

Appendix 1: Interview with Isabelle Poirier (Compagnie Marie Chouinard)

It's April 13, 2020, when I meet Isabelle online. A month has passed since the start of a national lockdown in Canada and there is no clear information as to how long it will last. I informed Isabelle about my work via email, and I expressed my interest in the performance Le Jardin des Délices. The interview is carried out in English although Isabelle's first language is French and mine Italian. We both use a lot of non-verbal aids – movement and facial expression – to communicate. We chat for a few seconds before I start the audio-visual recording.

V: First of all, I wanted to start by asking if you want to tell me something about yourself, how did you start working as a dancer, a bit of your career and how did it intersect with Marie Chouinard, how did you start dancing in the company.

I: I will be fifty soon, and I started with Chouinard in 1988, so I danced with them for eight years. Before that, I was working as an independent choreographer here in Montreal, creating my own pieces, teaching, and then I joined Marie. For sure, it was more something that I was drawn in, touring a lot, six months a year, so for eight years I was really dedicated to the work of Marie. And then I decided to have a kid, and another, and I became for Chouinard more and more someone...I kept dancing after the first child, but I got involved more in the artistic direction when on tour, because she was not coming with us all the time, so I was more and more responsible for the pieces. When I had the second kid, same thing, so more and more I stepped out of dance. But I kept dancing here in Montreal with independent choreographers. So, I work with Marie since then to now, I am remounting a lot of pieces of Marie, I was there for *Bosch* and the creation, so...I was outside eyes with that, so if you have any questions...

V: Yeah, many... so, what I am also interested in is the sort of translation process that happens in the body as you are performing with different choreographers and in different styles. I wanted to know how working with Marie affected your movement quality, or the way that you would perform, or dance...

I: So, when I joined Marie, the first thing I thought when I entered the studio was that I had never danced before. I had really that feeling of stepping into something totally new, the awareness of my body, how I use my breath, how I use... and you saw, in *Bosch*, they are doing sounds too...

V: Yeah, yeah.

I: So, I had to feel more and more free as a dancer to use the voice, the spine [she moves her hand in wavy motion], being really free with... often Marie would put us in some choreographic sequences, but we could modify that. So, we're working a lot with a system she is building and us as dancers, we have the "freedom" [she gestures quotation marks with her hands]. I always use quotation marks because we are in a frame. Marie is always saying, like, you are free, but not like that. In the sense that you have to understand the system of the piece, or the sequence, it is always multiple parameters that are different. It would be different from piece to piece, so you really have to understand what the system is about: *système architecture, système mon corps ton corps*. So, in different pieces you have different tasks. So, you could use it. So, I had to become a dancer. Marie loves that, being in the moment, and making choices within the piece, so well, it was really...for me... and there's the voice and the use of the spine [she repeats the wavy gesture].

V: And how do you think that... because her use of the voice is quite a landmark feature and it's a very...visceral voice I would say, it's something that comes from the movement, so what do you think it adds to the performance, and do you also have a specific training in that?

I: Yeah, Marie helped us a lot to find that, and for me, it made me click. I was not so much in my brain, thinking of how I was putting voice into it, but it was my body that it was almost creating [all the while she moves her hand and chest as if to indicate something that comes up from the guts and out of the mouth] the sound, the words that are...the letters I was using as....shuuuu. It was coming from movement, in a way, everything is coming from movement, in a way, with Marie. So, my voice was really a training with them, using multiple exercises so it becomes really fluent and not so [she raises her hand and freezes it in a stiff way].

V: And do you have a typical routine, like some training or style that you are expected to know, or is it always changing...

I: It's always changing. Yeah, it's really dependent on the piece, sometimes...*Body Remix* it was ballet, we are using pointe shoes in that, we used to have ballet classes, to really work on how to be more and more stable into that, and depending on the piece we have other trainings. It could be krump, it could be...to just enforce authentic movement and Marie would bring... she asks the dancers what is your need right now? And, if you feel this would reinforce your connection to the piece, she will invite people that would help us develop it.

V: So, there is also collaboration with external choreographers, external dancers...

I: Yeah, it's always like that, back and forward, and seeing what's lacking right now, what you feel that it's not here...

V: Always experimenting in a way, I'd say, it's a space for experimentation...and do you feel a difference in changing your status, like, from being a performer to the rehearsal director? And how do you consider your role as such? As a performer you say that you also kind of create within certain limits, and as a rehearsal director, I would assume that you also have this shifting positioning, between keeping the work but also adding something...

I: Yeah... what I felt was really organic for me, as I really understood first in the heart, in my body, what it is to dance, to be embodying, moving the work of Marie. When I stepped out it was a lot of *aller-retour* at first. That might have helped that kind of change, but for sure the first thing I thought was, I was feeling really alone at first, because you are always surrounded by people, so it was more like being outside. At the same time, it was so beautiful to be someone that could help understand the work, and I have been teaching a lot, so I think this is why for me, that sharing, that giving keys to understand, to go deeper, to acknowledge maybe a link that was lacking, for me to be out was as challenging as it was beautiful. And I made my peace with it too, like, ok, now it's time to step out and it's fine. It's another beauty I was acknowledging, *oui*.

V: And so, would you consider it as a collaborative process?

I: Yeah, I know Marie since...now it's twenty-one, twenty-two years. Marie is [she moves her heads back and forth on the sides of her head] a roller coaster, and I am there sustaining that and maybe sometimes really being there for her if she has a question, but especially being there for the dancers. 'Cause sometimes Marie... I would be really there for the rehearsals; she is not there. She is there for creation. She would come in and out in rehearsal but mostly I would be there for the dancers to rehearse and understand the work more deeply and follow where we want to go, so it would be my role to be the motor of that.

V: And I am thinking, to what extent is this role of rehearsal director different from being a dramaturg? Or do you think they are more or less...

I: Yeah, it's a hard question. I think everyone is dramaturg in a way, dancers would be one, everyone is part of a partition, I feel. It's like, we're naming things, we are putting structures to say this person is this and this is this, but at one point for me it's collaboration. It's togetherness, it's what we are lacking so much right now [referring to the quarantine]. And exchanging and being there and being in the same...in the same project together, every day. Feeling that. For sure, Marie would be the voice of that, she would be the one that's starting, we're all there, like a dramaturg, to help this become a life.

V: When you start the creation process, do you normally start right away working with the body, on the body, or do you first have meetings, you discuss ideas...?

I: Marie, she's really into going into the body. So yeah, experimenting in the body. Yes, there's some exchange, we'd talk, but...we'll sit sometime because we need to exchange maybe what we felt during that work, but Marie is really visual and she observes, often she would draw things, she would put it on a rope and...yeah, she is really visual in a way, she loves drawing. Sometimes it's in the space that she'd draw. So, she is putting that then and [moving her hands as if she is moving the order of the drawings on the rope]: "ok, this will go first, this there". she'll move things, so...It's more dynamic.

V: Another thing that I was thinking is, is there any difference when you start...for example, in Hieronymus Bosch, or in the other work, *Mouvements*, which are based on already existing artworks, does it change the creation process in that case, or is it the same? Or because you are working with something that's already existing it changes a bit?

I: Let's say, it's more the inspiration that's changing. It's like, it's still the same but, for Michaux, it was really that book that someone gave to Marie, and she said: "ok one day I want to choreograph those shapes moving". It's moving that book, so it's from that that she got inspired and it started from something...again, like I said, she's really visual. So, from those drawings, she wanted to make them alive and move and shake and feel what's in it, that shape. And that's the best for the rehearsal director, just taking the book [she forms the shape of the book with her hands] and say "ok, that is not the same, it's more this". Because it wants to be as exact—for sure it's an interpretation of it—but the starting point is the book. Because often we'd see little details...and Bosch it was really the tableau, its' like, ok, sometimes she was saying, "ok, those *deux personages*, we'll dance about them". And then, she really took it like the triptych, so, when *l'enfer* was coming, hell, what's that, that chaos. Kind of crazy. So, she put all the objects of many different pieces in our lives. From our solos in the past, from now...and that was hell for her. All that mix of objects and ways of being and...so that's for her, that chaos was hell. It was really starting sometimes to just, we were doing a lot of captures of the pictures and isolate little parts of the tableau, so we have, maybe we have the one with the apple, the one that was pregnant, there were different dances that were getting born because of the visual aspects.

V: Yeah, and when I was watching the performance, I was thinking, in the first part, when you have the central tableau, what is being performed is exactly what is being shown on the two circles, so as a spectator you are very, like, you can trust it, you are very drawn into it, it makes you feel comfortable. Like you see what's going on, you can see how it's

been done. And, as you were talking about chaos in hell, when hell comes, what's in the circles doesn't match what's on stage anymore, so I was like, wait, you feel a bit tricked in a way, like, I can't trust this. And that was chaos. And that was voluntary, to have this mismatch.

I: Yeah. But at the same time, the image that you were seeing it was an interpretation of that. So, there are some people that were kind of inspired by those pictures but transformed them in another way in the body, so it was not so textual, like, "ok, it's placed like this, so we place it exactly the same", sometimes it's more like, [she turns her wrist with her fist close, like a corkscrew] a sensation of this picture. And at the end, the other tableau, it's more like...it's really that state of just "pffff" [she rains down her hands on her face], understanding everything, and feel almost, there's almost nothing, there's space.

V: And I was also wondering about the order of the performance...It does not follow the order from left to right of the triptych and I was wondering why, how come that choice?

I: Yeah, I think she...for her the first tableau, because it's really at the center, there is something of "ok, I am getting the spectator with me, in that land, we are together". Then for her she couldn't... she wanted something more [she exhales moving her hands down], calming, like something that's opening, like a triptych let's say. Something that is not so hard, like hell, but something that just [she moves her hands around one another, jointed at the wrists in an enveloping, twisting gesture], like "ok, that's together and now there's maybe hope or more, subtlety", do we say, subtle?

V: Yeah, being more subtle and having a message that's less dark, having different ways of understanding it. As it was getting into the third act, the creation of Eve in paradise, I felt that it was very interesting the play with positions, as she was having Adam and Eve and then she swaps those positions, like questioning gender...and then replicated, but also then she just puts a lot of movement, and she just has them moving. Like it doesn't have to be stable categories, it seems to be saying,

I: Yeah.

V: But she comes back to this movement, which is in fact, generative.

I: Yeah, and sometimes she was playing too with it, sometimes having the movement that was standing [she shows this with her hand], then the same but down. So, for us as a spectator we recognize a bit something but it's just the shift in space, a shift for the dancers, it's still the same, it's just shifted [moves her arm from vertical to horizontal]. And all, woman, man, everything could be everything. A row, or one person, multiple, yeah, multiple Jesuses.

V: So, like the exploration of one movement in different directions, positions, combinations.

I: Yeah, shifts of positions, in really the standing, or the sitting position or laying on the floor, right.

V: And how much collaboration was there in the creation of this piece between the dancers and Marie, were there some tasks that she was giving to the dancers to come up with movement or she already had her own idea?

I: Well, sometimes, even with... let's say, the first tableau, sometime she was leaving the dancers just like, "ok, be inspired with that, like, *personage*" and maybe see what could be moved from there and then she'd say, "ok that's alright", and then modify this, ta-ta-ta...as I said, for sure it is a conversation, back and forth and sometimes she was giving something like, "ok, it's hell and I want someone there to climb and fall, and this will be added this way". For sure the dancers in hell, it was "ok, let's try what to do with those objects", sometimes [raises her finger]: "Oh, that's great, we have to keep it!" We have to keep it, it's no more an improvisation and we never do that again, this is choreographed [she moves her hand as if to capture something] "tak, tak, tak, tak", and then adding up little elements, one by one to really achieve what will be part of hell.

V: Yeah, and in hell, the voice is very important, the voice of the dancer who's [I rotate my upper body].

I: Yeah, Valeria, *oui, oui*. It was really a lot of work, even with the sound man, how to do it, the letters in it, the quality of the sound (she shrinks her upper body, twisting it). It's really important the way we hear the sound of hell.

V: Yeah, because again for the spectator it was like "woo" [I move back from the screen], and the strident noises, really like, trying to get under the skin of people in the audience and provoke this reaction. Also, I was thinking if there was any difference in the creation process, so in the way that ideas emerge and are staged between dancers who've been working with Marie for a long time, I don't know, Carol, rather than...

I: Yeah, there's a difference. For sure there's a difference, because sometimes it's really with the years, you kind of understand what's she's searching for, in a way. You kind of understand the "ok, that's where we should aim for", and you understand it better in the body too [she moves her hand in a wavy way] how to do the movement, and there's so many fundamental qualities in Marie's work. Often when we are remounting pieces outside the company, it's really great to have time at first, when we arrive, to just go through those qualities, to rebuild up something that, "ok that's always at the base of everything". Even if I

show the position, that's in there. The breath, the spine, the way you look, the way you use space and multiple directions, it's always there, so for sure, an older person, and she's fifty like me, Carole, let's say we've been together like those eight years that I was there and then many years of observing her, but that's something I really adore about her, because she is always finding something else in the work. It's not like she's found something and then she's just [she crosses her arms and rests her face on them] resting on that, she's [moves her hands], yeah, it's something that you...it's why, it's always challenging being into the work of Marie. It's always in transformation. For sure a younger dancer that arrives doesn't have all those tools. There's some rare case though, where [snaps her fingers]...I remember there's some rare cases that, right away. Some people that had it, lucky, it's there, they are there, they understand, they go [moves her hand as if going deeper] and really are not afraid of trying things, of being free in that land, especially with the voice, eh, that's the hardest one sometimes.

V: What would you identify as the basic qualities when you go and teach other companies, like "keep in mind this, it's fundamental"?

I: Especially, how she is working with the spine, we're never stiff, there's always something that's really starting from that [she makes a wavy moment of the hand], so often we'll take time and do many exercises about that, connecting how my arms move [she displays the movement and her facial expression changes], connecting to the spine so I am not [she moves her arms in a stiff way], moving my arms outside of that, and my leg, my leg connecting to the spine too. To lift it. Especially you can see that clearly in *Sacre du Printemps* [she moves her fingers in a wavy way as if they were crawling on the floor], where they're going...did you see the entrance, prologue? It's like "skywriting", this is how we call it [she moves her hand as if she was sketching something, rapidly and vocalising it] you see them passing and [the fingers, vertically moving, jerk back] it's it, the spine that's making us move through space. The spine, for sure, the way we carry the breath. Mary doesn't want us to be always [she exhales heavily] like this, but how we connect the breath. [She displays it, moving her spine and hands in sudden impulses while exhaling and performs, talking while moving and creating the typical visceral voice that results from breath and movement], and if I want to talk, I could just engage my breeeath" and my breath would make me go, and the sounds are pretty strange sometimes. With *Le Faune*, the way I would just transform myself [she displays it]. This for me was almost falling in love, when I found *The Faune* in my life, how to become...I am so tiny and gentle faced and to become that [she spirals her hand and spine inward], that other, other creation, and it was really that, the breath was really helping.

So, my breath, my spine, the use of multiple directions [again she displays moving her chest and face towards the right and arm and hips towards the left] at the same time. I am not using just one track but right away I am—there my elbow [elbow is pointing right], there my ear [the ear is pointing left] the hips... so it's something more and more articulate, the way I would embody on stage, there are many exercises. Marie would be [she beats her hands] into us to just *charge* the space. That too, as *une interprète*, to connect, yeah. That's many things that are there all the time and that's interesting.

V: And, as this work, the Bosch work, was commissioned by a foundation, I was wondering if that had any impact in the work, if they asked you for anything specific...

I: No, I think it just had an impact on the choice of Marie to do that creation. She was always intrigued by that tableau. She will never do something that she does not desire, in a way, that does not challenge her. She is tempted to go in more deeply, so there was that offer, and she was loving the painting, it's something that for her was really mysterious and she wanted to dig more. So, it's just arrived at a good time for Marie.

V: Yeah, a good meeting also, it matches very well. And you didn't perform in *Le Jardin de Délices*

I: No, never.

V: But you know the whole work because you were there when creating and you teach it.

I: Yes, and I still... it's a very rare occasion, even last summer I went to replace a dancer, but it was because of...the last work, with all the different solos and duets, I don't know if you saw, the last piece?

V: Yeah, *Soft Virtuosity*, the few pieces assembled together.

I: Yeah, as I danced that a long time ago at the beginning when we were touring all the solo works of Marie and there was no one to do it at the time so I had to come back in the company and do it, I said "ok, but maybe with two kids I don't know how it will work". But it did work well, luckily, and I did another part of the dance and there were other things that I never danced and it was fun, like it was...me as outside eye, sometimes, even with the masks, you remember, all those masks of people [she bends her neck to the left and right], I thought "it's easy, why are they not together?" and putting on the mask, I am like "ah! we don't see anything!". I understand now, from inside, that's the thing, sometimes the whole pieces I feel like I understand them pretty deep because I danced them. The newer pieces it is a different understanding, it's depth too, but it's a different one, but I loved when I could step in to just "Ah, ok, now I understand, I understand more that it's demanding, how demanding". I was

thinking it was easy but no! It's a good thing for me, I have to remember how it is from within, to find keys better.

V: Do you think there is any difference when you just go to another company and teach them the work of Marie, but it's you teaching it, so it's already kind of filtered through your body, and I wonder if it's Marie's work, or is it yours or is it yours together. Because I would say from a translation point of view, as a translator, I would say this is more like when you do indirect translation, like I don't translate from the French, but I translate from the intermediate English and I transfer that, I was thinking if this could be the same case.

I: Well, I know Marie, I learned so much beside her, I remember having my first kid and she really made me learn how she was looking at things, what was attracting her, and on stage, like, with the light, the sound, so I try to really... I am not Marie, for sure, but I feel I understand, with the years, I understand a lot how it's working, and how I translate that, because I am a teacher, and that for me was pleasurable too. Because I found it was great as a teacher, an interpreter, to go to another company and make them understand. For sure, they will not do the work of Marie all the time but to make them taste it, and understand something that for me, for sure, it's my experience, but for me was truly... well, changing my life as a dancer. So, to make them understand that. And for me first of all I think it was the possibility of metamorphosis, as a dancer, to say, wow, I could become a dragon, I could become anything I want, as a dancer, I could go old, I could go young, I could change! I could change in any shape, I could get denser... so for me, that is what I want to exchange, when I am meeting other people, to make them passionate about the transformation. And not afraid.

V: Yeah, that's something that's so beautiful in dance, you can be yourself when you are not being yourself.

I: Yeah, that's it!

V: I always found that I could find my freedom in that, I am not myself, so I am being my truer self in this moment...

I: Yeah, and when I went at ... I have been there two months making them learn Chopin, *Prelude de Chopin*, it's really, not easy but something that is more precise, like classic, there are a lot of shapes... but at the same time, there's one part I remember, and I remember Alfonso... Ahah! I made them learn every little role of the thing before casting it and we had to cry, we had to cry and be in that state for five minutes, that's the role. You are just there, and you are crying, and Alfonso made me laugh so much because he was saying "Ah, *mais un napolitaine ne pleure pas*" (Ah, but a Neapolitan doesn't cry), and I was "well,

un interprète would cry”. You are *une interprète*. And he said “ok, I just think something”, so, for me it was a really beautiful exchange, because I mean, ok maybe it’s not what we are used to but... to just go there as *une interprète* it’s... Yeah, it was a beautiful moment. Funny, he made me laugh, Alfonso.

