

Special Affects

Compositing Images in the Bodies of Butoh

Michael Hornblow

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Certificate of Authorship

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis examines how the relationship between ‘*the body*’ and ‘*the image*’ may be understood within the Japanese dance movement called *butoh*. The aim of the thesis is twofold – to investigate what it means to construct a body specific to *butoh*, and to consider how the image in *butoh* may be seen to affect this body. In the first instance, I examine how the materiality of the *butoh-body* constrains or delimits its expressive capacity. In the second instance, I investigate how the materiality of the *butoh-image* performs a generative function, to stretch the bounds of this body and the limits of its expression.

As far as theorising the *butoh-body* is concerned, what interests me are the points of confluence that may be explored through the materialist philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. I seek to demonstrate how the ideas of Tatsumi Hijikata (*butoh*’s co-founder) may be discussed through the writing of Antonin Artaud, whose approach to the body influenced both Hijikata and the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. As far as the *butoh-image* is concerned, I seek to show how Deleuze’s *cinéphilosophy* may also inform an understanding of Hijikata’s choreographic method of working with images, called *butoh-fu*. Here, I develop a conceptual model with which to probe the materiality of the *butoh-image* and the cinematic qualities of the *butoh-body*.

This twofold approach stems from my own art practice as a filmmaker and performer. The initial impetus for the research emerged through an intensive period of *butoh* dance training, as well as the production of a short film. This film experiments with a dynamic interaction of performers, sculptural elements, plus digital and optical effects. In the thesis, I use the theory of complex systems and the ideas of Deleuze, Guattari, Hijikata and Artaud, to discuss how the film may be imagined as a ‘systemic narrative’. This approach explores the interactions between the filmic elements, to produce the narrative as an ongoing process of construction.

This thesis is a work in progress towards two outcomes. The first of these is a *diagrammatic* model for *butoh* dance notation, to provide a graphic template for Hijikata’s choreographic method. The second is a proposed video-installation, which may further implement the systemic narrative with a technical configuration that corresponds to the diagrammatic model. Through this research, I seek to develop my own praxis, which investigates a systemic approach to the embodiment of the image.

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Introduction

The origins and influences of the Japanese dance called *butoh* often appear as formless and complex as the dance itself. Its period of gestation and emergence in Japan during the 1960's was a tumultuous time of artistic experimentation, alongside other art-historical luminaries such as the Gutai Group and the Little Theatre Movement. But apart from the popular art-criticism of its post-apocalyptic aesthetic as a response to the Hiroshima bombing and the political fervour surrounding the Allied occupation, many commentaries often fail to articulate the philosophical undercurrent of its emergence – merely scraping the skin of the '*butoh-body*'.

The focus of this research is to examine the relationship between what is meant by the 'body' and the 'image' within *butoh*. Firstly, *butoh* develops a radical scrutiny of the body's expressive capacity through an interrogation of its materiality. *Butoh* does not take 'the body' as a given, but goes about constructing a specific *butoh-body* – seeking to capture its singular *butoh-quality*, or *butoh-sei*.¹ Secondly, one of the processes involved in this construction is a choreographic method called *butoh-fu*, devised by the movement's co-founder, Tatsumi Hijikata.² *Butoh-fu* (translated as 'butoh-score') is defined as a *notational* system for "physicalising images through words" (Waguri, in Waguri and Kohzensha, 1998).³ This system involves placing images 'inside' or in relation to the *butoh-body*, while also affecting and transforming this body according to the tactile, temporal or spatial qualities of these images. It is the defining characteristics of a *butoh-body*, in terms of its qualities and methods (*butoh-sei* and *butoh-fu*), which constitute the main thrust of this research.

i. A brief overview of butoh

Butoh is an avant-garde performance movement founded by Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno in the late 1950's, both of whom were trained in modern and classical dance but who sought to give their own iconoclastic response to the chaotic times in which they lived. Kazuo Ohno is widely

¹ Japanese terms are italicised, except for '*butoh*'.

² See Illustrations of Hijikata performing and choreographing (figures 1 – 3).

³ Hereafter, Waguri and Kohzensha are given as W&K. All contents in the CD-ROM and booklet, *Butoh Kaden* (W&K, 1998), are unpaginated (including essays by other *butoh*-scholars and commentators).

recognised as butoh's co-founder,⁴ although it was Hijikata who gave the movement its name and a choreographic method (butoh-fu). Hijikata demonstrated a pronounced radicalism, rejecting traditional aesthetics of beauty as well as disciplinary boundaries, seeking to redress the burden of modernism with an intense or primordial state of being, and a capacity for transformation. Although the positing of a signature style is anathema to the spirit of butoh, the hallmarks of Hijikata's dance were readily apparent in the rawness of his first butoh performance, *Kinjiki: Forbidden Colors* (1959). With its themes of homosexual love, perversity, animism, violence, the grotesque, and the parody of traditional dance forms, it earned him immediate eviction from the Japan Dance Association, while his instant notoriety brought him to the attention of the famed novelist Yukio Mishima, whose novel *Forbidden Colors* was used in the title of Hijikata's performance.

Hijikata was soon exposed to a broad circle of artists, writers and musicians, collaborating with practitioners from different fields, to produce riotous spectacles, happenings and site-specific performances. His engagement with the world of ideas was also influenced by works of French literature and philosophy, especially by Jean Genet and Antonin Artaud, whose attitudes towards the body as a site of resistance and transformation were popular amidst the dissident culture of Japanese artists and intellectuals in the chaotic aftermath of the war. Genet's *Our lady of the Flowers* inspired Hijikata's *Kinjiki: Forbidden Colors*, with its themes of childhood rural experience and sexual metamorphosis. The performance came during the buildup to the student riots of 1960, when the generation that had been children during the war expressed a sense of liberation from parental authority and military rule, and frustration at the impotence of American political control and cultural influence.⁵

Following nine years of experimentation, Hijikata's performance spectacle, *Rebellion of the Body*, again came soon after the student riots of May 1968. Artaud's influence can be seen here, as Hijikata enters on a ceremonial palanquin and later wears a golden phallus, recalling Artaud's debauched tale of the Roman emperor, Heliogabalus. In *Rebellion of the Body*, Hijikata also

⁴ The few references to Ohno in this thesis are in no way intended to underplay his role, but to limit the focus of the research to Hijikata. Viala and Masson-Sekine describe Hijikata as the 'architect' of butoh, while Ohno is its 'soul' (V&M, 1988: 60, 20). In this sense, it is the systemic or architectonic nature of butoh (and in particular, butoh-fu) which is the focus of this thesis. A study of Ohno would require perhaps a very different epistemological approach, given that he was to reject the reliance on method, remaining faithful to the improvisational gestation of the movement. As the 'soul' of butoh, Ohno's dance has nonetheless had a profound effect on me (through workshops with him in 2002-03) and this experience is described in the Appendices.

⁵ See Motofuji, in W&K (1998).

referenced his first butoh performance *Kinjiki, Forbidden Colors*, by breaking the neck of a live chicken.⁶ For many critics, *Rebellion of the Body* makes a turning point from the raw and improvisational approach of ‘Ankoku Butoh’,⁷ to the formation of his second butoh group, ‘Hoppo Butoh-ha’, in 1972. In this second period Hijikata searched for the nativist roots of his rural upbringing, while withdrawing from dancing himself to focus on the development of his choreographic method (butoh-fu). *Rebellion of the Body* is often described as Hijikata’s ‘farewell to the west’, and yet he continued to draw visual inspiration from many western artists for his butoh-fu, including the paintings of Bacon, Turner and Michaux (to name a few). In fact, his engagement with Artaud continued until Hijikata’s death in 1986. Hijikata was planning a collaboration with philosopher Kuniichi Uno, to be entitled *Experiment with Artaud*, just prior to his death at the relatively young age of 57 (see Barber, 2004). As dancer Sumako Koseki once said, “Butoh is Artaud’s voice at the end of his life” (in Barber, 1993: 5). And so perhaps it was for Hijikata a fitting swan-song as he contemplated his own departure.

ii. Aims, methods and review

The initial point of departure for this research came from my exposure to butoh practice through a dance workshop with Min Tanaka (a former student and collaborator of Hijikata), in Melbourne (June, 2001). During the training process I was struck by the similarities between the dynamic nature of the dance and the materialist philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. Through further dance training on Tanaka’s ‘Bodyweather Farm’ in Hakushu, Japan, I then formulated a preliminary understanding of the complementary relations between Tanaka’s image-work and Deleuze’s cinephilosophy.⁸ Subsequent reading revealed the connection between Hijikata and Artaud, both from original sources and their commentators. Deleuze and Guattari also discuss Artaud in relation to the body, as does Deleuze in terms of the image. Thus, Artaud emerged as a way of examining Hijikata’s butoh through their philosophical paradigm. Other theorists and

⁶ There is a widespread conflict of opinion in the literature as to whether the chickens were actually killed or merely strangled in ‘*Kinjiki, Forbidden Colors*’.

⁷ Until 1965, Hijikata referred to his dance as *ankoku buyō* (*buyō* is a generic term for Japanese dance), then he changed it to ‘Ankoku Butoh’ – translated as ‘dance of utter darkness’ (Motofuji, W&K, 1998). By the end of the 1960’s it was gradually shortened to ‘Butoh’. Originally, butoh referred to Western dance forms such as *shi no butō*, the medieval European dance of death (Kurihara, 2000: 12).

⁸ As set out in his two cinema books, *Cinema 1, The Movement Image* (Deleuze, 1986) and *Cinema 2, The Time Image* (Deleuze, 1989).

practitioners have drawn links between Hijikata, Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari (discussed below). However, what I have found interesting, as both a filmmaker and performer, is the way Deleuze and Guattari may be used to explore a philosophy of the image within the butoh-body. It is this approach, as well as my experimental methods (set out below), that distinguishes this research from other studies of butoh.

In this thesis, I draw out the materiality of the image as it is embodied in the notion of butoh-sei, as well as the cinematic quality of the body-body as it emerges through butoh-fu. I use Deleuze and Guattari's materialist philosophy to develop the notion of a butoh quality through concepts relating to *immanence*, *virtuality* and the *outside* (see Glossary for a list of terms relating to Deleuze and Guattari, and other references). Through these I compare and contrast Hijikata's *oeuvre* with that of Artaud. In terms of butoh-fu, Deleuze's cinephilosophy provides the theoretical model for an understanding of the butoh-fu image in relation to the butoh-body, while also incorporating Deleuze's work with Guattari on the *affect* and the *percept* (see Glossary). Here I use the systemic basis of their materialist philosophy to consider the butoh-fu image in a *generative* sense, in the manner by which it produces transformations within the butoh-body. This analysis also draws its impetus from Hijikata's own writings as well as those of his commentators, former students and other butoh scholars.

There are several precedents for the conceptualisation of butoh through the writing of Artaud, Deleuze & Guattari. Firstly, Hijikata and Tanaka used the text from Artaud's final radio-play *To be Done with the Judgment of God*. More recently, Tanaka's performance *Infant Body out of Joint* in Montreal (October 2002) was preceded by a lecture given by Kuniichi Uno entitled *Corps-gense ou temps-catastrophe – Autour de Min Tanaka, de Tatsumi Hijikata et d'Antonin Artaud*. In this dissertation Uno investigates time, catastrophe and the body in the work of Hijikata, Tanaka and Artaud.⁹ Tanaka also collaborated with Guattari, resulting in the publication of a book (in Japanese) and several performances at Guattari's *La Borde* clinic, shortly before Guattari's death. Several of

⁹ Kuniichi Uno was a student of both Deleuze and Hijikata. He directed the Japanese translation of *A Thousand Plateaus* and *To be Done with the Judgement of God*. Unfortunately, at the time of writing there is no available translation of Uno's lecture, *Corps-gense ou temps-catastrophe – Autour de Min Tanaka, de Tatsumi Hijikata et d'Antonin Artaud*. However, my own analysis of the event as a time of crisis, in relation to the image and the butoh-body, may be found in Chapter 2.

Tanaka's former students, in the group 'Bodyweather Amsterdam',¹⁰ have explored how the dancing body may be compared to Artaud's conception of a *body-without-organs* (see Glossary),¹¹ using Deleuze and Guattari's commentary in *A Thousand Plateaus* (D&G, 1987: 149-166).¹² The links from Deleuze & Guattari to Hijikata, via Artaud, are indirect and nonlinear, yet thick with common features and points of conjunction.

Further understanding of butoh as a conceptual practice is also influenced by screenings of Hijikata's films at the Asbestos Kan in Tokyo during December 2002 and from a series of intensive butoh workshops and casual classes in which I participated while researching this thesis.¹³ These include; a four-day intensive workshop in Melbourne with Min Tanaka in June 2001, a four-week intensive summer school with Tanaka in August 2002 (Hakushu, Japan), a three-day intensive with *Gekidan Kaitaisha*¹⁴ in Sydney, June 2002, a one-day intensive with Peter Snow and Frank Van de

¹⁰ 'Bodyweather' is the name given to Tanaka's own dance training methodology, based in Hakushu, Japan, where I participated in a four-week summer school in August 2002. While Tanaka is reluctant to describe Bodyweather as a system, it may be variously defined as a training regime, performance process and dance paradigm, operating within the history and culture of butoh. Tanaka's 'image-work' is a development of Hijikata's butoh-fu, made all the more precise through his sensitivity exercises, their efficacy drawn equally from site-specific immersion in the natural environment and from his background in sports medicine. Members of *Bodyweather Amsterdam*, including Frank van de Ven and Claudia Flammin, have conducted research in collaboration with groups such as De Quincy Co. in Alice Springs, and at Chisenhale, in London. Both Frank van de Ven and Tess De Quincy are former members of Tanaka's dance group, *Maijuku*.

¹¹ The reference to a body-without-organs appears in *To be Done with the Judgement of God*, the same text used by Hijikata and Tanaka for their collaboration. See Chapter 1 ('A generative limit', *iii.*) for the relevant citation.

¹² The initial impetus for their research comes from a thesis written by Claudia Flammin, entitled, *Un lieu, une danse, Min Tanaka et la meteorologie du corps*, University of Paris 8 (1996). This thesis was also unavailable in English at the time of writing.

¹³ Workshop references are listed in *Butoh Dance Workshops*.

¹⁴ Adam Broinowski, a member of *Gekidan Kaitaisha* (translated as 'Theatre of Deconstruction'), recently submitted his MA thesis entitled, *Theatre of Body in Japan: Ankoku Butoh – Gekidan Kaitaisha* (University of Melbourne, October 2003). In this thesis (in the process of examination at the time of writing and therefore unavailable), Broinowski examines the work and methods of *Gekidan Kaitaisha*, as a continuance of Hijikata's legacy. Shimizu Shinjin, its director, is also very familiar with the work of Deleuze, as indicated by discussions during the Sydney and Tokyo workshops (*Gekidan Kaitaisha*, Sydney, June 2002).

Ven in Sydney, February 2004, two casual classes with Tony Yap in Melbourne during 2003, one casual class with *Gekidan Kaitaisha* in Tokyo, October 2002, and six casual classes with Kazuo and Yoshito Ohno over a five month period in Yokohama, September 2002 – January 2003. I have also attended several performances by Tanaka (some with his group, *Tokasan*), as well as Ko Murobushi (another former student of Hijikata), *Gekidan Kaitaisha*, Tony Yap and Yumi Umiumare, Tess de Quincy and Frank Van de Ven (the latter two both former students of Tanaka).

For my own dance practice, I performed street theatre four to five nights a week in downtown Shinjuku / Kabuki-cho and Shibuya (Tokyo), from September 2002 to January 2003.¹⁵ In this butoh/mime improvisation, I danced for a constantly mobile audience¹⁶ over a four-month period, including a four-week tour over Christmas and the New Year (Osaka, Kyoto, Hiroshima, Bepu, Kagoshima). This culminated in a video-performance in my squat – an abandoned apartment building in Harajuku, Tokyo (see Illustrations, figures 4 – 7).¹⁷ This field-work was helpful in processing what I had learnt on the Bodyweather farm in Hakushu, where I had come to question the validity of performance itself after experiencing what seemed more like a way of seeing the world, the body and nature – dance as a philosophy of life. Few Japanese people on the street knew about butoh, thinking my dance was perhaps pantomime, maybe enacting a deity, devil, fool or madman.¹⁸ This seemed strangely paradoxical as a Westerner coming to Japan to train in butoh. Wanting to then rediscover some kind of generative locus, this prompted me to research Hijikata and recontextualise the formative links with Western theorists.¹⁹

¹⁵ I also performed at a number of artist-run spaces in Sydney, 2002-2003 (Space3, Knot Gallery, Alpha House), including a multimedia performance of my short film *pneu babel* (see DVD), with a live soundtrack by eight experimental electronic and instrumental musicians (Space3, July 2002).

