of the project emerged in interaction with me and the dancers during the process. The knowledge was situated and created from the lived experiences and reflections of me and the participants. Consequently, the choreographic practice created new insights through action and doing rather than through abstract thinking. This approach acknowledges that it is not possible to separate knowledge from the situations in which it is generated (Barrett and Bolt 2010, 5).

## **Choreography as a Performative Practice**

The dancers' intentions defined the choreographic practice, as did the relationship between the dancers and the environment. I chose this approach as an expanded way to understand the concept of choreography (Klien 2008), as a performative practice that includes the processes of thinking, writing, and dancing in collaboration as opposed to the choreographer defining a predetermined idea that controls the process.

The dancers were able to use their intuition and spontaneity to make personal choices as I used a somatic approach to guide them through structured improvisations. The somatic approach links body and mind together by including both sensory and cognitive aspects of embodied experiences (Coogan 2016; Brandstetter 2007, 41). This means that the body cannot be separated from feelings about ourselves or environmental experiences. By paying attention to the surroundings, the space, and the other dancers, the choreographic practice became an interaction between what choreographed the dancers and what the dancers choreographed. The interactions between bodies; different materials, such as yarn and personal objects; and thoughts, hopes, and desires were visualised as performative practice through the body.

When the dancers used a photograph of themselves to explore the feeling of «being me now»

and the feeling of «being me then» (in the picture), they began to create art. The photograph served to connect with a personal discovery that enabled the dancers to express themselves artistically. This implied that the dancer became artistic because of the photograph. The potential that a photograph and other objects had, this affordance (Nelson 2013, 41), was essential to helping the dancers achieve the experience of artistry. By using the objects' affordance in dance, the dancers challenged their boundaries which led to creating meaning and pride.

Using improvisation as a self-determining practice and somatic approach as a possibility to gain contact with embodied experiences (Nadeau and Young 2006), the dancers expressed themselves without being overshadowed by notions of a specific aesthetic and bodily ability. The fact that there was no explicit dance aesthetic to aim for opened the dancers up to develop the aesthetics themselves. Memories and lived experiences were used to explore the body in collaboration with others, rather than the construction of a possible dancing self through imitation. Thus, seeing elderly women in dance has the potential to challenge norms related to dance and the body and can use deconstruction to reformulate alternative knowledge in the context of choreography.

I see improvisation as a practice that implicitly involves an age-critical perspective due to a continuous transformation of the body in time and space. Ageing is a part of a body's transformative process, which is neither fixed, constant, nor measurable. With an unstable subjectivity and no fixed self, there is no body that can decay or be lost through ageing. This approach advocates that ageing is part of a process of being itself (Schweiger 2012, 109).

## **Writing as an Embodied Way of Thinking**

Immediately following each workshop, I wrote down and reflected upon my experiences and thoughts. This

retrospective introspection (Frostling-Henningson 2017, 42) was necessary in order to be able to determine what happened between me and the dancers. The notes served to resonate between the supplemented writing and the choreographic practice and became an embodied way of thinking.

In logbooks handed out at the first workshop, the dancers were asked to write their reflections regarding body, age, and dance based on their experiences with dancing. The initial purpose was to gain a deeper understanding of what dance can do for elderly women and how these women experience artistry. As a researcher, I did not want the dancers' written words to affect me during the process, and for that reason, I relied on the doing that arose in the moment instead of reacting to the written reflections. Hence, the logbooks were collected, and I read them after the project ended.

With humility and excitement, I continued the artistic process by reading the dancers' personal documentation as an echo of collected traces, or as Kim Vincs writes, «I don't translate my dances but I create a new trajectory or line of flight» (Vincs 2019, 111). The voices that their notes created established a presence that did justice to their intentions. After analysing and summarising the notes, I found a reflexivity in their body which seemed to become visible through the documentation. The dancers referred to profound realisations that were emerging through the dance and affecting different layers of their personality. Several dancers described how thinking and reflecting on dance while dancing helped them discover their artistry. This became possible through an unpretentious and permissive environment that was crucial to daring them to explore their inner selves. Overall, I became aware of the importance of the dancers' thinking, dancing, and writing about dancing in a reflexive process in order to gain a deeper understanding of the self, which in turn generated an experience of artistry.



*The image is an excerpt from pictures taken during the project (Simonson 2021).*

### **«What I did was not dance, it was art»**

Perceiving artistry in dance was not intuitive, and only emerged during the project. In retrospect, my concern in emphasising a clear distinction between dance as art and dance as physical training contributed to making norms about artistry visible. I took for granted the fact that the dancers could define an artistic value; however, this turned out not to be the case.