V: And do you work as a rehearsal director or performer with other companies at the same time?

I: At the beginning I was really with Marie, so, eight years as a dancer then I had the kids, but I still was there, even pregnant like this [she forms a circle with her arms around her belly]. I was watching *Body Remix* beside Marie, I had the kid, and I came back as a dancer, but then I was mostly with Marie, and after that, when I had the second kid, touring was too much for me, so I was more someone who was coming in and out when it was possible. To be there, so I am always there...when she does work in Montreal in Place des Arts, I would come, just to help, to remount things, other pieces that we didn’t remount with the new dancers, but I, for sure, I am mostly, right now, a *répétiteur* with a lot of different people in Montreal. I am working with a lot of different people, and I am dancing too, and I’m in two different projects, one with old people, right now we can’t, because we can’t go in, it was with them... So, I am working with different people, other layers...

V: Yeah, because all those layers become then intricated and muddy in a way...you are learning from different sources, and it all comes in your body.

I: Yeah, and as a rehearsal person it’s always challenging to understand what’s really important, what’s really necessary, that is the good word, and for me I understand it well with Marie, I think, because I really lived it. But with others that I never danced for, it’s really beautiful because I think: “ok, I didn’t dance that but with my eyes, and as a dancer in my heart, I am trying to understand what’s really necessary for them to be kept, to be pushed, to be challenged, to be clearer”. So, it’s like I am touching the creation process of many heads. It’s fun, I appreciate that.

V: Yeah and this thing you are saying is so interesting, that you don’t know where’s the essence, the thing that is necessary, and even throughout time, I am wondering, if your understanding of a piece that you’ve done, for example with Marie, changes...You are remounting it over and over again so I imagine your experience now as opposed to your experience five years ago, does it change, do you see the performance differently?

I: For sure. It’s a life and for sure I am thinking differently and with the time, now [referring to the quarantine], the time in the studio is even more precious, and the time away will make me think in different ways, it will change again my way of seeing life *choses*

(things). Just right now, on video...it's changing all the time and I think it's not always better, maybe it's not always better but it's different, and I think that I have to be honest with that.

V: What was Marie's relation to the idea of the author with the Bosch piece?

Mounting a piece that's based on something else, how was she dealing with the fact that she was embodying someone else's work, in a way, was she trying to stay very faithful to it, or was she feeling the freedom to do whatever she wanted with it?

I: For sure she wanted to respect, and she had the canvas, a really big canvas in the studio, so we were seeing it really big and we could see the little images that were maybe small like this bigger, and sometimes to capture one and project that on the wall so we had the details...So she really wanted to go in details...she is a woman of details, *c'est vraiment*...for sure there's respect but at the same time the impact of that on her. On her perception. On her dancers, *oui*.

V: And what was your understanding of the painting in itself, if you have to say what's going on there?

I: I think she captured it really well, in the sense that, for me that's it, when I watch that, I don't know for you, but I love that she starts from the middle. Like, it's calming my understanding first to see beautiful and then to go in the darker part of it, more...and having that resolve, "resolve" [she question marks it] in a way that's spiritual...for me it is kind of what we go through in life, and it's always un *allér-retour*, it's not just one [she signals a linear ascension], I can be in paradise and then hell, and sometimes I feel serenity and I try to go somewhere else, I think it's really talking about life, and the way we...

V: Navigate through...

I: Now it's hell [referring to the quarantine], it's a different time.

V: Yeah, it seems...the beginning it seems very naïve, innocent, I really appreciate it. There are these sexual intercourses and things that might seem weird, but it is just naïve, innocent, a playful atmosphere.

I: And joy. There's joy in that, *oui*.

V: Also stages of age, probably...this playful innocence and the more...calmer reflection in paradise, rather than turbulence of...

I: of hell, yeah, you are right.

V: and also...because I am looking at this works as sort of translations, because also my understanding of translation is not just as a reproduction of something, but I think that there is an amount of creation in the translation process...and would you agree with this view

of seeing this work as an intermedial translation, and what kind of meanings would you associate with it?

I: Well, I think, maybe I am wrong, but one of the biggest challenges sometimes is to start from something that's already known. We know something so much, could be *Le Sacre du Printemps*, that was a big challenge, to step into that, to do *La Faune*, there's many people around the world who created *La Faune*, but I think that's it, those creations, from something that we know. That's creation, how we re-think something, re-thinking a pen, that's creation for me, in a beautiful and really challenging way, especially when you have something like *le triptych de Bosch* that's so...the book of Michaux, André Michaux, there is something really solid. How your gaze will interpret that book, that image. That for me is really...not re-creating something but creating, it's pure perception of that, in your life, in your time, in your frame, *oui*. Does it answer?

V: Yeah, yeah. And were you given the book of Michaux before stepping into the studio to perform, where you asked to watch the painting?

I: Yeah yeah, we had the book, for sure, we had the book in the studio and every one of us who joined the company, we all had the print of that, so we know what's the part of me and the page, I am doing that ta-ta-ta, so everyone had the first, the source let's say, of that inspiration.

V: And did she use any other ideas from other artworks or things, reference to other things as well? Because, for example, I was interviewing a choreographer about translating *1984*, he made his dance performance based on *1984* by Orwell, but then, he was also telling me "yes, but then I was also thinking about this square in Beijing, and here I was thinking about a scene from a movie", so it was the novel but it was also enriched by other entry points. And I was wondering if in *Le Jardin des Délices*, is there also this mixture of inspirations.

I: As I said, for *l'enfer*, it was her pieces through the years. So, her story of creation, mixed together, coming hell. So, it was many visual cues that create that, it was important for her to have that, but it was her creation, and she put that in space together with that. So that for her, for sure it was visual and a landscape, that she was putting in space to create that. *Oui*. Often it could be even an object, you know, when she did the solo *Gloires du Matin* :)-(:, all those boxes on the floor, the wood the same color of the floor, sometimes it's visual for her, as I said she—and now I am not doing Marie's drawing [she draws a figure standing on the floor], sometimes she would say, "ok, that's my block, that's standing on it", she...she is

a visual artist, she's with someone too that's a visual artist, so for sure...the mountains, the trees, the birds...all that connects with her, *oui*.

V: Do you have, as a company, do you keep books of the drawings as a sort of score for the performances?

I: Yeah, we keep everything, for sure, we call it *La Bible*, The Bible, almost, but we are doing...for every piece we try to keep everything together, somewhere, the costumes, we try at least, not losing any... but sometimes it's alright, but like, for older pieces we didn't have the thought right away, I remember, when I first joined the company it was less established, but right now Marie has that in her mind. That vision is important, *oui*.

Appendix 2: Interview with Carol Prieur (Compagnie Marie Chouinard)

I meet Carol on June 17, 2020, via Zoom. While meeting outside in small groups is by now possible, there are still concerns and a sense of lingering fear which makes the format of online interview seem more reasonable. We meet late in the afternoon, and I spend the time leading to the interview reading a book, the first I was able to buy at a bookshop since March. It's Rebecca Solnit's "A Field Guide to Getting Lost", and it is balm for my soul. At 5pm the interview starts, a smiling Carol appears on the screen, and we start speaking English, her first language, although she is bilingual.

V: I would like you to introduce yourself and tell me a bit about yourself, your career, your dance training, how did you join Marie Chouinard...and just very generally introduce your work.

C: Well, my name is Carol, Carol Prieur and I grew up when I was quite young in Ireland and France, and then when I was eleven, I moved to Canada, and that's really when I started dancing. When I was young, when I was a teenager, I was part of a youth dance crew, where we would perform in schools and that sort of things. And that really activated my interest in dancing, and then when I went to university, I chose Simon Fraser University, a university that at that time had a dance program, but I was also interested in biology, kinesiology, so I was able to do both. But after my first year, I decided that I really wanted to just concentrate on dance and the program at that time in Simon Fraser was not as developed as other programs were across other areas of Canada, so I moved, I moved to Winnipeg. At Winnipeg there's a school of contemporary dance, so I did a full-time program there and after the three years I went right into...there was a company affiliated and I went right into it, working with the company there. The company at that time was directed by a director who came from theatre actually, Tom Stroud, and he...it was a repertory company, so he created works but he also brought in a variety of choreographers from across Canada and so it was an opportunity to taste different types of work, from more traditional dancy lyrical to experimental theatre, and so that was very interesting. We were a small group, and it was intimate, and we were able to be very involved in the creative process, and the creative process was extremely central to all of the activities and so it was a very inspiring and creative time. And at the same time that I was there, there was a dance festival and the person that was running it at that time, Ted Robinson, he...one of the companies that he had invited was Marie Chouinard, it was her very first creation, group creation, *Les Trous du Ciel*. So, I

was just a young, you know, I was a student, just coming out of school when I first saw the company. Right away, when I saw the company, it was something that I instinctively related to, it was a very visceral experience for me, when I saw the work and I just understood it in a very subconscious sort of level, it was not at all cerebral, it was just an automatic connection. And it wasn't until years later, for a project I was doing...it was the tenth anniversary of Joe, Jean-Pierre Perreault, and I was here in Montreal doing that project and at the same time Marie was starting auditions, and so I went to the auditions, since I was in Montreal and we stayed in communication, because at the time she was not looking for a woman, she was looking for a man, and I also wasn't available, and it wasn't until maybe a year later that our timings worked out and she was expanding, also, her company. Originally there were only seven dancers in the company, and then she expanded, she was doing a new creation. The new creation was *The Almond and the Diamond*.

V: Oh, I love that!

C: And so that's when she wanted to have ten dancers, and so we were new people coming in together, it was a new beginning and that's how it all started with Marie, and now it's been twenty-five years.

V: Wow! And how did you melt what you were already doing, your experiences, your training and even, I think you did some theatre, right? I read in an interview that you had some theatre experience, so I did you use that in the work of Marie when you entered the company?

C: Yeah, because the company I was working with in Winnipeg beforehand, he was a theatre director, we did a lot of...we would take for example a classical piece, say, *Romeo and Juliet*, and it would be partly theatrical and partly dance. It was sort of dance theatre, and he worked...all his research and inspiration really came from theatrical method, physical movement theatre where we were producing material in research, he would lead us to more theatrical improvisation, or context, or structure, and out of that we would develop the material. So, I came from his knowledge, and this past and a lot of vocal work...

V: Yeah, which is also important in Marie's work, the use of voice

C: Exactly, and Marie's work is all...she always had, even when she was a soloist she worked really close with the voice as an extension of the body. Like the breath, like an arm or a leg, it's another part of the body, an extension...

V: Yeah...so as you were saying, you grew up in Ireland and France and then Canada, and also, the company being based in Montreal, makes me think of language...do you have a working language, do you speak English in studio, or French, or do you just navigate...

C: We speak in French, it's really something that Marie...it's very important for Marie that we have that common language of French and because for her it's her roots, it's the language of the land we are on as well and besides... ideally, we would be speaking also an autochthon language...but it's French. But the dancers are coming from very different...you know we have Italian, we have American, we have French, English that are really English... and so we work in French, the French language is our communication and then of course it just goes...hands up, especially when it's only us the dancers, but within the working environment we really try to stay in French but sometimes it's difficult for us...

V: Yeah, I can imagine, when there's a group of people coming from different places you just start coming up with some words in your language...

C: Yeah. Like there's two Italians, two, and so sometimes the two Italians go like [she mimes two people chatting quickly].

V: Ahah, yeah, it's something I know, ahah...and how did working with Marie affect your own experience of dance and your own sensations and perceptions while dancing?

C: Well, it really made me go...it's been a huge journey of research in fact, and trying to understand what my own dance is, and what is important for me in relationship to movement, because Marie herself is a person that is so...she's just a 150% all the time in whatever she does. It's her work, it's coming from her and so it's so clear when she does a movement, and she is always doing a movement that's coming from a very clear place and a very clear intention. She is like, connected to something, energy that is...sort of even beyond, like bigger than. And that's very clear when you see her. Even when she walks into a room, her presence, her clarity, is so connected to a vital charge of living energy. When you are in front of that, you are in front of like, a mirror, you are being asked questions, you have to then question, well, who am I in front of this great force, power, energy. And so, it was a real learning process and a real...at the beginning, quite a scary challenge to sort of go...I never took dance as necessarily something light, but with Marie is a whole other level of intensity. It was sort of an eye-opener and I felt that I was jumping into the unknown, you are diving...I thought I had understood, I thought I had lived and I had experienced but...nowhere near

that. Marie is really inviting, and she wants you to be there as the individual you are, with your history, with your experience, your knowledge, your perspective on life. Because that's your humanity and she needs all of those very different humanities to be present in her work, and so she really invites that. So, it's a whole process, it's a whole process, it's a lot of internal research.

V: And what is the role of friendship and of your relationship, as you have been working in the company for so long and you are also Marie's muse, so I'm thinking, in this sort of research that you do on yourself and this sense of becoming, what is the role of friendship?

C: Well, I think that's something that now, as both Marie and I are more mature in our lives, we are older women now, it's sort of as if we realize it now, we are able to see the journey that we've taken and the time that we've taken and we are now able to maybe come together in ways that probably were not necessarily...other people weren't able to fulfil those roles. Whereas now there is an innate trust, an innate...somebody that's just been there for twenty-five years, that you know that you can turn to and just be very frank with or...but that's something that I think we are just starting to enter now. Because I think of where we are in our own personal lives, that is something that we are both now open to have, whereas I think that before we were in the roles we had, you know.

V: Yeah. And you also work with other companies, right, and have other projects, how does that come in dialogue with the work you do with Marie, do you keep them as separate things or sometimes you realize that there are things that you bring from a collaboration, or out of the collaboration with Marie...

C: Yeah, you know, it's such a blurry line, because it's me, it's the same person and depending on what I am living at that movement, or depending on what I am going through or feeling, or thinking, researching, that is still me, it's still also my physicality, or my way of movement, how I am in movement that I am going to be carrying from one project...and then, it really depends on the directions that I am given or the choices that the creators make to form or to use my capacity in a way that they'll either remould it, they'll take and... that's a whole process, and sometimes it's with time that you are able to open other doorways into yourself, and that's what I like of working with different people, because they are able to open different rooms in us, different colors and textures...

V: Yeah. And is there a specific training that you do with Marie, that people of the company have to do, or a specific normal day that you...go in and have some sort of rituals or is it freer?

C: It's quite free...in the morning is when we train and people...Marie allows for us to choose, how we want to prepare for the work that we need to do, whether it's a new creative process, whether it's a repertory work or rehearsal for other works...so people train in all sorts of different ways. Some people do more of a gym and they go running, and they are physical in that way, other people do the ballet class, and it's a ritual to do the ballet class, and there's Pilates, there's yoga, and some people train themselves and some people need to go and follow teachers. So it all varies and then, Marie, every now and then, depending on what work we are doing and especially if it's a new creation, she might decide that she would like for us to do more of a somatic work, or when we were doing the creative process for *Gymnopédie*, it was a clown workshop, and then...so, a variety...

V: How interesting! It's very inspiring, to do new things every day

C: Yeah, it would be for example, before the *Gymnopédie* we did a week, or two weeks, of a clown workshop, which was intensive, where everybody was there and Marie was there, so we would immerse ourselves in that type of work, of *Feldenkrais*¹, or whatever that is, and it's really inspirational because it's something that we all lived together, and then it's a knowledge, an experience that we shared and that we are then able to refer to in the creative process.

V: And in terms of the creative process, how much agency, how much freedom and really subjective investment do you have in the creation process as dancers?

C: It goes through different phases, and the initial phase usually...there's always a phase of complete freedom! She'll maybe put in a suggestion, or she'll lead us in a direction and then she'll let us go, and you know, in that sort of abandonment, freedom...and then slowly, she starts...and it's a very intuitive, she works very, very intuitively. And then she starts to maybe carve things in a certain direction and then it becomes more and more and more and more structured, until it's incredibly structured. And then when we go to performance and the structure is there, it's integrated, and we understand what is important to be delivered, when we understand what that structure is and it's clear that we are honouring

¹A somatic education method.

it, that we are not going to represent blue and it should be green, then that's when she allows for people to...with the experience we go deeper in that and maybe it starts shifting in this way and that way, it's really...it goes through these many different phases, where there's yes, a lot of freedom, and we bring ourselves, and then where it gets very structured, and it's Marie, she is the one choosing and defining and carving and then putting it...you know, it's like a sculpture in a way. It becomes very clear in her mind, and then it's us understanding what that is for her, and then after that we are able to play with it, because we can then, we know that it's crystallized like this, but we can maybe show this facet and that facet, but it's within the crystal. I don't know, it's hard to explain!

V: No no, it's clear, I think it's clear, you explain very well. Would you then call it a collaboration, in a way, it's a collaborative work, I'd say.

C: I mean...I think so, I think it's a conversation

V: Yeah, I like this word.

C: It's a meeting of people, of minds, of energies. So, it's a meeting of those energies in that room in that day, you know, in another day, in a meeting...it will be different, even if you have the same people in a different way, it would just be different. So it's that sort...and those moments, you know, one day it's magic and one day it's hard...but exchange happens, whether it's a verbal conversation, sometimes it's verbally, sometimes it's just physically, sometimes it's energy...but that exchange, even if there's sharing of ideas, sharing of the energies, at the end, no matter what, it's Marie who makes those final decisions in terms of where the piece is going and what her vision is. So, the vision is there, but she clarifies it through the process, the creative process. And that's the intuition. She allows herself to be in a lake or in a river and she allows for that stream of consciousness, that stream, to take her, and she allows for that, and then eventually she defines it.

V: Oh, it's very interesting. I'm just reading a book that is about getting lost and this really makes me think of it.

C: And it's fascinating. I learn so much watching her in the studio because of how she, one of the things I admire the most of the creative process, of watching her, is that she risks. She takes risks. She is not scared to take a risk. She has an idea, and she does the idea, she sees what it looks like, she tries it, she doesn't sit in the fear of "maybe that's not going to

be good”. It doesn’t matter. She really takes the risk, and that has been something that’s been very inspiring, watching and being around that, yeah.

V: And, also in terms of the creative process, is there any difference when you work with...like in *Mouvements*, or in Bosch, when you start from something that is already an artwork, and when you start from scratch? Is there any difference in the creation process?

C: Ehm...I think that...yeah, there is! There is in a way that you kind of have a score there, you have reference, there’s reference to something. Whereas when we went into a process like, *Le Nombre D’Or*, *The Golden Mean*, or even when we went into the research of *Soft Vitality*, we are searching with her, the beginning stages (she moves her arms and upper body as if walking in the dark and groping), clawing through many different lands and...you know. Whereas when you have something, like with *Mouvements*, she came with the book and right away, you have it, it’s an imprint, it’s a reference to go to, to be inspired by. Two worlds, two different types of feelers that, ways of connecting into something.

V: Yeah, and at the same time she stayed very close in a way, both in *Mouvements* and Bosch, by deciding to have them on the background. And, also, of course, adding her own intention and vision...so I was wondering how important it is for her to stay close but also how much freedom she affords herself.