¹⁶ In addition to hundreds of mobile-telephone photographs. See also polaroids, in Illustrations (figures 8 – 11).

¹⁷ Living in hiding and relative destitution gave me a sense of life and death, in the shell of a room seemingly replete with the ghosts of its former inhabitants. In my thesis, this acts as a personal subtext to the discussion of dying alive in a dead-body.

¹⁸ Pantomime, or corporeal mime, and butoh are uneasy bodies for co-habitation (see Chapter 1 and 2, for a discussion of mime as counter-actualisation), but this mixing revealed many things about internal and external space in relation to, or in interaction with other bodies. It was in some ways a homage to the early butoh street performances of the 1960's.

¹⁹ Viala and Masson-Sekine (1988: 171) and Motofuji (in Waguri and Kohzensha, 1998: unpaginated) reflect on the problem of butoh becoming stylised, nostalgic or academic. This tension was reflected in the butoh/mime mix, for me like reappropriating a return to the west. In this thesis the East/West tension is discussed specifically in terms of French Philosophy (and Literature/Arts).

Despite the formidable conceptual barrage Deleuze and Guattari present, theirs is essentially a pragmatic philosophy concerned with the *creation* of concepts and the interference of practices. Hijikata too, despite his self-mystifying character, broke with the traditional *sensei* model, by encouraging his students to find their own butoh quality and to develop their own butoh-fu. For his part, Artaud demanded a mode of thought and being which existed only in the event of its conception. Deleuze & Guattari, Hijikata and Artaud are all in a sense ‘constructivists’ in the way their respective projects are a call to *invention*, implementing rigorous systems of experimentation for the creation of the ‘New’. Whilst acknowledging the work of other butoh scholars, this ‘non-traditional’ thesis is essentially a work of *praxis*. In reconsidering the body-without-organs, I develop a conceptual model called the F.A.C.E.²⁰, which operates as a technical template or functional schemata for tracing the complex dynamics of the butoh-body. In practical terms this research is mobilised, not only through butoh dance training, but also in the production of my short film – *pneu babel* (see DVD).²¹ In the thesis I discuss the film as a ‘systemic narrative’, using the generative approach to butoh that I establish through Deleuze and Guattari. I develop my own butoh-fu method of *diagrammatic* notation, using video-compositing interfaces and complex-systems theory²² as a way of realising the conceptual model mentioned above. Finally, I discuss the proposed construction of a generative-media video-installation, in order to further develop the systemic narrative of *pneu babel*, and to implement a staging mechanism that may use my butoh-fu method in future performance(s).

By synthesising the ideas of Deleuze & Guattari, Hijikata and Artaud, I aim to trace the emergence and transformation of my own art practice, in order to develop my own schemas, sources of inspiration and conceptual models.

²⁰ F.A.C.E is an abbreviation for processes of Fossilisation, Accumulation, Condensation and Evacuation (see Chapters 1 – 3). Hereafter, it is also given as (the) FACE.

²¹ Also on the DVD is an older work, *:plugins, drifting...* (1 minute). This informed the development of *pneu babel* in its reflective imagery and use of found materials. See also Appendices (*Ghost Spatum, Description*) for the history behind this project.

²² As De Landa, Massumi and others have established, the systemic basis of Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy utilises ideas drawn from the sciences of complexity (De Landa, 1997; Massumi, 1992). My own understanding of complex systems is not drawn from De Landa and Massumi however, but from Byrne, whose comprehensive glossary and sociological analyses provide a clear approach to this rather difficult theoretical paradigm (Byrne, 1998).

Chapter summaries:

1. The butoh-sei of a butoh-bwo

In Chapter 1, the initial task is to establish points of confluence between the butoh-body and the body-without-organs by asking the question, how may butoh be considered to develop a BwO,²³ or what might be called a butoh-bwo²⁴? In doing this, the intention is not to produce a simple taxonomy of complementary traits and surface effects, but to identify what Hijikata might call their butoh-sei (butoh quality).²⁵ The BwO essentially turns upon an internal or generative limit where it opens to, or is opened by, relations beyond the physical organism. For Artaud, the generative limit appears in the idea of cruelty, while for Hijikata, it is the notion of suffering. Here, the discussion itself opens to the question of what is within or beyond this limit; what hollows it out to render void all distinctions between inside and outside. For Deleuze, this is immanence itself – positing a realm of virtuality where the ‘outside’ appears as a pure *event* (see Glossary), dismantling subject-object relations and the interiority upon which they are founded.

Through this knot of relations are interwoven the tropes of Artaud’s ‘shadows’ and Hijikata’s ‘darkness’, unravelling themselves through the virtual. These figures follow a critique of the butoh-body in relation to *being* and *death*, where the former is contrasted with a more generative state of *becoming* (see Glossary) and the latter is conceived as an opening to the outside. This allows me to identify two attributes of the butoh-bwo – a dead-body and a hollow-body – with which I conceptualise the problem of expressing the pure virtuality of the butoh-bwo, while being affected by this very impossibility. In terms of the dance, I discuss how Hijikata seeks to refuse representation, with fragmented movements that elude any definitive interpretation, always returning them to the depths of the butoh-body – to the inexhaustible darkness of the virtual. The three *strata* of the BwO – *subjectification*, *signification* and the *organism* – (see Glossary) are

²³ Hereafter, ‘body-without-organs’ is referred to as ‘BwO’.

²⁴ This neologism follows from the compounds butoh-sei and butoh-fu, while ‘flattening’ Deleuze and Guattari’s abbreviation ‘BwO’ (body-without-organs), to give it a singularly pronounced shape and sound – ‘bwo’. This is inspired also by the way Hijikata claims to have chosen ‘butoh’ as the name for his dance because he liked the shape of the sound (Fumiyaka, in Moore, 1986).

²⁵ The original reference to ‘butoh-sei’ is found when Hijikata talks about the butoh-quality of a painting, specifically those used in his butoh-fu (Hijikata, 2000c: 49). In this thesis, I explore the singular qualities of Hijikata’s oeuvre, while also developing the notion of butoh-sei in another way, for instance in Chapter 1 via the notion of the virtual, and in Chapter 2 through Deleuze’s cinephilosophy.

invoked here, as Hijikata rejects the self and rebels against the everyday body, to harness death itself as a power of transformation. Finally, I give the two attributes a conceptual model (the FACE), by describing the specific dynamics of the *butoh-bwo* in a diagrammatic manner, thereby introducing a ‘technical’ template²⁶ for its ‘special affects’.

2. The *biociné*²⁷ of *butoh-fu*

Chapter 2 focuses on *butoh-fu* as the essential image-making mechanism for the *butoh-body*. As a *notational* system, utilising everything from poetic phrases to instructional description, some clarification is first necessary as to the status of the image in relation to language. In this respect, I make a comparative analysis between Tanaka’s approach to ‘catching the sense’ of the *butoh-image*, and Deleuze’s critique of *sense* (see Glossary) as the continuum between a ‘thing’ and a proposition or expression. This involves a process of *becoming* the image, in a real rather than a merely linguistic manner. Therefore, I supplant the metaphorical function of ‘carrying’ the sense, for a *metaplastic* notion in which ‘catching’ the sense engenders a tactile and complementary transformation of *butoh-body* and *butoh image*.

Returning to the conceptual model of the *butoh-bwo* and its FACE, I situate the technical template of its special affects according to a series of ‘conceptual figures’, in order to introduce a degree of detail that may illustrate the compositional dynamics involved in this process of becoming. These figures reference some of the tropes that appear in Hijikata’s *butoh-fu*, as well as Deleuze and Guattari’s materialist philosophy. In addition, I posit an ‘aesthetic personae’ for the *butoh-bwo*, in the figure of a *hitogata* – translated as “human shape”, origin for the word “doll” (Gunji, in W&K, 1998)²⁸ – whose mechanical animation may be seen to characterise the modulation of the two attributes. I discuss the process of matter and image in mutual becoming in relation to perception and sensation, where the tactile qualities of the image come to acquire the autonomy of the percept

²⁶ This ‘technical template’ is a conceptual rather than a technological one, although it is informed by systems theory (as developed in Chapter 3).

²⁷ This neologism refers to Deleuze’s biophilosophy of ‘becoming’ and his cinephilosophy of ‘matter-images’, both of which owe their inheritance to the work of Henri Bergson (Bergson, 1988, 1911). *Biociné* may be understood as indicating an approach to the materiality of the image, and its embodiment, as well as the cinematic quality of the *body-body* as it emerges through *butoh-fu*. The term is partly inspired by Hijikata’s own neologistic experimentation.

²⁸ Quoted in Motofuji.

and the affect.²⁹ To illustrate this, I provide an example of how percepts and affects arise in the butoh-body (in the manner of a *hitogata*), by examining the clay-work exercise from Tanaka's Bodyweather workshop (Bodyweather Summer School, Hakushu, August 2002).³⁰

Next, I turn to Deleuze's cinephilosophy, in order to mobilise the materiality of the butoh-fu image, as it concerns intensive movement within the butoh-body. Firstly, I set in motion the percept and the affect using Deleuze's approach to the *perception-image* and the *affection-image* (see Glossary). These are formulated in relation to the butoh-bwo by using its conceptual figures to illustrate how the butoh dancer may employ the faculty of *proprioception* (internal awareness of the body; see Glossary), to negotiate the limits of expression and the problem of representation. This leads to a discussion concerning a crisis of action, where I posit a series of common historical conditions in post-war Europe and Japan, as ripe for the appearance of Hijikata's butoh, as well as the emergence of modern cinema (as conceived by Deleuze). Finally, I locate this sense of crisis within a critique of butoh versus ballet, in which ballet is seen to generate an external relation to space – filling it, while butoh explores an *intensive spatium* (see Glossary) that hollows it out.

This allows me to then revisit the event (discussed in Chapter 1), to describe how butoh-fu may be envisaged according to an 'image of time'. Here, I compare and contrast Deleuze's notion of a *time-image* (see Glossary), with the multiple, fragmentary and intensive movements in Hijikata's dance. This conception of time and movement also recalls the darkness of the virtual (as described in Chapter 1), reiterated here via a Japanese notion of primordial time – *yami* ('the dark' or 'gloom'), and what Kiyokazu Yamamoto calls a 'metempsychotic' model of time.

Finally, I consider Hijikata's concept of 'a thinking body', as a way of situating butoh-fu within a systemic frame that may adequately deal with the multiplicity of images and their trajectories. This is placed in the context of Artaud's critique of the image, as producing a 'shock to thought', apprehending the spectator with the automatism of its linkages. For Deleuze, this invokes the figure of a *spiritual automaton* (see Glossary), while for butoh it recalls the *hitogata*. As with the critique of being in Chapter 1, the solution for both Artaud and Hijikata is not to seek the coherent linkage of

²⁹ Briefly, the percept is defined here as an aspect of perception that is carried *into* matter (where the image becomes a pure quality of 'thought-matter'), while the affect is an aspect of sensation which receives or registers this movement. In this way, the percept belongs to the modes of the butoh-bwo (that which passes), while the affect belongs to the attributes and their facets (the aspect of modulation).

³⁰ Hereafter given as Hakushu workshop, August 2002.

images, but to *unlink* them, multiplying their conjunctions in order to approach the impossible limit between one articulation and another, where the power of the *new* unfolds.

3. *pneu babel* as generative system

In Chapter 3 I explore how the generative reading of *butoh* given thus far may inform the development of my own art practice. This is done through an analysis of my short film, *pneu babel* (see DVD). The characters in *pneu babel* are based upon the early European settlers of New Zealand, although in the analysis of the thesis their migration is one of continual settling across a topological terrain, in which their settlement constitutes a state of emergence. In this manner, I reconsider the narrative in a systemic sense, in which the unsettled subjectivity of the settlers is produced through their relation to other elements in the film. This systemic narrative is formulated according to the conceptual model of the *butoh-bwo*, allowing me to integrate and further illustrate the *butoh* research through a discussion of the film.³¹

At the same time, there is also a need to examine this experimental theorisation in practical terms, to establish a new ground where the validity of the systemic narrative may be evaluated and developed further. To do this, I discuss two proposed methodologies. The first is a *butoh-fu* schema, using the conceptual model of the *butoh-bwo* to produce a choreographic method of *diagrammatic* notation. The second is a proposed video-installation that may actually implement the generative analysis provided, with a technical configuration that also corresponds to the *butoh-fu* schema. With the development of my own *butoh-fu* schema, I appropriate elements from the video-compositing interface, Adobe After Effects 4.1 (used in the post-production of *pneu babel*) to produce a diagrammatic method of notation. This is situated according to the generative analysis of *pneu babel* and the conceptual model of the *butoh-bwo*.³² I then describe the proposed development of the film

³¹ I should note here that the film, while performance-based, does not strictly contain *butoh* dance elements (the film was shot prior to the dance phase of this research). However, its aesthetic is partly inspired by *butoh* (influenced by an earlier trip to Japan in 1996), while the post-production occurred concurrently with the dance-training period (2001-2004). The important point in this regard, is not that *pneu babel* necessarily constitutes a ‘*butoh-film*’ in the usual sense, but that the development of its ‘generative analysis’ emerges as part of my own *butoh* praxis, arising from a critical appraisal of Hijikata and other *butoh* theorists and practitioners.

³² These methods are illustrated in a series of diagrams and tables in the Appendices. Here, several examples of *butoh-fu* are given, which translate the film and other sources into ‘diagrams of intensity’.

into a video-installation, using a generative-media platform. This suggests a way of actually implementing the systemic narrative, while also complementing the diagrammatic model of the butoh-fu schema, with a staging mechanism that may be used in future performance(s). Finally, I tie the three aspects of the project together (systemic narrative, butoh-fu schema, video installation), by tracing the architectural nature of *pneu babel* as a site of transformation and mechanical illusion, while discussing the complex epistemology the film's title in relation to butoh, the butoh-fu schema and the corresponding video-installation.

In this thesis, I reflect on what it means to generate a butoh-body. This involves considering how the image may be seen to affect this body, while also enabling it to produce affects. I reiterate that I am seeking to establish a conceptual model (the butoh-bwo and its FACE), which may provide a systemic taxonomy of terms for 'imaging' the relationship between the butoh-body and butoh-fu. The thesis that follows is very much a work of praxis, one that seeks to unearth the generative mechanisms of Hijikata's butoh (through Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari), by surveying a body of knowledge replete with many kinds of bodies. In so doing, I aim to contribute to scholarship in the fields of butoh / dance, cultural theory and the moving image, whilst developing my own praxis – exploring the systemic embodiment of the image.

The *butoh-sei* of a *butoh-bwo*

To speak of ‘the body’ is to invoke a rather broad concept, therefore it is necessary to specify certain limits in terms of definition. In this chapter I will examine how the very materiality of the body, and the subjectivity nominally ascribed to it, undergo a rigorous interrogation within the critical frame of *butoh* dance. So what exactly do I mean by a body? It may be considered as one delimited by the physical organism, governed by its unitary functions and the organisation of parts; or it may denote a more open conjugation of common principles or intensive features, defined only as a mass of singularities. It is the latter which characterises Artaud’s concept of a *body-without-organs*, as developed by Deleuze and Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus* (D&G, 1987: 149-166). Following Artaud, Deleuze and Guattari declare that the BwO is not opposed to the organs themselves, but rather to the organisation of the organism, being neither reduced to the functional articulations of the body, nor attributed to the sovereignty of a subject. It is rather, a *nomadic* or *desubjectified* movement (see Glossary: *nomadism* and *desubjectification*) that disarticulates the organism and *deterritorialises* the subject (see Glossary: *deterritorialisation*). The body-without-organs does not assume the given facts of an organism, nor a subject whose phantasies are decoded by interpretation and signification, but rather develops a program of experimentation. It is first and foremost a matter of constructing a set of practices, in order to determine the specific type of BwO, and what it is that circulates through it, according to the intensive modes and singular attributes it comprises.

