The Subtle Dancer

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Dedicated to Merce Cunningham, whose dances suspend my interior monologue[1]

While watching a great dance film, I witnessed a dancer enter a painting. Taking into account that human bodies cannot do this, was that movement metaphorical or symbolic or oneiric? It was none of these. It struck me as a fact, an *aesthetic fact*. Consequently, since it happened and since normal human bodies cannot enter paintings, the question becomes: what kind of body is produced by dance and can do what I just witnessed, enter a painting? It is a subtle body with different characteristics than the physical one.

In one sort of "dance," the dancer remains in the homogenous space and time where his or her physical body is—I consider this sort a form of theater or performance rather than dance. But another kind of dance projects a subtle dancer into a realm of altered movement, body, space and time specific to it,[2] though having an affinity to the undeath realm.[3] In *The Band Wagon*, the walk of Fred Astaire and Cyd Charisse in Central Park imperceptibly turns into a dancelike mannered movement that maintains the dancers where their physical bodies are; I can very well imagine the following variant of this scene: they go again to the park, reach the same spot where earlier they imperceptibly began their mannered movement, but this time while ostensibly seeming to have continued merely to walk, the peculiar alterations in space and time imply that they are now dancing—the one seemingly walking is actually dancing if he or she has been projected by means of his or her movement into dance's specific realm of altered body, space and time. While film usually makes the projection induced by dance explicit, so that we

can actually witness the subtle dancer and dance's specific altered movement, space and time, on the stage the projection of a subtle dancer into dance's realm frequently remains implicit, felt by the discerning spectator. An imperceptive audience member thought that he was the first to leave the theater, in protest against what he viewed to be anything but dance—little did this slow-witted person know that way before him the dancer on the stage had, by means of dance, also left—to a realm of altered movement, body, space and time.

Given that they are projected as subtle dancers into dance's realm of altered movement, space and time, then even while seemingly continuing dancing with their ostensible partners, dancers have left them behind when the latter are ersatz dancers. Ironically, on two different occasions an ersatz dancer swerved toward me while I was sitting at a remove and accompanying the real dancers through writing, and incited me, "Just do it!"; can't she see that I am doing it, writing, while, being an ersatz dancer, she is not doing it, is not really dancing?

In narrative dances, the actor-dancer is a hinge between two entities: the character, and a subtle dancer he or she projects through his or her dance and that the artwork may (for example in the "dream ballets"[4] of cinematic musicals) or may not explicitly present. By getting rid of the plot, one gets rid of the character but not necessarily of the subtle dancer. It seems that many of the 1960s dances attempted to get rid not only of the character, but also and mainly of the projected subtle dancer, since their unreserved aim was to nullify the aura; yet the aura cannot be nullified merely by minimizing or even annulling derivative sorts of distance through

the use of nonprofessionals, everyday clothes (instead of pointe shoes, tutus, etc.), everyday movements (instead of assemblé, ballotté, battement, batterie, vole brisé, chaînés, chassé, entrechat, fouetté rond de jambe en tournant, jeté, pirouette …) and everyday positions (instead of arabesque, attitude …); the eschewal of performing on a proscenium; and/or devising situations that make the performers intermingle with the spectators. Since even when the dancer is ostensibly with non dancers in a certain location, and they ostensibly touch him or her, he or she is dancing in the form of his or her subtle body elsewhere, in dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time, to which the one who is not a dancer has no access, dance is an exquisite example of the aura, of a *phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be* (Walter Benjamin).[5] But it is not only discerning non dancers who feel the aura of the dancer; other dancers too feel the aura of the dancer since dancers continue to be separated however close they get to each other: even a *pas de deux* is made possible by a seamless *superimposition* of two dancers' movements across the two distinct branches of dance's realm of altered space and time into which their dance projects them. Taking into account that both those who are not dancers and other dancers feel a dancer's aura, dancers are all-around auratic beings.[6]

When a dancer addresses the camera before being projected by his dance into a realm of altered movement, body, space and time, he or she is addressing an indeterminate spectator, but when the subtle dancer addresses the camera while in dance's realm of altered movement, space and time—one of whose characteristics is the intermingling of media and world—he or she is addressing

each specific audience member—such an address induces a psychotic affect.

Dance is an altered state of the body, hence presents its own dangers, for example the loss of the reflection/shadow, the immobilization induced by diegetic silence-over, from which the dancer can never be sure when, indeed if at all, he or she will be released, and the auto-movement of the dancer's shoes, which, for as long as it persists, forces him or her to continue dancing; *and*, concurrently, a safeguard when going through other, more dangerous states of altered consciousness, time, space and body, for example death-as-undeath.

Is it surprising that while putting on makeup in preparation for the dance, which will project a subtle version of each of them in its realm of altered movement, space and time, dancers often surround themselves with tokens of their identity, for example their photos, their reflections in the mirror, and some of their cherished belongings, and talk about their memories and projects? Such seemingly redundant assertions of identity and mentions of future plans often signal an apprehension that a threshold to a condition in which they may no longer have access to these is imminent.[7]

Most often, the dance student practices his or her movement in front of a mirror while training to achieve dance. Having achieved dance's state of altered movement and body, no dancer looks in a (reflective) mirror as a dancer, while dancing. She was now dancing in front of a mirror; she was unaware of this, but also, and unlike in Kierkegaard's *The Seducer's Diary*,[8] but as with the vampire, neither was the mirror. Why didn't the mirror register her presence? It was because she was not fully in front of it, but was

already partly in dance's realm of altered body, space and time. At some point during their training, dancers of the same gender form duos that perform the same movements and gestures (Carlos Saura's *Sevillanas*, 1992). The dancer is thus training himself or herself to accept without anxiety the frequently dissimilar-looking alter dancer he or she projects in dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time: in Agnes de Mille's ballet for Fred Zinnemann's *Oklahoma!* (1955), a somnambulant Laurey (played by Shirley Jones) extends her palm and rests it on the raised palm of her dissimilar-looking alter dancer (the ballet dancer Bambi Linn)—the two hands miming an invisible border—and then her alter dancer, who replaces her in dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time, sees Curly (played by Gordon MacRae) standing, eyes open, next to his dissimilar-looking alter dancer (the ballet dancer James Mitchell), eyes closed, who then replaces him. The custom in musical films of choosing dancers to play the main characters is not such a good idea, for it obfuscates the material dancer's replacement by the subtle, alter dancer in dance's realm of altered body, movement, space and time, who may happen to be (as in the case of *Oklahoma!*'s Jud, who is played by Rod Steiger to both sides of the threshold) but *often is not* identical-looking to him or her. In this manner and sense, every dance is a *bal masqué* in the eye of the dancing beholder (and the film spectator). In Vincente Minnelli's *The Band Wagon* (1953), if we view the alteration of Tony Hunter in the distorting mirror at an arcade as a foreshadowing of his future metamorphic transition to dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time, then the actor playing him should not have been Fred Astaire since the latter

performs the subtle dancer that dance projects into its realm.[9] A high degree of ascesis is required of the advanced dance student in order to accept the dissimilar reflection provided by another dance student who is duplicating his or her every movement, or for the subtle, alter dancer, who loses the natural reflection and the natural shadow[10] in dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time, to accept the dissimilar, unnatural reflections or shadows[11] he or she encounters there:[12] at one point in *Swing Time*, the other female dancers, who are performing the same dance movements as the one dancing with Astaire, line up behind Astaire's partner, giving the impression of a mise en abîme, that they are the non-identical-looking reflections of the one dancing with him.[13] Regrettably, the dancer may be tempted to try to reestablish the differentiation with the dissimilar unnatural reflection through rivalry and jealousy, as is clearly the case in Carlos Saura's *Carmen* and in the *pas de trois* in his *Tango*. Yet, as René Girard has shown, "when mimetic rivalry escalates beyond a certain point, the rivals engage in endless conflicts that undifferentiate them more and more; they all become doubles of one another."[14] This is clear in the dances of rivalry in Carlos Saura's *Blood Wedding* (1981) and *Carmen* (1983), where the two rivals (whether individuals or groups, for example the two groups at the factory in *Carmen*) try to distinguish themselves by excelling in making the same gestures, but instead become more manifestly mirror images. All this rivalry, with its Girardian danger of undifferentiation and doubling and that very frequently ends in death-as-cessation-of-life (*Blood Wedding*, *Carmen*), may also be an intuitive way to forget the uncannier doubling in death-as-undeath. A mortal aristocrat who died before

dying, I am attuned to the difference between someone who prefers to me people I reckon to be quite inferior or tries to induce jealousy and provoke rivalry; and rare persons, for example those who died before dying and dancers, who have no discrimination not because they are plebeian,[15] but because for them all distinction has been undermined.[16] I quickly avoid the former; on the contrary, I am fascinated by the latter, in the company of whom what I hold dear is cruelly discounted.