C: Yeah, you know, I wonder, Marie is very visual and yes, she is a choreographer, and yes, she works with movement as a primary mode of expression, but she writes, she doubles with drawings, I see her as a very multifaceted artist, and I think she is really interested in the whole design and visual art. So, I think the projections, yes, they make reference and sort of ground her work in a way, it helps, it’s like a doorway for the audience to understand, but also, I think it’s an aesthetic for her. I think aesthetically there’s something about having visuals that...she is researching as a visual artist. It’s a curiosity. And especially if you look at where does she come from, as a performance artist herself. She was really a performance artist, she comes from that very raw time where, you paint yourself, so putting yourself on stage painted, with horns, it was a visual statement, artistic statement. And so, I think that that’s a continuation of where she comes from as an artist, that’s yes, dance, but there’s more, it’s a performance, it’s visual...

V: And as for Bosch, *Le Jardin des Délices*, how long did you work on the creation process for the performance and where did the impetus for that come from?

C: Well, when we work with Marie it is never like, six weeks in a row, we work one week creation, than we go on tour, do other things and then we come back, so it is always extended through time, and so I don't know what the exact amount of weeks were for the actual creation, but that was over a year, a year, we work within a year and usually, it's a little bit of week here and there. And Marie, she was commissioned, asked for the 500th anniversary, to do this project. And when she's asked to do things, sometimes she sits with it for a while and...so somebody had come to her and then she was like, oh...and she's always loved the work of Bosch, it's always been an inspiration and so there was a...serendipity, just how things come together, and you are like "ok, well then let's do it now, this is the time..". What she had done at the beginning of the creative process was that, she had enlarged huge drawings of the work, so that we could have with us in the studio the images from the triptych. So, we started like in *Mouvements*, imitating, we would try and insert, we became extensions of the painting into space. And then we were taking that into movement. And then we were playing with all sorts of different things, we had plastic bubbles and all...

V: Yeah, I loved this. I watched that in Lisbon, and I wanted to ask, because in Lisbon it was part of a cycle dedicated to Bosch with films, documentaries...and were you aware of that?

C: No!

V: It just came at the end of a whole cycle dedicated to Bosch, so there were movies that made reference in a way, concerts...

C: Wow.

V: And at the end there was the performance of Marie, so you came to it with a baggage of things that you'd been building up.

C: Ah, wow... Nice!

V: Yeah, really lovely. And I also felt...one of the things that I liked was how she was playing with our understanding and with trust. Because I felt, as in the beginning you have these cycles that zoom into certain sections of the painting, you see that you are doing the same thing, and then when Hell starts, you have *l'enfer*, it's different, so all of a sudden I was doing this (I move back with my upper body) I perceived my body doing this, so I was

moving with you in a way, first coming close, I trust, I understand everything, and then pushing back.

C: Wow...

V: And in the end all these ways of looking for alternatives...as you have this image which is always represented as THE image, the one image, and she was instead setting it in motion, and she was showing different combinations that were possible and so endless possibilities of being... and I was thinking, how do you, as a dancer, experience and live the dance, like somatically. What are your feelings?

C: Within Bosch or just in general?

V: Within Bosch and if you want also in general, both.

C: Ok, ah...Bosch for me...well, each work of Marie is a different world and a sort of different energy, different preparation, different state of being, different energy, imprint...even though there is a signature in, you know, the spinal work and the breath work and all of that. Still, the world itself, it is quite unique. Like, the *Sacre* is a whole other physical adventure. But, for me, Bosch is a real...They are all journeys but really within Bosch I try to put myself in a place of...especially because the first scenes start in an open, and sheer sort of innocent, you know, just of not knowing, of [expires while opening her arms in front of her face]. So, I find in Bosch, the amount...in any of the performances there is an abandonment, of having to let go, of being in a place of the unknown, but especially in Bosch because I feel it's very much a part of that world. So, it's that sort of abandonment, of innocence and non-judgment, simply entering into a very...especially, I mean, we are naked! But I feel...just imagining, that there's the garden and...it's a very specific, a bubble, it's a very...it's a universe that we cultivate in Bosch. And, compared to a lot of other pieces too, it's a very united work, where we are connected to the others. You know, a lot of Marie's works are solos, even within a group, we are separated, but Bosch has another type of sparkly energy. Even when we are in chaos, people for *Hell* sometimes can be just "ugh", but we are having the time of our lives, there's so much fun! A lot of times people are just like "Oh my god" but we have so much fun in that, and it's about that, that abandonment, when we allow ourselves to go into an imagination beyond this physical world, then we just are free. It's freedom. And I think that can be said to wanting to be in that freedom in general. You know,

to attain that in all of the dance works is to be able to find that balance between knowing and not knowing.

V: Yeah. And as per performing it, how does the different context or location, time, influence the performance of a piece? Because I imagine, it's always unique but it's also informed by what's around you.

C: Yeah, yeah. Greatly so. We don't talk about it a lot, but just even the energy of the public, whether they are close, whether they are far, whether it's a bigger stage or a smaller stage, all of that contributes to the energy that's moving around. We had the opportunity a couple of times to perform Bosch outside.

V: Oh, wow!

C: And that was wonderful, that's magical, that's really magical.

V: Yeah, already as you are talking of it, I am imagining it, and it must be incredible.

C: Yeah, I think it's beautiful, it was really one of...some of the best moments because it excites us, you are in an element of...already, it's magic, and it was just beautiful to be in that.

V: Why did you choose, why did Marie choose to start from the central panel. Because normally, the critics who have approached Bosch read it from left to right, and it was something interesting for me that she started from there, then she went to hell and then paradise, which is the opposite of what Bosch does, or critics who read him do, by saying it ends with hell.

C: I think that...this was not necessarily a choice that she had thought about doing before, I think it came...you know, part of our process, at the end of our process, we go into a theatre and we actually finish, we do all the lighting and there she starts understanding more of the scenography, the reading of the piece. And she played with that, the order, in different ways. And I think that for her, ending with the beginning allowed for...that there isn't a story, it's not a linear thing and...Marie always talks about how there isn't a story, there isn't one interpretation, how it's really open for the individual to see what it is that they need to be seeing at that time. And I think that the order of the tableaux, allows for that reading in a more, sort of, open way and it allows also for a positivity. It's kind of futuristic in some way, we are moving...you know, there is the creation of the world, and then the destruction, all the

difficult times, but where are we going in the future? So, I think that she took all those symbols and then played, with the gendering, the symbols themselves, to make them invite us to something that is not so dogmatic, something that we don't even know what is.

V: Yeah, radical freedom, really.

C: Yeah.

V: As I was talking to Isabelle, she said that in *Hell* Marie was playing with past performances, so you were using objects or scenes from past performances, so I was wondering, do you remember what specific performances she is referencing and how did you come to do that.

C: Yeah, so that was an improvisation. *Hell*, it was an improv. And, because we rehearse in the same studio, all of those objects from past performances are there, in the studio. And so, we just pulled everything out, because she just wanted us to be free, whatever. And so, we pulled all of the objects around and other things. We had garbage cans...all that was possible around us. What she wanted us to do was to enter where we were not necessarily...the referencing of the past works was there because we used the objects that were there, but it wasn't her intention. She understood...it was one of those things, it was one of the beauties of that research, that improv, that moment of research that it came out...it was magical. And she saw...she's so good at that, she has an eye, she is able to [moves her hands as if to seize something in the hair], go "oh, something special just happened here". And she sees the referencing, the, exactly, reference, reverberation, the pebble that drops into the water and then it ripples out...She sees and understands all those ripples, and so when she sees something going on in the studio, it touches her, talks to her, and so that was just one of those moments in the studio, we were...part of the dancers who were there at that moment didn't know some of the referencing that was going on, because they hadn't done all the other work, you know.

V: Yeah, right. So, it's also interesting to think in terms of how with time you understand better the work you do with her.

C: Oh, for sure!

V: So also, I was thinking...because for me, when I think of what I'm doing, I'm studying translation and I'm studying dance and dance that starts from other artworks. And I

try to understand translation in light of dance. So as something that is and can be creative, in which one can have a different kind of agency, where one works with memory, as when you take an object like Bosch's painting and you re-imagine new futures for it, in a way. And so, I treat this form of dance as translation, and translation as this form of dance. And I was wondering whether you would agree with this view of seeing this kind of work as a translation of Bosch, but also what is your idea about translation in general.

C: I think that...I see it as a conversation. I kind of see Marie having a conversation with Bosch through time with the work. If she were able to sit down and have coffee with him, you know... and be able to exchange. Because there's fundamental things within art that travel across time, the humanity, that travels through humanity. So, artists through time are approaching similar subject matters and they will interpret it through their lens, their perspectives. I think that's some of what's happening, they are using their language, as we see in the Bosch work, and there is a conversation happening about something else, bigger than. And here is Bosch using that palette of color, and...so I kind of see it like that.

V: Very interesting. A last question, we are in a specific moment and how are you living this moment? As a dancer, not being able to go and train, perform...how are you living it?

C: Yeah, it's particular because again it puts the question "who am I", "what is my identity", with movement, without movement...and especially at this time in my life when I am entering a whole other phase of...you know, I've had a long career, is that something that I want to continue doing? Because all of a sudden you are in front of the unknown, you don't know what the future is going to be. But at the same time, I've always used movement as a way to figure myself out, and I think that if I were without movement...there would be something missing in my life. So, even if I am not able to get into the studio, I go to the park. I still try and find that connection of being in some kind of movement. Because for me it's how I'm able to relate and express and have an identity or connection to this world that we are in.

***Appendix 3: Interview with Valeria Galluccio (Compagnie Marie Chouinard)*²**

*I met Valeria on June 19, 2020, at Parc la Fontaine, Montreal. She had just called me to ask if we can postpone our interview by an hour, as she needed to consult the Italian embassy to know if she would be able to go to Italy and teach at the Biennale Dance College the following week. The stay-at-home order by the Canadian government had been loosened in stages—people had been allowed to meet in open spaces since May but restaurants, shopping centers and museums would only open the following week. At the time, Valeria was working on a dance film shot in the woods, entitled *Sur la Lame*, and the Compagnie Marie Chouinard was having their first online performance in ten days. There was a tender, tentative atmosphere of things beginning again, encouraged by the warm summery weather after the harsh winter inside. When Valeria arrived, she sat down next to me and showed a flyer of the performance she brought with herself “so that I leave you with something”. She asked me about myself and my research and seemed interested in finding connections between her work and translation. Valeria speaks fast and with passion, in an Italian interpolated by English and French words that reveal her inhabiting of different languages (the translation into English is mine and has been revised and approved by Valeria). She pointed at the flyer and explained...*

Valeria: This is *pèlerinage*. How did we create it? Let me see, it is in one of the images. We worked with a big tableau. She had it printed out very big, then we went to watch it at the museum Prado and the original painting is so small! So, one of the sequences is called *pèlerinage*. One of the keys of Marie’s choreographic language in *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights* is the accumulation; for example, if there are two characters, she multiplies them until there are four, five, all embodying the same image.

Vanessa: Like in last part, *Paradise*, when there’s two of you and then the rest?

Valeria: Yes, that is the way she works in the third act of the piece. She takes an image and duplicates it, triplicated and son on. For the creation of unisons of the first act, she asked us to choose an image that we liked from the tableau and then create a movement phrase with it. Then she chose two or three phrases and assembled them, modifying them a

² This interview was published by the online journal SKHEMA in November 2023.

bit, so the resulting piece would be homogeneous. And from one person dancing these movement phrases, it became all of us. She uses the concept of the extension of the painting into space. She works a lot with prostheses and elements that extend the peripheral part of the body. We can find an example of this logic in another choreography, *Body Remix/Goldberg Variations* (2005). In here, she does not see the pointe shoes from the perspective of ballet; she uses it as a way to walk, to move in space, something integrated within the rest of the body. The same goes for the painting. The dancers' bodies in Bosch are an extension of the painting, prostheses of the image. She often uses the stage/space as an architecture. She says that the public needs to see the image, but also see the live projection in the space. The way the dancers occupy stage/space is precise. For example, a little detail, a foot on the right, a foot ten centimetres to the left, and the light shifts, the way the image is seen shifts. She has a deep visual sensitivity.

Vanessa: Is it a sort of architecture of the body?

Valeria: Often there is a reference to the architecture of the body or architecture of the space, or architecture of the thoughts. When we move from point A to point B, usually we move on a line, and rarely we go back off. When we use curves or spirals, they are to inspire in us the quality of the movements. This philosophy reflects the way people move in their own lives or do actions, for example: if you want to go up to that tree, you go straight there, you don't need to zigzag.

Vanessa: Very interesting. But then the curves are all in the way you move your body. And I also noticed the way you move your hands, your body... I was looking at the birds outside the window and they move similarly, with jerky movements, with sudden accelerations.

Valeria: Yes, nature is a source of inspiration for Marie and us. I don't think Marie thinks "I am going to replicate a tree", but always in her work there are elements of animals, trees, connection to nature. For example, in *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1993), there is a solo of flower or a duet of flowers. She decomposes and recomposes her ideas, like a Picasso painting, it's made of multiple layers, we can see it from different angles evolving and amplifying itself. Dancers are not just embodying a flower, we are embodying the feeling itself through imitation of the flower. In *Le Sacre du Printemps*, the flower's solo only lasts twenty seconds, yet in those twenty seconds you see many different things. Marie's talent

rests in her ability to understand when an image, and the feeling behind the image, work. And then if it works on a symbolic level.

Vanessa: And when you create it, do you go through all these different layers?

Valeria: Well, she never speaks about emotions, never imposes them to us interpreters. You would not even have words for all of those feelings. But she is very intuitive, and she feels it in her body, she notices something and asks you to do it again, then she starts adjusting the movements, maybe changes the angle of inclination of your fingers, or the movement of your spine, or the way you breathe. And she knows that by doing this, she is taking you back to how you felt the first time you moved that way. She has real talent.

Vanessa: Every time you perform the same piece, are you able to access the same sensations?

Valeria: We often work with “systems of movements”. In Bosch some parts are choreographed, other parts are made by systems of movements, where we have clear indications – spacing, lighting, timing, musicality, quality of movement, all elements that are really important to frame the work. For example, I may have a solo lasting thirty seconds, knowing I must move my arms in a specific way, like in architectural way, with long and angular movements, fingers extended, legs moving on a different rhythm and change the level of the body. Everything is very well defined, but it’s up to me, the interpreter, to do ten leg movements and two arm movements or the reverse, punctuating the specifics accents on the music or just following the melody. She created the “systems of movements” because she wants to leave the dancers free. She created them for herself when she was a dancer of her solos for let herself free as well and be connected to the present moment in each show.

Vanessa: The performance is always slightly different.

Valeria: Yes, and as dancers, this gives us freedom, the performance changes with you. I am not the same person I was nine years ago. I dance the same choreographies, but the feelings are different, because I have lived through different things. My body has a memory that I carry in my dance, every day, and every time.

Vanessa: And what about the music? Do you start creating on the music?

Valeria: It depends on the choreography, but often the music arrives when we are more than mid-way through the process of creation. With *Les 24 Préludes de Chopin* (1999)

she created the choreography on the music from the beginning. When the creation process begins in silence, it gives Marie the freedom to start from simple movement energy, without being influenced by external inputs as music. When she finalizes sections, she records them and send their videos to her long-time composer and collaborator, Louis Dufort, then he starts to compose the music. Louis and Marie have been working together for over twenty years. Once we have the music, we start putting the two things together, and to look for interesting cue to dramatize the work. The way she uses music is not obvious, her research is always surprising, interesting. A good example of this is in *Le Sacre du Printemps* (1993), where there are “systems of movements”. Some musicals cues are set, and the dancers have to hit them, while other cues are freer. As in jazz music, in each show we can play those roles and the result will be different each time, considering that the body itself is an instrument that plays music adding to the score.

Vanessa: It is about making choices in the moment.

Valeria: Yes, it’s about being present. Perhaps like for interpreters: when they translate, they are in the present, they don’t know what the other is going to say but are ready, open, available to reproduce...

Vanessa: Carol Prieur, your colleague, was telling me about a sense of abandonment, of letting yourself get lost in something.

Valeria: Yes, loosing yourself without fear. There is always fear: fear of the unknown. But the body remembers, has a muscular memory, and it takes you back to the movement you should be doing. Perhaps not from the very beginning... it takes three or four years working with Marie to be able to let yourself go, because your body knows the movements intimately. And that is when things become fun. You surprise yourself as you dance. I had moments when I was moved, moments when I experienced grace. They are invaluable. It still gives me goosebumps. It is almost a contact with the divine. And this contact with the divine, which Marie pursues in her work, is also present in *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights*.

Vanessa: What do you feel when you dance *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights*? What is your lived experience of it?

Valeria: Dancing Bosch for me is really dancing three interpretative energetics distinct tableaux. In the first act I interpret a solo that seems to say “this is me, I need to

communicate with you, I need you, and I love you all, sitting there in front of me”. There is unconditional love in this solo, I create a connection with the public through it. Apart from that, the first act requires a lot of technical prowess. I have my own dramaturgical line, a sort of internal discourse, but there are also parts where we dance together, and I need to be careful about the spacing. It’s a mixture of being careful about what I am doing, be in connection with the group of the dancers and connecting to the public. The second act opens with long voice solo performance that I interpret. I announce to the public that hell is going to start. I leave behind the naive, joyful, pure, and innocent quality of the first act to access the darkness of the hell, to access the powerful dark side of myself, without fear or judgement. It can be scary; it was scary when I discovered this side, but it soon became fun! Marie pushed me to find all the possibilities of the extreme emotions that I can embody through the use of my voice; mad, sad, angry. She made me research those characters so obscure and absurd who communicate inside of me and outside to the public. During this solo, all the darkness is pushed to the extreme to the point that it becomes bright, interesting, funny, and clever. The second act clearly indicates a shift in the performance and this voice solo is actually a duet with the sound designer because he alters my voice, but I have to follow precise indications. Everything is so precise; it is always a negotiation between the abandonment mentioned by Carol and the attention required to fulfil the specifications. The third act is a meditative act where we multiply the images of the three main characters of this side of the tryptic. The music in this act is particularly calm, we are arriving from the hell act to the last act that is more contemplative and restorative.

Vanessa: Do you follow a specific voice training for that part?

Valeria: We have some voice coaching, how to warm up our voice, how to breathe and how to train the stamina. The solo voice in second act of *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights* was created in a residency: there was a microphone on stage, I hopped on a bucket, making sounds. And Marie had a flash, she said, this is going to open the act 2. We rehearsed the sounds that she needed to hear, then she called Louis Dufort, and he gave me directions. There are so many other interesting things in this piece. For example, the characters, there is no difference in terms of gender, they are simply beings, and the white paint she uses, it’s a transposition of what we see in the painting, or the fact that she did not represent the Black characters from the painting; first, she did not have Black dancers at the time...

Vanessa: I was wondering about that, and how the choreography may change with time... because the dancers she worked with in 2018 are different from those she works with now.

Valeria: Yes, and the political situation is also different, and the way the audience responds to that.