The Euro-American dance canon that characterises western culture includes a hierarchical order with a clear definition of who is an artist (or not) and who can define themselves as a dancer (Fensham 2008, 1). When the structure of dance is based on a system of knowledge involving the choreographer as the authority, the dancers consequently experience a distance and a respect for the concept of art. This became clear when I made assumptions about art as

being something desirable. By raising awareness of this gap, norms about the accessibility of art became visible and thus were possible to deconstruct.

One dancer reflected on the question, when do you feel artistic in dance? She answered, «I haven't thought about that. I feel like a layman in dance.» At first, this answer surprised me. How was I able to make a strong connection between dance and art so easily while the dancers were not? The dancers implicitly needed permission from me, as a choreographer and representative of the artistic academy, to identify themselves as being artistic.

Later in the project, when the experience of being artistic arose, another dancer chose to distance her practice from dancing by expressing that, «What I did was not dance, it was art.» A sensation of artistry became apparent without associating it with dancing. At this moment, normative notions about who has access to dance in an artistic context became visible.

## **Deconstruction of Dance Discourses through Decolonising Methodology**

The decolonising methodology focused on both the dance and the dancer. By making the bodies of elderly women visible as bearers of knowledge of contemporary dance and by giving legitimacy to their experience, assumptions about the young dancer body as a norm was dismantled. I chose to use the decolonising methodology and perspective in a white and westernised dance context to problematise how dance knowledge is produced, how ownership of dance is created (or not), and what and whose knowledge is considered valuable in dance. «Decolonizing methodologies is not a method for revolution in a political sense but provokes some revolutionary thinking about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies, and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation» (Tuhiwai Smith 2012, xii).

The dancers and I practiced and discussed a set of normative ideas regarding contemporary dance. For example, the dancers could confidently move with strength, lightness, weight, or stiffness. They were physically able and there was no need for normative body ideals within the dancing space. When the dancers were encouraged to make their own decisions through struggle and self-determination, they developed their self-esteem and ownership. Or as one dancer expressed, «I'm creating something that only I own. That is mine. I make the dance sensual, artistic.» This indicated that experiencing ownership was crucial to achieving artistry. Listening emotionally to the body rather than relying on imitational practices rejects an authoritarian teaching situation (Sööt and Viskus 2013).

Another example appeared while experimenting with different identities. One dancer expressed how she could use both traditionally female and male energies in dancing, saying, «Movements are as good as

emotions. And they are both the woman and the man in me» (Simonson 2021, 31). When the dancers were allowed to use their experiences without requirements from a normative outside gaze, the feeling of self-determination arose and a deconstruction of the female dancer and the dance occurred.

One of the workshops examined the theme of body memory. The dancers explored how early childhood experiences affected the body. Unpleasant memories like, «a tight feeling in the stomach and pressure over the chest,» were used in the dance sessions. This generated new discoveries of dance and the feeling of a memory as ageless. As one dancer expressed, «When I dance, I don't have an age. I can play, be imaginative, creative, funny, serious, and all that doesn't have an age. I feel like all my ages in the dance» (Simonson 2021). In that moment, choreography and dance became a means to negotiate different realities beyond the body moving in space, where ageing is part of a process of being a self and is a subjective creation that is never fixed but constantly changing. With the help of decolonising methodology, the dancers created the feeling of re-establishing the body in dance and defined themselves as artistic.

## **Conclusion**

The findings show that elderly women's need for personal development and self-realisation is strong regardless of age and is something they can explore by participating in a dance project. By interacting with me and the others, the dancers used their life experiences and creative expressions to investigate dance, embodiment, and their thoughts about ageing and dance. This generated a transformative learning process as well as the feeling of ownership, empowerment, and artistry. With an open and permissive atmosphere, the dancers and I could come together by dancing on equal terms while also developing self-confidence and trust.

By allowing oneself to dance just for the sake of the

dance itself, a sense of being artistic emerged without consideration for physical ability and requirements. From a researchers' perspective and as part of the group of elderly women, I found a deep confidence in my own artistry. As a result, the gap between artistry and dance was clarified, discussed, and deconstructed. The dancers discovered unknown artistic abilities that they valued higher than they first expected.

I argue that these findings can be understood as a decolonisation of the identity of elderly women within the context of contemporary dance. The group's experiences are visualised, articulated, and re-established as decolonialised embodied knowledge. Ageing is ongoing regardless of age. If considering that dance deconstructs age and age deconstructs dance, an ageing female body can be valued as a resource for further development of contemporary dance.

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*The image is an excerpt from pictures taken during the project (Simonson 2021).*

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## BIOGRAPHY

**Annakarin Simonson** holds a master's in contemporary dance didactics and a teacher's degree in dance from Stockholm University of the Arts. She is active as a dance teacher in contemporary dance, choreography, and improvisation at the Royal Swedish ballet school in Stockholm. She has a special interest in research regarding dialogic artistic and choreographic processes, contemporary dance

contexts, somatic approaches and bodily learning. This article is based on her master's thesis from the Master Program in Dance Education in Contemporary Contexts at Stockholm University of the Arts (SKH). Her work has been presented at the dance festival, Tensta dansar.