Taking into consideration that dance is affined to death-as-undeath, are over-turns, a peculiarity of the undeath realm,[17] one of the risks of dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time? If so, then (ballet) dance's pirouettes would be an attempt to render, albeit awkwardly in the absence of cinema's cuts or of an equivalent of the blocking of Kabuki theatre's kurogo,[18] conjointly the over-turn and a countermeasure to it, a turn that overturns the over-turn, through the production of a two-faced straightforward being.

In Carlos Saura's *Love, the Magician* (aka *A Love Bewitched*, 1986), while showing almost no signs of psychological vengefulness toward her husband, José, and his mistress, Lucia, Candela has a perfect revenge on both through the permeability of the two realms of life and death made possible by her dance—while she dances, the other gypsies who were singing and dancing with her are suddenly frozen,[19] this implying that a transportation, through dance's altered realm of movement, body, space and time, to the undeath realm has already occurred:[20] José is engaged in a fight during which he is mortally stabbed, becoming thus the first victim of such a permeability, then, following the community's

misstep of trying to ritually stop the permeability of life and death (which is allowing the dead José to become a revenant) by means of what made possible such permeability in the first place, dance,[21] and after being taught how to dance by Candela's lover,[22] Lucia is possessed by the dead José, thus confined in the *barzakh* between life and death.

In religious ceremonies, dance frequently plays the role of a means of transition to other realms, religious ones. But dance can implicate its own realm. Indeed, it can implicate its own realm even as it acts as a passage to a religious one—the dance realm, although it may be similar in many of its characteristics to the one to which the dance is leading in the religious ceremony, is nonetheless a distinct one.

Dance connects directly what someone who is not dancing would consider and experience as non-contiguous spaces-times. Dance transports the subtle dancer seamlessly from one space-time to another, non-contiguous one, thus juxtaposing the two. In the ballet of Minnelli's *An American in Paris* (1951), dance transports the dancer directly and seamlessly from Place de la Concorde (à la Dufy) to the Pont-Neuf and the flower market (à la Renoir) to a deserted street (à la Utrillo) to the Jardins des Plantes (à la Rousseau) to Place de L'Opéra (à la Van Gogh) to Montmartre and the Moulin Rouge (à la Toulouse-Lautrec), then back to Place de la Concorde.[23] In Maya Deren's *A Study in Choreography for Camera*, the film edits implement this characteristic of dance's realm of altered space, time and body: Tatley Beatty raises his leg in the woods then, in a cut on movement, deposits his foot in a room, then, in another cut on movement, in a hall. In cinema, such

a juxtaposition of non-contiguous spaces-times made possible by dance has for consequence that the offscreen frequently turns out not to be the homogeneous extension of the on-screen space. Those who refuse, and justly so, to have film merely document a dance must guard against the eventuality of occulting that many if not most of the devices their films are using to better show the dance, for example edits that seamlessly join different spaces-times, altered movements such as backward in time motion, speeded and slow motion, etc., are intrinsic to dance, objective characteristics the latter implements on its own diegetically, although often virtually, i.e., often by means of the subtle dancer it projects and who often remains implicit in theatrical presentations. Consequently, the filmmaker has to try to prevent the misinterpretation by the spectators of the abrupt "changes of place and focus"[24] in dance films as non-diegetic filmic edits: for example, whereas when the camera pans with a character who is not a dancer as he or she steps beyond the frame, our natural assumption that the previously offscreen space is the homogeneous extension of the previously on-screen space is confirmed, when later in the film a dancer steps beyond the frame, we discover that the previously offscreen space is inhomogeneous to the space that was on-screen, learning that such "changes of place and focus" are to be attributed to the dance (unlike walk, dance, with its aristocratic quality, does not move between different spaces-times, linking them gradually; it rather directly connects them). It would be also instructive in a dance film to have the subtle dancer seamlessly continue a sentence he or she began in one space-time in a second space-time that is not contiguous to the first and that he or she reached in the film in a cut

on movement, this indicating that unlike with the standard cinematic edit, the direct joining of non-contiguous spaces-times in dance is diegetic. Gracefully, the dancer is not jarred at all by either these furtive sudden changes of space-time or the sudden freezing and the sudden coming back to motion of the other dancers, and he or she is able to come out of such an immobilization without needing any readjustment, hence without clumsiness, thus including the interruption in a continuity.

Taking into consideration dance's direct linking of non-contiguous spaces-times, in many dance films the dissolve from one location-time to another, remote one frequently does not imply a passage of time between them but implements an extra movement: a movement while not moving or a movement to the second power. In Max Ophüls' *The Earrings of Madame de …* (1953), as the two dancers waltz, they move in dissolves from one space-time to another. The circumstance that their dialogues refer to waiting between their successive meetings across four days, then two days, then twenty-four hours can be interpreted in two ways. 1) It is not dance, but film edits that produce the changes in time and space; in which case, we are dealing with a non-diegetic abridgment of the diegetic time, and the mentioned waiting is a psychological state experienced by the two protagonists at various times during these four days, then two days, then twenty-four hours. 2) It is not the film edits, but dance that produces the changes in time and space; in which case, no time passed between these meetings, and the waiting is all in the words and has a subtle performative modality.

Immobilization is an element of dance, more specifically it is the genetic element of movement that has to be reached in order

for all sorts of extraordinary movements to become possible,[25] for example:

— Diegetic speeded motion, for instance at the party in Gene Kelly's *Invitation to the Dance* (1956).

— Diegetic slow motion. In Charles Walters' *Easter Parade* (1948), during a performance in the theater, while the other dancers in the background move in standard motion, Astaire dances in slow motion. In Maya Deren's *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1946), the seated woman played by Deren moves a yarn in slow motion while the other two women in the room act in standard motion. In *Blood Wedding*'s knife-fight, Saura lets the dancers do their slow motion without resorting to cinematic special effects, this making it clearer that the slow motion is an effect of the dance itself.[26]