Vanessa: I find this very interesting. The way Black bodies represented by Bosch have been traditionally interpreted... it would be fascinating to see this dance performed today and adjusted to the dancing bodies.

Valeria: If we perform in Italy, I will invite you. Everything changes at each performance. You see this inflatable ball here? She tried many other props at first, then we tried this inflatable ball, like a bubble, we went inside it and had to find a way of keeping it up, because sometimes it deflates a little, it depends on the electricity of the place where we are performing. Did Carol talk to you about the use of objects? Objects are always used as an extension of us, they need to have a function. We used objects that had been used for other performances, for Marie those objects had acquired a deep meaning because they are part of her past creations. Objects are always treated with respects in her work, they are never thrown into the stage, they are deposited, dragged, pushed... they always involve action.

Vanessa: How much time did it take to make this choreography?

Valeria: It was very simple and fast, maybe a month or two. I found the process of the creation of *Hieronymus Bosch: The Garden of Earthly Delights* had a similar approach to the piece called *Henri Michaux: Mouvements* (2011) in terms of translation of the images projected on the screen and the images embodied by the dancers.

Vanessa: Is there any difference between the choreographies created from scratch and those based on another artworks, like Bosch?

Valeria: Definitely. Each choreography has its own energy and its own way to exist and become. For example, with Bosch, the starting point of the research was the tableau. Same for *Henry Michaux: Mouvements* (2011), where the book was the starting point. That time though, the creation took quite long. She had the book *Mouvements* on her table for years. Initially she created a solo for Carol, then she thought of it as an ensemble piece, and she did it in 2011. It took time. She was honest and slow in her process. Her talent rests in the

fact that she never gives up, she never doubts herself... or maybe she does but keeps on going. It's inspiring. What is different in the piece of Bosch, is that we have the painting projected on the background, and the video she made, using the camera as a magnifying lens, is projected on two round screens situated on each side of the stage. The result was to create not just a choreography with the movement of the dancers, but more of a multimedia installation. With the piece *Mouvements* the images appear briefly and at a sustained rhythm.

Vanessa: I see what you mean. I felt that Chouinard was playing with our sense of trust, our understanding. At the beginning what you see on stage matches what you see in the video, it looks like a facing page translation really. The hell starts, and the images don't match any more so clearly. And I was moving with the dance.

Valeria: You felt lost.

Vanessa: Yes, it's a sensation of being tricked. And then you get to the finale, *Paradise*, and the way she plays with the images of Eve and Adam, and gender identities... like it is not only this received image, but it could also be many other combinations. And from the video, you have these beautiful eyes looking straight at you.

Valeria: Those eyes belong to Lucy Mongrain, a long-time dancer with Marie Chouinard. I started working in the company when she was pregnant, in 2011. She had already been working there for thirteen years and that was her leaving – well, she may always come back – but she has a special relation with Marie, a bit like Carol. These people who have been in the company for many years... artistic encounters. She called Lucy to ask her if she could do these beautiful videos with her eyes.

Vanessa: Indeed. It is because it interrogates you, you are initially the one who watches and suddenly you are the one being watched.

Valeria: And it reminds me of the moment in the piece where we dancers all turn towards the public at the same time. We stay still, look straight to the public and afterwards everyone moves. I love this choreography and I love Marie's work. This has been a remarkable artistic encounter for me.

Vanessa: How did it change your perception of dance, your experience as a dancer?

Valeria: Well, I come from ballet, and I was twenty-five when I met Marie. I had a very good teacher as a ballet dancer, Annalisa Cernese, although I know other dancers have

had traumatizing experiences with ballet and some unhealthy practices linked to it. When I started working with Marie, I was so happy, happy to live in another continent, to have a career as a dancer, but mostly happy because I was fascinated by her, and I still am. This person looks so strong yet so feminine, sensual, and her strength is in her intelligence. I'd never seen a woman so radiant, intelligent, human. The way she corrects you and gives suggestion on the movements, the way she relates to you artistically is so human and intelligent that after all these years I still find pleasure in being in the studio with her. As a matter of fact, I meet Marie in her creations, and I must say that my body is made for her aesthetic. I had to adjust some things initially, but then I found my way into her work, I discovered how to be myself in it. And that was the key, a watershed moment. It does no work if you try to copy others, you won't be happy, and she won't be happy unless you put your heart and soul into it and make the work yours. I reached that stage after three, maybe four years of work with her and it made our relationship deeper. It takes time: the work is complex; the relation is complex. Both of you are artists and you need to get to know each other, as in any kind of relationship, you need to trust each other. I believe that dance is always connected to human relationship – the deeper and more sincere the relation, the deeper the dance.

Vanessa: and what about the other dancers, what kind of relationship do you have with them?

Valeria: Well, many things have changed. Two generations of dancers have gone. When I was twenty-five and I was learning the language of Marie's work, everyone looked fantastic and brilliant to me. I learned so much. Then I became the one who taught to the younger dancers... and it is interesting, because I teach what I have been taught and what I discovered through the years, so there is a sort of generational baton being passed there. We spend a lot of time together, especially when we are on tour, we are very connected, but sometimes I also need my space. It's a bit like family.

Vanessa: If you had to describe the type of body that Chouinard creates in her practice and technique, what would you highlight?

Valeria: I would highlight the connection between earth and sky. This connection, this being very grounded with your feet and pelvis, a fluid spine, and a connection to the sky that makes your body like a channel. The body is seen as a passage of energy, so this is the basis of her work. Movement and energy must flow unencumbered. The movement of the

spine, the use of voice as an extension of the body. Developing a hypersensitivity, always listening to your inner sensations, the acceptance and transformation in the present moment. In this, her work is like a translation: this continuous connection. You see, if I had to improvise, I would observe: the green of the trees, but also the chirping of the birds. Already I have two inputs coming from the outside world which connect me to movement, then there is the passing dog, you see my eyes are moving and naturally my hand has moved too [she extends her left arm forward creating a thirty-degrees angle at the level of her elbow and a forty-five-degrees angle with her left hand whose fingers point right] and my foot has moved in a small arch. So, there is this hyper-sensitivity of being in the present moment with everything that happens around you, an opening of the senses, this is Marie's dancer, a body that is ready, sensitive, listening... listening without judgement, because we don't look for beauty only, we accept the terrible, we let it come out. Terrifying things exist and we stage them, without judgement. But we always leave something beautiful and luminous at the end. So, it's the spine, the work you do with your organs, the conversation with the public, the rhythm. When I dance, there are pauses, silences, just like when you speak to someone. There is a truth that emerges from an inner rhythm, a rhythm that shapes the conversation so that the public is always focused, like you are focused now.

Vanessa: Does the dialogue with the public change with the public, the context, the location...?

Valeria: Yes, you have all kinds of audiences, those who are used and those who are not used to our work, those who are generous and those who are shy. And then it depends on the different cultures. But this is a good question, the importance of the public. I dance because I need it, I love it, it is something bigger than myself.

Vanessa: How did lockdown impact that?

Valeria: It was hard. I kept on training at home. It was a good moment to check in with my body and my abilities, my propensities. And I discovered new things. I generally like to train on my own, to remain in my universe rather than to take classes. Dance for me lives in a very intimate context. In this time, I researched new things, I had the time to go deep and find out what makes me feel good. And I taught to a small group of people who aren't dancers, and I discovered how satisfying it was to teach by offering simple images, to channel people's energy. It was a free course for non-dancers. I needed to tell everyone that they could access movement. I prepared it during the week, identifying the organs I wanted to

work with, for example the connection mouth-stomach, and I would guide the breathing process... it was like a conference on movement delivered while everyone was moving.

Vanessa: Is there a specific choreography that sticks out for you?

Valeria: Each and every choreography gave me something. More so with those pieces we created together than with the pieces of repertoire I had to learn. Each of them carries a different shade of me.

Vanessa: Can we talk about your creation process as a collaborative one?

Valeria: Absolutely. Marie regards her work with dancers as a collaboration, although the final decision is hers only. She is open to our proposals; she listens to us and she trusts us to contribute with something interesting and sensitive.

Vanessa: Do you also work with other companies?

Valeria: We have forty weeks of work guaranteed with her every year, so when she gives me work, I need to respect her requirements, but when I'm off I can work with whoever. However, I prefer carrying out my own experimentation, my own projects.

Vanessa: My last question – when and how did you start working with Chouinard?

Valeria: Well, I was in Naples. I wanted to dance since the age of five, and I don't come from an artistic family, so they saw it simply as a hobby. But I knew this is what I was going to do in life. When I was twenty, I started collaborating on small projects with the Biennale in Venice, working with its director Ismael Ivo. In Italy there were very few solid contemporary dance companies. I had a friend who lived in Amsterdam, he called me and said that there were auditions for the Marie Chouinard Dance Company in Vienna. It was 2011. I was in Naples, I did not know the company, I had 400 euros, I was not working, it was full summer, and my dad had given me an ultimatum: either I finish my degree in economy, or I go to live on my own. I had three exams left. I went to Amsterdam, moved into a horrible flat, there were rats in the house. My plan was to look for a job there while taking dance classes. I was twenty, you know. Now when I look back, I wonder how I could have done that. So, the audition was in ten days, I went to Vienna thinking of it as a holiday, without thinking she would have chosen me. She was hosting two big auditions to replace Lucy Mongrain, the dancer we talked about before. I placed myself in the back of the room. She enters, walks around the room, she notes down my number before we start moving. We

start auditioning, we were about 100 dancers, after half an hour only forty of us were still there. After an hour, she calls me and asks what my name is, where I come from, if I speak English, if I speak French. My answer was, “I don’t speak either English or French”. She asks me if I want to learn French. I said: “I could learn it in a month!” That was ridiculous. She asked me to go to Montreal in ten days and start working for her company. And there I was, ten days later, with two suitcases, without speaking either English or French, completely lost in this land, North America. But it was August, it was warm, beautiful, it was perfect... this is how it all started. You know, at some point you meet someone for a reason, you have a stretch of journey to cover together. I believe in this, it happened more than once to me, the first time with Ismael Ivo, former director of the Biennale in Venice and the best coach I’ve ever had. Three years later I met Marie Chouinard. I can say that I am lucky to have found the choreographer that represents in movement my sensibility and make me happy with her creations.

Appendix 4: Interview with Luis Dufort (Compagnie Marie Chouinard)

I meet Luis Dufort on June 29, 2020. A new piece by Marie Chouinard will premiere at the Centre d'Art Contemporaine de Montreal the day after, with his music. We agreed to meet outside in my neighbourhood, and I invite him for a coffee and few snacks in my back garden, where we can talk quietly without interruptions. It's early afternoon, and I spent the morning trying to re-arrange my flight to Italy after the one I booked was cancelled, so I am quite distressed, but when Luis arrives and we sit down to talk, I manage to forget about it. We have a brief informal conversation; he asks me about my project, and I start explaining it and why I thought Marie's work was an interesting case study, how I understood it as a feminist rewriting.

L: Marie is not very political, I think she stuck very closely to how she felt, she saw the painting without any political agenda. That's the way I perceive it.

V: Yeah, I think that's also in construction with the audience, and whoever forms part of the audience...

L: True.

V: Because for me that was striking, and also because I'm into feminist studies maybe, I can see the last part, Paradise, in those terms.

L: Yeah.

V: But maybe for someone else it would be different. And it is a conversation with us...But that painting...the performance...when I watched it, I was "all right", and I wrote the day after to the company thinking this is really something interesting.

L: You saw it live?

V: Yeah, in Lisbon. And they had organized a cycle around Bosch for that season. From March on there were music, movies...

L: So, all kinds of different translations of the same work or different works by Bosch?

V: Yeah, well, there were different works, it was really trying to make different connections, there was a documentary on Bosch at some point, there was a conference, there were movies that were related to the Seven Deadly Sins, and the same with the music...and also interesting because inside the performance she uses these eyes.

L: Yeah

V: And you find that those eyes are important in another painting by Bosch, which is *The Seven Deadly Sins*.

L: Yeah

V: So, there are these reverberations of...of meaning and references. But it was interesting to see that it was picked up by the Centro Cultural de Belém, it's where I watched it in Lisbon...and also with a translatorial eye, looking at it from the point of view of translation, I had this feeling that she was playing with it, even if she wasn't maybe, for me that was definitely... the first part it's really like a facing page translation, you have the text, you see what is being translated, you can see it performed by the dancers as it is, and then, when you move towards hell is confusing, and it's another type of translation, one that...I was also moving with them, wondering what was going on and confused...you are playing with trust in a way because I was trusting you, now I don't know if I can trust what I see, it doesn't correspond...and then in the end you have this other sort of engagement with the text and the multiplication of the bodies...that was all particularly striking.

L: On my side, this comes to the point where my relationship to Marie...when we do a new creation, we never think about the process, the meaning...I'm not saying I'm not thinking about it, or that she is not thinking about it, but we both don't really talk about it, it's very rough and we have this...an invented word, that we call *connettix*. Between us, we just have this kind of...I think we are both very sensuous, we both feel with our ears, with our eyes, and that way we are very close, and we wanted to be...we have a feeling when it works and when it doesn't work. So, we talk about the mechanics and say "ok, this is too long", and this is very straight, we are not at all talking about meaning. It's very focused on what you see and hear.

V: It's intuitive.

L: Yeah...well, it's intuitive yeas and no, I don't like too much that word because I think...would you say that nature is intuitive? It's not intuitive, it's organised. It may look random, but it's really organised. So, I think that you have to be open-minded when you do creation, so that you have this space where chaos and auto-organization, auto-regulation inside a work...because it's a complex thing, it's a complex structure. And you must be humble enough to accept that you are not in total control of that work. That in itself a work has to grow, by itself, by its own structure. And the more the piece evolves, the more the piece tells you what to do and what to not do. Because it takes form in front of you and you have to be humble and open and see, "ok, even if I have an idea that intellectually would be nice to incorporate, but the work won't accept it" because it has already its own rules that are grown. So, I think in this specific case, Bosch, one of the reasons why we didn't have a lot of talks like...in music we call it extra-musical, everything that relates to affect, that the music wants to translate or something that you want to translate that does not come from the music itself, it's called extramusical. In this case, everything was from within the Bosch piece. So, this acts exactly like the partition, like a score, and for her it was a score for the dance also. So, everything, the meaning of the piece, was already there in front of us and we never...I am talking on my side anyway, and we didn't have that talk with Marie, maybe I am wrong, maybe she has a political stance or something, I'm sure there is on her side, but we really tried to translate the painting in its roughness, it's beauty, in a sensuous way, the way we perceive it, the way we want to translate it.

V: And I was wondering how... just talking about the music, how do you start composing? Especially the music in Bosch but also can be extended in general. Were you inspired by the painting, did you have already some ideas or did you start from the videos that Marie was sending as they were putting the piece together...at what point and in which configuration?

L: Well, we always have this workflow, where she is in the studio, she is working without music, or sometimes she uses music of other people just to add a kind of vibe or something. So, normally how we work is that she in the studio and she is filming the dancers, and then when she sees something nice happening, she calls me and she is all excited, like, "Oh, Luis, Luis, I have this project...". But in that case, it was a bit different because normally she has her own stuff in her head, or sometimes she uses...there's a piece called *Henry Michaux*, that's another kind of translation, literally a translation of the painting, like,

literally, they are doing the scores... So in those cases it's different. In most of the cases, I'm not in her head, so I don't have any... she just talks to me and then I just make music with the video that I see a bit there, and most of the times I present music that I am composing for myself, actually. Where I am into my own process and then I make her listen, "this is what I do right now, maybe I can change something". So, it's not always specifically for the dance, sometimes it comes from my own little drawer and then we do it, we construct like this. I make music, she dances on it, then we adapt, maybe something it's too long, "change this or that" and then we construct work like that. But for Bosch it was a bit different because we both had the same reference, which was the painting. So, I was as advanced as her in a way because we had the same score. So, the painting for me was... The time when the painting was made it was completely... It's crazy when you look at the painting and what's in there for the time, there's a lot of taboo and there's a lot... because of religion and everything. And the roughness and the fact that he could have painted that, is quite amazing. So, there's something that is very bold for the time, and I wanted to translate that also into the music where, like in the *enfer*, the music was completely complex and very intense... very contemporary, very written also, serious. So, to me it was a way to... because contemporary music is very underground right now. In the 40's when composers rejected tonal systems and said, "we don't do harmony anymore, we are just going to use sounds and noise", the general public really... you don't hear a lot of composers right now. If you go to an orchestra now, it's all people who have been dead for 200 years... Beethoven, Mozart, we all know those composers but actual contemporary composers, there are tons of them, they are alive, but they are not played in bigger orchestras. So, that was for me a way to present this music that nobody really knows, in front of their faces, with no concern at all about... giving the audience no break at all. Because I could do it, because it was going with the painting. So, we normally don't do... I think, in my artistic process I rarely... if there's something that is, let's say, really intense with the dance, I'll go the other way with the music sometimes, just to do a counterpoint or have more depth to what you see. But with that scene which is so intense and with the music that goes in the same way... both go on the same way; it was a cool thing to do. So, it was way over the top, absolutely. But it does also act as an important part of the piece because if I would not go that way, so intense, then the third movement, would not be so releasing. So, the contrast was really important, so afterwards I can go very minimal, and you are not bored.

V: Yeah, it was like a shower...

L: yeah...and the contrast in the music was also important I think, because there is a contrast in the painting.

V: Which is something interesting in the order that she used for the performance, it's even starker this contrast because she started from the central panel and then she went hell and paradise, so the contrast is very stark and that's echoed in the music. And as for the first part, what was your inspiration for the music of the first part? Is it related to the time of the composition of Bosch's painting?

L: Yes! It's true. That's another thing, to me, it was important to...because I really did it for other pieces of Marie...we did *Orphée et Eurydice*, which is mythological, where I use a lot of old instruments, acoustic instruments from Greece. And now I use more music from the Renaissance, and I wanted to give that vibe. Because in those years, these instruments are really cool, interesting. Before everything got modelled in a kind of occidental way, there were a lot of instruments that sounded weird that disappeared. So, to me, to bring back those sounds, it was inspiring. And it was a way to connect, to put people in the vibe of that. A kind of respect, also. So that way, ok we pay respect for the time period but then we are going from that period and into 2000...so there's a lot of sampling of those kinds of instruments and that's...also those instruments bring back a kind of...for the general public, that doesn't know much about these instruments...it brings us to a vibe of ceremony. There's something ceremonial about it, something calming but also spiritual I would say, because of the voice...of the way I use the harmony, which is ancient also...so there is a vibe that's going towards that relaxing, mystical, spiritual kind of thing.

V: Which then comes back in the end.

L: Yeah, exactly.

V: And, as for the vocal work you did with Valeria, because she was having this performance, she said that she also put it... had a dramaturgy of it and she was working with you as well for that. Can you tell me a bit more about it?

L: Well Marie is always very picky about the use of voice. She always uses voice in all of her works. This was a bit complex, in the sense that Marie was really picky about that and...now we get in another kind of complexity which is reproducing what I do in the studio and when they go on tour with people and everything. So, to me it was important to have

something that's very simple to use, so I bought a software and I use different kind of plugs in where I change her pitch...I put a lot of effects so that she sounds pretty much like...something that is not totally human.