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# Report from the NOFOD National Seminar at the CODA International Dance Festival

Elizabeth Svarstad

NOFOD Norway arranged a national seminar for dance researchers and dance artists on October 30, 2021 at the Kristiania University College's Department of Performing Arts in Oslo in cooperation with the CODA Oslo International Dance Festival.

Members of NOFOD and the fields of dance and dance research were invited to present their research. The event was free for all NOFOD members and a fee was required from non-members. In total, 14 persons were present.

Artistic leader and festival director Stine Nilsen opened the seminar by giving a welcome speech.

Invited keynote speaker, Professor Gunn Engelsrud of the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Department of Sport, Food and Natural Sciences, gave an enthusiastic and absorbing speech about the state of the art of dance in 2021, throwing light on ongoing debates and freedom of speech from the field of dance's point of view. She presented perspectives on how dance researchers, artists, and teachers can use their voice, trust their position, and

*Kari Hoaas*

*Photo: Marius Hauge*



*Keynote speaker Gunn Engelsrud.  
Photo: Elizabeth Svarstad*

express themselves in these at-times rough discourses. Engelsrud's keynote speech formed the basis for relevant reflections and good discussion.

Kari Hoaas, a professor in the Department of Performing Arts at Kristiania University College, presented some of her choreographic works from during the lockdowns and restrictions of the pandemic, and provided insight into how the works came about despite limits concerning bodies and space.

Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen, a dance teacher and the director of the dance department at the Trøndertun folk high school (folkehøgskole), gave a presentation of her master's thesis, «The Liberal Learning Potential in dance» [«Dansens dannende potensial»]. Olsen has studied the potential of dance when it comes to education through collected information about students' experiences and her colleagues' didactic reflections.



## Dansens dannende potensial

Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen

### SAMMENDRAG

Hensikten med denne presentasjonen er å formidle hovedmomentene fra mitt masterarbeid «Dansens dannende potensial» (Olsen 2019). I masteroppgaven fokuserer jeg på det potensial og den kraft som ligger i dans og i danseundervisning i forbindelse med dannelse definert som menneskelig vekst på folkehøgskole. Jeg presenterer dansens fire dannende potensialer som ble skrevet fram som grunnlag for oppgaven og deres relasjon til tidligere elevers erfaringer samt min og mine kollegers didaktiske tenkning. Oppgaven kommer med ny kunnskap om hva dannelse i/gjennom dans kan være. Dette er av relevans for folkehøgskolen spesielt, men også når de estetiske fagenes posisjon i samfunnet og skoleverket skal diskuteres. Norsk skole har i likhet med folkehøgskolen et oppdrag i å danne mennesket. Denne oppgaven er en stemme som indirekte snakker for dansens plass i norsk skole og lærerutdanning i et dannelsesperspektiv.

Nøkkelord: Dannelse, dans, folkehøgskole, forstudium, a/r/tografi, profesjonsutvikling

### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this presentation is to communicate the main arguments from my master's thesis, «The Liberal Learning Potential in Dance» (Olsen 2019). The thesis focuses on the potential and power that lies in dance and dance teaching in connection with liberal learning, defined as human growth at folk high schools. I present the four liberal learning potentials in dance that formed the basis for the thesis and their relation to the experiences of previous students, as well as the didactic thinking of my colleagues and I. This thesis brings new knowledge about what liberal learning in/through dance can be. This is of relevance both to the context of folk high school in particular and to the wider discussion of aesthetic subjects in society and the school system. Norwegian schools, like folk high schools, have a mission to facilitate human growth. This thesis is a voice that indirectly speaks of the place of dance in Norwegian schools and teacher education from a liberal learning perspective.

Keywords: Liberal learning, dance, folk high school, pre-study, a/r/tography, professional development

# Dansens dannende potensial

Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen

## Å dannes som menneske gjennom dans

Gjennom mitt arbeid som dansepedagog og avdelingsleder i dans ved Trøndertun folkehøgskole har jeg stadig undret meg over temaet dannelse i dans. Mitt utgangspunkt for å skrive en masteroppgave om dans og didaktikk på forstudium på folkehøgskole er min oppfatning av at arbeid med dans kan ha en sterk positiv innvirkning på individets utvikling. Kritiske stemmer i folkehøgskolemiljøet og kolleger på Trøndertun fikk meg til å stille meg spørsmålet om det er forenelig å undervise i scenisk dans på høyt nivå på folkehøgskole samtidig som folkehøgskolens intensjon om å danne det hele mennesket ivaretas. Våren 2019 forsvarte jeg min masteroppgave i kunstfagdidaktikk ved NTNU. Min drivkraft var å bidra med nye

perspektiver på dannelse i og gjennom dans generelt og på forstudiums nivå på folkehøgskole spesielt. Oppgaven baserer seg på 22 år med arbeid med dans på heltid; 20 av dem i et stabilt profesjonsfelleskap med to andre danselærere på Trøndertun folkehøgskole.