— Diegetic backward in time movement, whether it is rendered by recourse to cinematic special effects (for example the woman rising backward in the air in Deren's *Ritual in Transfigured Time*)[27] or takes the form of a dancer's smooth movement backward with no hesitation whatsoever[28] (whether such a movement is motivated, for example backing off—into the past, to a time prior to a threat facing him or her—or, preferably, not). In Agnes de Mille's *Fall River Legend*, when we see the youthful Lizzie standing apart, pensive, then find her in the presence of the child Lizzie around the time of her mother's death and her father's remarriage, are we to consider what is occurring as a stylized rendition of a simple memory of the youthful Lizzie? Is it rather some sort of hypnotic reliving of the past? Or did she actually return to the past—a return made possible by the immobilizations we witness throughout de Mille's piece? It is most probably the latter[29].[30] Taking into

consideration that we witness an interpenetration of times within the same movement in *Cría cuervos* (1976) by Carlos Saura, it is fitting that this filmmaker went on to make several dance films, where the interpenetrations of past and present will no longer be, as in *Cría cuervos*, only special effects of subjective memory, but objective.[31] Conversely, it is often the case that even in their other films, directors who dealt with dance in one or more of their films do not have straightforward flashbacks. Does the subtle body acquire new memories in the altered space and time into which dance projects it? Yes, but frequently these memories remain dissociated from the others. Approaching the dancer at a mundane party, he asked him: "We've met before? Don't you remember?" "No!" For some reason, the dancer felt that his negative answer was unconvincing—even to himself. That dancers, who can actually go back to the past, something made possible by their immobilization at an earlier time or by other dancers' immobilization, do not try to alter it cannot be fully explained by the repetition-compulsion, which acts as a sort of hypnosis, distracting one from reacting appropriately to the situation one wants to alter, but is to be attributed largely to their endorsement of fate. The backward in time movement and dancers' endorsement of fate together make possible the apparent recurrence of the exact same events, as at the party in Deren's *Ritual in Transfigured Time*. Taking into account dancers' endorsement of fate, a dance adaptation of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* does not have to start after Oedipus has killed his father and married and had sexual intercourse with his mother. Only in the context of dance, which makes possible motion into the past in the realm into which it projects the subtle version of

the dancer, can a film, novel or play concerned with the oracular not have the oracle and what it presages already come to pass by the time the film, novel or play begins, but instead have it be what not only the majority of the audience members and readers but also its protagonists usually mistake it to be: something one can still possibly alter.[32] Thus dance has often resorted to past periods as setting not only for extrinsic reasons, for instance exoticism, but because his or her earlier immobilization or that of other dancers makes possible for the dancer to actually, though subtly, go back in time. Since dance makes possible an actual move back in time, frequently the flashback in dance films rather than serving a narrative function, for example the implementation of an act of memory of the character, induces the sensation of an extra movement (either a movement while not moving [when the dancer is not moving in both shots of the dissolve] or a movement to the second power [when the dancer is moving in one of the shots of the dissolve]) that may itself be diegetic or function as a foreshadowing of a diegetic one.

— A diegetic extra movement: a movement while not moving if the subtle dancer is motionless or immobile, and a movement to the second power if he or she is moving. While all kinds of objects can become automobile as a consequence of the freezing of some or all of the dancers, for example the cans that move by themselves before the ball that the Fred Astaire character aims at them hits them in the arcade in Vincente Minnelli's *The Bandwagon*, there are two kinds of auto-movement that are exemplary in this regard: the auto-movement of the ground and the auto-movement of the dancer's shoes. And yet the same anomaly, immobilization, which

was the condition of possibility of the auto-movement of the shoes, can seize the dancer and thus suspend his or her compulsion to indefinitely move along with the automobile shoes. Unfortunately for *Giselle*'s Albrecht, who is forced to dance on and on, several times falling exhausted to the ground, he doesn't reach the state of freezing, while the Wilis are constantly gracefully in and out of it, and were in it in their graves. We find the conjunction of a freezing of the dancers and an auto-movement of the ground in the finale of Charles Walters' *The Barkleys of Broadway* (1949), where Astaire and Rogers dance in front of figures initially immobilized on a revolving fountain; and in the beginning of "Broadway Melody" in *Singin' in the Rain*, where immobilized figures on a moving floor glide by the dancer who has just arrived on Broadway. Indeed, in *Easter Parade* the gliding floor in the number "A Couple of Swells" (as well as the slow motion of Astaire) confirmed my feeling during Astaire's and Judy Garland's audition for Ziegfeld that the people behind them, *on the stage*, are immobilized. This is an exquisite scene as the people on the stage are at the intersection of three different states, at least two of which are mutually exclusive: an audience watching the performance, and whose subsequent applause at the latter's conclusion is its token of approval of what it saw; an audience entranced by the couple's dance, thus motionless, and whose members' startling applause is a means to snap themselves out of the trance;[33] dancers (hence their placement on the stage) that have become immobilized during the dance, in which case the applause is not their reaction of approval of what they saw—for they saw nothing (indeed, they do not turn their heads to accompany the couple's recurrent lateral movement

across the stage[34]—a movement that functions as an equivalent to the waving gesture one makes in front of the eyes of someone to check if he or she is blind)—but is the joyful exercise of the ability to make a sound and to hear it following a diegetic silence-over. In addition to gliding floors whether at a theater stage or dance platform or in the world at large, changing backprojection or moving backdrops or flashbacks also can function as means to impart diegetic objective extra movement to the dancer. With the occurrence of immobilization, we have to be attentive to the quality of the camera movement itself, which may be implicated in the diegesis, giving the dancer a diegetic extra movement. In some cases, it is simply this diegetic extra movement imparted by the camera that makes a film not just a documentation of a dance but a dance film. In case such movements while not moving or movements to the second power made possible by immobilizations are to occur in a film, it would be advantageous to have in advance instances of indiscernibility as to who is moving due to the relativity of movement, since such instances can function then as a subtle foreshadowing of the actual movement without moving. In rare instances, the extra movement may be imparted by the aforementioned indiscernability,[35] the movement now revealed to exist irrespective of the reference frame, with the result that dance (whose freezings, which are the coming of motionlessness to a sudden, furtive dead stop, present a case of absolute deceleration) would be generating a non-relativistic favoring of one reference frame over others. The aforementioned movement while not moving made possible by dance makes mountains, which most humans take to be steadfast, move. In its manner, dance, and not only faith

("I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move" [Matthew 17:20]), can move mountains.[36] Auto-movement is something that can be experienced not only in dance (*The Red Shoes*) but also in the thinking process (Darren Aronofsky's *Pi*, 1998). Nietzsche frequently felt keenly an inability to stop thinking and he unconsciously tried to defend himself against such inability with migraines! (Pierre Klossowski: "The agonizing migraines, which Nietzsche experienced periodically as *an aggression that suspended his thought*, were not an external aggression … his own physical self was *attacking* in order to *defend* itself against a dissolution").[37] Which thinker has not at some point felt conjointly that ideas are associating on their own and that he or she is not thinking (the exclusive association of ideas on their own is not really thinking but often a mark of madness)? Thinking should be neither "human, all too human" *nor* inhuman, all too inhuman (the exclusive associative auto-movement of ideas), but humanly inhuman or inhumanly human. But while the associative auto-movement of ideas is not thinking, the auto-movement of shoes or the ground in dance, made possible by the dancer's earlier (or later?!) freezing or by other dancers' concurrent freezing, is part of dance, making possible movement while not moving or a movement to the second power (when the dancer is moving), but sometimes revealing something inhuman about dance (*The Red Shoes*), possibly a mortal danger to the dancer. Nietzsche, who wrote in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*,[38] "I should only believe in a God who knew how to dance,"[39] as well as, in a 22 February 1884 letter to Erwin Rohde, "My style is a dance,"[40] is being hastily

unconditional when he writes, "Get out of the way of all such unconditional men! They have heavy feet and sultry hearts: — they know not how to dance,"[41] since he is disregarding a danger that is not encountered by those "who know not how to dance," a danger that is intrinsic to dance: an "unconditional," automatic movement, the sort we see in *The Red Shoes*. O my very dear Nietzsche: who has not only a sultrier heart than *Giselle*'s Albrecht, who caused his jilted lover to commit suicide, but also heavier feet than him, who is forced to dance protractedly in the undeath realm and who but for the intercession of his lover Giselle would have been forced to continue to do so until his second, final death?

Whether the dancer becomes immobilized intentionally (to reach the genetic element of movement) or not (due instead to diegetic silence-over), the other subtle dancers perceive such a freezing as uncanny.