V: Yeah. It's visceral in a way, you feel it in the guts and it's at the same time beyond

L: Yeah, so for this it was about having something organic, that comes from the voice of a female, but she doesn't sound as a female, it can be a male, an animal...if you close your eyes, I'm not sure what it is.

V: Yeah, this makes me think about...what I see in the work of Marie Chouinard, there's always this sort of transformation, metamorphoses, becoming of bodies.

L: Yeah

V: Which not necessarily is related to a meaning but are bodies that can become whatever. And so, it's interesting because it offers huge, endless possibilities of being. And even looking at the figures and people who populate the painting, they are just embodied as being, it is not so important what they are, and they can change...so it is interesting that in the use of the voice there is this idea. And how long have you been working with Marie? I know it's been many years, but how did you start working together? I was curious.

L: Ah, that was just...random thing, the normal story, which is always kind of random. I was a student, I was an undergrad in those years, beginning my undergrads, and one of my best friends was working with the sound technicians of Marie Chouinard, for a piece called *L'amande et le Diamant*.

V: Ah yes, I love that one.

L: That was more than twenty years ago, I think. Dancers had some rings, and sending wireless some midi-notes, which is information to trigger a sampler. So, they would to this and then you would hear a song, a sound, like a *ding, ding ding*. Which is kind of a corny idea, but anyway, that was twenty years ago. So, I knew nothing about that, and one day I went to, you know, bring some CDs to some of my friends. And I didn't know that, but my friend had the task of putting the song into a sampler, working with the sound guy at the company. So, I went there, and they were both there. The sound guy is called Eddie Freedman, he did a lot of sound conception for Marie. Not musically but technically, putting

speakers and stuff like that. I went there and the sampler that they had there, I had the same at home and I am kind of a nerd with machines and they were struggling to put sound there, they were like sweating, they didn't know what they were doing and I just said, "Hey guys, you just have to do this and that" and then the sound man, Eddie, saw me and said "ok, you have to come to the studio". So, my first thing with Marie was as a programmer. Because after that, it's nice to have sound that makes *ding ding*, but then you want to change the sound, to mute it, to multiply...so I ended up doing a program. So, Marie learned to know me, and she liked me a lot. So, because of the technical prowess in that piece, I did the tour with the company, and I got to know the dancers, and the dancers liked me a lot...you know, I was young, I was happy to be there, it was a good vibe. And she knew that I was studying composition and I had just won an international prize for one of my compositions and she knew about it so she... she had some solos to do, she had a first day view big show at the *Musée d'Art Contemporain* where she was doing some solos...So, she gave me the opportunity to compose for those two or three short solos, really short. I think she wanted to test me out also. And from there we just kind of kicked off. So, all the original music, I'm the one who makes it. She has another couple of collaborators, she has collaborated with another guy before me, he's called Robert Racine. He's more a conceptual artist who also makes music and she made some collaboration with him, but since then I always make the music.

V: And do you also work with other people in other projects or?

L: Oh yeah yeah. With dance I mostly work with Marie. I worked with another choreographer, but just two pieces...one is called *Mon Petit*. But with Marie, she keeps me quite...we have a lot of jobs to do and because it's been so long, I like to keep it exclusive with her in some ways. I might do other projects eventually but...for dance is that. But I do music for films, I do my own compositions, I do also audio-visual works, my own 3D kind of visuals with sound and everything and I teach at the conservatory.

V: And did you ever work together for the visual composition as well? Because I know that she is very visual in the way she works.

L: I never did a visual for her, we almost did something together visually for a piece that she is doing right now, but she decided to put the visual aside, which is very simple. She did the visual of that...but no, I never did video for her yet. [In a chat we have after the interview, Luis corrects himself: Actually, I remembered that I did a video work for her

Cantique no. 2, I also did the program which is a granular synthesis. And a declination to an interactive installation in *Cantique no. 3*.

V: Would you say that the other projects you have dialogue with what you do with Marie?

L: Yeah, absolutely, as I said, I compose my own music and a lot of my own music...like, she calls me, sometimes it's very fast. She thinks music can be composed, I don't know, I work very fast, and I am very efficient when I work, but one of the reasons I can be very fast is that I have always a lot of material from my own stuff. So, when she calls me and she says, "I need it in two weeks"...just for the piece tomorrow, she called me three weeks ago and she wanted to have thirty minutes, and I said, I have a new album coming out, I can take some stuff from there...so everything is into that relationship, because...well, sometimes, even for me, *Henry Michaux* is heavy metal music sample that I use and I love heavy metal and I use it...so to me it was a nice opportunity to do a piece. When I presented that to Marie, I thought she was not going to like it and she was "Yeah"! So, it's completely...it's very intense, this piece is very intense. And also...I would say, what was most of a challenge was the *Variations Goldberg (Body Remix)*, because that was very specific and I was not smashing, like, Sebastian Bach music on my own so...to really work with Bach and the interpretation of Bach, putting an axe in there and cut it and everything...that was something that was really made for the company, that had not much to do with my own universe. But it was really nice. Because the good thing when you compose for dance is that because it's not concert music, where people are only listening to the music, as a composer you can compose some moments in which there's almost nothing in there. You can be very minimalist. Or you can be very conceptual in a way. Whereas in a concert, that doesn't work as much. When you do this instead, you have to think that there are dancers on it, so the way to receive the music is not the same, because the mind gets busy by looking at the dancers. So, the music can be way beyond, this gives me the opportunity to make some work that are more conceptual, which I never do for my own music. It's for me...other doors where I can look inside and try some stuff that are much more experimental, that I can take afterword and rework for my own stuff as well. So, it goes both ways.

V: Yeah, that's interesting, and also the same happens when you watch a performance without music and with, it changes completely what you are seeing, it's incredible

L: Absolutely.

V: I was also wondering, so do you travel with the company?

L: No.

V: Does it change the quality of music? Because I can imagine that you produce a sound but then it's not always...

L: Yeah, that's a problem, yes. I think that's a problem, but one that getting older I don't mind anymore, when I was younger, I was a bit "Oh, no, my music, what are they going to do"! Yeah, at first, I was more travelling with them but then...it became too expensive to bring me for nothing, I was just...Yes, I could have made sure of the sound, but I worked two hours, and my job was done, I was just alone and not knowing what to do. So...it can be a bit sad, I must say, but I think Marie tries to offer the best quality. But sometimes I am a bit paranoid, or scared they'd use MP3 versions...Sometimes it happened they did some edits in the music without me knowing necessarily, because they had to cut, and I had a phone call, "we have to cut", I said "yes", but it's kind of weird, because...the *Goldberg Variations* when I saw it...I had done it and it was five or four years without seeing it and I saw it back in Montreal and there was something that changed. That was not really good. But I think it's normal, sometimes you just have to leave it. It's hard to have this consistency on tour, especially when the people inside the company change.

V: Because also they feel differently the music and...

L: Yeah, some people won't touch it at all, other may touch it...and the sound system depending on the theatre is not the same.

V: Yeah, exactly.

L: Because my music is composed for speakers, it's really detailed and the dynamic range...so sometimes can be very active and full of harmonies and almost harsh, so if you don't take care of the sound, it can be almost aggressive.

V: I was thinking, *Le Jardin des Délices* was also performed open air once in Italy. So, I was thinking that must have been very difficult in terms of stage, music, projections...

L: Yeah, right, I wish I would have seen that.

V: And I was listening to an interview of Marie, some years ago, and she was saying that you both use the golden mean in your work, and I was wondering if you can go a bit more in details about that.

L: Well, we did this once or twice. I sometimes do it because it's just a fun way to cut sections into time. When you start a piece, sometimes Marie...Ao, the big difference between a choreographer and a composer is that a composer is maybe more aware of *la grande forme*, the big form of a piece, because it's part of our heritage. Symphony, *rondeau*, *sonata*...and different kind of dance... everything is based on structure. And sometimes choreographers don't think about the big timeline, so to say to Marie, "ok, at three minutes we have this, at four that...". Sometimes the golden mean is a way to put some points where I will meet the music, change a section...There is a piece called *Le Nombre D'Or*.

V: Yeah, yeah.

L: So that's probably it, but.

V: It's not used often, not in Bosch.

L: No, that's just "ok, let's do it that way". Because we need a structure. It's like the Fibonacci, sometimes I use that in my music. The Fibonacci Series is a bit the same thing, is like, one, one, two, one plus two three, two plus three five...and it makes the same kind of natural...It's Italian!

V: Yeah, I know! And are you there when they put the music together with the dance? Sometimes they would look at the music and say "Ok, this is cue, we do this" and...

L: No! I was much more in the studio in the beginning, me and Marie...maybe because it was the beginning, we needed more...I was much more present and much more available also. And especially for...we made *Le Cri du Mond*, which is a big piece and then we had *Les Variations Goldberg*, which was a big, big piece, that was a complex one. I remember one day, because it's a long piece, so on my CD I made a lot of tracks so she could cue the tracks. That was all day, you had to advance the CD...So I made a lot of indexes. And I think there was a misunderstanding or maybe she didn't want to do it the way I wanted, I am not sure, but when I went to see it, she was...completely destroying the music because she was going from track five to track two...she was cherry-picking the music to fit the

dance! She was completely lost, and I think that's one of the first times I said to her...I was kind of mad, it came from deep inside, I am not this kind of guy but...again, it was not my ego or for me, I didn't mind, but it's just because she was wasting the time of everybody when I did the work already. And I said "no, you are going to calm yourself, redo everything and leave it play". And I was really persuasive, she had no choice. And everything worked. Because I worked with the video, and I put the music on the video. So, I don't know what happened with this, maybe it was a lack of confidence, that was in the beginning...but since then, I sent the music, and she dances on the music. So, I don't have to be there in a way because we have this process now and it's very efficient. And I think she likes it like that. I don't want to interfere also...because it's another...she invites me, and I see it when it's almost done. And then I can say "well, this is a bit long, I can cut it if you want". We do small changes and adapt. But the cool thing of working with videos during the process is that when I receive the video, and when I make the music for the video, it's fun for a composer because...even though the choreography is not finished, most of the times is not, and even when it is there's a lot that changes because there is a lot of improvisations, and a certain amount of freedom you have. It's going to be the same kind of thing but not exactly the same. So, when I have the chance to put the music on the video it's good for me, because sometimes I can tell there are some accidents that I can see with the music, or there's something that I see on the video that was just improvised but was super beautiful. And then I just put the music on that specific movement and it's a way for the composer to say to the choreographer, "you see, this timing, I did this on purpose, and you have to keep it". Well, you do what you want but...

V: It's a suggestion.

L: It's very nice is a way for me to have an input...I would not say on the choreography but to show her the things that I compose, that works really with the movement, now it's your choice to keep it or not, but it's a way to express my voice. So, in that way Marie is very open, and she is very open to my comments, and she is also very open to say "no, no, I don't like it at all" and I can also say...I most of the time like her work, most of the time my comment is that it is too long. Or sometimes, I am not a big fan of the screaming voice, I like my music not to show affect and emotion, it's mainly...I like beauty that is very structured and complex. To me is the real beauty. But that's personal, so sometimes when it gets too emotional...but that's my problem in some ways.

V: But that's interesting because in a way it goes close to a dramaturgical eye or stance, where you are in conversation and in fact put your input in the way the choreography develops.

L: Yeah.

V: By making suggestions. And it's a collaborative process, with the dancers, but also with the composer, and the fact that it's not just with the music but also the movement...it's interesting.

L: Absolutely. I think what Marie likes in me is that I have no ego, about cutting my music for example, I don't mind that at all, unless you do without telling me. What's important for me is that it works for her and for the choreography, that's the main thing. And I think that because she knows that well, she knows that when I say something it is not because I want to save my music or whatever, she knows that I'm talking about the piece. I'm never talking about the music alone. I think it made me humbler and more...you know, at the beginning when she was cutting some parts I was "oh, but that's the best part", so it's not going to work to say that. You have to say "ok, I'll fix it, I'll find a way to fix it, so it doesn't impact too much". Sometimes though, I can say "no, no...you are missing something", I have to sit down and explain, and sometimes it works.

V: Yes, that's interesting and that's the difference when you work on your own and with a choreographer, it's that you are engaged in a conversation, a dialogue, you have to give some things up.

L: It's like a couple. I think it's the same thing in love. I'm in love with my wife for twenty-six years now. And a lot of people ask me the trick and it's forget your ego. If you want to win an argument, even though you know inside of you it's your mistake, but you still want to win it, your couple is not going to work. So, it's the same thing with Marie. In that I am not emotional when it's about art, I say, "Ok, I made a mistake, or ok, you are right, let's find a solution".

V: Yeah, and that's interesting because I can also see it from the point of view of the translator and in translation, where you are always in dialogue with the original text.

L: When you want to put yourself and then you say "Oh no, you have to stay back"

V: Yeah, sometimes you have to stay back, sometimes you see that there might be a point for doing it, so it's a dialogue and a humbling dialogue in a way.

L: Yeah, absolutely, yes.

V: And it works for the best of what comes in the end. There's another question that I have. In the triptych, in the panel Hell, there is one character who is bent like this, and he has on his butt a score for music.

L: Oh yeah, ahah.

V: So, I was wondering, if you knew!

L: Ahah, yes!

V: Because I found out that the fact that he was like that is because at the time they used the word *flatulenza*, in Italian, flatulence, when it was bad music!

L: Ahah.

V: So, I was wondering if you thought of it when you were composing?

L: No, but I did play what was there, I wanted to hear but no.

V: Is it playable?

L: Yeah. But no, no. Ahahah.

V: Ok. Because I thought that'd be interesting and also the fact that is probably very discordant music, I don't know, I can't read but I imagine...

L: Yeah...let me look again.

V: Because I found this article about the history of farting.

L: I saw that article, yeah. I think it was "A Bum Note, Music Score Written on the Butt". There's so much detail in that piece, is so funny.

V: Yeah, it's incredible because you can lose yourself in it...and maybe that's the point, I don't know. What is the sensation that the painting gives you, when you first were in

front of it and thought “ok, I have to propose some music for this”, what kind of somatic sensations did you feel?

L: Well, as I said, the first impression is the boldness of the piece. When you look at it, you cannot say that there’s a big evolution between this and “Make America Great Again” rally in the US. I mean, in French there’s a word, *l’hommerie*, meaning that where is man there is flaw, like, we are destroying the planet, we don’t care, we...and I know it’s pathetic. We are self-humiliating ourselves. Which for me is a good thing because the planet doesn’t care, we’re only a fraction of a second in the history of the planet, so we’re going to basically die, we’re going to be the sixth extinction and so on...I don’t want to be too pessimistic, but this piece is kind of a big middle finger.

V: To that.

L: And also, there’s some beauty in it, it’s not just a big “fuck you” but also...it’s the complexity of the human and the paradox of human being. It’s glory basically. It’s very human, everything is human, you have religion...so that is what strikes me. How he managed to show everything in there. I am not a specialist in paintings but, I’ve been to Florence, and you see all those academic paintings, beauty, beauty, beauty...and then you see this. It’s kind of a punk way for the day. So, there’s something very close to contemporary society too, a lot of relationships that can be drawn.

V: Yeah, very human in the way it traces the sensorial, and sufferance...also in a way it seems to go through stages of life as well.

L: Absolutely.

V: The first part, it’s extremely...and in the way I perceived the performance, it is naïve, innocent, being newly born, and then you go through this phase of confusion and chaos and destruction and to the acceptance of things...I don’t know, as they are.

L: Yeah, what I like in the works of Marie is that there is a lot of room for interpretation. I think Marie felt close to that painting, because if you see prior works, those images are in her work since the beginning in some ways.

V: Yeah, it struck me.

L: So, I think she found a kind of brother in that painting, an artist she can relate too. And you feel it when you see that she is very free into that, and she goes into each part of the piece in a completely engaged manner, there's some reserve but there's nothing too much. I really appreciate the fact that Marie is open to having my music as well, which doesn't have any compromise at all, no compromises. It's very heavy music, but because it's danced it works, and I think it brings depth to the piece. I think some problems that I had with dancers and choreographers is that they chose whatever music. And make a personal playlist that goes from jazz, piano to classical bits, to techno track, all in one piece. It takes out a lot of depth to the piece. What I like about Marie is that she leaves me...I take control on the big form of the piece. Because even though the music can be very changing, because it's all original music I can always keep some elements and bring back elements, and I think it brings something that is...interesting, because it goes back to the real traditional of ballet, which is a real composer and a choreographer, and the composer has the craft of the composer, that's creating. And I think it's a lack nowadays. There are still choreographers that work with composers, but I think there's a problem there in dance. I think choreographers want to use any kind of music they like and don't take any risk. So I respect that from Marie, to take this kind of music where I can go completely mad, and you know, people...well, I am the composer so they are not going to say in front of me that the music sucks but most of the time I truly think that a lot of people enjoy the music, whereas if you put the same kind of music in a concert they... maybe they wouldn't accept it, I think it is a way to have people discover this, say, "ok, contemporary music exists and it can be beautiful, it can be very hard...but it can be very beautiful and nice to listen too also". So, I think it serves also as an introduction to this kind of music, which is a small, small part but she gives work to a composer who makes really complex music and I think it brings the level of the piece to...for some people listening to that kind of music must be an experiment in itself, it's not like music for cinema, even the music for cinema became really simple, it always sounds the same...it's changing a bit, they are taking more chances, there are some composers who are becoming a bit more daring, but it only serves emotive purposes. The music is only there to put emotions, action music, romantic music...it's very formatted. So, to me it's a privilege to see a big dance company, to see dancers dance to that kind of music, to put so much time to find cues and everything, so I appreciate that.

V: And do you also think about the dancers? When I was talking to Valeria she said that the music is so important, to have a music that supports you, drives you, because

sometimes you are tired and to have a music that in that moment drives you is so important, and talking about Michaux she said that was fantastic because you are tired but you have the music so you keep going...so, I was also thinking how it is a negotiation between many things and if you were also in a way thinking of that, if when you are composing you are already imagining...

L: Well, no. Because I don't know totally what the dancers are doing, when I compose, because it's at the beginning of the process. But when I see the dancers dancing on my music and I see how they feel into their bodies and I see them sweating, because it's intense, and it's not necessarily always in relation with the beat only, it can be just a drone, but to see that they feel the energy that I feel in the drone, because...do you know what is a drone in music?

V: No.

L: A drone is like, just one big note. There's all this drone music, it can be very ambient, but it can be very full, it's just like "Fffffffu" [moves his hands forward]. And to see that they can feel all the little particles of energy in sound work. Normally it sounds something like this, but it's made of all little things. So, it's like grass, if you take a view of the grass from a certain height, it is only green, but when you go close and close and close, you see all the details. So, to know that the dancers are...and it's another thing, they listen to it a lot of time, maybe even more than me. So, they get to different listenings, they are able to go through different layers of the music. And I can tell this because sometimes they say "oh, the music is really amazing" and I know that when they say that to me is because they understand the music. They come to understand it and they are probably the best listeners...the humans that best know my music are the dancers, that's for sure. To me is such an honor to see them dance to my music and dance is such a high discipline, it takes a lot of work and they are so humble. Dancers are amazing artists.