This threefold *destratification* (see Glossary) – disarticulation vs. the organism, experimentation vs. interpretation, nomadism vs. subjectification – provides a departure point for the group *Bodyweather Amsterdam*. These dancers and theorists have investigated how Min Tanaka’s methodology may be considered to develop a *dancing* body-without-organs, following the critical analysis provided by Claudia Flammin. While touching upon the three strata at various points, this chapter sets out primarily to make a comparative analysis between Hijikata and Artaud, in order to investigate the *butoh-sei* (*butoh-quality*) of the *butoh-body*. The aim of this chapter is not to discuss specific methodologies (this is done in Chapter 2), but to determine its particular attributes and generative limits, the synthesis of which may be regarded as generating the specificity of a *butoh-bwo*.

A generative limit

i. *The limit of cruelty*

In attempting to define a butoh-bwo we should consider not only how the dancer seeks to corporealise a set of practices, but also by what quality (butoh-sei) they may take their butoh-body to its *limit*. As is evident in many butoh performances, this limit might be seen as one of physical extremity or social impropriety, an anti-aesthetic of ‘non-dance’ or ‘unbeauty’, presented in the signature styles of the grotesque, the violent and perverse; or by contrast the absolute minimalism of a sublime stillness. However, this view apprehends the butoh-body only at the level of appearance (organism and interpretation), while for the dancer there exists an internal or *generative* limit which determines the production of intensive states at either pole.³³

Firstly then, I will examine how this idea of a limit may be approached through the writings of Artaud and Hijikata. For Artaud, this limit is predicated upon the belief in a certain *vitalism*, which he describes as “that underlying power, call it thought-energy, the life force, the determination of change, lunar menses, or anything you like.” (Artaud, 1958: 78). This vital force emerges as a limit in the sense that, “There is in life’s flame... life’s irrational impulsion, a kind of initial perversity: the desire characteristic of Eros is cruelty since it feeds upon contingencies...” (Artaud, 1958: 103). Artaud posits this idea of *cruelty* as a fundamental limit factor in life’s unfurling, where “everything that acts is a cruelty.” (Artaud, 1958: 85). Which is to say, everything within matter and thought is inextricably linked along a continuum marked by the interference of contrary forces. For as Artaud asserts, “It is cruelty that cements matter together, cruelty that molds the features of the created world.” (Artaud, 1958: 104). In the second instance, this aspect of cruelty is essentially hidden beneath the surface of fact, glossed over by the banality of everyday reality. Therefore, it behooves the visionary artist and the radical metaphysician to reveal the lie; moreover, to harness life’s hidden force and unleash its cruelty, as an act of *creation*.

³³ Here lies the crux of the problem for the dancer – how s/he may allow the body to express *itself*, in both its pure materiality and its virtual connections, without imposing upon it any subjective preconceptions or readymade representations (while at the same time employing methods that may facilitate the process).

In his manifestos and letters, Artaud stresses the necessity of a cruelty that would rescue theatre from the servitude of “human interest”. Not *cruelty* in the sense of inflicting pain and suffering – “neither of sadism or bloodshed”, but rather one that “signifies rigor, implacable intention and decision, irreversible and absolute determinism” (Artaud: 1958, 101). Artaud proposes a *Theatre of Cruelty* that may place the audience in direct relation to the primary forces of life, through “dissociative and vibratory action upon the sensibility” (Artaud: 1958, 89). To bring life into the theatre and expression into life, making actors and audience “victims burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames.” (Artaud, 1958, 13).

ii. *The root of suffering*

The same sense of a hidden force and its elusive, yet violently contingent nature appears in the writing of Hijikata; for instance when he writes –

“In butoh we can find, touch, our hidden reality – something can be born, can appear, living and dying at the same moment. The character and basis of butoh is a hidden violence.”
(Hijikata, in Stein: 1986: 125).

For Hijikata, the gestures of butoh dancers should appear directly and inexplicably, as though emerging from some other place, beyond the body. “Since the body itself perishes, it has a form. Butoh has another dimension.” His *butoh-sei* may be glimpsed in irrational movements that appear to surpass technique, going beyond the mechanical organism, attempting to touch a fecund chaos underlying the everyday: “I wager reality on a nonsensical vitality that has purged the echo of logic from my body” (Hijikata, 2000b: 45). In a manner resembling Artaud’s rebellion of men descending from the cross of divine judgment in bodies made of “bone scrap” (Artaud, 1992: 319), Hijikata says: “My work is to reanimate with vitality a skeleton pieced together from the consciousness of being a victim.” (Hijikata, 2000b, 47). And when Hijikata cites Nietzsche: “One must strip the costume of barren perception designed by contemporary society” (Hijikata, 2000b, 47), a similar air of protest may be heard as to that cruelty with which Artaud rejects the representational mode of psychological realism in the theatre.

Demonstrating an affinity with the surrealist and neo-dada schools, Hijikata felt the desire to go around “cutting off heads with a hoe”, and it is this necessity for a kind of Artaudian *cruelty* which Hijikata calls for in his own way when he criticises the performance practices of the *shingeki* (new theatre). “As for Happenings, I don’t like them because they lack precision. The participants claim

to be precise but they aren't. Because there's no terror in what they do" (Hijikata: 2000c, 50). And yet such an antagonism is not reserved only for those of 'barren perception'. No-one may be spared the double-edged sword of cruelty and suffering, for its metaphysical basis imparts an ethical exigency. "The origins of Japanese dance are to be found in this very cruel life that the peasants endured. I have always danced in a manner where I grope within myself for the roots of suffering by tearing at the superficial harmony." (Hijikata, in V&M, 1988: 185).

This is not then the kind of 'suffering' that might be attributed to the aesthetic romanticisation of an artist in his garret (for this would also be something to tear away as a superficial harmony).

Hijikata's groping for the *roots* of suffering, may be regarded as a desire to extract an affective potential from such states of abjection, seeking a perverse vitality in approaching an unattainable limit. A limit that cannot be captured so much as *created*, for it constitutes the innermost mechanism of a hidden force, which may be engaged only as a "struggle with invisible matter." (Hijikata, 2000e: 77). The 'implacable necessity' to suffer the inherent impossibility of this internal relation, becomes the task of creative expression.

iii. Immanence and difference

In the same manner, the body-without-organs cannot be reached or attained, because "you are forever attaining it, it is a limit" (D&G: 1987: 150). That is to say, it is a *generative* limit in the process of destratifying the organism, of opening the body to multiple connections with other bodies and things, via assemblages made up of conjugating singularities. But then, if the BwO constitutes only a mass of intensities, surpassing the external limits of the physical organism, what *vital* substance does it comprise that may allow the distance between these points to be traversed; indeed, how is the limit of this destratification generated? For Deleuze and Guattari, the BwO is made possible via the notion of *immanence* (see Glossary) – a creative principle pervading all things, envisaged in terms of an unformed substance. There is a certain resonance here with the vitalism of Artaud and Hijikata. Indeed, it is via Henri Bergson's discourse on the *elan vital* that Deleuze and Guattari draw inspiration for the term. For them, Bergson's *Matter and Memory*³⁴ performs two crucial tasks for philosophy –

"[it] marks out a plane that slices through the chaos – both the infinite movement of a substance that continually propagates itself, and the image of thought that everywhere continually spreads a

³⁴ See Bergson (1988).

pure consciousness by right (immanence is not immanent “to” consciousness but the other way around).” (D&G: 1994: 49)

The BwO invokes a *plane of consistency* (see Glossary) – a fluid continuum marked by pure intensities, continuous variations, events, and incorporeal transformations – features immanent to matter and thought (D&G, 1987: 507). Moreover, to account for the means by which this unformed substance propagates itself, Deleuze develops an ontology of *difference* (see Glossary), also derived from Bergson, in which he puts forth a view of difference-in-itself, that is to say, a tendency internal to difference, such that it constitutes an *internal* limit particular to immanence.

In short, the BwO comprises singular points plotted upon a plane that establishes their consistency. These points are connected by the internal limit of how they differ in themselves; that is, their degrees of intensity. The BwO therefore lacks extension in regards any conventional coordinates of time and space, but rather constitutes an *intensive spatium* (see Glossary) through which it is constantly gouged out by the generative limit of its incorporeal transformations. The body itself is in a sense turned toward the *outside* (see Glossary), or indeed turned *inside-out* by the body-without-organs, through *virtual* relations (see Glossary) that blur the contours and jam the controls of the molar organism.³⁵ In the words of Artaud –

“When you have given him a body without organs,
then you will have delivered him from all his automatisms
and restored him to his true liberty.

Then you will teach him again to dance inside out
as in the delirium of our accordian dance halls
and that inside out will be his true side out.”³⁶

(Artaud, 1992: 329).

³⁵ The notion of the virtual is discussed in subsequent sections. In opposition to the strata of the molar organism, Deleuze and Guattari posit ‘molecular becomings’ – enacting purely intensive processes between things (where this ‘between’ occurs at the level of difference in itself). These molecular becomings are discussed in Chapter 2, in relation to the image and perception.

³⁶ Line breaks and indentations do not preserve the original formatting.

In a similar frame of mind, Hijikata says –

“I once became a wicker trunk, which became a bellows that drove each and every one of my organs outside, then played.

(Hijikata, 2000e: 75)

Hijikata dismantles the organism by evacuating the organs, to trace a plane of consistency between his body, the wicker trunk and the bellows. Within an intensive spatium comprising their common attributes, he generates a series of incorporeal transformations, or in another way of speaking, enters into a *becoming* (see Glossary). By evacuating the organs he establishes an intensive spatium in which he may play this becoming-bellows, and have it play him; his body becoming the object only as it is also objectified. It is not a matter of *imitation*,³⁷ of trying to fit into the form of the object(s), but of disarticulating the organism by tracing their common singularities. “Its not about squeezing your body into a space but about its being stripped of things” (Hijikata, 2000d: 63).

iv. Emptiness is standing

With this notion of evacuation I may posit the first attribute of the butoh-bwo, that of a *hollow-body*. In his discussion of Hijikata’s butoh, Tanigawa outlines the various etymological nuances of the body in the Japanese language –

“In butoh, it is not like a body exists as mass and moves in the already existing space. The self is a kind of transient membrane, and the space is perceived by passing through the body. [...] the idea is that emptiness is standing. In other words, it is not mass but a hollow-body. “Utsuro (hollow)”, is related to words such as “utsurou (shift, transform)”, “utsuru (move, shift)”, “utsusu (remove, turn)”, and “utsushimi (actual body)”. (Tanigawa, in W&K, 1998).

It is perhaps then in the sense of *utsusu* (remove, turn) that Hijikata may be understood when he says that it is not about squeezing the body into a space but its being ‘stripped of things’. He goes on

³⁷ Deleuze and Guattari discuss how becoming differs from imitation in the sense that it produces nothing other than itself (D&G, 1987: 237-238). It is not a matter of verisimilitude, of adequately approximating ‘the thing’ in question, but rather, through the intensities of the process this becoming itself becomes ‘a’ thing (thereby eluding the fixity of a form by the power of the indefinite article).

to say: "... if you turn the skin on things inside out, the hole created there is a space. Things turned inside out like that tightly fill up space and even envelope it." (Hijikata, 2000d: 63). Such a sentiment echoes Artaud's determination that the body-without-organs is for dancing *inside-out*. More precisely, in the sense that it produces a hole that is nonetheless filled or enveloped, the 'skin on things' *turns upon* an inherent paradox. The term "utsurou (shift, transform)" may be invoked here, in the manner by which the 'skin on things' can be seen to endlessly evacuate itself, turning inside out to create an intensive spatium, where inside and outside become indiscernible. Here it becomes the pure membrane of a plane of consistency, a skin enveloping all things and yet lacking extension, where the inside is constantly hollowed out by the outside, turning upon the internal limit of their differentiation.

The delirious dance of the *butoh-bwo* is then one of approaching an internal limit that cannot be attained, by *turning upon* the impossible conception of an evacuated interiority. There exists a crucial tension between emptying the *butoh*-body (opening it to the outside), and filling it with things (in the purely intensive space of a *becoming*). This tension is characterised by the modes of what come to pass through a membrane that is in a sense 'turned inside out.'³⁸ For as I have said, the body doesn't *hold* things within itself, so much as undergoes an objectification, thereby entering into a series of *becomings* with other objects. As in the example of Hijikata's bellows, this state of emptiness or neutrality allows for a continual metamorphosis (*utsurou* – shift, transform). Perhaps Hijikata's bellows may be imagined transforming into Artaud's accordion, where his body provides the auditorium of an intensive spatium, playing the evacuation of its own organs as a theme of constant metamorphosis.

In short, the *butoh-bwo* as transient membrane simultaneously evacuates the organism (disarticulation), 'strips' the interiority of the self (desubjectification), and constructs a plane of consistency, or transient membrane, upon which *n*-articulations 'strip' from the body only those singularities that may circulate upon it. There is something quite unique about the emptiness of the *butoh-bwo*, in the way it generates itself through this negation.³⁹ The hollow-body does not operate

³⁸ The 'modes' of the *butoh-bwo*, or what comes to pass, comprise the intensive qualities of the image. These are discussed in Chapter 2. In this chapter I discuss the 'attributes' (the hollow-body and later, the dead-body) through which the modes pass.

³⁹ It oscillates somewhere between the emptiness of those dreary bodies which Deleuze and Guattari describe in "*How do you make yourself a body without organs?*" – the masochist, drug addict, alcoholic, schizophrenic (D&G, 1987: 150-152); and the generative nature of those outlined later in the chapter – courtly love, the yin / yang of the Tao, Don Juan's tonal vs. nagual (D&G, 1987: 156-157, 161-162).

in terms of what the self lacks but on the very lack of a self, replacing instinctive forces with transmitted ones, in order to bring about a becoming. The important thing to re/member here is that de-stratifying the organism is not an absolute, but only a limit, countered by the opposing force of stratification. For the *butoh-bwo*, this involves the tension (as stated above), between emptying the *butoh*-body, and filling it with things. Becoming is a dual process of evacuation *and* objectification, rather than a total de-stratification. D&G criticise so many ‘dreary bodies’ (the masochist etc.) as always running the risk of wildly de-stratifying themselves, emptying themselves of their organs rather than dismantling the organisation of the organism. In doing so they bring about a *stagnation* of their attributes, emptying their BwO’s rather than filling them. Hijikata’s *becoming-bellows* has done precisely that – driven out the organs; and yet the emptiness that remains is then also filled by a bellows that plays.

The actual and the virtual

I will return to the complementary aspects of evacuation and objectification, for it is the latter which characterises the second attribute of the *butoh-bwo*, that of a *dead-body*. At one point D&G temper somewhat their mission towards deterritorialisation, for without an organism there can be no de-stratification, only “a body of nothingness, pure self-destruction whose only outcome is death.” (D&G, 1987: 162). As I will show later in the chapter, Hijikata innovation is that he subtends this very limit, extracting a generative mechanism from death itself. For now, I will examine the *butoh-sei* (*butoh*-quality) underlying Hijikata’s approach to death, and the manner in which it situates the actual body (*utsushimi*) vis-à-vis the emptiness of the *butoh-bwo*. To do this, I will first make a comparative analysis between Artaud’s deliberation on the *shadow* as *double* and Hijikata’s ‘dance of darkness’ (*ankoku-butoh*).

i. Shadows in the event

The body-without-organs constructs a plane of consistency founded upon a conception of immanence which pervades matter and thought, generating an intensive spatium that supersedes the given state-of-affairs of the physical organism. And yet, we cannot forget that the dancer’s *butoh*-body is still an “*utsushimi* (actual body)”, albeit a disarticulated one. The problem of expression is then a matter of how the *butoh-bwo* becomes apparent within the *butoh*-body, conveying the sense of an internal limit through a process of *actualisation* (see Glossary).

Within an immanent paradigm what appears in actuality does not delimit the extent of the real. The *actual* (see Glossary) is but the surface of fact beneath which lies a limitless reserve of potentiality. For Deleuze and Guattari, this is the realm of the *virtual*⁴⁰ (see Glossary) – the irreducible Whole, the open set of all conceivable choices, simultaneous with and yet also exceeding the process of actualisation.