In Charles Walters' *The Belle of New York* (1952), the camera zooms-in on a still-frame of a recreation of a Currier & Ives painting until the frame of the painting disappears; once this immobilization that is non-diegetically imposed on the movement is discontinued, all the figures resume their dance movements,[42] then, with the exception of Fred Astaire and Vera-Ellen, freeze again, but this time diegetically. Soon after, Astaire and Vera-Ellen, while dancing amidst these men and women immobilized by the diegetic silence-over,[43] begin to tap dance and, hearing the sound of their footsteps, smile joyfully. When a musical film underscores dance, it becomes an instance of an ostensible continuation of "silent films"—actually, since the latter films were not really silent ones,[44] of the inaugural appearance of silent

films—in the era of sound films, not only because of dance's stylized movements and gestures, which are affined to the manner people moved in "silent films" and to mime; but also and mainly because of the immobilization-inducing diegetic silence-over, which can at any moment hush sounds absolutely in dance's realm of altered movement, body, time and sound. It is fitting that the musical was the transition between the "silent" period of cinema and sound films (this transition is the subject around which *Singin' in the Rain* revolves), since there is often simultaneity of silence and sound in dance. When in *An American in Paris*, the subtle dancers performed by Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron dance amidst immobilized people, who in the diegesis is hearing the music audible to the film spectators? The couple alone is hearing it. The subtle dancers performed by Caron and Kelly can visually detect the silence through its effect on the other subtle dancers: the latter are immobilized by it—a moving blind dancer would miss this silence. To the film spectator, there is simultaneously silence and music in this scene: the other, immobilized subtle dancers are in the silence and were immobilized by it, while the subtle dancers performed by Kelly and Caron can continue dancing because they are enwrapped by and hearing a diegetic music-over. Dance is not just about movement and music; it is equally about immobilization and silence[45]—it is curious that John Cage, who collaborated with Cunningham on many dance works, continued, despite the immobilizations encountered in dance, to declare that there is no silence![46] In musicals that reach the immobilization of some of the dancers, we often witness other dancers' wonder at the very occurrence of sounds (wonder: a surprise without surprise, a

graceful surprise). The surprise at the occurrence of the sound that film spectators must have experienced on first hearing an in-sync aural accompaniment of the image, the voice of Al Johnson in *The Jazz Singer* (1927), is thus induced whenever in the history of the musical film a dancer is released from the immobilization induced by diegetic silence-over or witnesses other dancers immobilized by such a silence, making such films reflexive whether they explicitly refer to their "silent" past (*Singin' in the Rain*) or not. In one of its modes, tap dancing in musicals is the joyful demonstration that one can (still) hear the sound (most tap dancing has no such function, since the vast majority of tap "dancers" were never projected as subtle dancers in dance's realm of altered movement, space, time and sound, where such a silence[-over] can occur and cover and absolutely hush the sounds[-in], and consequently they, as tap "dancers," never encountered dancers immobilized by silence-over). One detects the joy in sound derivative from an encounter with and an overcoming of such a diegetic silence-over in Astaire's use as percussion instruments of the gym's appliances in Stanley Donen's *Royal Wedding* (1951) or of the gadgets in a penny arcade at Times Square in *The Band Wagon* and a toy shop in *Easter Parade*, and in Kelly's dance with a squeaky floorboard and a newspaper in *Summer Stock*.

In musical films, sometimes the subtle dancers dance to a music that has no diegetic source; sometimes the visible orchestra playing for the dancers does not have a number of the instruments that we hear, or one or more or indeed all of the musicians stop playing (in *Invitation to the Dance*, the valet begins to dance to the music the pianist is playing, enticing him to join her in the

dance, which he does shortly, yet the piano music persists!) or do not visually accompany the audible music at the right speed. In a fine dance film, this implies that the music, song or tapping sound that continues even after the one who was ostensibly producing it stops doing so was all along a song-over or sound-over (in *Love, the Magician*, the song Candela continues to hear notwithstanding that the gypsies who were ostensibly singing it and clapping to it come to a dead stop is thus revealed to be a diegetic song-over), and that *dancers do not accompany music* that has a diegetic source *but are accompanied by* diegetic *music*-over (although he or she may have began moving to the music-in to reach dance, once he or she is projected into dance's realm of altered movement, space, time and sound, the fortunate subtle dancer is then accompanied by diegetic music-over). Why, following the rehearsals, does Merce Cunningham add music to the dance although the latter was choreographed irrespective of it, the music in some cases joined to the dance for the first time only at the premiere? Is it merely in accordance with the convention that when one goes to see a dance performance, one usually expects to both see dance and hear music? Not really. Is it to mark the independence or detachment of dance and music, as John Cage, who composed the music for many of Cunningham's dances, demands? Yes, but it is also because the dancer is accompanied gracefully, as a grace, by diegetic music-over. Cage's sounds can be considered music not only for the rigorous original reasons he gives, but also because in his collaboration with Cunningham, for instance in *Points in Space*, the sounds manage to perform music's function of accompanying the dancer in the -over mode in the altered realm in which his or

her dance introduced him or her. In Cage's collaboration with Cunningham, for instance in *Child of Tree* (1975), there is a double determination of the sounds we hear: they are both music-over and the sounds that music-over gives back to us, allows us to hear, the "ambient sounds" conventional music-in repressed in the first place (the fact that diegetic music-over with long stretches of "silence"[47] can counter the silence-over, releasing the dancer from immobilization, clearly indicates that the "silence" it contains is the normal one, a misnomer for ambient sounds[48]).

"Silence" is interrupted by sound, which itself can be covered and absolutely hushed by diegetic silence-over,[49] which itself can be dispelled by diegetic music-over. While "everything grew still" as diegetic silence-over started spreading in the undeath realm, Orpheus opened his mouth to sing and moved his hand to pluck the lyre. Just then—"Oh pure uprising!"[50]—or should I write, "O sheer transcendence!"[51]?—of a diegetic music-over and song-over, which countered the diegetic silence-over, with the consequence that even in Hades "Orpheus sings," "Orpheus is singing!" How weird that Orpheus, who was a singer while alive, should still be able to sing and play the lyre in the undeath realm! Orpheus is the exemplar of a previously unheard of felicitous sync between the music he is playing as well as the song he is singing *and* a similar song-over as well as music-over.[52] The song-over and music-over releases the undead from the *unheimlich* immobility induced by the diegetic silence-over to the *heimlich* "silent"[53] motionlessness required to listen clearly to the music sung and played by Orpheus ("Creatures of stillness crowded … / and it turned out that their light / stepping came not from fear or from cunning / but so they

could listen" [Rilke, *Sonnets to Orpheus*]).[54] If Rilke was right to write, "When there's singing, it's Orpheus," this would be because "when there's Orpheus [in the undeath realm], there's singing[-over]." The power of music to move us (e*motion*ally and at the level of muscular empathy) is *founded* on its ability to release us from the immobility induced by the diegetic silence-over; only those who died before dying and subtle dancers know the fundamental sense of *music moves me*.