V: Yeah. And is interesting also...I think there is a shared interest, or maybe resonance, feeling, in nature and structure in your work and the work of Marie. Because it is so structured and it has so many references to nature in a way or another, it's very organic.

L: Yeah. You'll see tomorrow the piece. The piece is from my new album that is going to come out and the title is "Into the Forest". So, it's very, very organic music, very intense, micro, very fast, very nervous, very articulated. Yeah. I go a lot in nature, I do a lot

of running and stuff like that. An hour from here you are in deep woods. And I get more and more touched by that. My music is definitely a kind of translation of nature, speaking of translation. I truly want to transmit what I feel when I walk in the woods, you know, all the euphoria that you feel after a big, long walk or a run in the woods, you feel so good. My video work also works with nature a lot, yes.

V: And how did you live this time during lockdown, the confinement? Were you still able to go outside?

L: No, I just went yesterday...last week it was my first run in weeks. Wait, I'll show you some photos.

Appendix 5: Interview with Eliot Smith (Eliot Smith Dance)

I interview Eliot at the Barre Studios on the November 25, 2018, two days before their premiere of Froth on the Daydream, while the other dancers are rehearsing a part of the choreography where he does not appear. Until this moment I watched their rehearsal and was allowed to take some notes, photographs, and videos. We sit outside the rehearsal space and start talking.

V: Just a couple of questions. First of all, who decided to make this adaptation of the book, was it you or was it Geffré, was it somebody else...

E: So, I'll give you a quick introduction. Eliot Smith Dance, based in Newcastle, we are a repertory company and over the past first three years a lot of the works were created by me and still are, but over the past two years, I've now being inviting international choreographers to come and work for the company, in terms of creating new works, commissioning them. It wasn't until a year ago that I had an initial conversation with Mathieu Geffré, to create a work on ESD dancers, and of course there was logistics behind that, in terms of how many dancers, what you want the work to be about, but he came up with the idea of *Froth on the Daydream*. So, this is Mathieu Geffré's take on the novel.

V: Ok, and do you know why he chose this novel, like, did he give you any reasons for, like...

E: He had read the story when he was younger, and Mathieu is French.

V: Yes, that's why I was asking...Because I think it is not so well known in England?

E: Noo, it's not. I found the book, and there is also a film, in French. I realized that *Froth on the Daydream* has a particular taste for particular people, and that's fine, and I think that's what made me be excited about the work, and Mathieu, he is creating a work that the majority of the public audience might not know of it, and when they do get the grips, with, even the first chapter, they notice that that's not a typical story, it's not the typical novel, and in fact that's what makes the work exciting.

V: So, you got to know the book through the dance that you were performing.

E: Yes, yeah, and that was quite exciting for me, because when I commissioned other choreographers... some of them have been abstract works, so I gather already that is the style that the choreographer wants to bring to the company, to the dancers, what can give as a gift to them. With Mathieu, I had seen him before, in National Dance Company Wales and I was very impressed by his dancing...and I knew that he was starting to choreograph his own works, he is starting out now, and he is a notable choreographer, excellent, but when he came up with *Froth on the Daydream* I knew this was also going to be very new for the repertoire, and that's exactly what I was hoping for, and Mathieu has done that.

V: Ok. In which language did you read the novel? Did you read the novel in English, in French?

E: English.

V: English. And the company, do you know, the dancers did they have to read the novel?

E: Yes. So, the process: Mathieu came in March, this year, 2018, for four days, research development. And that was for him to get to know the dancers in the studio, the dancers to get to know Mathieu, to understand a little bit about the work that he was hoping to choreograph on us, because it was pending on funding. Then when we were offered and awarded a grant to create this work, Mathieu made it very, sharp that he wanted us to know the story inside out. He did say you can watch the film, which I have done, because for me, as a dancer, or as a human, I find it a lot... words are just not always my easiest, I always like to see visuals, and I read some of...because there is an English version of the book. Which I've read, I haven't read the whole book, I've read chapters, because I've been looking at particulars, my role in the work.

V: Ok, and did you watch the movie by Michael Gondry, *Mood Indigo*?

E: Yes, that's the one.

V: Ok, yeah.

E: Which was very hard for me and for the dancers. I remember asking them, is very hard first to concentrate in the film, because there's so much going on, and the moment when you see the love part, the male and female coming together coming together, it's so beautiful

but something crazy happens in the background...and it's, I think that's what Mathieu has also been inspired by, within that particular novel.

V: And some parts, like, the music, some parts of the music also appear in the, in the movie, I find that interesting, like when you dance the...

E: Oh yeas, the unison, the beginning, yes, that's the one. That's also interesting because the movement, you can tell from the dances that Mathieu created, some of the work's movement is very clean, very classical sometimes but then he changes and flips it, by using a lot more the hips, or use more the shoulders, doing something that a typical dancer wouldn't do. And I think that's him really bringing up the craziness, the differences within the work.

V: Yeah, I was thinking about that as well. As the language is so, like, different in the novel, and you have a body language which is also so different.

E: Yes.

V: That's kind of mirroring...that's very cool.

E: Yeah, thank you.

V: yeah, so, how did you divide the work, like, for example, what amount of flexibility did the dancers have, you had, and Mathieu had? I you are working with a choreographer that comes from, you know, outside.

E: Yes, Mathieu came with a set material, some of it, so the unison phrase, that was his material...Canon parts was his material... but then he would give us some task-based work, to go away, he would give us a lot of...he would say this is what I want, you, for example, my solo, the book. My book was my prop, so he made evident that I have twenty books, I look into the book and I'm searching for the professor, I'm reading about the professor, and then I would go away, and I would create that material. And same for the other dancers...but Mathieu would then, come in afterwards and then he would start saying "I like this, I don't like that, put this on..." So, it becomes more... collaborative, and Mathieu likes that, he likes to give you very much set material and then give some task-based, put his own resonance, which I think has been quite exciting because it allows us to bring in what we've been reading, what we want to try and portray, to help the choreographer and also the novel... To bring that out.

V: Yeah, like a mixture of different perspectives that come together.

E: Yeah.

V: And even like in the rehearsal right now: “ok I like that movement of the head so let’s go with it”, so that’s really collaborative.

E: Yeah, and I should also mentioned that Mathieu, he... with facial expression... in this work it is very easy for us to bring out face. But Mathieu wants us to try and strip that back a little bit. He doesn’t want it to be drama... He wants the drama to come from within the body and the face, pull it back a little bit. But I think because if you start adding the face, it then loses its sense of quality it becomes cheesy.

V: Yeah, and also if you have a lot of props then it becomes maybe a bit too much.

E: Yes. And that’s why I think, when you watched it today, when Giacomo was saying to Yamit, the rehearsal director, Mathieu is asking us to keep it stripped back, go forward and take it back. So, hopefully we’ll see, we’ll see if that means to an audience...

V: Right. So, you started working with different artists and inviting choreographers, what do you think are the main advantages of this approach? How do you think it enriches the company, also in terms of sharing experiences and repertoires of images that everybody brings?

E: Sure. I always say there’s two advantages in bringing a choreographer in. One, is the dancers. And the other is the audience. So, if we come to the dancers, the company, bringing choreographers from outside is very useful in terms of...you learn new skills, you learn new works, you learn new practitioners, you learn new ways of moving, there’s a sense of variety...when it comes to audience, it’s important because the company being Eliot Smith Dance, one would suggest, what you are seeing is Eliot Smith’s works, while in fact it is a genre of dance. So, the audience gets not to only see Eliot Smith’s work, but they also get to see works from other acclaimed choreographers and that’s really exciting. And it is resonant when we go to places that are less engaged with the arts. So, we tour to very small-scale theatres or memorial halls. We do also go to big theatres, like next week we premiere at the Sage Gateshead... and what’s so special about that is, the elderly, who are less able to get on the bus or go into the city center, we bring first class dance to them, so we are bringing

Mathieu's work, bringing Rosie Kay, my own... in the past Lorenzo Pagano, Maggie Boogaart, all internationally renowned, and when you hear the feedback from the audience, one that always strikes me is "thank you so much for coming here, I never knew these beautiful performances, exceptional dancers and choreographer would come to this small memorial hall", and it has always been part of our DNA.

V: I see what you mean. I come from a very small village, and we have been having for a couple of years an international cinema festival, and it's the feeling, that something that is really good coming to your...

E: You are part of a bigger community. You've got a small community but when the international comes in, you feel part of the world, part of that big community, which I think we need a lot more in the world in this moment.

V: Yes! So, talking about smaller locations, I also see in your company there is this kind of willingness to rescue some figures from the past, for example the work on the Pitmen Painters and this idea of, yeah, rescuing some figures... even with this, about Vian, I mean, he is not so well known in England and bringing it to the wider audience...

E: It's quite interesting that you talk about that because earlier this week I was at Durham Cathedral and I was invited to give a talk about how we are trying to move out, take dance into other parts of the country, and many of the big companies don't. They purposely invited me for it, they have been inspired by how I use heritage and culture, within my work, and I believe that, not dance just has the power to transform lives but that dance has the power to communicate to audiences through heritage, through our past, through culture, so that, when the audience think they know what they know, actually they get to know a lot more, and a different side, because we are talking through the physical body, the physical form... So, when we look at Mathieu's work, which is why he brings that novel and puts it through the physical body and people will see, the audience will see perhaps something just a little bit different compared to the book and to the dance or they may actually see something new, that they have never seen in the book, and it makes them go back to the book and read it further. And coming to the miners that was very...that was a pivotal point for ESD, because that changed my movement vocabulary. We are specialized in the Martha Graham's technique, which is, people say !that is very historic technique!, actually it is a technique that allows us to be built strongly, we talk about the contraction and the release, I believe it's very

much of a foundation for dancers, so that they can be in dances like Mathieu's, Maggie Boogaart, mine... so that they have a very strong core to project out, and I think it's a very fundamental ability here, you are right, try to bring past into the present and how does that resonate into the future, and it reminds people.

V: Yeah, I was thinking also of *Pioneers of Courage*, which is based on historical figures. How does this engage with memory, you know, cultural memory and the way people remember things, what do they remember, what not?

E: Definitely, definitely. Within *Portraits of Courage*, one of the sections was looking at Emily Wilding Davison, and Emily was, she was a very big northern ambassador for women and also across the world, because she was part of the suffragette movement for women to have their vote and that really inspires me. That, women, and you know, also the work that I did, I didn't want to become very political but it did bring in a very natural evolutionary politics in the work, because William Armstrong, he invented a lot of the mechanical, and the powder, the gunpowder, and he was the first to have his house be lit up with light bulbs, but he was very much talking about men, but when you look at Emily Wilding Davison she is very much the opposite, she had the courage to speak for women, to have their vote and how does that come together. And you see that in *Portraits of Courage* at the end, the final section all the characters come together and that was a very big statement for me, because they never probably met, because of the times they were born and their work, but I wanted to show the audience that we should all be together as a community, we are one and I am sure they'd be looking down saying what's going on in this world, we need to work together.

V: Yeah, so even in terms of historical canon there is a sort of subversion, like, also subverting the canon.

E: Definitely, definitely. I think my new work that you've seen today, which is still in the process, *Poppies*, that's very new, that's another step change for me because *Pitmen*, *Portraits of Courage*, I created a duet, Moonlight, which is very abstract, but in the past two years I've been looking very much at character, and theatrical... now *Poppy* being inspired by Flanders fields, and *Poppy* itself, I am looking at war and World War I, I wanted to take a portrait, abstract, so not just showing the audience "I am a poppy and I am a flower" but actually show what has been the aftermath of war, because war still goes on today and War

World I was supposed to be the last war of all world wars and actually it had the opposite effect. And you see this within various countries around the world and it's quite upsetting and I think is very hard for the youth of today and that's my aim within *Poppies*, to show that we are bodies, we are humans, and we shouldn't be killing or going to war, we should be protecting the world, in fact, the most important devastation at the moment is global warming, that's what war should be about, we should be human, try and protect the world, not fighting against each other in this world.

V: Yep. Do you think of making a piece about that? It just popped to my mind...

E: Do you know, yes, I think that is a work, I think inside it is starting to flare up, there's a fire burning inside when I've come to the point where I want to create a work about that. I think, *Pitmen*, *Portraits of Courage*, *Poppies*, I think there is a particular timeline, trying to flow through, I think, me being the choreographer if I was outside looking into it, I definitely see that there is a thread coming through, and my work for the next year, I am looking at nature, and at particular birds, red kites, it's an endangered species... now I am looking at nature and how we need to protect a particular environment, how birds have very much of an understanding when weather becomes bad or good, they flock, in a very mysterious but very direct way. And perhaps after red kites I've done heritage, I've done war, I've done history, I've done now nature, I think now it has come to the pivotal point when I am going, how I wrap all four together and say to our politicians of today, look what's happening in this world, we need to change.

V: So how helpful it is to start from, you have a given narrative, a given image, already, like with the paintings.

E: Ah the paintings, yes.

V: Or with this, with something that is narrative, how helpful is that in creating the work and to what extent it is limiting? If it is.

E: *Pitmen*, I was inspired by the paintings, and what was captivating and so different was that these were miners who weren't just drawing for drawing's sake, they were drawing and depicting their lives. So, they show in their paintings their friends their fellow friend dying in the mines, because it made us now realize what it was like, it is informative works. They showed the women at home, baking, you know, whilst the man went down in the mines.

Women had a very much important part in the miners' lives, they had to protect their family, the children, they had to go to the shops, they had to save, they had to cook, they had to clean. So, what the Ashington Group, the Pitmen Painters have done for us, for our generation, is showing what it was like through art, through its visual form and for me, I was inspired by all of them but that would take four days of work, of performance, so I chose six paintings that touched me and the six that could come together to show a life of a miner. I would say it was quite easy, choreographically, in terms of I took the paintings, and it was a tableau, so I would assume what the audience or the visitors at the museum could see, they would see that on stage, it would begin [moves his body] and then it would stop. And it was down to me and the dancers to interpret what would have been happening in that scene, and I think that's when the artistic licence comes into it, you get to add a bit of your own into it. But of course, we did a lot of research, we visited the museum, we interviewed a few miners, we looked at a lot of archives, we were in collaboration with Woodhorn Museum, they've just been brilliant and really understood our company ethos. So, in terms of your question, it's down to the choreographer, for me, I took the paintings, I wanted to show to the audience the paintings but through the physical body and then I added a bit of my own interpretation, on the research I gathered from outside. For Mathieu's work, I know he's taken the characters, the four characters, but he's also brought out some particular sections, the main theme sections of the book but then he's just added a little bit of his own essence, and I think that's allowed. Because that is the choreographer's interpretation and I think that's what excites art, because art is about, not just about the present and the past but also about the future.

V: So, if I define it as a translation into another medium, because it resonates with a lot of things that a literary translator has to do like, the research, going to archives and then back to the text and then try to stay with it but also you have to, you know, put your little things there and change it a little bit, would you agree with that?

E: I do. And I think it's important to mention, when you see a piece of art, a piece of art, like a painting, it's finished, when you see a piece of dance, I don't think it is finished. Now, a choreographer will, most choreographers say it's actually never finished, and I assume that is true. But I think the reason why they say it's not finished is because when I look at dance, there's something...the form is the same but what's different every time is the dancer. The dancer brings their world into the stage, and I am not just talking about the

character, I am talking about their personal life. So, one day, in a performance, everything might be happy outside, and the character might be happy. But the next day he might have had a breakup or a divorce, or heard some bad news from family, that's going to affect the physical body, and then they have to become happy, and what I say to my dancers is "actually, bring what's outside, bring it into the studio", because I think that's how my dancers really show honesty on stage, presence on stage. And sometimes when I see dance, I don't see that. It becomes movement, it becomes dance. Pretty dance. We shall go to a theatre and be moved I would walk away going "that make me reflect, that made me cry, that made me happy, that made me do something, tomorrow, make it change... and sadly, I think a lot of dance doesn't do that normally. I think there are very few choreographers who can do what I've just said, and I think that also takes time, and it's a very big collaboration between the choreographer and the dancers.

V: And trust.

E: Yes. That's very important that you mention that.

V: Yeah. So, what would you say is the importance of Boris Vian's novel, *Froth on the Daydream*, today, how is it relevant?

E: Ah, ok. I have someone in my family, a relative, who is coming to the performance, and I am aware that she actually has a particular health problem. And I think what this piece will do is to show everyone, not just my relative, and I've spoken to her about it.... Which she is fine about. I think it opens a door to, say, a realization of life? Love will be in this duet, but also what comes from love is not just happiness but also pain. And so, you see within this work variations of life, depictions of life. Of health, love, friendship, misunderstanding, grittiness unravelling. So, although Boris Vian, the author, was writing in the 1940's, I think what Mathieu's has done is quite clever, he has made in a new way that is going to hopefully speak to today's audiences and actually perhaps many of them want to read the book, to find out more. I think there is a lot more darkness than there is lightness within the work, and I think more towards the end, because, when one of the dancers he goes out, to the audience and tells them about the new world, and that new world isn't always happy. And I think in fact that links back to what we talked about *Poppy*, World War I, that was supposed to be the end of all world wars, but actually had the opposite effect, so, it was just to show that yes, this work does, I believe, speak to the audience and in fact we'll find

out in the premiere! I think this particular program, this premiere program on Tuesday, it's three works, we have, *Froth on the Daydream*, Mathieu, we have *Artemis Clown*, which is Rose Kay, which you haven't seen, and I am sure you will love, and then *Poppy*. There is a mixture of three works, different movements, but I think what is quite special about this program, my aim is that the audience will go away being moved, and I don't think they'll be moved in terms of happiness, I think it will be a time to be moved and reflect, on three different chapters in life, you have Mathieu's work *Froth on the Daydream*, about heath, love, relationships, the quirkiness, based on *Froth on the Daydream*, you have *Artemis Clown*, Rosie Kay, which is on very particular pieces of Bach's music, looking at the woman as a dancer, a voice, you look at *Poppy*, which is a statement on war, conflict, and sacrifices... So, although some moments may be quite happy, I think the audience will be leaving going "that was a very nice type of program".

V: I have a couple more questions but not many... So, what do you think about, there's seems to be a growing concern about crossing boundaries within media, playing with films, playing with literature, with different things, dance, what do you think about this, do you feel a need when you create to draw from different sources?

E: I think... Look, I think media, has had a very big effect on the world, first of all. If I take you back a little bit. If you look at up until 1970s, 1980s, dance, or any theatre art form, you would go to the theatre. TV started to come out, television, but then we have mobile phones and now dance has changed a lot, you can watch a full dance piece on your mobile phone, you don't have to go to the theatre. So, I think, that sometimes has a bad effect, because for the audience it has become really easy for them to see dance, while actually seeing dance is about being in the theatre, or a room or a space, hearing the dancers breathe, seeing the dancer perform with so much exploration. In terms of how it affects works, I think works, I think it can have the power to complement works. Because you can speak, if people are in the studio you are feeling it, you can pronounce it on you Twitter, or your Instagram, on facebook or email, and you can keep drilling in your sense of direction, feeling about the work, to make them be more aware, and I think it is also interesting that it brings a lot more scope and collaboration, not just regional but national, international, in the work. But does that really answer your question?