Jeg gikk inn i undersøkelsen med A/R/Tografi som metodologi og med en hybrid identitet som artist, researcher og teacher (Irwin 2013). Mine tre roller som dansekunstner (Artist), forsker på masternivå (Researcher) og danselærer (Teacher) fungerte i et kontinuerlig og utviklende samspill i kunnskapingen. Jeg sto selv midt oppe i undersøkelsen med egen erfaring og praksis.

*Visualisering av a/r/tografisk tenkning.  
Foto: Arne Hauge*



Tre forskningsspørsmål ledet meg gjennom arbeidet:

*Hva er dannelse i/gjennom dans undersøkt gjennom utvalgt teori?*

*Hvilke dannelseperspektiver i dans blir til blant tidligere elever ved forstudium i dans på folkehøgskole?*

*Hvilke dannelseperspektiver oppstår i et profesjonsfellesskap mellom tre folkehøgskolelærere i dans ved forstudium på folkehøgskole?*

## Dannelse i/gjennom dans

Folkehøgskoleforbundet (2019) definerer dannelse som en prosess som utvikler evnen til å være oppmerksom på seg selv, på sine medmennesker og den verden vi lever i. Dannelsesarbeidet bidrar til at den enkelte finner mening, mot og entusiasme til å leve og mestre eget liv som et opplevende, deltagende og reflekterende menneske. Jeg opplever dannelse som noe som er i bevegelse og som ikke har en begynnelse eller slutt. Det er en kontinuerlig tilblivelse av en identitet i verden. Jeg søkte etter teorier om dannelse i og gjennom dans. Jeg fant ingen nedskrevne teorier på dette området og oppdaget et kunnskapshull. For å legge grunnlaget for min undersøkelse gjorde jeg derfor en teori gjennomgang hvor jeg krysset teorier om dannelse og dans. Ut fra denne krysningen oppsto det mulighetsrom, og jeg skapte det jeg betegner som dansens fire dannende potensialer:

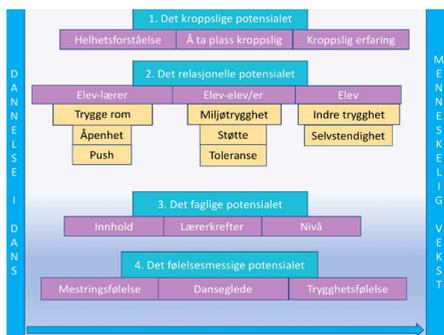
1. Det kroppslige potensialet
2. Det relasjonelle potensialet
3. Det faglige potensialet
4. Det følelsesmessige potensialet

Gjennom arbeid med dans har mennesket et potensial til å formes positivt ved å kjenne og beherske sin kropp. Gjennom gode relasjoner med andre elever, lærere og seg selv muliggjøres menneskelig vekst. Gjennom faglig kunnskap og gjennom å bli kjent med, beherske og bruke sine følelser kan mennesket vokse gjennom

dansen. Jeg sier at dette er potensialer fordi det krever at det legges til rette for at eleven skal kunne vokse som menneske. Dette forutsetter at pedagoger har en solid dansefaglig kompetanse og en dansedidaktisk tenkning med fokus på det hele mennesket. I teori gjennomgangen fant jeg også forhold som kan virke hemmende, eller begrensende for dannelsen. Dette er forhold der danseren objektiviseres.

## Intervju

For å finne svar på om arbeid med scenisk dans på forstudium på folkehøgskole er dannende i elevens liv gjorde jeg intervju med ti av mine tidligere elever. Alle var på det tidspunkt studenter ved høyere danseutdanning i inn- og utland. Det oppstod mange dannelseperspektiver i mitt møte med elevene og i det transkriberte materialet fra intervjuene. Intervjuene bekrefter at elevene har blitt positivt formet av året på Trøndertun og at alle dansens fire dannende potensialer er til stede i elevenes betraktninger. Funnene som oppstod samlet jeg i denne figuren:



Elevene opplevde at arbeid med dans ga positive erfaringer og økt bevissthet rundt egen kropp. Det relasjonelle potensialet viste seg å være stort. Det var mange opplevelser og erfaringer rundt relasjoner; både relasjonen elev og lærer, elevene seg imellom og relasjonen til seg selv. Elevene trakk fram faget som viktig for den personlige veksten og at innholdet, lærerkreftene og nivået var av stor betydning. I tillegg



*Samtaleworkshop i kollegiet.  
Foto: Jan Eivind Tønnesen.*

trådte fokus på følelser fram og at arbeid med dans på Trøndertun ble knyttet til elementer som danseglede, mestring og trygghetsfølelse. Jeg oppfatter det slik at de fire potensialene veves sammen i hverandre i elevenes betraktninger. Potensialene trenger hverandre for å bli til som potensialer for dannelse i dans. Tar man bort det ene, mister man også de andre, eller man svekker dem.