Toward the end of the Bolshoi Ballet's production at Battersea Park of Michel Fokine's *Les Sylphides*, the frozen corps de ballet suddenly moves, bows, then freezes again. Then one of the three principal ballerinas enters the stage, bows to the audience, moves to the right and freezes. Then another one enters the stage, bows, moves in dancing steps backward to the left and freezes. Bowing is external to the plot; doing away with the plot allows, among many other things, the extension of dance even to the bowing—not merely in the sense of extending the stylized gestures and poses to the bowing, but also and mainly in the sense of allowing these dance gestures to be the occasion for some of the effects dance may produce, for instance freezing and therefore, amidst the audience's applause, the diegetic silence-over it implies.[55]

What attracts many of the most interesting directors of musicals and choreographers to painting—beyond their possible resort to the latter in set design (à la large strokes of red paint on both the walls and the bar counter in the dance number of Gene Kelly and Mitzi Gaynor in George Cukor's *Les Girls*, 1957)—is the freezing encountered in dance,[56] which provides the occasion to compose the immobilized subtle dancers into tableaux, and that the

presence of flat painted backdrops next to the dancers and to three-dimensional objects renders the space with fractional dimension into which dance projects the dancer, a space that is neither two-dimensional nor three-dimensional, but between the two. In the ballet of *An American in Paris*, by placing Kelly in a recreation of Toulouse-Lautrec's drawing *Chocolat dansant*, making him move for a while amidst flat painted cardboard figures, then enter a cafe where a number of human figures dressed and lighted in the Toulouse-Lautrec manner are immobilized while three Can Can girls dance on the stage in the background, Minnelli made Kelly move from one space with fractional dimension to another, both with a dimension between 2 and 3, but the former closer to 2, the latter closer to 3. Cinema has presented us with visionary states where the three-dimensional material object or landscape itself is the vision (Herzog's *Heart of Glass*), and with realms, mainly in dance films, where space is not three-dimensional but has a fractional dimension between 2 and 3, a space between a surface and a volume. The Zen master's injunction "When you reach the top of the mountain, continue climbing" is something dancers accomplish in their own manner. The dancer's movement is frequently a creation of space, making the resultant space if not a full three-dimensional one then one that is closer to being so. The creation of space in dance is conveyed either directly, for example through the dancer's movement into flat backdrops, often paintings;[57] or indirectly, for example through going beyond a spot at which another dancer or the same dancer previously turned aside instead of proceeding ahead (implying thus space's limit). The grace of the dancer's movement then resides not only in the

absence of imbalance and imprecision but also and mainly in his or her bringing space into existence at the pace of his or her smooth progress.

As Astaire and Vera-Ellen dance on the grass in *The Belle of New York*, they keep bumping against each other although they see each other; this is not because of an imperfection in their dance movements—these are still executed with elegant precision—but because their dance has introduced them into distinct branches of its realm of altered movement, body, space, and time. We can thenceforth better detect in the following sections of the dance, which show the two dancers in perfect harmony, the seamless superimposition of their movements across the separate spaces into which the two dancers have been projected by dance—this tele-characteristic of dance, that it is a dance at a distance, is always missed by unrefined spectators, who take the two dancers dancing a *pas de deux* to be in the same location (these same unrefined spectators take Gene Kelly and the animated cartoon character Jerry the Mouse with whom he dances in George Sidney's *Anchors Aweigh*, 1945, to be in the same location, instead of discerning that they are *superimposed* figures who happen, against all odds, to exquisitely accompany each other [gracefully]). At one point in Saura's *Blood Wedding*, the two dancers, at the two ends of the dance studio, which stand for separate locations, make complementary gestures while not facing each other, each dancer's arms tracing and miming the outline of the other, beloved person in a caressing or hugging gesture. Dance provides an exemplary manner of testing whether two people are really a couple, for by dancing, they enter separate branches of dance's realm of altered

space. Indeed, while a *grand pas de deux*, as codified by Marius Petipa, opens with the ballerina and her partner dancing together, it continues with solos … The two dancers' maintenance of their interaction despite their projection into separate branches of dance's realm of altered space (the *grand pas de deux* concludes with a coda where the two dance together again) confirms that they are a couple or indicates the formation of a couple.

The frequent independence of the dancers in the choreography of Cunningham, where the phrases and movements for the different dancers are determined by chance procedures, each dancer or group of dancers doing his/her/its separate movements, stems *partly* from this general characteristic of dance: its introduction of the dancers into separate branches of its realm of altered body, space and time (many of dance's personages are ones who suddenly disappear from sight: the sylphs …)[58].[59] In Cunningham's work, the two kinds of independence, the furtive introduction of the dancers in separate branches of dance's altered space and the programmatic assignment of independent phrases to the different dancers, sometimes simultaneously determine the dance, sometimes alternate.

The solitude of the dancer: dancing amidst frozen figures, or with partners that are suddenly immobilized (in the dream ballet of *Oklahoma!*); dancing with his independent shadows, who end up abandoning him (Astaire in *Swing Time*), or independent reflection (Kelly in Charles Vidor's *Cover Girl*, 1944); dancing at a distance with a partner (*Blood Wedding*); dancing with an electronic puppet (Tharp's *The Catherine Wheel*), or with life-size windup toys that continue to move even after their winding mechanism has came

to a stop, having acceded to the auto-movement made possible by dance (Ashton's "Tale of Olympia" in Powell and Pressburger's *The Tales of Hoffmann*).[60]

With the exception of the ones presented by cinema, subtle dancers are invisible to those who are not dancers; but they are also occasionally invisible to other dancers, when the latter become immobilized (In *The Earrings of Madame De …* the coquettish Countess Louise, now in love, tells her paramour while they move to the music-in: "I wish I could be seen only by you." Were the two actually dancing, would she need to wish for that when it is something dance often actualizes, for example through the freezing of others?). What cool impertinence to place dancers in the position of spectators and then have them immobilized, frozen still, for then they *have eyes but fail to see* (Mark 8:18) the other subtle dancers who have continued dancing to a diegetic music-over they hear—such impertinence is all the more remarkable when the latter dancers happen to be (performed by) Fred Astaire, Natalia Bessmertnova, or Galina Ulanova. Notwithstanding that musical films are often reflexive, showing the making of a musical within the film, they frequently stage the aforementioned absence of the look and therefore of the spectator.

Jalal Toufic, *Over-Sensitivity*, 2nd ed. (Forthcoming Books, 2009; available for download as a PDF file at http://www.jalaltoufic.com/downloads.htm), 79-105.

The cover design is by Graziella Rizkallah and Jalal Toufic; the still frame is from Vincente Minnelli's *An American in Paris* (1951)

Notes

1. Writing in relation to an artwork is not a commentary if it happens in the suspension, *induced by the artwork*, of the interior monologue.
2. Since the latter kind of dance has a tendency to project the dancer into a particular realm of altered space and time, a choreographer who designs such a kind of dance would have to counter such a tendency if he or she wishes to maintain the dancers solely in the space and time where their physical bodies are.
3. The unsettling thing about Agnes de Mille's dance *Fall River Legend* is that dance already envelops in diegetic silence-over and freezes Lizzie Andrew Borden's father and stepmother—a condition that they will undergo in the realm in which their *future* murders will thrust them. Indeed, which is uncannier and seems more patently to the other side of death: (the subtle dancer) Lizzie facing the future murder weapon, the ax, while behind her her father and stepmother (as subtle dancers) sit frozen? Or her dance with the specter of her dead mother? It is certainly the former.
4. While it may have been coined to justify to the films' producers the anomalies that take place in such ballets and convince them to finance and then actually include such scenes in the film, the term "dream ballet" is prolixly inept since many of the dreamlike characteristics in these ballets, for example the direct, and often seamless connection of non-contiguous spaces-times, are ones that dance, therefore ballet, can produce on its own, with no recourse to dreams and the dream work. What we see in the ballet is neither a dream nor the images an entranced person would see, but rather what a subtle dancer is going through. The projection into dance's realm of altered movement, space and time is certainly not just in the mind but is a bodily one, albeit with a subtle body. Indeed, what happens to the subtle dancer affects the material dancer, who remains in the space-time where his or her physical body is.
5. Dance is a locus of the aura all the more since the subtle body it induces is one unit, indivisible into parts; it is impossible to go into close-ups of this body.
6. "Dance is not erotic. The supposed eroticism of dance is the result of the common urge to penetrate the aura of the dancer" (Jalal Toufic, *Distracted*, 2nd ed. [Berkeley, CA: Tuumba Press, 2003], 77).
7. Thus Nietzsche writes in the preface of his book *Ecce Homo: How to Become What You Are*, "In the expectation that soon I will have to confront humanity [myself included] with the most difficult demand it has ever faced, it seems imperative for me to say *who I am*. People really should know this: since I have not left myself 'without testimony.' … I only need to speak with some 'educated' person who happens to be in Upper Engadine for the summer to convince myself that I am *not* alive … Under these circumstances it is a duty (albeit one that my habits and especially the pride of my instincts rebel against at a basic level) to say: … *Above all, do not mistake me for anyone else!*" (Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ, Ecce Homo, Twilight of the Idols, and Other Writings*, edited by Aaron Ridley, Judith Norman; translated by Judith Norman [Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005], 71)—"soon" enough by the reckoning of the living, he will mistake himself for everyone, writing, in a 5 January 1889 letter to Jacob Burckhardt, at the onset of his psychosis, of his dying before dying ("This autumn, as lightly clad as possible, I twice attended my funeral, first as Count Robilant [no, he is my son, insofar as I am Carlo Alberto, my nature below], but I was Antonelli myself"), "I am Prado, I am also Prado's father, I venture to say that I am also Lesseps.… I am also Chambige … every name in history is I" (*Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, edited and translated by Christopher Middleton [Indianapolis, Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1996], 347). In Bergman's *Persona*, alarmed by her first, curt meeting with her new patient, the famous theater actress Elisabet Vogler, who has been hospitalized following her lapse into mutism, the nurse Alma reiterates her future plan, "I will marry Karl-Henrik and we will have a few children, whom I will raise. That is all determined. It is inside me. There is nothing to worry about"—in this film of the close-up, which according to Deleuze is both "the face and its effacement," since it undoes