In theatre Artaud seeks a cruelty that is internal to matter and life, and just as this limit must be actualised (not realised) through bodily expressions, at the same time these expressions surpass their actual appearance. According to Artaud, the theatre is like alchemy, in that they are both “virtual arts, and do not carry their end – or their reality – within themselves.” (Artaud, 1958: 48). In this sense, the actual does not exhaust the virtual. Rather, the latter accompanies the process of actualisation without being fully accomplished by it. Deleuze and Guattari describe the relationship between the virtual and its actualisation in terms of the *event*, an entity sitting astride the threshold of the virtual and the actual. “The event [...] is actualised in a state of affairs, in a body, in a lived, but it has a shadowy and secret part that is continually subtracted from or added to its actualisation” (D&G, 1994: 156). This shadowy part to the event is its virtual aspect which eludes and exceeds its actualisation in a *state of affairs* (see Glossary): “the event is pure immanence of what is not actualised or of what remains indifferent to actualisation, since its reality does not depend on it” (D&G, 1994: 156). The locus of the event carries the shadow of the virtual, and it is here where the actual and the virtual coalesce, where the hidden force of immanence lurks, carrying with it an infinite abundance of pure potential.

The inherent vitalism of Artaud’s cruelty is found in the very features of the created world, and this imparts a cruel determination to reinvigorate its hidden force, so often delimited or stratified within everyday life. There is then a subtle violence to the event (its secret part), to the way in which the virtual crosses the threshold into actualisation, where “everything that acts” (Artaud, 1958: 85) appears only to be haunted by the shadows of a virtuality that is already real.

⁴⁰ “Virtual, having virtue or efficacy: having the efficacy without the material part: [...] unreal but capable of being considered as real for some purposes.” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 1234). The virtual is not opposed to the real but is rather contrasted with the actual. Deleuze writes, “The virtual ... does not have to be realised, but rather actualised; and the rules of actualisation are not those of resemblance and limitation, but those of difference or divergence and of creation.” (Deleuze, 1988: 97). As I have said, immanence is a matter of difference, an internal limit by which the virtual becomes actual.

“Our petrified idea of the theatre is connected with our petrified idea of a culture without shadows, where, no matter which way it turns, our mind (*esprit*) encounters only emptiness, though space is full.” (Artaud, 1958: 12).

This attitude towards the fullness of space engenders a *virtual* domain, recalling my earlier comments about the skin on things being turned inside out to envelope an intensive spatium, both empty *and* full. Here, Artaud’s view of emptiness criticises the false appearances of a social reality that ostensibly occupies the real, extinguishing all shadows in the process of actualisation. On the other hand, the *butoh-bwo* takes on, and *turns upon* the cruel determination of an emptiness that opens itself to the fullness of the virtual. The ‘skin’ of the BwO creates a plane, or a membrane, that ‘encompasses’ an intensive spatium of pure potential. There is a complementarity of sorts between the pure event and the intensive spatium, in that both comprise virtual conjunctions, *haecceities* and incorporeal transformations. For the hollow-body of the *butoh-bwo*, the intensive spatium establishes the locus of the pure event, so that the latter carries the shadowy visitation of virtual relations within the *butoh-body*.⁴¹

ii. *Doubling the real*

I am a little closer to situating the *butoh-bwo* in terms of an actual *butoh-body*. And yet, there is still the problem of the inherent impossibility in adequately expressing a sense of the virtual in ‘real’ terms; that is, without seeming to exhaust the virtual through the process of actualisation. The question then becomes: how may the locus of the pure event be posited within the *butoh-body*, as an intensive spatium located somewhere between the virtual and the actual, where it occupies only the site of their indeterminacy? In his analysis of Artaud’s *schizophrenic-body*,⁴² Deleuze discusses the virtual and the actual by delineating the *depths* of a body vis-à-vis the *surface* of language, where the former plunges into the chaos of the virtual while the latter renders the sense of it legible within the frame of a proposition. Moreover, insofar as the depths imply a destratification, versus the stratification of the surface, the internal limit that generates them both (difference) may be

⁴¹ In a similar manner, José Gil discusses a *virtual body*, as a process of ‘emptying out’, in relation to the choreography of Merce Cunningham (Gil, in Massumi, 2002: 122-123).

⁴² In Chapter 2 I compare Artaud’s *schizophrenic-body* to Hijikata’s *silent body*, in relation to language and the problem of expression. Deleuze and Guattari cite the *schizo body* as a type or attribute of the BwO (D&G, 1987: 150). Deleuze also describes the dimensions of Artaud’s *schizophrenic-body* as porous, fragmented and dissociated (Deleuze, 1990: 87).

apprehended within a body (albeit provisionally) when the process of actualisation is subtended by a *counter-actualisation* (see Glossary). This auxiliary movement does not *oppose* the actual, so much as accompany it in order to defer its accomplishment. In Deleuze's words –

“... to be the mime of *what effectively occurs*, to double the actualisation with a counter-actualisation, the identification with a distance, like the true actor or dancer, is to give to the truth of the event the only chance of not being confused with its inevitable actualisation.”⁴³

(Deleuze, 1990: 161)

Counter-actualisation invokes that secret part of the event within which the virtual is preserved; that is, the event as pure reserve. It is a *doubling*, in the Deleuzian sense of differentiation via repetition and divergence, or in Artaudian terms as the implacable necessity to approach the hidden cruelty that cements matter together. For Artaud, the shadow play of hidden forces is precisely what he believes to be theatre's double and from which it receives its power: “Every real effigy has a shadow which is its double.” (Artaud, 1958: 12). According to Schaffer, Artaud's shadows express “pure virtualities which double every given form” (Schaffer, 2000: 140). This elusive doubling recalls what Deleuze says about the secret part of the event adding to or subtracting from its own actualisation, invoking a vast mathematics of virtual conjunctions working behind (or within) the scenes.

For the *butoh-bwo* vis-à-vis the *butoh-body*, we may say that the attribute of a hollow-body performs the function of evacuating the interiority of the strata (the organism, subjectification, interpretation), via the eternal deferral of the pure event. This secret part of the event unleashes the hidden force of the virtual by a degree of destratification that counters its own actualisation. This tension derives its power from moving in two directions at once, towards the actual *and* the virtual.

There still remains the question of how the *materiality* of an actual body (*utsushimi*) may be turned inside out, not only emptied but also *filled*. As Deleuze remarks, events are not bodies but *effects* – they do not so much exist as *subsist* or *inhere* (Deleuze, 1990: 4). Nonetheless, “The eternal truth of the event is grasped only if the event is also inscribed in the flesh” (Deleuze, 1990: 161). To unpack this dilemma, I will turn once again to Hijikata's *butoh*, in order to clarify the complexity of the event and the power of counter-actualisation, in terms of the second attribute of the *butoh-bwo*, that of a dead-body.

⁴³ An affinity may be noted with Artaud here when he says: “The plastic and never completed specter, whose forms the true actor apes, on which he imposes the forms and image of his own sensibility.” (Artaud, 1958: 134).

iii. *Shades of a dark luminosity*⁴⁴

In his *Ankoku Butoh* or ‘dance of utter darkness’, Hijikata builds a whole *oeuvre* around the potentiality of a darkness lying in the depths of the body. This theme has several aspects that resonate with Artaud’s shadows as an opening to the virtual. Here I will compare and contrast the two in order to discover the dark luminosity of a dead-body. I will show how its *butoh-sei* is informed by a particularly Japanese aesthetic of darkness, a primordial yearning that rejects Western modernism, while nonetheless drawing upon the lineage of avant garde French literature and radical philosophy.⁴⁵

Amidst the rapid economic growth of post-war Japan, with its accelerating consumerism, the cultural imperialism of the West and the superpower politics of the AMPO (U.S. – Japan Mutual Defence Treaty) many Japanese artists and intellectuals sought refuge in a nostalgia for the premodern, while nevertheless remaining critical of the traditional Japanese performing arts. Certainly Hijikata’s derision of modern society is clearly evident when he says “I abhor a world which is regulated from the cradle to the grave. I prefer the dark to the dazzling light.” (Hijikata, in *Asbestos Kan*, 1987: 84). The *butoh-sei* of Hijikata’s darkness *turns upon* and *turns inside out* conventional definitions of darkness and light, as they pertain to ostensibly innate values of good and evil. Such a *detournement* (see Glossary) is meant not merely to confound notions of beauty and morality, but to unearth the hidden, vital force lying beneath interpretation – an experimental *will to power* in Nietzschean terms, ‘Beyond Good and Evil’ (Nietzsche, 1975).⁴⁶ Hence the impulsion of the artist-philosopher to draw all dualities into an aesthetic logic of hermeneutical collapse.

“All we have now is light. The light was carried on the back of our darkness. That little devil throws its weight around, gobbling up darkness. That’s why darkness runs away from the night. We haven’t got darkness at night these days. The darkness of the past was clear and limpid.” (Hijikata, in *Asbestos Kan*, 1987: 84).

⁴⁴ The title of this section refers to the title of Viala & Masson-Sekine’s book, “Shade of Darkness” (V&M, 1988).

⁴⁵ In addition to Artaud, I mention Genet, Bataille and Nietzsche. Hijikata was also influenced by Sade, Sartre and Lautremont.

⁴⁶ Later in this chapter, I explore a related critique concerning truth and the power of the false, again with reference to Nietzsche.

In another translation of this speech, the darkness of the past is described as “translucent” (Hijikata, 2000e: 77), inferring a luminous quality. Darkness acquires what light claims only for itself. The little devil that gobbles up the darkness attempts to delimit the event to the process of actualisation, reducing the possibility of existence only to those things that see the light of day. On the other hand, Hijikata’s *darkness* resembles the unlimited and inexhaustible reservoir of the *virtual*, for which the event becomes pure reserve.⁴⁷

Jun’ichiro Tanazaki first proposed a Japanese ‘aesthetic of darkness’, writing in 1933: “the darkness in which Noh is shrouded and the beauty that emerges from it make a distinct world of shadows which today can be seen only on the stage, but in the past it could not have been far removed from daily life.” (Tanazaki, in Klein, 1986: 49). This appears to resonate clearly with Hijikata’s yearning for a luminous darkness that now runs away from the night, a tendency to find “beauty not in the thing itself but in the patterns of shadows, the light and the darkness that one thing against another creates” (Tanazaki, in Klein, 1986: 49).⁴⁸ Butoh seeks to enact on the stage a desire for “a world of darkness that our modern age has lost” (Eguchi, in Klein, 1986: 90), and here it finds an echo in the words of Artaud when he links – “Our petrified idea of the theatre [...] with our petrified idea of a culture without shadows” (Artaud, 1958: 12). Hijikata plunges into the dark, beyond the premodern to something quite primitive, carrying this other light with which “to illuminate the primordial darkness seething beneath the surface of the human imagination.” (Munroe, 1994: 193).

iv. The crack in the surface

The innovation of Hijikata’s conception of darkness is to locate it inside the very depths of the butoh-body. Here it becomes the limitless reservoir of unknown potentiality, the sea within of which Tanaka speaks, Kafka’s forgotten landscape of the body. Vast as it is, it strains any relative delineation of inside and outside; indeed, it is more like the absolute Outside, conceived as a force unbound by interiority or exteriority, but rather *bound up with* the virtual. In trying to create a conceptual image for this straining between the darkness and the light, is it not like a kind of *chink* between what is apparent and what is not? When Deleuze discusses the surface and the depths of the

⁴⁷ In a similar vein, Artaud states: “... the theatre is the time of evil , the triumph of dark powers.” (Artaud, 1958: 30).

⁴⁸ Hijikata’s preference for the dark instead of the light echoes Tanazaki description of “a phosphorescent jewel [that] gives off its glow and color in the dark and loses its beauty in the light of day” (Tanazaki, in Klein, 1986: 49).

body, he posits the locus of their indeterminacy in the image of a *crack* (see Glossary). The *crack* rends the surface of the actual with a counter-actualisation, in rendering the indiscernible aspect of the pure event. Here, the actual and the virtual coalesce, where the unfathomable depths rise up to shimmer within the crack, unrealised and yet already perfectly real. When Deleuze said earlier that counter-actualisation gives “the event the only chance of not being confused with its inevitable actualisation”, he goes on to say –

“It is to give to the crack the chance of flying over its own incorporeal surface area, without stopping at the bursting within each body.” (Deleuze, 1990: 161)

The crack is incorporeal, a tear in the transient membrane where the virtual and the actual *turn upon* themselves. To evacuate the hollow-body is not an attempt to go beyond the limit but to generate something by it, in a relentless search for the virtuality of a *butoh-bwo*. “To evacuate one’s body, to step into an obscure region of matter” (Tanaka, 1986b: 153). This is how Hijikata appears to us when he dances in a manner that refuses form, or “the intention to get into form” (Sakurai, in W&K, 1988). No less precise, Hijikata moves with the tremor of always *becoming*, never fixing the contour of the body as a delineation between inside and outside, occupying only the interstice of what is and what has not yet come into being (*metamorphosis*).

Counter-actualisation is problematic by nature, so for the *butoh-body* the problem of *expression* becomes one of both generating and absorbing the power of the event, giving it the chance to ‘fly over’ the incorporeal surface of a *butoh-bwo*. So how may a dancer ‘actually’ express the *darkness* when this actualisation exposes it to the light, thereby delimiting its power? Tanaka’s answer is, “the body doesn’t need to express, it is already expression” (Tanaka, Hakushu workshop, August 2002). For Hijikata, the mute mutability of the crack may be seen in the figure of his dead sister, chastising his craving for expression –

“I keep one of my sisters alive in my body. When I am absorbed in creating a *butoh* piece, she tears off the darkness in my body and eats more than is necessary of it. [...] And she speaks to me like this. “You call it dance and expression and are mad about it, but don’t you think that what you can express can only emerge by not being expressed?” Then she quietly fades away. That is why the dead are my *butoh* teachers.” (Hijikata, in *Asbestos Kan*, 1987: 84).⁴⁹

⁴⁹ In Deleuzian terms, the dilemma for the *butoh* dancer lies where the expressed becomes fixed in a representation, seeming to exhaust itself in the process of actualisation.

For expression can so easily fly free of the crack, when true becoming collapses into mere imitation, exhausted by its realisation. Hence the necessity to “be the mime of *what effectively occurs*, to double the actual with its counter-actualisation”. This mimicry is not imitation, just as it is not the virtual that is ‘evacuated’ within the locus of the pure event, but rather its actualisation. It is like a shadow-play hovering above the crack, where the dark depths arise in the butoh-body to acquire a luminosity that never really sees the light of day. In this manner the transient membrane of the butoh-bwo constantly draws upon the darkness of an *outside* that is nonetheless within itself.

Harnessing the event

It is the figure of death that assumes the form of the absolute outside within the butoh-body, where the emergence of a *dead-body* rises up from the darkness of the butoh-bwo, to generate a luminous condensation or ‘fossilisation’ of the depths. In the last section of this chapter, I will summarise these aspects of the dead-body (and those of its counterpart, the hollow-body) to provide a conceptual model for the butoh-bwo and its articulation, or *modulation* within the butoh-body. This conceptual model (the FACE) will be presented as a kind of *image* – a way of picturing in theoretical terms what occurs within the dancer’s body. But first, I will examine the figure of death and the dead-body through Hijikata’s approach to nakedness and Artaud’s critique of being.

i. Killing the body

Hijikata’s penchant for paradox can be seen to operate most effectively in his mystifying obfuscation around life and death. To begin with, his approach to death problematises the negativity in which it is generally understood, invoking the impossibility of a generative limit by drawing from it a negentropic power. Death appears here as a figure of the outside, haunting the process of actualisation with the spectre of the virtual.⁵⁰ Death gives Hijikata a *modus operandi* for the detournement of the darkness, while this darkness gives the virtual an image – one turning upon the

⁵⁰ To clarify things, there is a complex and subtle relationship between *death*, the *outside*, *immanence* and the *virtual*. For my purposes it may be said that death appears as a figure of the outside; the outside is the form (or rather non-form) in which the virtual appears in relation to subjectivity; the virtual is that unlimited domain out of which actualisation occurs; while immanence is the vital force which pervades all these things. Also see Glossary.

blind limit of what may be apprehended within the field of immanence defined by the butoh-bwo.⁵¹ It is perhaps like the image of a butoh-body slowly disappearing amongst the shimmering layers of a rice-paddy at dusk, the luminosity of which compounds the difference of an apparent surface and an absolute depth.⁵²

Akaji Maro, a friend of Hijikata and founder of the butoh group *Dairakudakan*, describes the abolition of the organic body with a sense of implacable cruelty, when he says –

“First of all, you have to kill your body to construct a body as a larger fiction. It is not only massive but also light and transparent [...] When it opens its mouth, the dark cave in it belongs to something other than human beings. This fiction is almost chaos. Catching some parts of chaos and creating a total chaos. Such a process exists innumerable. You always go back to the chaotic fiction. For example, you can find many different cells in each part of your body. And you can build a bridge between one cell and the other cell. You don’t have to have the shape of a human being. You can be a whole city.” (Maro, in V&M, 1988: 197).