## Samtaleworkshops

For å finne svar på hva det er i dansepedagogenes dansedidaktiske tenkning og pedagogiske praksis som legger til rette for at dannelse skal kunne skje hos eleven arrangerte jeg tre samtaleworkshops med mine to kolleger. Bilder og minner ble benyttet for å hente fram refleksjoner. Tre sentrale dansedidaktiske prinsipper pekte seg ut gjennom samtalen: Å SE eleven, Å TRYGGE eleven og Å UTFORDRE eleven. Ved å se eleven som et helt menneske og arbeide under trygge forhold med fokus på gode relasjoner og med faglige utfordringer, legger dansepedagogene til rette

for vekst hos elevene. Alle dansens fire dannende potensialer var til stede i pedagogenes refleksjoner og i den dansedidaktiske tenkningen. Å la elevene være skapende og medskapende dansere trådte fram som et viktig grep i arbeidet med å utfordre eleven. Ved å skape dans setter elevene sin egen signatur på et arbeid i stedet for å kopiere lærerens eller koreografens bevegelser. Pedagogene ser med dette eleven som et selvstendig subjekt som former seg selv, ikke et objekt som formes utenfra. Dansepedagogene oppleves som samstemte og i kontinuerlig utvikling med fokus på elevenes beste. Selve masteroppgaven fungerte som en utvikling av profesjonsfelleskapet der dansedidaktisk tenkning som før var mer usagt og udefinert ble nedfelt i tekst.

## Resultat

Funnene i undersøkelsen min viser at det ikke er en motsetning mellom det å danne et menneske og det å arbeide med dansefaget på forstudiums nivå på folkehøgskole. Resultatet viser at arbeid med dans har et potensial til å danne det hele mennesket og at dette er noe som realiseres på Trøndertun med det faglige opplegget som tilbys i dag og med de lærerne som jobber der. Funnene viser at om dansepedagogen ser, trykker og utfordrer eleven, muliggjøres menneskelig vekst gjennom de fire potensialene som igjen muliggjør dannelsen av det hele mennesket. Oppgaven er med dette et bidrag til folkehøgskolens dannelsesopdrag spesielt. Den er også et argument for dansens og kunstfagenes plass i samfunnet og skoleverket nettopp fordi funnene viser at arbeid med dans som estetisk fag har potensial til å danne det hele mennesket.

## Referanser

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## BIOGRAPHY

**Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen** is a trained dancer and dance teacher from the Oslo National Academy of the Arts with further dance studies in Paris. She has a master's degree in art didactics from NTNU and is a dance teacher and head of the dance department at Trøndertun Folk High School in Melhus outside Trondheim, where she initiated Dance pre-study in 2013. Olsen has been engaged as a practice supervisor for KHIO and NTNU and runs the company Dansepilotene together with Marit Laupstad Solberg. She also works freelance as a dancer, educator, and choreographer and was actively involved in the establishment of the DansiT choreographic center in Trondheim.

## BIOGRAFI

**Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen** er utdannet danser og dansepedagog fra Statens Balletthøgskole med videre studieopphold i Paris. Hun har en mastergrad i kunstfagdidaktikk fra NTNU og er dansepedagog og avdelingsleder i dans ved Trøndertun folkehøgskole i Melhus utenfor Trondheim. Her initierte hun linjen Dans Forstudium i 2013. Olsen har vært engasjert som praksisveileder for KHIO og NTNU og driver selskapet Dansepilotene sammen med Marit Laupstad Solberg. Hun jobber frilans som danser, pedagog og koreograf og var aktivt med i etableringen av DansiT, koreografisk senter, i Trondheim.

# Enrico Cecchetti: Danser, koreograf og pedagog

av Randi Frønsdal

Enrico Cecchetti (1850–1928) var en italiensk danser, koreograf og pedagog tilknyttet blant annet Mariinskijteateret, Diaghilevs Ballets Russes og La Scala. Hans metode for undervisning i klassisk ballett har hatt stor betydning i Europa og i verden ellers.

Randi Frønsdal (1935–) er en norsk danser, koreograf og pedagog som selv har undervist Cecchettis metode i hele sin karriere. Hun studerte blant annet med Cecchettis elev Olga Preobrajenska (1871–1962) i Paris og er imponerende nok kun to ledd fra Cecchetti selv.

Frønsdal har tatt for seg Cecchettis metode og dens utbredelse og betydning, i tillegg til en biografisk gjennomgang og historisk kontekst. Boken ble utgitt i 2019 med støtte fra Kunstnerforeningen og Lise Eger. Den er heftet, er på 58 sider og inneholder en rekke illustrerende bilder.