the three roles of the face ("Ordinarily, three roles of the face are recognizable: it is individuating [it distinguishes or characterizes each person]; it is socializing [it manifests a social role]; it is relational or communicating [it ensures not only communication between two people, but also, in a single person, the internal agreement between his character and his role]. Now the face, which effectively presents these aspects in the cinema as elsewhere, loses all three in the case of close-up" [*Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Continuum, 2005), 101]), within a short period by the reckoning of the doctor who lent them her villa on an island, she'll no longer be able to differentiate herself from her patient Elizabet Vogler, protesting anxiously, "No! I am not like you. I do not feel like you. I am the sister Alma, I am here only to help you. I am not Elisabet Vogler! You are Elisabet Vogler! I would like to have? I adore? I do not have?" becoming a nothing (she instructs Elisabet to repeat after her, "Nothing. That's it. That's the way it shall be. That's the way it would have to be")—to worry about.

8. "There is a mirror on the opposite wall; she is not contemplating it, but the mirror is contemplating her. How faithfully it has caught her image …" Søren Kierkegaard, *The Seducer's Diary*, edited and translated by Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong; with a new foreword by John Updike (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 20.
9. In the final scene of Orson Welles' *Lady from Shanghai*, the character played by Wells is shown passing in front of a distorting mirror before arriving in front of the Magic Mirror Maze. His distortions as well as the presumed ones of the other two protagonists function as dissolves to "inside" the mirrors. Indeed, soon, the three protagonists are no longer visible to each other outside the mirrors. To have each other outside the mirrors again, two of the protagonists shatter them with their bullets.
10. In George Stevens' *Swing Time* (1936), at first Fred Astaire's shadows dance in perfect sync to him, so that one thinks that they are dependent on him, then at a different rhythm, then do different

movements, then leave him altogether. The "Alter Ego" dance in Charles Vidor's *Cover Girl* (1944), in which Gene Kelly's reflection detaches itself from the glass pane and dances with him, is to be criticized not for its somatization of a psychological conflict, but for giving a psychological interpretation of the relation of the dancer to "his" or "her" independent shadows and reflections.

11. Margot Fonteyn, the watersprite of Fredrick Ashton's *Ondine*, dances in wonder with her newly encountered shadow (a dance based on the *pas de L'ombre* in Jules Perrot's *Ondine*, 1843). The paradigmatic form of the *pas de trois* would be a dance of two subtle dancers with the similar or dissimilar unnatural reflection one of them has projected or encountered in dance's realm of altered body, space and time. The paradigmatic form of the *pas de quatre* would be a dance of two subtle dancers with the two similar or dissimilar material, dense dancers who projected them into dance's realm of altered body, space and time, but who themselves remain outside it.
12. The flip side of the circumstance that it is not uncommon for the subtle dancer projected by the dense, flesh-and-blood dancer into dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time to be dissimilar to him or her (as well as for the subtle dancer and his or her unnatural reflection to be dissimilar) is that the flesh-and-blood dancer may come across weird similarities to another dancer: while sitting in front of a mirror applying his makeup in Carlos Saura' *Blood Wedding*, Antonio Gades (1936-2004) remarks how physically similar he is to the youthful Spanish dancer Vicente Escudero (1892-1980) and mentions that on moving to Paris and sending Escudero a postcard, he received in reply a letter informing him that he is living in the same apartment Escudero lived in for 20 years: 36, rue Boulanger.
13. The presence of many dancers all doing the same movements is not annoying if, as in McLerran's *Pas de deux*, these dancers are the result of a dancer's projection of extra reflections or shadows in dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time (or if, as in Busby Berkeley's work, they enter into large-scale abstractions). It is therefore appropriate that when the modernist decompositions of movement in painting, à la Duchamp or the futurist Balla, or

in photography, à la Marey, were made, none of them dealt with a dancer in the midst of his dance movement, since then they could have been interpreted as just stylizations of the dancer's projection of extra reflections or shadows in dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time (Mclerran's *Pas de deux*).

14. René Girard, *A Theater of Envy: William Shakespeare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 185.
15. Whereas the ballerina Galina Ulanova gives the sensation that she hovers because the air is her element, Gelsey Kirkland (for instance as the black swan in her *pas de deux* with Baryshnikov in *Swan Lake*) gives the aristocratic sensation that she remains in the air out of repulsion of the earth (with her, the impression of distance and elevation is produced mainly in the region of the feet).
16. We encounter this distinction in Nabokov's *Despair*: to one side, the fickle wife betraying her husband with another, dissimilar man; to the other side, the husband encountering the dead ringer, no longer able to differentiate between himself and a dissimilar man.
17. According to "The Death of Orpheus" in Book 11 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, following Orpheus' physical death, "His ghost flies downward to the Stygian shore, / And knows the places it had seen before: / Among the shadows of the pious train / He finds Eurydice, and loves again; / With pleasure views the beauteous phantom's charms, / And clasps her in his unsubstantial arms. / There side by side they unmolested walk, / Or pass their blissful hours in pleasing talk; / Aft or before the bard securely goes, / And, without danger, can review his spouse." I do not believe it is the case, since for me the over-turn is a peculiarity of the undeath state. After his mortal dismemberment by the female Bacchanals, Orpheus, now in Hades, repeatedly turns to face his wife, each time discovering that he is still facing in the same direction, away from Eurydice! What the gods of the underworld told Orpheus, not to turn to face Eurydice while still in Hades, the realm of undeath, but to do so only once he reaches the world of life, was a disclosure of a peculiarity of the underworld, the over-turn, which he misunderstood as a moral prohibition, the same way, according to Spinoza, God's revelation of the nefarious effect

the apple would have on Adam was falsely interpreted by the latter as a divine moral prescription against eating it: "'Thou shalt not eat of the fruit …': the anxious, ignorant Adam understands these words as the expression of a prohibition. And yet, what do they refer to? To a fruit that, as such, will poison Adam if he eats it …. But because Adam is ignorant of causes, he thinks that God morally forbids him something, whereas God only reveals the natural consequence of ingesting the fruit …. Now, all that one needs in order to moralize is to fail to understand. It is clear that we have only to misunderstand a law for it to appear to us in the form of a moral 'You must.' … Adam does not understand the rule of the relation of his body with the fruit, so he interprets God's word as a prohibition …" (Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, translated by Robert Hurley [San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988], 22-23).