V: Yeah, and in terms of production I was thinking, was it the first time that you use Kickstarter? And...

E: Yeah. So, Mathieu's that was our fourth successful Kickstarter. We've had one a year ago now. Kickstarter is quite special, although it's American, it was a useful funding strategy, which there are also here in the UK. But Kickstarter allows us to show to the audience around the world, to say this is what we believe in, and if you believe in those too, you can become part of this. And we picked up, in fact, a lot of collaborations, and people who were not just giving sponsor towards the work, but they actually showed interest. It isn't just about sponsoring, it's they wanted to be a part of the work, a part of the creation, part of the dance. So that's been quite interesting and again, if it wasn't for the media, we wouldn't be able to do that. A lot of companies have started to work that way, especially you see this in America, a lot, you see this in certain countries in Europe. I think in places like England we have subsidies, in terms of outcomes in England, so they...they believe in great art, culture and if you have a great idea they will put an application, fund that, because they believe that art is for everyone, and we believe that too here. Whereas, some countries, they don't have that economic support, that sponsor support, and they have to look for patrons, which can become very hard. Because you really have to get people who believe in you...But that also happens here at ESD.

V: Yes, and I was thinking also in terms of how that can limit you? In both cases you are responding to an audience, right? On the one hand is the people who backed you and on the other it is somebody, but it's just one person, an institution maybe, paying for that.

E: Yeah, and also it allows them to have a conversation. We got some Twitter, the company's page has started to build and people, the audience, are starting to have a conversation, back and forth, about the work and also, through emails, which I think informs and entrusts me and the dancers. The dancers, any dancer, loves to hear feedback from the audience, whether it has been good or bad. Because it's their burning desire that they want to, one, entertain the audience, and be let them be moved, they also have their own talent, they want to dance, but also, they want to fulfil the choreographer's interpretation. And so the outside community can have an input on that because they give feedback. And we take that feedback and put it back into the work.

V: Why did you decide to present these three pieces together? Like, more or less you said it's about touching people and building something but is there a certain reason why you decided to put these three pieces together?

E: At the time, a year ago, no. I think the only reason of why I asked these two choreographers, great choreographers, Mathieu, because he was a great dancer, but he was starting to be more involved with choreography and I wanted to give an opportunity to a new established choreographer. And he is male. I really wanted to bring in a female choreographer and finding a female choreographer was actually quite challenging, and I'll tell you why: in the past two years the UK has been talking about of course, women's rights. The artistic property of women should be equal, and I am all for that, I mean, my biggest icon was Martha Graham, a woman. And this particular choreographer, Rosie Kay, I was really inspired by her drive and ethos and recently she was awarded national portfolio of Arts Council England and I can see from reading and hearing that she is a choreographer, being a woman she has worked so hard since she graduated from London Contemporary few years ago, and she is still going hard, still going tough and she's creating works, her works *MK Ultra*, *Five Soldiers*, a lot of her works are actually a lot of statements to the audience. She might not be seen saying this is a statement, but she was a choreographer that I really enjoyed, it was a woman, a female, I loved the historic past of how she went from London Contemporary (it's where I trained) and so it all fitted in well. And then obviously my work *Poppy*. I didn't know at the time when I chose Mathieu and Rosie what were the works. Now, one would say that's quite dangerous for the director, for normally he would have an initial conversation about what is the work first. But I trusted them, and I think they trusted me, I hope, and then we started talking about *Froth on the Daydream*, and Rosie's *Artemis Clown*, I felt like, yeah, this may be a deep format but that's alright, I think it fit in anyway.

V: Do you think people are going to... because, perception, is it going to be influenced by the fact that the three are together?

E: Maybe, yes. Of course, yeah. Within, the program that you've seen, I give an introduction. And in my introduction, I don't talk about it being a statement, I don't know if you've read it, it just talks about "I am very pleased to invite Mathieu to choreograph this work and Rosie's and my work *Poppy*. But there will be people in the audience, probably a typical theatre audience, might see why he has put this program together, is he trying to give us a statement. I think now, now that I look back, yes. Now I think there is a statement, but it has not been intentional, but I am going with it, because I believe things are meant to be, I believe that things happen, very spiritually, that it's happening that way, so I allow it to be

that way. Again, we are taking this program on tour in Spring next year... So, I look forward to the feedback from the premiere! Because then I'll be able to judge if it is

V: Ok, and as for the music, settings and costumes of *Froth of the Daydream*, were they decided by Mathieu?

E: Yes. He knew what he wanted. We spent a day in Newcastle looking at from very different charity shops to the typical Primark, H&M, and then he got a lot of props. So, I think for *Froth on the Daydream* props really add another layer...

V: What are your feelings when you dance this piece?

E: Well first of all, there are four different characters, and I have to acknowledge that I am Chick, and I am very much inspired and want to be like the professor. On the other hand, there are other characters, like Chloé, they have a noble character, but we all have a sense of one direction, generally... and my character changes, I become the doctor, I love that part, but one of my feeling when I dance this work, I am trying to bring the today, to make it relevant today. I try and think of something or someone I am passionate about, and I want to just know more about this thing and hopefully on Tuesday that will be ... yes, it's the professor, but I was not really thinking about the professor, I am thinking about someone else, so that allows me to become that. When I jump into duets, I try to link back to the story, the real story of *Froth on the Daydream*, the film I try to pull off all these things... The costumes, we only did it once, and I knew it straight away from that, it really gives me a sense of support, really just gives me support. And *Poppy*, well, my top now is bare, so I am trying that, I am doing that because I try to get into that mood, trying to get into that feeling, and of course lights have an effect. And most importantly, what do I feel? I just love it, I just love to dance, I just love to perform, even if I can get bad-tempered if something goes wrong, but it is because we all have a passion, we want to do it right. And talking... just finally I was dyslexic, a slight dyslexia, you know. When I was younger, I found words were very hard. I went to speech therapist up until I was eleven years old, 'cause my words were back to front, so it made it very clear to me now that I can look back, I know why I dance, it's because, I talked through my body, it's a lot easier for me. I find it very hard talking... people are going to say, "but you wrote a book, how did you write a book?". I collaborated with Helen Redfern, my works, you create works, you give talks, but that comes with practice, and I think dance has been my medicine, dance allows me to evolve, to be who I am. I think that's

what I mean when I say dance has the power to transform lives, you see that in children, in the various cities across the world. Body language, Martha Graham talks about this a lot, “movement never lies”.

V: Yeah, I know that quote.

E: This is dance, I am moving now, and when you watch news reporters, they are choreographed, because they are told to do that, you can see they are trying to move, that’s choreography. Does that help you?

V: It does, it does... and just a last question, did you only draw on the source text, meaning the novel and the film or even like, other, completely different sources? Like: “I’ve seen this scene from that TV series”, or maybe, like you know, whatever that gives you inspiration that comes through the work. When I was looking into Jonathan Watkins for 1984, I didn’t know this but there was a part that was inspired by a, a cartoon, so I was “Ah, ok!”

E: Yes. Yes, there has been a discussion with the dancers, we all would say: “ah, reminds me of that”. I think, Mathieu’s just being allowing us to do that. Because I think he sees it as that’s how we are trying to fulfil the character, but he would say, a few times, go back to the book. Go back to the book. I mean, now, it’s what, it’s Saturday, Sunday, Monday but tomorrow (that’s my day off), I will go back to the book, I will just read it I will watch not the full film, but I’ll just watch the character Chick, how the director portrayed him in the film, and most importantly I’ll keep true to the choreographer, because it’s very easy for a dancer to add your own thing in and if the choreographer has always directed you, to bring it back...

V: Yeah, so the idea was to stay quite faithful to the novel.

E: Yeah.

Appendix 6: Interview with Giacomo Pini and Paloma Moscardo

I meet Giacomo Pini and Paloma Moscardo for a short conversation over lunch, soon after their rehearsal, and a few days before the premiere of Froth on the Daydream. I already know Giacomo, with whom I exchanged messages and to whom I asked to keep a journal of the creative process, and I am meeting Paloma for the first time. The interview was arranged the evening before and we have a short time, as I need to catch a bus for Sheffield. The atmosphere is informal and relaxed, and we keep chatting about various things after the interview.

V: So, you had to read the book before performing.

G: Yes.

V: And you watched the film.

G: We watched the film.

V: The film by Michael Gondry?

G: I think, yes, the latest.

V: *Mood Indigo*?

G: Yes, the latest version, *Mood Indigo*.

V: And in which language did you read the book?

G: Italian.

P: In Spanish.

G: And I watched the film in French

V: And you watched it in Spanish?

P: In English.

V: So, you see how many languages, and I also watched the movie in English, so many interpretations from the translators.

G: Absolutely.

V: And in Italian it is a very good translation, I have read the book in Italian. And how long have you been working for *Eliot Smith Dance Company*?

G: For a year.

P: Same.

V: Is it the first time that you work on a performance that is a transposition or translation of a previous book, novel, painting, or whatever other artwork?

G: No, actually no, I worked with Gary Clark on a transformation of an old surrealistic French film, I don't remember the name, so it's not new for me.

V: And was it the first time for you, Paloma?

P: No, either. I work for Jose Tirado, and he created a work about *The Little Prince*, super famous, in Madrid.

V: Ok so you work for different companies besides this.

P: Yes.

G: Before this.

V: Before this, not at the same time.

G: Sometimes also at the same time, because it's short project-based, so...

V: Yeah.

P: I work at other projects at the same time and it's ok. So, we are freelance.

G: Freelance.

V: Experimenting a lot of different styles and things... So did you know the book before starting the project, had you ever heard of Boris Vian or this book?

G: Actually, no, I didn't.

P: I didn't either.

V: Ok, and... not even the film, *Mood Indigo*? No?

G: I did know the actors, though, in the film.

V: Who do you represent in the performance?

G: So, I am Giacomo and my character's name is Colin.

P: And I am Paloma, and my character is Chloé.

V: And if I asked you to describe the character in a sentence, or two sentences, what, how do you feel your character is?

P: My character makes a change during the show. She is quite strong at the beginning, she is strong, she knows what she is doing, she falls in love with Colin, she is alive, she is super... and then she's got a cancer, and she goes down down down, she depends, her life depends on flowers... So at the end she goes really sad...

V: Ok and what about yours?

G: I really like my character because I can relate to some aspects of him. I would say he is very clumsy but also very genuine, simple... sometimes naïve, but definitely very romantic. Very romantic and he loves the idea of being in love even before he is in love.

V: Yeah, true.

G: That's what I like about him. And then obviously he changes a lot throughout the book and the film and then the piece... by the end he is very consummated by this burden that he has to carry by the end of the book, again, we are not sure what happens, my interpretation is that he will die. Yeah.

V: Ok. And what do you think... what of the book do you think is more relevant today?

G: That's a hard question. Something is very modern to it, I think is definitely the world of work, so when Colin starts to work, it really de-humanizes him, he loses his humanity and he is just like a robot, doing a task.

V: This is a strong point.

G: And in the film, this is really something we can relate to today. Anything else? I mean, obviously the personal stories, so I mean, when a person falls ill. The idea of illness.

V: Yeah.

P: The idea of trying your best to get better and you can't do anything.

V: Yeah, ok. And when you were thinking on your own characters did you only rely on the book, the DVD, or did you also have other sources of inspiration from other artworks, or scenes that you can see in a street, anything that came to your mind while you were developing the character...

G: Yeah, actually, there's a scene that Mathieu focuses on, it's called the squint, and it's social dancing, is part of the book and the film as well, and in the film there's a very interesting interpretation of how the body is moved and this kind of dance, coming from the description in the book, but then we were encouraged to look at people dancing socially, like in clubs, and discos, stuff like that, so just how their body naturally moves rather than a formal dance, you know, so that was something that really related to us. How do you dance in a party? How do you actually have fun with dance in your character as well. So that was very interesting for me.

P: Something really... not very important, but I found a picture of a skeleton with flowers inside. And it was, it really captivated me, because I was the one that has the flower inside, the cancer, and that image hit me like... If you can send it to her...

G: Yeah, we can send you the picture if you want!

V: Yes! Send me!

G: It's a ribcage, just strip open with flowers like blossoming inside.

V: Oh, beautiful, yeah, must be very beautiful. So, what do you feel if I described this process as a translation into another medium? Would you agree or not?

G: What sort of medium?

V: The medium of dance. A translation from the book into the medium of dance, would you agree, or would you think, "oh not, this is not a translation really"

G: It's a hard one, because what does translation mean?

V: Yeah, that was my second question ahah.

P: Ahahah.

G: So, what does translation mean to you? I think translation is just coming from one thing to another, in many different ways, so it's definitely that. What we've done is definitely a translation. It's just another form of expressing your ideas.

V: Yeah. So, if I said that it's a way to better understand the text, to create and re-create it in another form and getting new relations to appear, to surface, you would agree with that.

G: Definitely.

V: About Kickstarter, what do you think are the main advantages or disadvantages, like do you feel freer because it's not a theatre commissioning the work and they may want something specific or maybe not? It's interesting to use kick-starter I think, it's a way that allows you to bypass difficulties in getting the work staged.

G: I think it's because, well, the people who give you some funds and donations might be the people who are actually interested in this project and they want to see you on stage and when you create, I think you should really think about whom you are creating for, rather than the venue itself, but of course also the venue is super important. So, I think it's definitely a combination of facts in this case. I think kick-starter is just a new way to do it and if people who want to see it pay to see it then you know, anyway they can, they support, sometimes it's about giving a free space to the artist to be in and develop the work, sometimes it's giving some money towards props, costumes, rehearsal time...

Appendix 7: Giacomo Pini's Journal

Notes from dancer Giacomo Pini's artistic diary

- Colin's beginning solo → getting ready at the mirror while talking to his mouse.
Use of gestures to convey the actions of preparing himself to go out.
Use of gestures to represent the conversation with the mouse ('there's going to be love in the air', meeting a pretty girl and kissing her...)
- CHARACTERIZATION: Start to find out what is peculiar about Colin: he's clumsy, romantic, naïve, rich, simple, generous.
- The 'street sequence' → introduction to the surrealistic world of the book
- The 'squint' → the party. Using the description of the 'squint' in the book to make a new type of social dancing. Wavy use of spine, use of chest and pelvis, very close to the other person but without touch. Quite sexual but not explicit.
- The first duet with Chloé → anxiety about behaving correctly, presenting yourself at the best and not give a bad impression. Falling in love. Surprise of the kiss and longing for more, until Chloé kneels down and asks Colin to marry her (choreographic choice to reverse the stereotypical image of a man kneeling down to propose to the woman. Interesting/ironic swap of gender roles).
- The second duet with Chloé → illness and how it affects the body. Love and desperation, trying to help your loved one get better. Support, encouragement, despair.
- Colin starts to work in order to pay for the flowers to cure Chloé → solos about the different job roles and his progressive getting more and more empty, tired, desperate, poor.

Job 1: creating guns by lying on top of them naked

Job 2: following straight lines on the floor (physical interpretation not from the book)

Job 3: Telling people bad news → delivering envelopes to audience members containing bad news from the 'minister of bad news'.

(example: When: tomorrow, Who: Your mother, What: Fall down the stairs)

Appendix 8: Interview with Mathieu Geffré

I interview Mathieu Geffré on February 10, 2019, while I am in Newcastle to carry out fieldwork with Eliot Smith Dance company. We meet at the café of Dance City, a dance school and theatre where he is working to produce a piece of community dance.

V: Maybe to start you can tell me a bit about yourself, your work, and how *Froth on the Daydream* fits in your repertoire.

M: My name is Mathieu Geffré, I am a choreographer and artistic director of the company Rendezvous dance, I am also very much of a freelance choreographer, so I have been working now since 2012 as a maker. This has been the four years transition for me until I decided to actually stop performing and focus on choreography - I say four years but it's actually not four years. It has been, well, seven years, it took seven years for me it actually stops performing, 'cause I really stopped and made the clear decision last year. So, you know, I have different practices according to the company I am working with. For my own company I am working on stories and concepts that have to do with LGBTQ+ communities, this is what I am interested in, I feel there are a lot of stories that need to be told and are not told yet, regarding this community, which is the community I belong too as well, so this is really important to me. When it comes to working with companies as a freelance choreographer, the task changes, of course, according to the context, according to the conditions I am being given, and according to the companies themselves. So, I do work with human beings, I don't work on my own with an idea which is just, you know, my own agenda. I need to know the company, what the company could embody or not, and make something that is relevant to the company. So, when I had the commission to work for a new production on Eliot Smith Dance, I knew the company before, and I knew them for being of course, well, they say they are a Graham-based company, but also, I had seen them perform and I thought there was an interesting theatricality going out of the company work. Which was an aspect of my work that I wanted to develop. So, the first decision was made of making a character-based work, and then I've just been asked to offer something that...without any conditions, what would you make for the company? And with the idea that I wanted to make a story, a narrative work, I basically got my notebook, really, of ideas that I wanted to translate to choreography, and I found this book by Boris Vian, which is *l'Écume des Jours*, which I had read three times already, and somehow, I kept going back for some reason, and I didn't really know why, I was always going back to this book. That was a book that I read first when I was

eleven years old. And then I kept going back to it and in different layers, I think the layers is the aspect of the storytelling that was very interesting to me, and the fact that there were so many readings possible! So, I thought that it was just the perfect story for this commission, being extremely aware that the conditions of this piece, being such a short piece, would require I edited the story quite a lot. Which was for me also very interesting work as a choreographer to actually take the essence of the work to present it.

V: Did you know if the novel was famous already in the UK, or Boris Vian?

M: So, I didn't think it was to be honest, because this is a novel that I've tried to offer as a present to a friend of mine six years ago, and I had really a hard time to find it. I just had to go through very independent networks on the internet, you know, to find a published copy.

V: Yeah, yeah, that's...I was also going around and trying to find it, there are three translations into English but it's impossible to find them.

M: It's really difficult to find them, and even, there are three different titles.

V: Yeah.

M: *Foam of the Daze*, *Froth on the Daydream*, which is the one I picked, and another one which I don't remember.

V: Yeah, *Mood Indigo*.

M: I think the movie was more famous, *Mood Indigo*.

V: Yes, also the movie.

M: The movie was more famous, but, you know, the cinema distribution in the UK is very limited and so I am not sure that the story was actually really well known in the UK, I don't think so.

V: Did you take inspiration from the book only, or also from the movie, or also from other things that have nothing to do with book or movie?

M: So, I always need many entry points when I start to work. So, the music is a big entry point. Of course, the book. This is a massive entry point; this is basically my score. The movie, I watched it, again, a second time, and also... as source of inspiration but it was also

important to me to make my version of the work, and to see the work resonating with me and with the company. So I wanted to have my score, I really try to expand it as much as I can, but I might also be interested in...what the time was in France, when the story was written, so in the 50's, post-IIWW, and to be honest that's quite a dark period for French history, there's been a lot of revenge desires and cruelty happening in the streets, so those were not easy times at all, so the historical context is important to me, and the cultural context is important, and it's through the music. So, the use and the choice of the music was very important, especially in relation to the book as you know...