Boken er inndelt i fem kapitler, samt innledning og avslutning. Frønsdal tar for seg Cecchettis bakgrunn, oppvekst og utdanning som danser og pedagog og hans videre karriere ved blant annet Mariinskijteateret, Diaghilevs Ballets Russes og La Scala. Hun gir et innblikk i de viktigste elementene i Cecchettis danseteknikk og fremhever dens særlige betydning for mannlige dansere. Videre gir hun en gjennomgang av teknikkens utbredelse i Europa, Russland, Australia, Canada, USA, og Sør-Afrika og hvordan den ble ivaretatt av hans elever, blant andre Ninette de Valois i London og Preobrajenska i Paris.

*Elizabeth Svarstad*



*Enrico Cecchetti underviser Anna Pavlova ca. 1905.*

# Spring Activities



## Norske koreografer 2: Siri & Snelle

Serien Norske koreografer er undervisningsressurser som med utgangspunkt i norske koreografers uttrykk og arbeidsmetoder gir eksempler på øvelser lærere kan benytte i arbeid med kreativt, utforskende, skapende arbeid med elever i skole og lærerutdanning. Den første ressursen i serien omhandler Jo Strømgrens kunstnerskap, og nå er vi helt i sluttspurten av ferdigstillelsen av ressurs nummer to, med utgangspunkt i kunstnerduoen Siri & Snelle. Ressursen vil bli tilgjengelig for medlemmer via en innloggingsportal på vår nettside. Vi gleder oss! Følg med!

## Styrking av dansekritikk

I samarbeid med Norsk Tidsskriftforening setter vi i gang kurs i dansekritikk med mulighet for at deltakerne kan få publisert kritikker i vårt tidsskrift Nordic Journal of Dance. Vi er veldig glade for dette samarbeidet med Tidsskriftforeningen og gleder oss til å komme i gang. Mer informasjon om kurs kommer på nyåret når alle detaljer er på plass.

## Nettverk for dans i lærerutdanning

Vårt nettverk for dans i lærerutdanning arrangerer webinar med Gunn Engelsrud med tittel «Teoretisk posisjonering» – om konstruksjoner av studenten/eleven i undervisning i kroppsøving/dans den 15. februar 2022 kl. 13–15. Webinaret er åpent for alle interesserte, men påmelding kreves.

Ønsker du å delta på webinaret og/eller bli med i nettverket? Send e-post til [sans@dansepraksis.no](mailto:sans@dansepraksis.no).

## Aksjonen En annen dans

Siden 2017 har vi hatt en årlig aksjon under Dansens Dager. Aksjonen innebærer at vi sender ut kunstnerpedagoger til skoler i hele landet for å undervise i kreativ dans. Kunstnerpedagogen knytter selv kontakt med en skole i sitt nærmiljø, men honoraret utbetales av SANS.

Lyst til å bli med på aksjonen i 2022? Send CV og kort søknad/motivasjonsbrev til [sans@dansepraksis.no](mailto:sans@dansepraksis.no).

Frist: 15. januar 2022.

## Vårsamling

Vårsamlingen (vårkurs) blir 6. mai 2022. Det blir som vanlig faglig påfyll, erfaringsutveksling og diskusjon, tilpasset de ulike skoleslag. Vi satser sterkt på å møtes fysisk denne gangen og annonserer innhold så snart dette er på plass, men hold av datoen allerede nå!

*Anette Sture Iversen*



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# CALL FOR PAPERS

## 15th NOFOD CONFERENCE

The Danish National School of Performing Arts,  
COPENHAGEN 5.–8.7.2022

### *Moving, relating, commanding:*

Choreographies for bodies, identities and ecologies

In the 15. NOFOD conference we want to address choreography's acute cultural and socio-political relevance in the context of the past months' worldwide protesting and the global pandemic. Choreography holds a capacity to exert and impose power, but also to identify, investigate and undermine it. As «a plan or orchestration of bodies in motion,» choreography provides knowledge about movement and its regulation: how moving bodies are arranged, fixed, ordered and manipulated.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, choreographic knowledge enables analyses of such regulation and its embodied defiance.

André Lepecki has referred to choreography as a system of command, but with what forcefulness do different instances of choreographic commanding impose themselves on bodies? What room do they leave for interpretation? Is the commanding a subtle nudge, an authoritative order, a suggestion, a manipulation and – not least – what are the alternatives to obeying it? How can we invent, explore and insist on these alternatives? And what sanctions do different choreographic systems put in place to punish those who stray from the prescribed path? We want to use the conference as a forum to explore the relevance of such questions in a variety of social, artistic and pedagogical contexts.