18. "At a certain moment of his performance he [the Kabuki actor] halts; the black shrouded *kurogo* obligingly conceals him from the spectators. And lo!—he is resurrected in a new make-up. And in a new wig." Sergei Eisenstein, *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*, ed. and trans. Jay Leyda (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), 42.
19. While the terms *freezing* and *immobility* are rather interchangeable in my writing on dance and death, I tend to use the term *immobility* when I wish to contrast this condition to motionlessness, which remains a variety of motion; whereas I tend to use the term *freezing* for its association with cinema's freeze frames (an association that frequently induces one to ask on encountering frozen people: "Am I in a film?"), which are the genetic element of motion; and with frozen stars (aka black holes), whose event horizons may be the only place in the world (or, to be more precise, at the world's limit) where one encounters, from the reference frame of an outside observer, immobility: "There remained the issue of what to call the object created by the stellar implosion. From 1958 to 1968 different names were used in East and West: Soviet physicists used a name that emphasized a distant astronomer's vision of the implosion. Recall that because of the enormous difficulty light has escaping gravity's

grip, as seen from afar the implosion seems to take forever; the star's surface seems never quite to reach the critical circumference, and the horizon never quite forms. It looks to astronomers … as though the star becomes frozen just outside the critical circumference. For this reason, Soviet physicists called the object produced by implosion a *frozen star*" (Kip S. Thorne, *Black Holes and Time Warps: Einstein's Outrageous Legacy* [New York: W. W. Norton, 1993], 255); "Windbag, watching Goulash from a spaceship safely outside the horizon, sees Goulash acting in a bizarre way. Windbag has lowered to the horizon a cable equipped with a camcorder and other probes, to better keep an eye on Goulash. As Goulash falls toward the black hole, his speed increases until it approaches that of light. Einstein found that if two persons are moving fast relative to each other, each sees the other's clock slow down; in addition, a clock that is near a massive object will run slowly compared with one in empty space. Windbag sees a strangely lethargic Goulash. As he falls, the latter shakes his fist at Windbag. But he appears to be moving ever more slowly; at the horizon, Windbag sees Goulash's motions slow to a halt" (Leonard Susskind, "Black Holes and the Information Paradox," *Scientific American* [April 1997]: 55).

20. The perception of freezing/immobilization is an *out of this world* encounter. Regarding the freezing of the astronaut and his or her accompanying animal at the event horizon of a black hole (aka frozen star) from the reference frame of some external observer, the latter would feel that the frozen human and animal at the event horizon are *out of this world*, in the informal sense of *extraordinary*—they are moreover so in the literal sense when taking into consideration that in the reference frame of the astronaut or animal or object on a spaceship, he or she or it exited this world by crossing the "gateless gate" of the event horizon. Concerning the immobilizations he or she witnesses in death's or dance's realms of altered time, movement, body and sound, the mortal witness or the subtle dancer feels *out of this world*.
21. Unlike the choreographed fight in which José was murdered, this dance is not just a stylized rendition of what is a mundane movement

in the diegesis.

22. The permeability of life and death made possible by dance is enhanced by dance films' fields of intense monochromatic colors (Saura's *Tango* …), which function as sucking "shallow depths," as a sort of Chroma key making possible overlaying and keying.
23. The inhomogeneity of space in classical and modern dance is to be located not so much in the conventional importance given to center stage and to the frontal position—an inhomogeneity that remains extrinsic; but in dance's direct, and often seamless linking of non-contiguous spaces (the ballet of *An American in Paris*).
24. Walter Benjamin: "From an alluring appearance or persuasive structure of sound the work of art of the Dadaists became an instrument of ballistics. It hit the spectator like a bullet, it happened to him, thus acquiring a tactile quality. It promoted a demand for the film, the distracting element of which is also primarily tactile, being based on changes of place and focus which periodically assail the spectator." "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 220-223.
25. Must a choreographer include a freezing in order to have these extraordinary movements? Obviously not, but then these extraordinary movements remain stylizations, rather than diegetic.
26. At *Blood Wedding*'s ceremony, the characters momentarily stand motionless purportedly for a photograph. Are they doing so in order not to appear blurred in it? Rather, in this particular instance, their motionlessness denotes that they are frozen since at no point do we see either the still-camera taking the photograph or the resultant photograph (but rather a freeze frame in the opening and closing credits sequences).
27. It is felicitous that this unnatural backward movement, allowed by the freezings, coexists in this short film with a natural backward movement as a woman revolving in circles around another dancer lets go of his hand and finds herself pushed backward by the generated centrifugal force.
28. Were the dancer also at one point during his or her backward

movement to do a pirouette, we would have the elegant coexistence of two dance characteristics that the less refined can try to link causally, but that actually coexist without one being the effect of the other: the ability to move backward with no hesitation is made possible by immobilization since it is actually a backward in time motion; the ability to be double-faced (Deren's *Choreography for a Camera*) is a result of the pirouette as both an approximate rendition of the overturn and a countermeasure to it.

29. Having one of the main dancers be a rather forgetful character would underline the difference between a psychological memory and the actual return to the past that dance can make possible.
30. Then why don't her parents and her younger self see her? It is because of dance's frequent introduction of the dancers into superimposed, but separate spaces.
31. Taking into account that one observes many of the characteristics I associate with dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time in Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* (codirector Alexander Hammid, 1943), is it at all surprising that she went on to make explicit dance films, for example *A Study in Choreography for Camera* (1945) and *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1946)? No.
32. The circumstance that his filmic adaptation *Oedipus Rex* (1967) begins before Oedipus kills his father and marries his mother implies that Pier Paolo Pasolini was not interested in the oracular modality as such in that film. Through the oracle, fate masquerades as something pertaining to the future. But, actually, the attempt to alter fate is an attempt to alter not the future but the past; that is why fate narratives, for example Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, start after what was proffered in the oracle had come to pass, and then report the fateful oracle.
33. If the actual function of applause is to snatch one out of the trance into which the performance has cast us, then it would be a sign of failure were one to applaud at the end of the performance of one of Richard Foreman's early plays, which had programmatically tried to eschew and resist the audience's entrancement.
34. For double feature, one can show a musical such as *Easter Parade*, with its immobilized dancers who do not turn their heads to accompany the dancing couple's lateral movements, and Hitchcock's *Strangers on a Train*, with its tennis match scene in which the spectators repeatedly follow with their heads the tennis ball as it goes back and forth between the two players.
35. This would be an instance of foreshadowing either by an illusion or by something that can be explained away. In *Persona*, the film spectator, slightly jarred by the repetition of part of the news footage of the self-immolation of a Vietnamese monk, can hypothesize that running out of images to accompany the anchor's commentary, the TV editor opted to repeat part of what had already been shown; then we get a real repetition, one that we cannot honestly dismiss: the scene of the diegetic comment on the child's photograph is repeated twice.
36. Those who die before dying require neither dance nor faith to witness mountains walking (Dōgen: "Preceptor Kai of Mt. Dayang addressed the assembly, saying, 'The blue mountains are constantly walking.…' The mountains lack none of their proper virtues; hence, they are constantly at rest and constantly walking. We must devote ourselves to a detailed study of this virtue of walking. This saying of the buddha and ancestor [Daokai] has pointed out walking; it has got what is fundamental, and we should thoroughly investigate this address on 'constant walking.' … Although the walking of the blue mountains is faster than 'swift as the wind,' those in the mountains do not sense this, do not know it" ("Mountains and Waters Sutra" [*Sansui kyō*], in *Treasury of the Eye of the True Dharma*, Book 29, trans. Carl Bielefeldt); or mountains moving in general: "Junayd's answer to the enthusiastic Nūrī, who objected to his sitting quietly while the Sufis performed their whirling dance, is famous: 'You see the mountains—you think them firm, yet they move like clouds' (Qur'ān 27:90)" (Annemarie Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975], 181).
37. Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, translated by Daniel W. Smith (London: Continuum, 2005), 19.
38. According to Deleuze, "the job of [film] criticism is to form