In terms of the strata, this desire to ‘kill’ the body engenders a dismantling or erasure of the organism, replaced by the construction of a butoh-bwo. Massive, light and transparent, this fiction of experimentation is articulated by the truth of a *false power* (see Glossary) that mimics and multiplies the strata of signification and interpretation. Most clearly, Maro’s killing of the body relates to the third of the great strata, that of subjectification. Here, the figure of death concerns the abandonment of self and the rejection of the unified subject as a product of Western rationalism. In its place there is the desire for a pure anonymity that may open up the possibility of a more communal sense of identity.⁵³ In this very rejection of the individual is seen the potential for an

⁵¹ “The field of immanence is not internal to the self, but neither does it come from an external self or a nonself. Rather it is like the absolute Outside that knows no Selves because interior and exterior are equally a part of the immanence in which they have fused.” (D&G, 1989: 156).

⁵² This reflection is drawn from an impression of the rice-paddies near the Bodyweather Farm (Hakushu workshop, August 2002).

⁵³ As Klein describes it, this denial of the individual ego as a product of modernism finds an influence in the native ethnographic critique of subjectivity put forward by Kunio Yanagita, who posits the notion of a collective or communal unconscious (Klein, 1986: 31-32). In other ways, Hijikata’s nativist tendencies echo Yanagita’s, although they are also very much the product of his own concerns: the nostalgia for rural Japan and the authenticity of marginalised bodies such as farmers, women, children, the aged, the disabled and the insane.

authentic autonomy of self, as a locus of resistance against those powers that seek to rob the body of its vitality (Klein, 1986: 31-32). Writing shortly after the AMPO crisis, Hijikata invokes the figure of death in just such a manner, through the concept of *nakedness*. Quoting Bataille, he writes –

““Nakedness offers a contrast to self-possession, to discontinuous existence, in other words.” He also said, “It is a state of communication revealing a quest for a possible continuance of being, beyond the confines of the self. Bodies open out to a state of continuity through secret channels that give us a feeling of obscenity. Stripping naked is seen in civilisations where the act has full significance if not as a simulacrum of the act of killing at least as an equivalent shorn of gravity.” These words of Bataille’s seem to approximate most closely the human solidarity of a naked body, which is first attained, even as the body is solitary, through the continuity of being, which is to say, death.” (Hijikata, 2000b, 45)

The *butoh-bwo* creates this kind of communication through the disassembly of the organism and the nomadism of desubjectification. But how exactly can there be a continuity between bodies when this solidarity is by nature solitary? It is in the ‘solidity’ of this solidarity, of immanence as an unformed substance, where it approaches the limit of its continuance at, and therefore *through* death. Its solitary status constitutes a singularity (the indefinite article of ‘a’ *butoh-body*), thereby invoking the collectivity of a naked multiplicity.⁵⁴ By the same token, it is by their intensive properties that the organs may free themselves from the subjugation of the organism; in a similar manner to the convulsive shuddering of the *butoh* dancer, when the muscles appear to have their own autonomy – “their own will” (Iwabuchi, in Klein, 1986: 75). It is by this very singularity that they are able to establish virtual relations with other bodies and things. This separation of parts does not then engender a separateness *per se*, for the *whole* is reformulated as the irreducible outside, opening to

⁵⁴ Masachi Ohsawa says that the body of the *butoh* dancer has an ‘absolute solitude’ about it, in the sense that it ‘bears singularity’. And yet, in so doing the body also “encounters otherness in itself, [so that] solitude turns to the plurality of chaos” (Ohsawa, in W&K, 1998). The influence of Deleuze is readily apparent here, as in the title of the essay, *Transcending Immanence*. This perhaps recalls Deleuze’s notion of a *transcendental empiricism* (Deleuze, 1994: 147; also see Glossary) – an idea inspired by Artaud’s critique of being (discussed later in this chapter) and thought (discussed in Chapter 2: *The thinking body*). For Deleuze, it involves the ‘transcendental principle’ of pure immanence, formulated in the empirical sense of difference-in-itself, rather than qualified by the transcendence of a higher power. For *butoh*, Ohsawa defines transcendence as “looking back on the pluralised body as a whole, and drawn back into immanence which is infinity.” (Ohsawa, in W&K, 1998).

the naked solidarity of the virtual, rather than remaining enclosed within the sovereign domain of the organism and the self.

“The naked body is bleeding. Amidst a continuity resembling anger, I make repairs to arms and legs, which constantly go astray in an individual organic body. Forgetting the origin of legs and even that of arms. I am a body shop; my profession is the business of human rehabilitation, which goes today by the name of dancer.” (Hijikata, 2000b: 44)

Hijikata’s conception of nakedness as a collective ‘death of self’ approximates the nomadism attributed to the desubjectification of the *butoh-bwo*; accompanying the disarticulation of the organism, where all functional origins are forgotten as the *butoh-bwo* traces the re/membering of a lost vitality, through a plane of consistency. Hijikata desired to finish his dancers as “lethal weapons that dream... as naked soldiers, as a naked culture.” (Hijikata, 2000b: 47). The ‘bleeding’ of this nomad warrior or naked soldier may be seen here as a process of becoming, in the light of Hijikata’s connection to everyday objects, when he describes them as “a blood relation” (Hijikata, 2000e: 75).

ii. *Death is living*⁵⁵

Deleuze credits Blanchot with distinguishing two aspects of the event through the figure of death. Firstly, there is the event as a definitive moment, grounded in relation to oneself and the fact of the body, in the mortality of one’s own personal death. Then there is the other side to the event that constantly eludes the present. It is interminable and ungraspable, except as a mobile and impersonal instant, forever floating in the crack between a past that is already gone and a future that is always yet to come (Deleuze, 1990: 151-152). So too, death is certain and yet has an absolute uncertainty about it, neither a final possibility that may be completely realised, nor an imminent necessity demanding our acquiescence (Bourassa, 2002: 71). Where the incorporeality of the event *slices* the corporeality of the body, here death resists being realised or accomplished. Like the counter-actualisation of the *crack*, it prefers to persist or inhere as a pure event, a shadow grounded only in its own relation. Death is absolute impotence. It is not so much that it robs one of life, but that it robs life of its own appearance. It is a pure event that is always/already incomplete; not an *imminent* certainty but an *immanent* undecidability that refuses to be grasped or fully realised.

⁵⁵ The title of a performance by *Gekidan Kaitaisha*, in Tokyo, which I attended in December 2002. Broinowski coined ‘Death is Living’, by translating the original title, ‘*Shinu ga mama ni*’, which has a slightly different meaning but doesn’t translate well into English.

In the face of death Artaud refuses the judgment of God upon his body, seeing it as the divine imposition of a hierarchical organisation of parts. He rejects the functional imperatives of digestion and excretion, of organs subjugated within a *whole* that is eminently closed, delimiting their diverse possibilities. In his radio play *To Be Done with the Judgment of God* (recorded shortly before his death), Artaud condemns a derived sense of being – granted by God and inscribed in the automatism of an organic body –

“There where it smells of shit,
it smells of being.
Man could very well have avoided shitting
and kept his anal pocket closed,
but he chose to shit
as he had chosen to live
instead of consenting to live dead.

The fact is that in order to make caca
he would have had to consent
not to be,
but he could not resolve to lose being,
in other words to die alive.
There is in being
something particularly tempting for man,
and that something is precisely
CACA.
(Roarings here.)”

(Artaud, 1992: 316).

Here, Artaud performs a delicate operation upon the notion of death as excrement, and their twofold denial by man. The consent which man surrenders in return for *being*, is the consent that would allow him the freedom to ‘live dead’, or to ‘die alive’; that is, the freedom to be the creator of himself. Like Hijikata, Artaud advocates a kind of *dead-body* (or what he calls a pure body), rather than one that merely eats and excretes a death that is always outside, even when it is *passing through*. The two sides of death redouble, so that to die alive in a dead-body means *enacting* a relation to the interminable event, grounded only in the infinite movement of the *crack*. As Deleuze remarks, every event has a double and impersonal aspect that is like death. Here, he cites Blanchot –

“It is the abyss of the present, the time without present with which I have no relation, toward which I am unable to project myself. For in it *I* do not die. I forfeit the power of dying. In this abyss they (*on*) die – they never cease to die, and they never succeed in dying.” (Blanchot, in Deleuze, 1990: 152)

Artaud takes up the task of dissociating the double, of naming these phantasmagoria of shadows, as they appear in life and in the theatre, and redoubling them – Blanchot’s ‘they’ that die unceasingly and yet without completion. Deleuze describes ‘them’ in terms of *preindividual singularities* (see Glossary), impersonal yet individuating elements which exist independently of, but also essential to the formation of subjectivity.⁵⁶ When Artaud says that man must create himself this is not advocating a return to the subject. It is a call to *action*, to the creative act that knows nothing of the self or even of being. It is the reserve of neither god nor man, but rather the *pure reserve* of the event. Here, the pain of the depths wants to “BURST OUT” (Artaud, 1992: 324). But firstly it must be *whipped* in order to render the flesh with a crack, flaying the impossible limit of becoming, through the process of counter-actualisation.

“There are some fools who think of themselves as beings, as innately beings. I am he who, in order to be, must whip his innateness. One must be a being innately, that is, always whipping this sort of non-existent kennel [*chenil* – also hole or hovel], O bitches of impossibility!” (Artaud, 1970-4, vol.1: 19).

iii. *Whirlwind gobbling pain*

Death is the ultimate impossibility, indeed the very model of impossibility (Bourassa, 2002: 71). It appears only as a limit, not as the end of one’s life, but as an internal limit in relation to being and its innateness. Here in the limit lies the task of making death one’s own, not of choosing the time of the final hour but of creating *a life*, through the open singularity of ‘a’ becoming. In order to *create* it is a matter of necessity that man dethrone the creator-God, stripping away the cruelty of derived being, and instead impose upon *himself* his own sense of cruelty, that of a pain borne of this problematic innateness: “pain, the menacing, never tiring presence of my body” (Artaud, 1992: 324).

⁵⁶ Individuation and preindividual singularities are addressed in more detail in Chapter 2.

“I employ the word cruelty in the sense of an appetite for life, a cosmic rigor and implacable necessity, in the gnostic sense of a living whirlwind that devours the darkness, in the sense of that pain apart from whose ineluctable necessity life could not continue; good is desired, it is the consequence of an act; evil is permanent. When the hidden god creates, he obeys the cruel necessity of creation which has been imposed on himself by himself, and he cannot *not* create, hence not admit into the center of the self-willed whirlwind a kernel of evil ever more condensed, and ever more consumed.” (Artaud, 1958: 102-103).

For Artaud, the creation of man, of himself by himself, is a matter of transformation, the consequence of an *act*. Therefore the counter-actualisation of ‘being innately’ cannot occur without the *virtual* from which it emerges and the *crack* through which it transforms.⁵⁷ For Artaud, the permanence of *evil* makes *cruelty* a necessity, just as approaching the impossible limit requires ‘whipping’ the pure event that is death: “O bitches of impossibility!”⁵⁸ Redoubling Artaud himself, we may perhaps see the two sides of the vertiginous event *turn upon* one another, slowly gathering centripetal⁵⁹ force as they redouble with the whipping of a whirlwind. A vortical movement of shadows chasing the limit of *cruelty*, the centre of which is neither ordinary cause nor state of being, but the *crack* of an impossibility that cannot be attained – only maintained through counter-actualisation. In a passage that also conjures up a sense of the centripetal movement of a *crack* that may be re-visioned in the form of a whirlwind, Artaud writes -

“Furthermore, when we speak of the word “life,” it must be understood we are not referring to life as we know it from its surface of fact, but to that fragile, fluctuating center which forms never reach. And if there is one hellish, truly accursed thing in our time, it is our artistic dallying with forms, instead of being like victims burnt at the stake, signaling through the flames.” (Artaud: 1958: 13).

Hijikata relates how he first apprehended a sense of dark forces underlying the world of appearances, of death as a vertiginous event that comes to haunt the living with the presence of the *outside*. Less than a year before his own death, he recalls the childhood memory of a ghostly entity

⁵⁷ Here, emergence and transformation do not denote what is accomplished within actualisation, but instead indicate two aspects of a recursive operation involving heterogeneous orders of individuation and divergent series of becoming. These references to complex systems theory are developed further in Chapter 2.

⁵⁸ Like Nietzsche, Artaud sees *evil* as a moral system of judgement issuing from a supposed origin of truth, whereas the good constitutes the power of transformation in life (Dale, 2002: 92-93).

⁵⁹ *Centripetal*: “tending towards a centre” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 879).

known as a *wind daruma*.⁶⁰ Taking the form of a blustering whirlwind, it would rush into the house when the door was opened, causing the young Hijikata to run about the empty rooms so it wouldn't know where he was (Hijikata, 2000e: 73). Hijikata re-visions his *wind-daruma* by inserting it into the story of a priest who dreams that he has died and is watching his own body burning on a pile of firewood. Hijikata imagines his *wind-daruma* skipping along the path between the paddy fields, "thinking all the while about its own bones burning up [...] conducting an aerial burial of its own body, its own soul." (Hijikata, 2000e: 72). Like Artaud's victims burning at the stake, Hijikata's *wind-daruma* is one that dances around the fragile, fluctuating center of a butoh-bwo without bones, or organs for that matter.

When Artaud says that the whirlwind devours the darkness, what kind of devouring could this be? Certainly not one of eating and shitting, for it would have "no mouth to mouthe being, that sewer drilled with teeth." (Artaud, 1965: 142). Just as when Hijikata invokes a sister or a little devil, this no-mouth mimes the toothless *gobbling* of his darkness – as a purely creative act, chewing on the event of its own emergence. Not the gobbling of a stratified organism that eats and shits, but one that delimits its own actualisation, as seen in Hijikata's refusal to *get into form*, or when Artaud disavows a kernel of evil that consumes rather than creates. Just as when Maro posits a fictional body "that is almost chaos" (Maro, in V&M, 1988: 197), in a similar manner Deleuze and Guattari distinguish between a purely chaotic virtual and a virtuality which acquires consistency – "that has become an entity formed on a plane of immanence that sections the chaos." (D&G, 1994: 156; see also Glossary: *plane of immanence*). This entity is the pure event, eluding its own accomplishment as it flies over the *crack*, like the dark cave of Maro's mouth, gobbling a silent scream as it bears mute witness to a massive articulation of nonhuman becomings.

iv. *The impersonality of an impowered dead-body*

In his own way, Hijikata takes up Artaud's call to action and to the counter-actualisation of the pure event. The innovation of his dead-body lies in its very internalisation of that death that is otherwise without relation to his body. Like Artaud, he prefers to 'live dead' in a 'dead-body', redoubling and defamiliarising death's own impersonal aspect. Instead of a just one relation to a mortal self, he

⁶⁰ "A *daruma* is a limbless figure weighted so that it always bounces back when knocked over. In Japan it is widely believed to be a symbol of persistence leading to eventual success. Daruma is an abbreviation for Bodhidharma, a mythical Middle Eastern priest said to have carried Zen practice and teachings to China about 500 CE." (Kurihara, footnote in Hijikata, 2000e: 79).

creates a multiplicity of relations, in the unceasing manner of the event, in a body that is “a graveyard of accumulation of dead bodies.” (Ichikawa, in W&K, 1988).