### Social choreographies

Susan Foster points to choreography's resonance with enduring cultural values concerning bodily, individual, and social identities. This can be seen in choreographic productions and reflections of notions of gender, class, age and race, but also of community, beauty, authenticity or professionalism.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, the recent crises regarding both COVID-19 and the protests against police brutality arguably emphasise an impossibility to detach choreographic power from its socio-political context. Such power becomes palpable in limitations of movement and mobility. With very different motivations and degrees of force, citizens are choreographed in restrictive, unfamiliar manners in their navigation around each other in public space. The global pandemic has also affected interactions in the private sphere with close ones in newly crowded homes. Inter-personal encounters necessitate new modes of enquiring consent about what constitutes an intrusion into personal space, as well as a new or appropriated set of gestures to perform affection.

### Choreographic objects

Dance and dance studies have conceived of choreography

1 Susan Foster, *Choreographing Empathy. Kinaesthesia in Performance* (London/New York: Routledge 2011), 15.

2 Susan Foster, «Choreographies of Gender,» *Signs* 24, no. 1 (1998): 5 and Foster, *Choreographing Empathy*; Andrew Hewitt, *Social Choreography: Ideology as Performance in Dance and Everyday Movement* (Durham and London: Duke University Press 2005).

as detached from the moving human body for some time. Works such as Mette Ingvarsen's *Artificial Nature Series* or William Forsythe's *Choreographic Objects* are examples of such a 'rupture of the body-movement bind.'<sup>3</sup> If we understand ecologies broadly as addressing relational processes that concern living on this planet, choreographies play a significant ecological role. But how exactly can we grasp the choreographic in those negotiations of reciprocal agency that characterize ecologies? How does choreography figure ecologically? By including notions of choreography as expressed not in dance, but in objects and architectures that direct human and non-human movement, we want to open the conference to scholars and practitioners who work in the proximity of dance and dance studies and explicitly invite architects, designers, scenographers and fashion scholars to participate.

## Choreographed pedagogies

As a framework, a strategy, or a set of instructions, choreography also figures in the field of dance pedagogy. How does choreography frame education? Teaching situations almost inevitably entail power dynamics. Can these only be challenged by abandoning choreography altogether? If choreography, in the traditional sense, was meant to direct dancers in how to move and what to do, can't choreography also facilitate disruptions of such instructing and directing? Steve Paxton suggested that contact improvisation can challenge hierarchies in the choreographic process – how can choreographic practices today be taught with respect to shared ownership and flexible creative roles?<sup>4</sup> (How) can choreography be employed as an

emancipatory tool? (How) can chaos and freedom be choreographed in educational settings? Participatory practices have moved from the art scene into schools where artists, teachers and children move playfully together. Here, choreographic strategies might be useful in providing adults with frameworks within which they can redefine the role of the teacher.

## Topics

After an expanded notion of choreography has been researched for some years now, the 15th NOFOD conference wants to explore its renewed current relevance. We, furthermore, want to give a platform to showcase how this strand has developed in the Nordic countries and explicitly open dance research up to other disciplines. We therefore invite contributions that transcend dance (studies) as a discipline, as well as contributions that explore practical modes of research to propose contributions on these, but not only these, topics:

- Choreo-writing and choreo-reading
- Choreography as ecology
- Choreographies of play and creativity
- Production of choreographic knowledge and choreographic methodologies
- Choreography and community; choreography and participation
- Props, costume and scenography /scenographics as choreographic
- Choreographies of gender; designing bodies
- Choreographies of the everyday; tacit knowledge
- Choreography and archiving; movement transmission; historical choreography
- Choreopolice and choreopolitics (Lepecki); choreographies of conformity, choreographies of protest, marching
- Architecture; city planning, drifting; psychogeography; exploring alternative paths Non-human movement; inter-species choreographies; robotics

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3 Bojana Cvejic, *Choreographing Problems. Expressive Concepts in Contemporary Dance and Performance* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

4 Ali B. Duffy and Alison Beaty, «Flexibility of artistic roles and shared ownership between dance educators and students in choreography and performance.» *Research in Dance Education* 20, no. 2 (2019): 130-147.

**We embrace a plurality of approaches to the conference theme and look forward to welcoming you to the Danish National School of Performing Arts, host of the 15th international NOFOD conference 5–8 July 2022.**

## Keynote speakers

**Gerko Egert**, dance and theatre studies scholar, Institute for Applied Theatre Studies, Justus-Liebig University, Giessen

**Charlotte Østergaard**, costume scholar and designer, Malmö Theatre Academy, Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University

**Mette Ingvarsten**, choreographer, dancer and scholar based in Brussels (tbc)

Performance by Danseatelier <https://danseatelier.dk>  
For more information about NOFOD and the confirmation of the last keynote speaker, please consult <https://www.nofod.org> and <https://www.facebook.com/nofod>

## Proposals

The NOFOD board welcomes a range of proposals for presentations:

- Paper presentations: 20 minutes + up to 10 minutes discussion
- Lecture-demonstrations: 60 minutes
- Roundtable discussions and conversations: 60 minutes
- Movement workshops: 60 minutes

If you are interested in contributing in another format, please specify in your proposal your requirements and whether the format needs 30 minutes or 60 minutes.