concepts that aren't of course 'given' in films but nonetheless relate specifically to cinema … Concepts specific to cinema … They're not technical notions … because technique only makes sense in relation to ends which it presupposes but doesn't explain. It's these ends that constitute the concepts of cinema. Cinema sets out to produce self-movement in images, autotemporalization even: that's the key thing … But what exactly does cinema thereby show us about space and time that the other arts don't show?" (Gilles Deleuze*, Negotiations, 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin [New York: Columbia University Press, 1995], 57-58; cf. Gilles Deleuze, *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975-1995*, edited by David Lapoujade; translated by Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina [Los Angeles, CA: Semiotext(e), 2006], 289: "cinema puts the image in motion, or endows the image with self-movement")—but, very dear Deleuze, what about dance? Deleuze seems in the aforementioned quote to overlook what he himself wrote in the second volume of his book on cinema about a movement of world made possible by dance (!): "Musical comedy is the supreme depersonalized and pronominalized movement … what counts is the way in which the dancer's individual genius, his subjectivity, moves from a personal motivity to a supra-personal element, to a movement of world that the dance will outline" (Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, 58, and more generally 57-59).

39. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and Nobody*, translated with an introduction and notes by Graham Parkes (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 36.
40. *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, 221.
41. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for Everyone and Nobody*, 257.
42. It would have been interesting had we in addition witnessed the following situation: the initial cinematic immobilization by means of a still-frame is imposed on both the movement of Astaire and Vera-Ellen and the diegetic immobilization of the other dancers, so that once the non-diegetic freezing is discontinued, the former resume their dance, the latter remain immobile.

43. How can two dancers dance a *pas de deux* with seeming insouciance amidst other dancers frozen in tableaux, when one or both of the partners may, at any moment, be enveloped by the diegetic silence-over and, like the others, become frozen (something we witness in the "dream ballet" of *Oklahoma!* as the women raised in the air by their male partners suddenly freeze, their hands dangling rigidly to their sides)?
44. "Could anyone rightly call this cinema silent, which was always accompanied by music from the outset—the Lumière Brothers' very first screening at the Grand Café in Paris—not to mention the sound effects created live in some movie houses? … Film characters were quite chatty.… How did spectators know that the characters were speaking? By the constant movement of their lips, their gestures that told of entire speeches whose intertitles communicated to us only the most abridged versions.… This is the reason for using the term 'deaf cinema' for films that gave the moviegoer a deaf person's viewpoint on the action depicted." Michel Chion, *The Voice in Cinema*, edited and translated by Claudia Gorbman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), 7-8.
45. Thus, at the beginning of Fokine's *Les Sylphides*, the four principal dancers remain frozen while the corps de ballet starts to dance to Chopin's *Nocturne, Opus 32, No. 2*.
46. John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), 8 and 152 respectively: "There is always something to see, something to hear. In fact, try as we may to make a silence, we cannot. For certain engineering purposes, it is desirable to have as silent a situation as possible. Such a room is called an anechoic chamber, its six walls made of special material, a room without echoes. I entered one at Harvard University several years ago and heard two sounds, one high and one low. When I described them to the engineer in charge, he informed me that the high one was my nervous system in operation, the low one my blood in circulation. Until I die there will be sounds. And they will continue following my death. One need not fear about the future of music"; "Silence, like music, is non-existent. There always are sounds. That

is to say if one is alive to hear them." Oh, my dear Cage, in so far as, a mortal, you were already dead even while you lived, you should have intuited that there is (diegetic) silence-over—it appears that you were not a good enough listener!

47. John Cage: "Formerly, silence was the time lapse between sounds, useful towards a variety of ends, among them that of tasteful arrangement, where by separating two sounds or two groups of sounds their differences or relationships might receive emphasis; or that of expressivity, where silences in a musical discourse might provide pause or punctuation …" *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, 22-23.
48. John Cage: "Where none of these [see previous note] or other goals is present, silence becomes something else—not silence at all, but sounds, the ambient sounds … These sounds (which are called silence only because they do not form part of a musical intention) may be depended upon to exist" (Ibid.). Clearly, I do not agree with the unconditional assertion "may be depended upon to exist": taking into consideration diegetic silence-over, in death and dance these sounds can no longer be depended upon to exist.
49. Which choreographer didn't at least once consider having all his or her dancers frozen while the music played by the diegetic musicians continues, intuiting that diegetic music-in is insufficient to counter and safeguard against diegetic silence-over, which covers and silences such music? The dancers themselves cannot counter the diegetic silence-over by singing, tap dancing, or clapping castanets, varieties of music-in, but end up in next to no time immobilized.
50. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Sonnets to Orpheus*, translated and with an introduction by David Young (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1987), 3.
51. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Duino Elegies and The Sonnets to Orpheus*, translated by A. Poulin, Jr.; foreword by Mark Doty (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), 85.
52. The concordance that, in the undeath realm, Orpheus attempted vainly to achieve by his repeated turns, that of his gaze and of his wife's gaze, happened gracefully when it came to his singing and

playing music, in the form of the synchronization of his music-in and song-in with a diegetic song-over and music-over.

53. John Cage, *Silence: Lectures and Writings*, 13-14: "One enters an anechoic chamber, as silent as technologically possible in 1951, to discover that one hears two sounds of one's own unintentional making (nerve's systematic operation, blood's circulation) …"
54. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Sonnets to Orpheus*, translated by David Young, 3. In some translations, we read "animals" instead of "creatures of stillness" (the latter is how Stephen Mitchell too translates the German original [in *Ahead of All Parting: The Selected Poetry and Prose of Rainer Maria Rilke* (New York: Modern Library, 1995)]). Are there actually animals in the undeath realm? With the exception of very few sorts, the ones who have self-recognition in the mirror, for example chimpanzees and orangutans, animals are neither mortal nor immortal but merely organisms whose life physically comes to an end at some point in time.
55. The clapping hands that do not touch each other and that appear to be moving backward in both Martha Graham's *Appalachian Spring* and De Mille's *Fall River Legend* do so not, or not only, as a stylization, but as an effect of diegetic silence-over, which by right should in next to no time freeze them.
56. The arresting thing in paintings of dancers (Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, etc.), as well as in the vast majority of photographs of dance (with their jumps arrested in midair, blurry images implying movement, etc.) is that most often they try to induce the sensation of movement, but rarely attempt to render the freezing, which is what would appear to be the most affined with photography.
57. In "Make 'em Laugh" in *Singin' in the Rain*, a number designed by Donald O'Connor and Gene Kelly, Cosmo tries to jump into a backdrop showing a corridor, bumps against it and falls back to the floor: a gag showing what happens when you mistake yourself for a dancer and assume that you too can create space.
58. Sometimes the reason a dancer has the impression that other dancers have suddenly appeared or disappeared is, rather, that he or she was frozen while they gradually moved toward him or her from another

location or gradually moved away from him or her to another location.

59. Ersatz dancers may move all over the place, but they remain in the location where they ostensibly are; contrariwise, even while moving in place, dancers are projected, as subtle dancers, elsewhere, in dance's realm of altered space (dancers' ability not to bump against each other even in constricted places is another indication that what undiscerning onlookers mistake for one space is a superimposition of spaces). Whereas the unifying element for ersatz dancers is the homogeneous space in which they all are, what is common to dancers, who while dancing together have each been projected into a different branch of dance's realm of altered movement, body, space and time? It is both that one dancer's immobilization can function as a condition of possibility for the other dancers to achieve all manners of extraordinary movements, such as time-lapse motion, slow motion, etc., and that the same music-over, which provides safe-conduct, is accompanying some, if not all of them in the various spaces in which they have been projected.
60. It should be obvious that the solitude of the subtle dancer may or may not be conjoined to a solitude of the character who projected him while dancing.

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