“I would like to make the dead gestures inside my body die one more time and make the dead themselves dead again. I would like to have a person who has already died die over and over inside my body. I may not know death, but it knows me.” (Hijikata, 2000e: 77)

Hijikata constructs what might be called an ‘impersonality’ of death in his body, one that is neither *self* nor *non-self*, but is rather constituted by the play of preindividual singularities – ‘they’ that ‘die alive’.⁶¹ In this sense, Hijikata may be understood when he says that individuality is “the overflow to the outside” (Hijikata, 2000c: 54). By killing the body, death is no longer impersonal, for there is no longer any person to mourn its mortality; and yet, by inhabiting this dead-body with those that die over and over, the outside makes itself apparent through a process of *individuation* (see Glossary) that is both anterior and adjacent to the self.

From the loss of his siblings (a sister sold into prostitution, his brothers returning home from the war in funeral urns), to the post-war devastation of Tokyo, Hijikata became acquainted with death’s elusive character. And when the *wind-daruma* entered the house to deposit itself by the open hearth, appearing “vaguely weird and yet somehow familiar,” he had perhaps the first intimations that while he may not know death, it nevertheless knows him. Hijikata would often say to his dancers that they must have suffered a lot by the accumulation of everyday movements. But he took these “dead shapes” and from their suffering restored the power of a potentiality (what is for Artaud the pain of a necessary cruelty). This process is perhaps like the warp and woof of a vortical movement,⁶² where the two sides of death turn around an uncertain point; a point constituted by the impossibility of a limit that is no longer defined in terms of mortality and subjectivity.

“It is at this mobile and precise point, where all the events gather together in one that transmutation happens; this is the point at which death turns against death; where dying is the negation of death, and the impersonality of dying no longer indicates only the moment when I disappear outside of myself, but rather the moment when death loses itself in itself, and also the figure which the most singular life takes on in order to substitute itself for me.” (Deleuze, 1990: 153)

⁶¹ ‘They die’ – as in the fourth person singular of ‘it’ is raining (Deleuze, 1990: 152).

⁶² This notion of a vortical movement as the warp and woof of the outside, is developed further in relation to my film *pneu babel*, in Chapter 3.

This singular life constitutes a process of individuation that goes beyond subjectivity *per se*, in which the figure of death allows the force of the outside (as a mass of preindividual singularities), to ‘flow through’ the subject. Or in Hijikata’s terms, it is an ‘overflow’ to the outside, in which a dead person dying over and over within his body deprives him of self, but also allows him to “bear singularity” while drawing upon “the plurality of chaos” (Ohsawa, in W&K, 1998). The construction of subjectivity is substituted in favour of a more open process of individuation, where ‘death knows me’ – in the sense that this ‘me’ is accompanied by a ‘knowing’ that exceeds any idea of inside and outside, knowing nothing of selves or non-selves. Instead of disempowering the subject, the *impower* of death (see Glossary) allows a transmutation to occur, in which the subject disappears outside of itself just as the force of the outside is harnessed when death appears via the event of its dying over and over. This notion of an impower is what Blanchot gives to the aspect of death that eludes its accomplishment, or what Deleuze attributes to the interminable waiting of the pure event. In his discussion of Artaud, Derrida describes it as –

“...inspiration itself: the force of a void, the cyclonic breath of a prompter who draws his breath in and thereby robs me of that which he first allowed to approach me and which I believed I could say *in my own name*.” (Derrida, 1978: 176)⁶³

Hijikata belongs to the same company of thought when he draws into himself so many dead bodies and dying gestures. Here, they do not rob him of life, for he is already dead. Instead, the impower of death turns upon itself with the centripetal force of a whipping (as in a counter-actualisation). The transfiguration that occurs is like the cyclonic breath of a *wind-daruma* rattling around inside the *butoh*-body, burning up its own bones.

A conceptual model

i. *Facets of the FACE*

In conclusion, the hollow-body and the dead-body constitute the two basic attributes or types of the *butoh*-bwo, where each aspect turns upon the other to generate an indiscernible relation between the

⁶³ In Derrida, *unpouvoir* is translated as ‘unpower’. Blanchot gives it as ‘inpower’ (in Deleuze, 1989: 168), while Deleuze describes an ‘impower’ (Deleuze, 1989: 166). The notion of the impower is discussed further in Chapter 2, through Artaud, Deleuze’s cinephilosophy and in relation to Hijikata’s *butoh-fu*.

virtual and the actual (counter-actualisation). The two attributes coalesce to the extent that the dead-body also engenders a sense of emptiness (in the abandonment of self and of death as an impower that hollows out the butoh-body), while the hollow-body forever approaches the limit of its continuance as a transient membrane. The butoh-bwo makes itself apparent within the movement and gestures of an actual butoh-body, where a zone of indeterminacy may be apprehended between them, appearing like a luminous and fluctuating contour that both encompasses and hollows out the dancer.

In the chapters to come, the complex dynamics of the butoh-bwo are described in a systemic and diagrammatic manner in order to facilitate the translation of theory and practice. For now, I will conclude this chapter by introducing the conceptual model that will be used for locating the variable dynamics of the butoh-bwo. With this model I aim to provide a 'technical' template for understanding and visualising the way in which the butoh-bwo modulates and is modulated by the butoh-body according to the two attributes.⁶⁴ This process of modulation is given a diagram (see Appendices, figure 1), in which each attribute has also two facets that describe the two sides or poles in this articulation.⁶⁵ With these four facets the conceptual model of the butoh-bwo is given the title of an abbreviation: F-A-C-E (fossilisation, accumulation, condensation and evacuation). Following the general circuitry of the diagram, the four facets of modulation function as follows –⁶⁶

⁶⁴ The butoh-bwo acts as a generative limit for the butoh-body, while the latter also delimits the former. In this manner, the two attributes are posited as a plane of consistency (dead-body) and its intensive spatium (hollow-body), where the former marks the continuance of virtuality and actualisation, while the latter delimits these two poles by modulating the event of a counter-actualisation.

⁶⁵ The two pairs within these four facets subtend a generative limit or *degree-zero* where the butoh-body and the butoh-bwo stratify or destratify one another.

⁶⁶ The order of sequence given here (A.C.E.F) provides the best way of understanding the model, where accumulation and fossilisation are given first and last (as the two poles of the dead-body) while condensation and evacuation sit in the middle (the two poles of the hollow-body). However, the order of sequence really functions as F.A.C.E. in the sense that fossilisation registers what actually appears in the butoh-body, while accumulation is so deep as to seem *virtually* non-existent (even though it is anterior to the process of actualisation). The notion of the butoh-bwo as a configuration of circuits delimiting actual and virtual poles is developed further in Chapter 2.

1. Firstly, an *accumulation* (A) occurs, in which preindividual singularities arise from the dark depths of the butoh-body (its virtual pole)⁶⁷, where the heterogeneous duration of the butoh-body includes the sum total of its intensive affects, whether this be suffering the accumulation of everyday movements or “a graveyard of accumulation of dead bodies” (Ichikawa, in W&K, 1988). In this manner, the facet of accumulation belongs to the attribute of the dead-body, for it is where the virtual domain assumes the figure of an absolute outside.⁶⁸

2. Secondly, the preindividual singularities gather consistency to form a *condensation* (C) of intensive plateaus.⁶⁹ Here, ‘they’ die again as they approach the limit of a process of actualisation. On one side of the limit, this condensation maintains the fluidity of the butoh-bwo (turning towards the virtual pole and its accumulation), while on the other side the accumulating weight gathers density, producing blockages in its conjugated flows (turning towards the actual pole and its fossilisation – see 4). In this manner, condensation belongs to the hollow-body, although it also marks a limit point along the axis of the dead-body.

3. Thirdly, there is an *evacuation* (E) of the hollow-body, which maintains the fluidity of this condensation to guarantee the very transience of the membrane (as a fluctuating condition). This occurs as a multiplication of singularities within the intensive spatium,⁷⁰ subtending the process of actualisation with a counter-actualisation, so that the butoh-bwo always eludes fixity (‘getting into form’). The image of this evacuation is that of a crack in the membrane, extending its web as the condensation of intensive plateaus allows a proliferation of virtual conjunctions.⁷¹ Waguri provides an image for the hollow-body when he calls for – “Dissection and analysis of one’s own body. An unstable lump of flesh in a container. Being pulled out and back in, the flesh goes through multiplication and condensation.” (Waguri, in W&K, 1998).

⁶⁷ The actual butoh-body of the dancer contains within itself a virtual aspect, via the inscription of the past in all its multiplicity. See also Chapter 2 for a discussion of time as duration and becoming.

⁶⁸ It is what Deleuze and Guattari might call an “accumulation of meanwhiles”, the *dead-time* (see Glossary) of the pure event, “an infinite awaiting that is already infinitely past, awaiting and reserve.” (D&G, 1994: 158).

⁶⁹ See Glossary: *plateaus of intensity*. These are discussed further in Chapter 2.

⁷⁰ It is an intensive evacuation rather than an extensive one. Figuratively speaking, it evacuates (delimits) the process of actualisation.

⁷¹ The dead forces are transmuted within the crack, dying over and over in their multiplication; in what may be called the *empty-time* (see Glossary) of the pure event – “as still to come and as having already happened.” (D&G, 1994: 158).

4. Finally, there is a *fossilisation* (F) of the transient membrane, where the butoh-bwo renders its affects on an actual butoh-body. At the actual pole, the butoh-body experiences a perpetual state of crisis, registering the impossibility of attaining the virtual fluidity of the butoh-bwo. Here, the limit process of the hollow-body (C-E) delivers an endless series of shocks, apparent in the wilful convulsion of muscles and organs. Fossilisation is marked by blockages in the evacuation of the hollow-body, its capacity for condensation ‘drying up’ when the dancer struggles to maintain the multiplication of intensive movements. And yet, as Deleuze and Guattari point out, “to be blocked, is that not still an intensity” (D&G, 1987: 152). The crisis of fragmentary gestures imparts a fragile realisation that is always delimited by the weight of its virtual conjunctions. Nonetheless, the crack does not fully ‘dry up’ so much as release fragments that fly over it – “Elements overflowing and abandoned, hanging in the silhouette of the body like departing souls.” (Ohtaka, in W&K, 1998).

In summary, at one pole there is a virtual accumulation of the depths, in the middle there is the condensation and evacuation of the membrane (via its crack), while at the other pole there occurs an actual fossilisation. The articulation (or limit-point) between butoh-bwo and butoh-body, occurs (for the former) as a fluctuation of attributes and facets, while appearing (for the latter) as a luminous contour around the dancer.⁷² Each facet turns upon the other, so the configuration of the FACE constitutes a self-affecting mechanism⁷³ (albeit one where the self is erased while the affect assumes the figure of death as a continual opening to the outside). As I will explore further in Chapter 2, it is these affective circuits that constitute the ‘*special affects*’ of the butoh-bwo.

⁷² Provisionally speaking, the dead-body is turned towards the butoh-body (marking the continuance of its virtual and actual poles), while the hollow-body is turned towards the butoh-bwo (maintaining the counter-actualisation of the intensive spatium).

⁷³ Deleuze states that the affect constitutes both the attribute of the state of affairs and the expressed of the proposition (Deleuze, 1990: 22). This is discussed in relation to the image and language in Chapter 2. For the FACE model, the two poles (F/A) turn upon one another, when the expressed of the proposition (F) becomes a new state of affairs, its fragile realisation being drawn once more into the process of accumulation (A); thereby multiplying the sum of its affects. The other two poles (C/E), regulate the process, where counter-actualisation also concerns the affect in a slightly different manner – in terms of an ‘absorbent’ quality (C) as well as a multiplication (E). See Appendices, figure 1. In Chapter 2, the former (C) is discussed in terms of an immobile surface as reflective unity, and the latter (E) through intensive micro-movements.

The biociné of butoh-fu⁷⁴

In the last chapter I defined the quality of butoh (butoh-sei), in terms of darkness and death as figures of virtuality and the event. In this chapter I will examine how the butoh-bwo may be ‘constructed’ using Hijikata’s choreographic method of working with images – butoh-fu.⁷⁵ This understanding of the relationship between the image and the body is theorised here using Deleuze’s cinephilosophy, in addition to his work with Guattari on the *percept* and the *affect* (see Glossary). A pitfall immediately presents itself when the semiotics of the cinema is applied to dance, which is another discipline entirely with a semiotics of its own. And yet, it may be noted that Deleuze situates his discussion not as a *theory* about the cinema, but as a philosophical engagement with a conceptual practice of images and signs. He says, “[it] is at the level of the interference of many practices that things happen, beings, images, concepts, all the kinds of events.” (Deleuze, 1989: 280).

This chapter considers Deleuze’s materialist ontology of the image in terms of the concepts which cinema may contribute to an understanding of Hijikata’s choreographic method. In his butoh-fu, Hijikata created an interference of practices spanning philosophy, theology, literature and the plastic arts, inscribing their compounds deep within the butoh-body. Firstly, the definition of butoh-fu is clarified in relation to language, where its notational basis is grounded in a material or plastic relation to the image. I then situate the butoh-bwo through series of conceptual figures for the FACE

⁷⁴ ‘*biociné*’ is my own neologism, a *portmanteau* word with two parts – referring respectively to the *biophilosophy* which Deleuze inherits and adapts from Bergson, and the *cinephilosophy* described here in this chapter.

⁷⁵ Hijikata does not explicitly mention *butoh-fu* in his writings (at least not in the available English translations). However, Yukio Waguri recorded many of these choreographic phrases during his time as principle male dancer at Hijikata’s Asbestos-kan, from 1972 – 1978. Waguri has since published the oral instruction Hijikata gave during this time in his CD-ROM and booklet, *Butoh-Kaden* (W&K, 1998). This chapter refers to Waguri’s archival analysis, in addition to a personal understanding of Min Tanaka’s image-work, gleaned from his dance workshops.

and its aesthetic personae, the *hitogata*. These are discussed using Deleuze and Guattari's approach to the percept and the affect,⁷⁶ in the sense by which they relate to perception and sensation. In this chapter, I examine how they may articulate the emergence of the *butoh-bwo* within the *butoh-body*. Next, the percept and the affect are contrasted with Deleuze's cinephilosophical taxonomy of images and signs, thereby mobilising the image in terms of matter and movement. These ideas are situated within the historical conditions of post-war art practices, where a sense of crisis is seen as critical both for the emergence of Hijikata's *butoh* and Deleuze's conception of the *time-image* (see Glossary) in modern cinema. This facilitates a re-examination of the event via a Japanese conception of premodern time, in relation to the darkness of the *butoh-body*. Finally, the way in which Deleuze's image of time produces a 'shock to thought' is discussed through Artaud's critique of thought and the image, while comparing and contrasting it to Hijikata's notion of a 'thinking-body'.

The image and language

i. Catching the sense

Roughly translated as *butoh-score*, *butoh-fu* constitutes a system of dance notation quite unlike anything in the West. The distinction Waguri makes between western choreographic methods and *butoh-fu*, is that whereas western systems are generally highly formalised and symbolic – prescriptive in the translation of signs into 'realistic' movement – *butoh-fu* uses words that cannot always be easily symbolised or physically translated (Waguri, in W&K, 1998). In this way, they play more of a generative role based upon the imagination. Waguri defines *butoh-fu* as a "physical language", although he qualifies this by saying that it is a choreographic method used to "physicalise images through words" (Waguri, in W&K, 1998). In order to determine how the material physicality of the image emerges through the words of *butoh-fu* it is necessary then to firstly clarify the status of the image in relation to language. As discussed previously, the *butoh-bwo* displaces the organic stratification of signifiacance and interpretation through experimentation. It would be inappropriate then to apply the logic of referents and interpretants, or to attempt a reduction of *butoh-fu* to a semiotic taxonomy of linguistic units that may guarantee the legible expression of some *thing*.

⁷⁶ Briefly, the percept and the affect may be defined as destratifying entities whose validity lies only in themselves, exceeding the lived experience of an actual body (D&G, 1994: 164).