Please send your proposal in the form of an abstract of no more than 300 words and a short bio (100 words) to [conference@nofod.org](mailto:conference@nofod.org) by **1 February 2022**. Those who sent a proposal for the cancelled 2021 conference, we kindly ask to re-submit their abstract.

We plan to hold the conference as a live event, but will attempt to make online presentations possible, if formats allow. Please indicate in your proposal if you would like to share your work online.

## Participation fees (Early bird//after 1 June 2022)

70€/90€ for students, non-affiliated scholars and independent artists  
150€/180€ for NOFOD members  
200€/240€ for non-members

We offer bursaries of up to 500€ to emerging scholars and independent artists presenting their work. If you would like to be considered for a bursary, please send an email with «Bursary» in the subject line to [conference@nofod.org](mailto:conference@nofod.org). If you applied for a bursary to travel to the cancelled 2021 conference, we kindly ask you to resend your application.

15th NOFOD Conference is supported by the Nordic Culture Fund, the Nordic Culture Point's Culture and Art Programme, and Letterstedtska föreningen.

## Memberships

**SANS – Senter for dansepraksis** is a Norwegian association that works to support the subject of dance in elementary, secondary and upper secondary schools, as well as culture schools and teacher education.

A membership in **SANS** offers you 1–2 issues per year of the Nordic Journal of Dance, electronic newsletters, reduction rates for courses and conferences arranged by SANS and more. For further information and membership fees, see <http://www.dansepraksis.no>.



**Nordic Forum for Dance Research (NOFOD)** is a non-profit organization that promotes diverse forms of dance research and practice in the Nordic region by organizing a biannual international conference and local events. A membership in **NOFOD** offers you one yearly issue of the Nordic Journal of Dance, newsletters and reduction rates for international **NOFOD** conferences.

For further information and membership fees, see <http://www.nofod.org>.



## Subscription

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# Nordic Journal of Dance

## Call for contributions—Nordic Journal of Dance

Present your work in *Nordic Journal of Dance—practice, education and research*.

We have two annual deadlines: June 1 for publication in December, and December 1 for publication in June the following year.

*Nordic Journal of Dance* invites practitioners and researchers to submit a variety of texts in one of these categories:

### **Research Articles:**

Research articles are expected to present theoretical and conceptual frameworks, discussion on methodology, data gathering, analysis and findings related to diverse dance practices and artistic processes as well as learning and teaching dance/movement in the Nordic context. The manuscripts will undergo a blind peer review process. Artistic Research is welcome. The maximum length of the submitted article is 6 000 words including references and possible endnotes.

### **Practice Oriented Articles:**

The purpose of practice-oriented articles is to document and reflect upon the practical work being done within dance in different artistic and educational settings as well as with different age groups/populations. Artistic Development work is included in this category. Articles need to be relevant in the Nordic context. Articles will be peer reviewed by the board. The maximum length of a submitted article is 3000 words or less including references and possible endnotes.

### **Emerging Scholars:**

The purpose of the category Emerging Scholars is to offer mentoring to emerging researchers, typically MA students who would like to turn their MA thesis into a research article. Articles need to be relevant in the Nordic context. Articles will be peer reviewed by the board. The maximum length of a submitted article is 3000 words or less including references and possible endnotes.

### **General Guidelines:**

Articles can be written in English or one of the Nordic languages. They can include alternative textual formats (for example illustrations, poems, dialogue). Type text and headings use 12 point font size and line-spacing 1,5. Mark references using Chicago Manual of Style. Please include two abstracts of a maximum length of 200 words: one written in the language used for the article and the other in a Nordic language (for articles in English) or in English (for articles written in native language), and a 100 word biography of the author(s).

Please indicate clearly in what category you are submitting your article. For research articles, include a separate page with the name(s) of the author(s), and title of the manuscript.

Send submission to [sans@dansepraksis.no](mailto:sans@dansepraksis.no) with subject heading «Contribution to Nordic Journal of Dance».

**Volume 12(2) 2021**

**Practice Oriented Article**

Deconstructing Contemporary Dance Discourses by  
Acknowledging Elderly Female Bodies

*Annakarin Simonson*

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**Report**

Report from the NOFOD National Seminar  
at the CODA International Dance Festival

*Elizabeth Svarstad*

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**Paper**

Dansens dannende potensial

*Birgitte Kaufmann Olsen*

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**Book Review**

Enrico Cecchetti: Danser, koreograf og pedagog av Randi Frønsdal *Elizabeth Svarstad*

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**Spring Activities SANS**

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**Call for Papers**

15th NOFOD CONFERENCE

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