V and M: Because there are so many references!

M: But that had to make sense to me as well, within the storyline, so I kind of, found the references and I wanted to find a way so that it's a bit more of a distorted way of approaching the music so it could be relevant as well, for me as a maker.

V: Did you have to ask permissions for adapting the novel or for...No? Ok.

M: No, I probably should have but...

V: And, you were saying about the limited time of the performance, did you have any financial or time limits, I mean, of course you have them in every production, but how does it affect the production of the piece?

M: I would say that it did affect it quite a lot. If I am honest with you, but that's to do with the administration of the company in relation with me, and that is something that was not necessarily well managed, so...you know, the communication was not clear enough, so I had an ambition that was much bigger than what was possible in the end. But you know, I think restrictions are tools in order to develop creativity. The more you are restricted the more you have to find a way to tell the story, and especially a story that is so...almost magical, you know, it's so surrealistic, it is a surrealistic story, with lots of elements which are difficult to recreate without special effects.

V: Yeah, which is something that's interesting in your version because in the novel you have so many things going on and it's so surrealistic and you can have a lot of imagination going on around it but then when you watch the performance it's like, this black space of the theatre. And so, it's about the bodies performing... mostly.

M: Yeah, absolutely.

V: There's very little in terms of props, which is interesting.

M: Yeah. Had I had the budget and the capacity, I would definitely have made a full evening, and I would have really explored the lighting, much more. This is something that I thought would have had great potential, also because the book starts in a very colorful way and gets greyer and greyer. So, there is a change, and the shift of colors is also something that I was very interested in, and I was trying to do with the lighting, and the space compressing slowly. The more the main character is getting ill, the more the space is closing down onto her. So that was extremely interesting. So, what I felt the most interesting were not all the little crazy ideas, which are just embellishing the story for me, it's what was related to the principles of dance which is, time, space, and weight. So, all of that was...everything was in relation to how from the body I can actually start saying a story that is quite quirky, quite dark, at the same time about human beings. Working with all those elements at the same time.

V: Yeah, and as for the language of the novel, which is very, as you say, it's very quirky, crazy...and how did you try to render that, if you did, in movement? 'Cause you see that you have some points where it's more classic, you have tilts or something like that and then you have the parts that are more twisted...

M: Yeah, I think I really wanted to depict an idea of...I would say the very operative emotions of the characters in contrast with the swing and the groove of the period. So, I was always trying to work...almost towards the jazz style of dance, in opposition with a more classical approach which is the one of the emotional journeys, the one that is more internal. And I was interested in conflicting those two styles, that was also very relevant to me, and it was very genuine, you know, but... you do research, you know, to kind of work for those two things.

V: And another thing, Eliot says ESD is a Graham-based company, and I was thinking as I was watching the performance that there are parts in the ensemble scene, or in the beginning when everything is going well, there the movements really start from the center of the body and then when things run amok, they go a bit crazy and they cannot control it anymore, it's the limbs that are leading the movement, so I found that very interesting.

M: Yeah, I don't have any Graham training at all, I've been Cunningham trained, so I don't know Graham technique at all...the dance starting from the center is very much my style, is very much my identity so a lot of the material came from me, from my body, and this is only due to time. If I had had more time with them, I would have definitely researched a bit more what would be their writing and my writing, how would do they react to me and how would I react to them. But because we had such a short time, I had to really generate a lot of material. So...I don't think there was a clear choice to make the second part of the piece start from the limbs, do you think that has to do with the performance or the writing?

V: Well, I thought it matched very well this idea of, like...when I read the novel, in the end it's like, every chapter starts in a different place, which a different character doing something else, it's like he's following them and doesn't know where they are going, and then you have Alise in her solo, who is like, guided by her hands, mostly.

M: Yeah.

V: And Colin as well, and so I thought that that reflected it very well, so in some points I was "Oh, wow!"

M: Very important to me I wanted the time to change the space, as you say.

V: Yeah.

M: Be able to really try to create different atmospheres, and almost feel that "this is it, this small stage". I think that the despair of the characters makes them move from their limbs, they almost drag behind their limbs. There is a sense of control when you move from the center, there is a sense of running after something when you dance from the limbs, and all those four characters are running after their own lives, their own ambitions, really. And there's nothing they can do because they are really into the Greek tragedy, almost.

V: Yeah, yeah, true.

M: It's fatality, it's going to happen in the end. They can try to save it as much as they want, it's going to happen. Darkness is happening.

V: And how did you develop the characters? How did you see the characters?

M: So... this was a very collaborative process...the characters for me came...actually came out quite quickly. It had to do with the performing skills of the dancers...so, I saw, yeah, we develop them together and tried to find a storyline that could actually respond to the dancers themselves. Not trying to put a mask on, trying to use who they are in order to develop the characters. I thought, also, the two second, supporting characters are...require a bit more maturity, so what is important to me is that the two main characters have a sense of youth and naivety, so they are like falling in love for the first time. And that was very much Paloma and Giacomo. We've been working on the opposite between maturity versus innocence and how this counterbalance though the piece, this changes through the piece...Yeah, I don't know if I can say much more about that. I think the idea of youth and innocence has been a massive factor for me to make a decision.

V: So, in terms also of how they move.

M: It is about how they move; it is about how they look. It's been like a casting a bit. Yeah, that was also a lot about how they looked.

V: Ah, ok. And I think you play a little bit with gender expectations, you have strong female characters in the performance, and Chloé, especially, whereas in the book she is a bit, always in the background and not really taking action. But you make her a bit more...she's proposing!

M: To me she is the main character. To me she is the main reason why this book is happening, she's the element that is making the book start. And we follow her journey through the illness and through...she's the cause of everything. That's why she had to be the main character, to me. She had to be quite poignant, and she had to lead the storyline. And that's a decision, I mean, I'd be very interested in seeing the opposite. To choose another character and to see, what if I was leading the story through this character and see what would happen. But, in this case, I mean, Paloma was a great source of inspiration as well. So, I think there is a genuine desire to work with her, but I also thought that this story was about Chloé.

V: So, yeah, it's like her point of view, she is the main character.

M: To me, yes. Yeah. It's just like, when you have such a...when you have such an editing work to do you need to make decisions that are very clear and so, who do I articulate

the story around, who do I want to follow from the beginning...although in the piece she enters quite late, doesn't she? Is she in the very beginning?

V: No, first is Colin opening, and then you see, first you see Alise passing and then you see from the other side.

M: Yeah. And then she is the last one to enter somehow. And even the first scene for me that could be whoever, it doesn't have to be those characters. And then when she enters for the first time, you know, that is very much her. So, she enters quite late within the work, but, yeah, the work had to happen because of her.

V: Because of her. Yeah, that's true, she is the one who sets things running...

M: Tilting the world.

V: Otherwise, they would have stayed in this idyllic space. True. And did you work on adaptations of other media before, I know that you've done *Murder My Sweet* before...How does that help you when you do something similar?

M: So, *Murder My Sweet* was not the development of an existing work, it was being inspired by a cinematic era, you know, in order to actually draw my piece. *Murder my Sweet* was inspired by American film noir era, so that was my first entry point. Second entry point was Cluedo game. You know when you have to kind of, discover who killed someone, and so on... So, it was about creating a Cluedo game onstage.

V: Cool!

M: Getting inspired in terms of the atmosphere from the film noir era, which has helped me a lot in terms of developing characters and almost developing lighting atmosphere. So, I feel, I mean, I love cinema, and cinema is a massive source of inspiration. Because it talks about human beings, and I think the dance I am making talks about human beings. I'm not interested so much about making, what I call 'architectural pieces', which I enjoy very much but...do you know what I mean by architectural?

V: More formal.

M: Yeah. Or I would say, they are basing on the actual body in movement as a structure within the space. This is not something that makes me dream yet... maybe one day,

but not at the moment, I think I am interested in the human on stage and how that experience can be relatable from an audience perspective. And that's what does cinema to me...the cinema experience, and that's the aspect that I like.

V: And, as per the creative process and the setting of the piece, how much amount of flexibility did the dancers have in creating the choreography, did you work with them from improvisations?

M: Yeah, within this context it was very much like me coming with material, with ideas that would generate material together. Just because I didn't have much time.

V: So, it was collaborative.

M: It's always collaborative, I never come as a dictator trying to, you know, saying that's it and you do it or...it has to be an exchange because the dancers have to respond to it. It's dance, you know, from the moment it's onstage it's theirs, it's not mine anymore. So, it is always an exchange and a dialogue. But yeah, I came with a lot of material still.

V: And another thing that I was thinking about, you were saying that space was very important...I thought that there was a clear demarcation of the two couples, by space, so

M: Yeah.

V: The way they...and gaze, I noticed how Colin and Chloé were looking at each other and Alise and Chick no. And then, the way that Chloé and Colin use up and down movements in their lifts and also travelling though diagonals in space, while Alise and Chick were almost staying put, and pivoting around themselves, it looked a little bit like the Rubik's Cube, when they are dancing together. So, I was thinking, did you want to have that effect?

M: I think, every time we meet Colin and Chloé, they meet in outer spaces, so for me there was a sense of, as much as I wanted to work with the very specific areas, you know, in order to create an environment and a space...when Colin and Chloé...their love is bigger than life. And that it's translated through the use of the space. It's bigger than any space, it just covers the space, it that could have happened in the audience it would have happened in the audience as well. When it comes to Alise and Chick, it's a completely different relationship, they are separating, and so compressing them within one space while they try to separate, it was for me something quite interesting. How they can't get away from each other, but they

are getting away from each other. So, their relationship is much more material. Its only about the materialism of us. And that just created an interesting contrast to me. With Colin and Chloé, we just... we are on the level that, that goes further than the real world. With the others, we are very much in the real world and dealing with the real world, you know, that what actually makes our existence happen...

V: Yeah, very cool, really, and what about the use of gesture and pantomime? You use quite a lot, and in an interesting way to me.

M: Yeah. So, to me dance has to have an accessible aspect. I don't have the ambition to make dance that only communicates to an audience that has an educated eye. I need to find a way to communicate to an audience that has never come to the theatre. And to do that, one of my tools, which is also a language I like to develop, is to use the idea of symbols, and use the idea of gestures. So, using the gesture or movement within choreography because you may not understand when a dancer makes a massive spiral with the whole body around the space what it means but what you will understand as an audience member who has never been in the theatre, is if a dancer is offering a handshake to another dancer, and that's very clear. It's hello, or it's an agreement, or it's a contract, but there is immediately an accessibility to the work and to what the storyline is trying to say on stage. That is very much relatable. So, it's important for me to actually include those gestures within the choreography.

V: As a symbol.

M: So, even if I lost you, I can grab you back.

V: And that has also something to do with your dance company, 'cause I think it's very interesting that with your dance company you are creating a project that is about working with people who have not done dance before...Can you tell me a bit more about this?

M: Well, once again, this is a bit for me how I can make dance readable. And I think that the theatre has always its challenges, one of the main challenges being the fourth wall—what happens in between the stage and the auditorium? And why is it so separated? And why, when we try to break this wall, this is so challenging? Now I've just worked on a production when one of the dancers was going into the auditorium and as soon as the dancer was doing that everybody was just like (inspires).

V: Yeah, freezing.

M: Absolutely, freezing and nervous, and so...I don't want to break the fourth wall in a provocative or threatening way, I want to break it in an inviting and welcoming way, almost not establishing it. Working with a community class for me is already doing that. Because what I am doing is that I am...there is a bleed of the audience space within the performative space. So that is the first reason, second reason is because of the nature of the next project. It's the story of a couple of gay men attending a concert by Nina Simone in 1976 and expressing the stories, emotions, hopes and feeling thought the choreography. So basically, we get in the head of those two characters and discover how they respond to Nina Simone's performance. Well, in 1976 it was forbidden to do that as gay men. So, the community for me is the important aspect, is the heart of this story, has a reflection, an impact, because there is a community around, observing. So, this is a story that has to do with the political context and the social context in 1976. But what's important to me also, is really to engage with dance and to help people access themselves and trust their body. So, beyond the work itself, working with communities is always a way for me to actually offer dance as a way to access wellbeing, physical and mental wellbeing. And that is something that is very important and I see that it's working. I have been working with the community since September, once a month for two hours workshops, and led us to tomorrow, we are having a performance tomorrow for the season launch. And then we keep going all the way until the creation and I can see... I can see that people feel much better in their body, and when someone feels much better in their bodies, thought the use of dance, it means that it's someone who will feel much better in their bodies when there is a job interview, when they have their first date, when they have you know, in life. From the moment you can stand, you can stand in a studio but you can also stand in a street.

V: Yeah, that's true.

M: And, you know, if I can provide that to people.

V: That's huge.

M: That's massive.

V: Yeah, true. As for breaking the fourth wall and trying to be accessible, I was thinking maybe also this idea of revisiting or adapting works that are already know, it's a way

of doing that. Because, as part of the audience, having a point of entry point, I may know the story, I have watched the film, it's also inviting.

M: Yes, yes, I agree. I agree and there is something that I am interested in and is trying to revisit...it's always about giving a new perspective, isn't it? And you can see in music, very very often and from very early on, you know, like, composers have been revisiting all the composers' music. Variations on the theme of Carmen by blablabla...from a new composer. Or variation on the theme of blablabla...How many covers do we hear nowadays... of really classic songs that we all know that are being revisited by a new musician. And I think this is something that we haven't really done in dance. Of course, you have 100 of *Swan Lakes*, you have 100 of *Rites of Springs*, but this is not a revisit for me, this is just, like, doing your version. While revisiting an existing work, not taking those themes but taking the actual dance, revisiting it. So, this is something that I feel interested in doing... and I have some ideas coming about that but I won't reveal them! But I think that will be the next work, actually, about revisiting in the dance. I think this is an interesting approach.

V: And would you agree to call it translation, and if not, what ideas do you associate with translation?

M: I think translation is that, you know...translating something into dance. Yeah, absolutely. This is about...'cause dance is a language. Or better, the moving body is a language in itself, you know, the word dance is always a bit scary, sometimes...so, the body motion is a language in itself. And so, it means that in theory, if it is a language, then it has the potential to translate something that has another language. So, it can translate music, it can translate texts, it can translate architecture, sculpture, anything that has the destiny to actually communicate. So, I would agree by saying that what I have done was a translation or a revisit of a story that was existing through the medium of text and plays, I don't think there was any dance version of it before.

V: No, I've done some research and haven't found. Theatre performances, yes, there's opera.

M: Oh, is there?

V: There's an opera, it was staged in France, Russia, and Germany, the same one done by a Russian but...there are mangas, in Japan, there's a Japanese movie, it's incredible

how much you find, like, this story is very little in the UK and there you find a massive thing in Japan.

M: Wow.

V: It's incredible and in terms of memory this is also interesting because translation has also the power to maintain memories alive, by maintaining texts alive, in different forms and in my understanding of intermedial translation, and to export them and put them in circulation, so that different imaginaries are, you know...

M: Yeah, for me it's important, it's the importance of art in different levels because it has the responsibility to carry the memory and without memory there is no history. Most of the information we have from our past comes through art and you know, sometimes you can wonder about the relevance of dance art form for instance, because it's a very ephemeral art form and we just, we're in the space for an hour and review the memory of something. It doesn't stay. Unless you do a video-dance or you know, unless a support is going to exist again in thirty years I don't know, but...I do believe it's still important because it leaves a memory, we still have recording of dances from the beginning of the century which inform us about what was happening in this time. History is built on art, really.

V: Yeah, and being there and doing the remembering together or just, you know, revisiting.

M: Absolutely, so important. Yeah. Finding a new meaning, finding, yeah...but which text was it? You know sometimes we hear on the news like, oh, this is exactly as it was told thirty years ago by this writer and...Yeah, it's important, actually to remember that.

V: And it's interesting also that by doing that you put different perspectives according to the different contexts, so you see that there are changes. So for example I've seen in different versions how the relationship between men and women in *Froth* were changing a little bit, so you have the opera, which is still...you see women, and, very much Alise as like, this girl who offers some sort of cheating opportunity to Colin, and then you see in other movies where female figures become stronger or more relevant and it's interesting to see that.

M: The choices that are made.

V: And how do you make it relevant in Japan.

M: Yeah of course.

V: There, there was a very nice take, the part that was talking about loneliness, and the part that was talking about problems at work, they were made a bit bigger and more relevant in the movie adaptation, so you were in a place of alienation and loneliness.

M: Yeah, absolutely, it's true because the movie talks a lot about the industrialization and how that turns human beings into bodies, into machines...and this is not something I felt I was able to explore within the twenty minutes condition.

V: Yeah, what I thought you examined very well was the vulnerability of bodies, and especially in the duets between Colin and Chloé, and then you have the same...you have another duet and in the end it's him doing some of the same steps but alone, and all the time it's gradually, kind of deteriorating, gradually becoming less strong and active.

M: Yeah. Thank you.

V: And breathing also came forward. You could hear them breathing and it was reminding you of the physical body breathing and having problems doing that.

M: That is what is interesting to me, it's the performative state of the work.

V: What dance can do.

M: And what dance can do when it's performed, when it's embodied, you know. The rehearsal is just giving you a first idea of the frame of it, but yeah...

Short Glossary of Dance Terms

Although I tried to avoid jargon as much as possible, this book's focus on intermedial translation into dance required the occasional use of dance terminology that may be new to the reader. Below are some of the terms I will use throughout the book when describing dance performances or talking about dance. A reader who is already familiar with these terms can skip this table altogether.

Act blanc: a typical ballet scene where the prima ballerina and the female *corps de ballet* all wear white. An emblematic example of this is Act 2 and 4 of *Swan Lake*.

Développé: developed. The movement whereby the leg, starting from first or fifth position, extends itself and is raised upwards, either in front of the dancer, or sideways, or backwards.

Flex: flexing one foot with toes forming a 90-degree angle with the ankle.

Pas de deux: in classic ballet, this is a dance made up of four stages: the first is carried out in a couple, the second by the male dancer, the third by the female dancer and the fourth ends in the dancers dancing as a couple (coda). It can also be used to indicate when a dance is executed by two dancers dancing as a couple.

Pirouettes: a term used to signify the movement where a dancer spins on one leg.

Plié: bent. This term is used to define a position where the legs are bent in one of the five ballet dance positions. In *demi-plié*, the heels always touch the ground; in *grand-plié*, the legs bend so much that the heels must be lifted from the floor, except when in second position.

Plié à la seconde: A position where the dancer, with feet wide apart, bends their legs so as to lower their center of gravity closer to the floor. Neither in *demi-plié* nor in *grand-plié à la seconde* the heels lift from the floor.

Relevé: raised, lifted. The movement with which a dancer reaches upward by lifting their heels from the floor. The body is imagined as a rope being stretched and lifted, so it is always the center of the body that initiates the relevé.

Port de bras: the movement of arms, wrists, and hands, always accompanied by the movement of the head and chest. Different types of *port de bras* exist.

Tendu: extended. It generally refers to a position where the leg is extended (frontward, sideways or backward), including the foot, which is pointed.

Tilt: a term used in modern dance to signify the inclination of the whole spine towards the side, whereby the body forms a diagonal axis with the floor.