As noted in Chapter 1, the heterogeneous duration (virtuality) of a thing cannot be adequately conveyed (actualised) within a proposition. Artaud's solution was to fragment the surface of language with his screams and glossalia, to allow a sense of the virtual to rise up from the cacophony of the depths – to “BURST OUT.” (Artaud, 1992: 324).⁷⁷ What Deleuze calls Artaud's *schizophrenic body* is one whose utterances can articulate neither the breadth nor depth of the crack, just as its excess of articulation traces the pure reserve of the event. For Hijikata, butoh is a *silent body*, without verbal language.⁷⁸ And yet, this silent body is equally concerned with the impossibility of its own expression, generating *n*-articulations⁷⁹ that fossilise upon the skin of a luminous contour. Here, “the crack pursues its silent course [...] until sound and silence wed each other intimately and continuously in the shattering and bursting of the end” (Deleuze, 1990: 155). It is in this sense that Deleuze assigns to the activity of the ‘true’ actor or dancer the spectre of counter-actualisation, constituting a ‘centre of envelopment’ that encloses within itself the impulse towards expression (Deleuze, 1990: 161, 1994: 256). In a similar manner, Osamu states that –

“Butō is like poetry in that it, in its very essence, resists the substitutive function in which words are used to express some *thing*. In poetry it is the words, in Butō it is the body – the body's movement encloses within *itself* the extreme point which it must seek...” (Osamu, in Klein, 1986: 89).⁸⁰

Osamu goes on to reject the metaphoric function as a detachment of words from things. But there is another way of understanding metaphor, that the words simply ‘carry’ the sense.⁸¹ It is merely ‘through’ words then, that butoh may seek to apprehend the thing – *via* the materiality of the image.

⁷⁷ For Artaud, what bursts out is the pain of his body – the pain of life as a creative force.

⁷⁸ “The silent body is more eloquent than words. It is the treasury of images. Don't you agree? Butoh is images” (Hijikata, quoted by Hasegawa, in W&K, 1998).

⁷⁹ By ‘*n*-articulations’ I mean the sum of virtual conjunctions silently proliferating within the butoh-bwo, as opposed to the physical articulations of limbs in an actual body.

⁸⁰ ‘Butō’ is the Japanese spelling for butoh.

⁸¹ This well-known interpretation of metaphor is derived from its Greek etymon – *pherein*, “to carry” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 668).

In his ‘image-work’,⁸² Tanaka would often instruct his students to “catch the sense” (Hakushu workshop, August 2002); that is, the sense of the thing *in itself* – to apprehend *within* the image, certain qualities specific to it. For example, “A fire in your stomach is burning your internal organs” (Hakushu workshop, August 2002), might be felt as an explosive, or expansive, rising heat (evacuation), or a dry, fragmentary contraction of the organs (fossilisation). In the proliferation and mixing of these singular events there exist innumerable speeds, simultaneous durations and heterogeneous orders.

In this manner, the image may reveal the pure virtuality of the object (and the body as object). This is what Bergson calls *attentive perception* – emphasising so many contours and features, where the object passes through different planes, rather than remaining on a single plane determined by habit (Deleuze, 1989: 44). And just as the object passes through different planes, the *butoh-bwo*, as a *membrane* through which things pass, is constructed by this concretion of layers. What is produced is a *pure description* of the thing, a *butoh-bwo* objectified within the *butoh-body*. This is not to say that the thing is *actually* apprehended in itself, for the object is *virtually* inexpressible as a so-called ‘true form’. Rather, a pure description is that which both replaces and renews its object, with the *power of the false* (see Glossary). It generates an unfolding of the interminably new by entering into a becoming with the object. This is where the pole of the proposition *turns upon* that of the thing, *becoming* the new state of affairs by creating a zone of indiscernibility between the *butoh-bwo* and that which ‘fills’ it. For the *butoh-bwo*, the conflation of affective circuits within and between dancer and spectator traces a circularity between the thing (or state of affairs) and the proposition. For as Deleuze shows, *becoming* demonstrates an element of paradox or absurdity in the *sense* (see Glossary) by which it moves in two directions at once, both towards the thing which one attempts to become, the other towards the proposition. “Sense is both the expressible or the expressed of the proposition, and the attribute of the state of affairs.” (Deleuze, 1990: 22).

⁸² Tanaka didn’t call these exercises *butoh-fu*, despite frequent references to Hijikata. This is perhaps because the workshops were in English, although it may also reflect his more ‘international’ or ‘universal’ approach to *butoh* (which is not to mean only English-speaking), as opposed to considering a specifically Japanese body, as Hijikata had done. Another term used by *Bodyweather* practitioners is “omni-central imaging” (Snow, 2003: 213), although it is unclear whether this originated with Tanaka or his followers.

ii. *The metaplastic membrane*

Just as the virtuality of the *event* is not exhausted by the actual, *sense* is not extinguished by the proposition but inheres as an ‘extra-being’. In the same way, there is a ‘pure reserve’ in poetry that constitutes a becoming of words, a becoming that is valid in itself and yet in communication with the thing. In order to avoid the pitfall of representation, it is critical then that this *becoming* is maintained in both directions. In a paradoxical movement, pure description replaces and renews the object, and this impetus to *invent* necessitates an absurd or nonsensical relation to the proposition, evading the substitution of the object through interpretation. In *Logic of Sense*, Deleuze discusses the aspect of nonsense in the writing of Carroll and Artaud (Deleuze, 1990: 83-86). There is a similar process at work in Hijikata’s *butoh-fu*, for example, where he constitutes a *becoming-cow* in “Cow: Variation I” –

“Letter “S” on the back
Wing on the waist
Left-side BOHBOHBOH
Daria on the head – The head is lowered.
A dwarf runs on the back
A grasshopper on the left foot.”

(Hijikata, in Kumakura, W&K, 1998).

As Kumakura suggests, these images are not intended to fit the body to the kinetic or visual aspects of a cow, but to constitute an “internal diagram of intensity” (Kumakura, W&K, 1998) through which it may be expressed. In the sense that the diagram is said to deterritorialise the subject (D&G, 1987: 142), these six images comprise an assemblage of preindividual singularities which both precede and exceed the cow and the dancer. The cow and the dancer enter into a becoming, distributing conjugated intensities within a *butoh-bwo*. There is no apparent resemblance between any of the six images and those sensations that might belong to an actual cow. As the title suggests, the cow only exists as the pure variation of a series. It is a virtual cow. As Deleuze states, “becoming is an extreme contiguity within a coupling of two sensations without resemblance or, on the contrary, in the distance of a light that captures both of them in a single reflection.” (D&G, 1994: 173). With the cow, there are now only images within images and their movement as the pure modulation of matter.⁸³

⁸³ Bergson envisages the universe as a vast accretion of *movement-images* (see Glossary) in varying states of consistency. “The movement-image is matter [*matière*] itself...” (Deleuze, 1989: 33).

Perhaps then, as a *matter* of the body, butoh-fu may be conceived as more ‘*metaplastm*’ than metaphor.⁸⁴ As is indicated by its etymological parentage (*metaplasia*, *metaplastmos*, moulding afresh; and *plassein*, to form) metaplastm involves processes of modulation and transformation rather than the moulds or forms themselves. As Deleuze writes, “modulation... is a putting into variation of the mould, a transformation of the mould at each moment of the operation” (Deleuze, 1989: 27).⁸⁵ In butoh, it is a matter of making the “materiality of language *vacant*, to gain the *image* of signification” (Sakurai, in W&K, 1998; emphasis added). The metaphor is a mould, ‘carrying’ linguistic resemblances and codifications, so it can never be truly vacant; whereas metaplastm perhaps suggests that emptiness and form are complicit and complementary.⁸⁶ So when Kurihara says, that for Hijikata, “the body is a metaphor for words and words are a metaphor for the body”, this might be reconsidered as the paradox of a becoming that moves in both directions at once – butoh-bwo as *metaplastic membrane*.

Percepts and affects

iii. *The skin of a hitogata*

As outlined in Chapter 1, the complex dynamics of the butoh-bwo may be understood via the conceptual model of the FACE. Taking this a step further, I will now show how the FACE may be

Deleuze also says, “It is a plastic mass, an a-signifying and a-syntactic material”, neither language nor utterance, it is rather, an *utterable* (Deleuze, 1989, 29).

⁸⁴ Metaplastm: “cell-contents other than protoplastm [and also the] change in a word by addition, dropping, or exchange of parts” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 668). It is in these two aspects, of pure contents describing processes of transformation, that I appropriate this term for the discussion of butoh-fu.

⁸⁵ For Bergson, there is no longer any distinction between image and object; while Deleuze adds, “The movement-image is the object; the thing itself caught in the movement of continuous function. The movement-image is the modulation of the object itself.” (Deleuze, 1989: 27).

⁸⁶ Metaplastm is like ‘the word made flesh’, not the Word of the Creator-God and his organism, but the ‘esoteric word’ of Artaud’s ‘hidden-god’. Like Artaud, for Hijikata ‘flesh’ is not a passive, corporeal substance, but the necessarily afflicted material of a dead-body, in which the pain of life may rise up.

envisaged through *butoh-fu*, by describing its affective circuits as a conceptual ‘diagram of intensity’.⁸⁷ Here, I will give each of the four facets an image. Briefly, they are as follows –⁸⁸

1. The accumulating preindividual singularities (A) constitute the ‘particles’ of so many heterogenous materials, or even pure qualities.⁸⁹ As will be discussed in subsequent sections, particles appear often in *butoh-fu*, not only to describe aspects of matter but most importantly their shifting states from one form to another. They may then be understood to convey the immanent quality (or *butoh-sei*) of a kind of ‘thought-matter’, moving at the infinite speed of the virtual.⁹⁰ As I will explain, for the dancer, this conveyance concerns the faculty of perception, or more precisely, *proprioception* (internal awareness of the body; see Glossary).
2. These particles gather together to acquire consistency, where their condensation (C) produce ‘cells’. These function as *plateaus of intensity* (see Glossary), in a similar manner to the way Maro talks about finding cells in different parts of the body and building bridges (virtual conjunctions) between them.⁹¹ For *butoh-fu* it is in the fluid concretion of particles where their phrases form as concepts and images; where the infinite speed of the particles slows down as

⁸⁷ Shinichi Oshikiri also states that “Hijikata had various circuits of bodily expressions inside, and “styles”, which were created by such circuits” (Oshikiri, in W&K, 1998). In Deleuzian terms, the affect denotes a circuit drawn between two poles – the attribute of the state of the affairs and the expressed of the proposition. The affect as circuit will also be discussed in relation to the micro-movements of a ‘small circuit’ delineating the actual and the virtual.

⁸⁸ This schema will also provide a template (later in this chapter) for situating the cinephilosophical implications of *butoh-fu* in terms of the *butoh-bwo*; as well as for discussing my own work in Chapter 3. Also see the Appendices for a series of diagrams and *butoh-fu* phrases, developing the various aspects of this model.

⁸⁹ Particles are discussed further in the following section, in relation to perception and the percept.

⁹⁰ In the sense that accumulation (A) arises from a virtual domain, these particles move at the infinite speed of Chaos, which for Deleuze and Guattari “is a void that is not a nothingness but a virtual, containing all possible particles and drawing out all possible forms... Chaos is an infinite speed of birth and disappearance.” (D&G, 1994: 118).

⁹¹ See Chapter 1 (*Killing the body*). Also see later in Chapter 2 (*Nerve circuits*) in relation to movement and the affect.

they approach the limit of an actual body (see fossilisation: 4).⁹²

3. And yet, the chaotic speed of their trajectories is also retained in the fluidity of the plateaus' conjugated flows, as their intensive *evacuation* (E) produces a multiplication of virtual relations; their aberrant conjunctions constantly tracing and retracing – “The speed of thought, of nerves, of blood circulation, of muscular tissues, of the spirit; the chaotic coexistence of various speeds...” (Tanaka, 1986b, 154).⁹³
4. At the same time, this multiplicity of relations is always constrained by the capacity of an actual butoh-body.⁹⁴ Here, the sedimentation of cell-plateaus forms the fossilised ‘skin’ of a luminous contour shimmering around the dancer. This fossilisation (F) is where the butoh-bwo renders itself upon the butoh-body. The butoh-bwo lays out a plane of consistency upon which this articulation with the butoh-body emerges as a transient membrane, oscillating constantly between actual and virtual poles. In this manner the ‘skin-plane’ at (F), is a composite surface of inscription, where all the other facets appear and disappear across the FACE.⁹⁵ It is where all the circuits may be seen to correspond simultaneously, as the dead particles settle back into the process of accumulation (A) and condensation (C), or are buffeted by the whirling of the crack (E).

⁹² The facet of condensation is like a sieve, where the infinite speed of the virtual chaos (A) slows down, and yet where the images or concepts formed retain its fluidity. For Deleuze and Guattari the ‘philosophical sieve’ is where the “plane of immanence that cuts through the chaos selects infinite movements of thought and is filled with concepts formed like consistent particles going as fast as thought” (D&G, 1994: 118). In this sense also, Deleuze discusses Artaud’s schizophrenic body as a ‘sieve-body’, in which surface and depth, and inside and outside, have a porous relationship (Deleuze, 1990: 87). See Appendices (figures 1 & 4) where the facet of condensation is illustrated by Hijikata’s butoh-fu, ‘pus’; while the proliferation of affects becomes a circuit of ‘nerves’, allowing the accumulation of particles to be constantly renewed. See also later in this chapter (*Nerve circuits*) for a discussion of the ‘web of nerves’ in relation the affect.

⁹⁴ For the dancer this capacity is both physical and mental. In terms of training, it is a matter of bringing the two together, of making the body *think* so that the muscles may appear to have their own autonomy, “their own will” (Iwabuchi, in Klein, 1986: 75). I discuss Hijikata’s ‘thinking body’ at the end of this chapter.

⁹⁵ For Deleuze, the close-up of the face characterises the affect, as an immobile surface containing micro-movements. These ideas are discussed in relation to the butoh-body later in this chapter.

The 'metaplastic membrane' comprises the totality of these relations. Its 'cell contents' comprise 'particles' of pure intensity ('other than protoplasm'), which gather density to form 'cell-plateaus', which in turn create a 'skin-plane' that renders the death of these cells and the multiplication of their molecular relations via a web of nerves.⁹⁶ The affective circuits of the FACE model enable the 'special affects' of the *butoh-bwo*; while here, the composition of the metaplastic membrane constitutes its 'conceptual figures'.

There is another way of envisioning the *butoh-bwo*. The FACE model may be seen to find its 'aesthetic personae'⁹⁷ in the spectral visage of a *hitogata* (human shape, the origin of the word 'doll'). Gunji describes how the *hitogata* recalls the *butoh* aesthetic of white powder on nakedness, engendering a notion of sacrifice⁹⁸ (Gunji, quoted by Motofuji, in W&K, 1998). This doll-like figure illustrates the transmutation that occurs through the vertiginous operation of dead and hollow bodies, where the proliferation of affective circuits enables a kind of sacrificial transmission of the transient membrane between dancer and spectator. The two primary circuits (F-A and C-E) turn within themselves and also upon one another, gathering up the audience in their multiplication, so that they too are hollowed out, snatching their "sensibilities away to a state of nakedness" (Klein, 1986: 42).⁹⁹

The *hitogata* resembles Hijikata's *wind-daruma*, as it is re-visited through the monk's dream of a soul burning up its own body; just as in Japanese theatre, where "the soul is made from the

⁹⁶ The 'web of nerves' is discussed later in this chapter (see *Nerve circuits*).

⁹⁷ I adapt this term from Deleuze and Guattari's use of 'conceptual personae' and 'aesthetic figures', where the former denotes the power of concepts and the latter the power of affects and percepts (D&G, 1994: 65). I have opted to reverse the terms, collapsing these distinctions, in the sense that *butoh-fu* images often function as both concepts, affects and percepts.

⁹⁸ In this way, the aesthetic of white powder has a more subtle complexity than the popular notion that it 'represents' the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As indicated in Chapter 1, the figures of death and nakedness engender a notion of sacrifice, an abandonment of self, communal identity or becoming-nature. I discuss the effects of World War 2 later in this chapter.

⁹⁹ The composite circuits of the FACE correspond to what Deleuze calls the 'small-circuit' of the image, turning on the cusp of the actual / virtual (see *The dark crystal*, later in this chapter). This concerns the internal limit within the dancer (self-affecting-self), while the 'broad circuit' between dancer and audience conflates or multiplies the small-circuit (self-affecting-other). In both cases, the notion of 'hollowing out' stems from the simultaneous creation and erasure of self.

‘mechanical movement’ of the puppet” (Deleuze, 1989: 268).¹⁰⁰ It does not imitate the form of a human body but rather carries the ‘shape’ of a transient membrane. In opening to (or by) the outside, the hollow-body provides a carriage for the sacrifice of a dead-body, as if its burning were stoked by a bellows that drives out the organs. The butoh-body moves like a *hitogata*, evacuated by the impower of the outside, to generate *a life* by dying alive.¹⁰¹ In this sense, Hijikata may be understood when he says: “We are broken from birth. We are only corpses standing in the shadow of life.” (Hijikata, in V&M, 1988: 187). The butoh-body is a corpse with a doll-like shape in which only *emptiness* is standing, a corpse consumed by the whirling shadows of the butoh-bwo.

iii. Sensations and tactile particles

To sum up, I have so far described the special affects of the butoh-bwo according to its attributes, and in terms of their facets and figures. But this is all a matter of compositional dynamics. There is still the question of what *contents* actually circulate within it. It is the image itself, or rather, the sense imparted by its intensive states that traverses the butoh-bwo. Deleuze and Guattari describe how the attributes constitute the types of the BwO, while the *modes* are what come to pass through it.¹⁰² For butoh-fu then, it is the tactile qualities of the image that constitute the ‘modes’ of the butoh-bwo.

Waguri describes how the modes of an image indicate not only the dancer’s movement, but a whole composite of interrelated terms; including their relation to space and matter, their *proprioception* (or internal awareness of the body), their sense of *being* or subjectivity and its positionality or

¹⁰⁰ A *daruma* is in fact a limbless doll, weighted so that it always bounces back to an upright position. *Daruma* is an abbreviation for Bodhidharma, a mythical priest said to have brought Zen to China around 500 CE (Kurihara, footnote in Hijikata, 2000e: 79). The mechanical generation of the soul recalls the Zen doctrine of pure emptiness versus the sovereign self. See Fraleigh for an approach to butoh in relation to Zen (Fraleigh, 1999).

¹⁰¹ This is how Min Tanaka appeared to me at a performance in Melbourne (International Workshop Festival, Black Box Theatre, June 2001) – acquiring the impossible presence of being hollow and yet filling the entire space around him with an electricity of gestures that were not his own. He was like a puppet whose strings were controlled by nothing except their own vertiginous movement.

¹⁰² For Deleuze and Guattari, these modes are for example, the pain of the masochistic-BwO or the cold of the drugged-BwO (D&G, 1987: 153). The butoh-bwo may be seen to traverse many other types of BwO, while extracting from them an affective potential specific to dance.

transformation vis-à-vis the object (Waguri, in W&K, 1998).¹⁰³ In terms of the *butoh-bwo*, it may be said that the ‘cell contents’ of its intensive plateaus accumulate and acquire consistency (condensation) as they pass through the skin-plane of the metaplastic membrane. At the same time, the membrane itself is constituted by their passing. That is, the dancer attempts to catch the sense of the *thing*, and in doing so extracts from the image a pure description, inaugurating a propositional process which situates the *butoh-bwo* vis-à-vis the *butoh-body*. It is the *dead-body* and the *hollow-body* that facilitate this articulation, via processes of accumulation, evacuation, condensation and fossilisation. This may be summarised by saying that whereas the qualities of the image constitute the *modes* of the *butoh-bwo* (what comes to pass through the membrane), its types or attributes (*dead-body*, *hollow-body*) are its *moulds*. The modes pass through the moulds, just as the moulds shape and are shaped by them. The *dead-body* and the *hollow-body* are mere metaphors for the metaplastic processes of the *FACE* (accumulation, evacuation, condensation and fossilisation). These processes constitute the *pure modulation* of the modes as well as the “putting into variation of the mould[s].” (Deleuze, 1989: 27).

Through this modulation, the tactile qualities of the image come to acquire the autonomy of a compound entity, arising from perception (or proprioception) and yet taking on the sense of an extra-being that sits somewhere in the hinterland between subject and object, affecting the subject but not belonging to it. This is how Deleuze and Guattari define *percepts* and *affects*, as ‘beings of sensation’ (D&G, 1994: 167) that, like the pure event, do not so much exist as subsist or inhere – shimmering in crack.

“Percepts are no longer perceptions; they are independent of a state of those who experience them. Affects are no longer feelings or affections; they go beyond the strength of those who undergo them. Sensations, percepts and affects are *beings* whose validity lies in themselves and exceeds any lived.” (D&G, 1994: 164).

Taking them one at a time, the percept may be considered in the light of the image being a “plastic mass” – the modulation of matter itself (Deleuze, 1989: 27-29). Whereas perception denotes a subjective act or power of perceiving, the percept is “an object perceived by the senses [and] the mental result of perceiving.” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 804). For Deleuze, even the brain is an image, although of a special kind. It is where the modulation of images becomes consistent. The mental result of perceiving is then distinct from subjective perception. The percept generates a bloc of matter-images, and a becoming-image that moves in two directions at once. Here, *seeing* attains

¹⁰³ Also texture, temperature, humidity etc. See Appendices for further modes and notes on *butoh-fu*.

the solidity of the *seen*, just as the image itself appears to *see*, as if acquiring some power of thought particular to it. The former is similar to the solidarity which Hijikata assigns to the appearance of nakedness (where the solidity of this solidarity is the unformed substance of immanence); while the latter is perhaps when the image appears to haunt the circuit of affects like a ghost – a hidden, spectral entity hollowing out both spectator and dancer.¹⁰⁴

To extricate the percept and the affect is problematic, for it is in their coming together as a *compound* entity that the modulation of moulds and modes may occur. Deleuze and Guattari distinguish them by saying that the percept “make[s] perceptible the imperceptible forces that populate the world, affect us and make us become” (D&G, 1994: 182). The percept appears as the plastic mass of an immanent force, interior to matter and anterior to man, while the affect emerges as both the quality of a state of affairs and the expressed of a proposition.¹⁰⁵ The percept allows the heterogeneous durations of the intensive spatium to *pass on* and be renewed, while the affect *occupies* its interval to generate a becoming that moves in two directions at once (or where the two poles come together). While both seem to indicate a tendency towards motoricity, for the *butoh* dancer their material basis presents a limit that precludes or resists expression. Proprioception determines the faculty of internal awareness in the body, while for *butoh* in particular, it is the means by which the dancer maintains a series of intensive states, that in themselves generate a tendency to counter-actualise extension. The same can be said of the affect, in that it occupies the interval rather than allows it to pass on. In this way, the percept relates to the modes (that which passes), while the affect relates to the attributes and their circuits (the facets of modulation).

For Deleuze and Guattari, man is himself a compound of percepts and affects, when he is “caught in stone, on the canvas, or by words” (D&G, 1994: 164). Things get rather more complicated when the medium is one’s own body, and more so when the qualities of other mediums are placed within it.

¹⁰⁴ Deleuze describes the affect as having a phantasmal aspect (Deleuze, 1986: 99), in a similar way to his conception of sense and the event. The phantasm is discussed in Chapter 3.

¹⁰⁵ Deleuze discusses both sense (Deleuze, 1990: 22) and the affect (Deleuze, 1986: 99), as having these two poles – the attribute of the state of affairs and the expressed of the proposition. For the affect, these become the quality or power of a complex entity that is “independent of all determinate space-time (Deleuze, 1986: 99). For the purposes of my argument, sense is like a ‘carrier’ (or that which is carried) while the affect is a ‘receptor’ (or reception itself). The faculty or power of proprioception seeks to apprehend the percept (as that which passes), while the affect receives or iterates its qualities. The problem inherent to ‘catching the sense’ involves a contiguity of both aspects, where an image as metaphorical carriage becomes a metaplastic membrane.

One of Hijikata's *butoh-fu* takes its inspiration from a painting by Jean Fautrier,¹⁰⁶ where he imagines "a person composed of tactile sensations and particles" (Hijikata, in Kurihara, 2000: 17). In *butoh* there is the sense of the 'material' rising up in the dancer's body, of sensations gaining autonomy as if the *butoh*-body were merely the medium for their existence. Things are not only placed inside the body but are at the same time happening *to* the body, turning it into a metaplastic membrane. Hijikata developed a whole taxonomy of materials, through which things and bodies may become transformed as a single substance – like "a coupling of two sensations [or] in the distance of a light that captures both of them in a single reflection." (D&G, 1994: 173). Bodies dissolve into particles of smoke or grains; are absorbed in pus, pollen or pain; or become mere nerve threads saturated in other substances – to trace the interior of the body, extend out into space, or enter other bodies and things. These images are pure sensation, as much modulation as they are modes. In fact, they are often used to transform one image into another, through their clinching or distension, fossilising and evacuating one another.¹⁰⁷

In summary, the quality of thought-matter that characterises the *being of sensation* (see Glossary) may be attributed to what Hijikata regards as the *butoh-sei* arising from a body of work (of any medium). For the *butoh-bwo*, *butoh-fu* generates the 'metaplasticity' of *butoh-sei*; that is, it 'scores' percepts and affects into or through the *butoh*-body, to set in motion a pure variation of words, images and things.

iv. Clay-body

During the summer school I participated in (Hakushu workshop, August 2002), Tanaka conducted a series of exercises in 'sensitivity training'. These not only develop the dancer's capacity to 'catch the sense', but also to witness the emergence of sensations whose autonomy exceed intention or motility. One of these, *clay-work*, is a partner exercise where one person is the sculptor while the other is an unformed block of clay. Through the malleable image of a *clay-body*, this exercise

¹⁰⁶ "Paintings, too [...] reveal their ultimate 'butoh quality' (*butoh-sei*)" (Hijikata, in Kurihara, 2000: 17).

¹⁰⁷ Deleuze and Guattari identify several varieties for the way two compounds of sensations interact (vibration, the embrace or clinch, withdrawal, division, or distension). In the *butoh-bwo*, the putting into variation of the moulds (accumulation, evacuation, condensation and fossilisation) may be said to constitute the co-existing durations of the percept, in which their combinations, or 'coming into phase', allows for new affects to occur. "The clinch of forces as percepts and becomings as affects are completely complementary." (D&G, 1994: 182).

provides a simple and yet in-depth example of the internal process the dancer may then carry into butoh-fu. The analysis here also draws out how the percept and the affect function in terms of proprioception.

With close attention to detail, the sculptor shapes separate parts of the body into different positions, sensing the plasticity of the material, where it resists or yields, opening space and time in the body. When the sculptor wishes to solidify a position, s/he pauses, thereby signaling the clay-person to fix that part, so the sculptor may then release it to recommence elsewhere. The clay-person seeks to remain entirely malleable throughout the process, while also being capable of hardening in an instant (yet without anticipation). That is not to say that the clay-person is passive and then active; rather, s/he is 'activated' by something from the outside as if s/he were generating the movement. Here, to catch the sense and then be carried by it, is for the clay-person to empty themselves of intention, but in doing so to fill the received movement with 'thought-matter', a being of sensation.

Like a *hitogata*, the clay-person feels a paradoxical sense of being moved; or as Deleuze says of the Japanese doll, whose soul is 'made' through its mechanical movement (Deleuze, 1989: 268). The dancer approaches a degree-zero of movement for the butoh-bwo, where movement is no longer dictated by the motility of the organism, but emerges for its own sake as a pure distribution of intensities. "Movement is sleeping in the body" (Tanaka, Hakushu workshop, August 2002). It is always and already present as a vast potential, an immanent condition anterior to intention or motility, a degree-zero of movement as speed of pure variation or consistency. Movement as the image of matter itself.

The sculptor does not need to have an intention as to the position of a part. What is more important is a sense of curiosity and imagination, resisting the habitual functions of the organism (eg. the elbow bends only this way). Through tactile experimentation and acute observation the two partners investigate a zone of indeterminacy within the clay-body, caressing its pure virtuality. As Tanaka says, "[the] body does not exist unless one is astonished at its ingenuous state" (Tanaka, 1986b: 153). A shoulder may be limited in its range of extensive movement, but it also has an internal limit of *intensive* movement, where sensations and micro-perceptions generate a spatium of pure intensity. It is here that intensive movement always approaches a degree zero of movement, "a zero intensity of production" (D&G, 1987: 164), where stillness comes to witness the movement of matter itself. Firstly, in being activated by an Other, the dancer becomes aware of the virtual potential of his/her own body, filling it with thought. Then when a part is fixed into position, the intensity of physical and mental effort serves to also hold the pure duration of accumulated prior movements, as well as those not given, though nonetheless imagined. In the clay-work, just as for the image in butoh-fu, the being of sensation emerges through pure description, by replacing and

renewing so many qualities of the thing (even if this is only ‘clay’), such that it acquires consistency and seems to rise up of its own volition.

“It is as though each fiber of the muscles has its own selfish autonomy and shudders violently as it pleases. It is not some *kata* that cries or is sad, it is the muscles themselves that are crying. The will does not move the muscles, the muscles themselves have their *own* will.”

(Keisuke, in Klein, 1986: 75)

This autonomy is most apparent in the second stage of the exercise, when the sculptor steps away and the clay-person attempts to reconstruct their previous movements and positions according to the sensations they experienced. It should be pointed out here that it is not necessary to follow the precise sequence in which the movements were given.¹⁰⁸ In fact, it is in the ‘reconstruction’ where pure description attains its higher power, not in the ‘truth’ of the received movement, but a ‘power of the false’ that characterises the unfolding of the interminably new. Different positions enter into nonlinear relations of aberrant movement, in endless recombination, regardless of distance (without extension). Any compound of sensations may be broken up into its constituent components, each entering into relations with any of its parts and with those of other compounds. This occurs not only in terms of position and speed, but also according to their clinches, vibration, distension (or for that matter, processes of fossilisation etc.). It is here that the dancer not only catches the sense, but moreover, *becomes* apprehended by the image itself.

Butoh and Cinephilosophy

In this next section, I will situate the discussion of butoh-fu in relation to Deleuze’s cinephilosophy, following the model he provides for the emergence of modern cinema. This is intended to clarify the way butoh-fu generates movements within the butoh-body, by re-examining percepts and affects through the *perception-image* and the *affection-image* (see Glossary).

Following from Pierce’s conception of images and signs, Deleuze develops a taxonomy of the *movement-image* (see Glossary), where it undergoes a process of specification. The plasticity it assumes through Bergson is now differentiated into components, to become a *signaletic material*. In short, this follows from the idea of movement as an *interval*, “which separates, within *one* image, a received and an executed movement.” (Deleuze, 1989: 29). It achieves this through a differentiation

¹⁰⁸ It is memory in the Deleuzian sense of fabulation as opposed to souvenir, a re-membering of the body.

into three main types: an *affection-image*, an *action-image* and a *relation-image* (see Glossary). With this differentiation, the movement-image is set in motion, assuring aspects of causality, linear progression and narrative coherence – signatures of the so-called ‘classical cinema’.¹⁰⁹ This schema undergoes a crisis of the action-image with the emergence of modern cinema, through historical conditions and aesthetic considerations that find a parallel in *butoh*. I will discuss these conditions later in the chapter. But for now, I will attempt to show how the materiality of percepts and affects may be set in motion through the deduction of image types and how these two approaches may elucidate the systemic basis of *butoh-fu*.

i. Particles of proprioception

The ubiquity of the movement-image presupposes another aspect that assures the differentiation of image-types. Deleuze describes the sense in which the interval receives and executes movement, as ‘perceiving’ and ‘carrying’ it out (Deleuze, 1989: 31). This is what he calls the *perception-image*, which does not so much express the movement, as the relation of movement to its interval. For if the movement-image is already perception, that is to say, the image of matter as a plastic mass of pure modulation, then the perception-image is perception *of* perception. It constitutes a degree-zero in the deduction of image types, facilitating the passage of one to the next, as a *function* of the movement-image: perception of affection, of action, of relation etc. (Deleuze, 1989: 31). Like the percept, the perception-image is understood in the Bergsonian sense that it goes beyond the selective human faculty of natural perception. So when the clay-person approaches a degree-zero of intensive movement through proprioception, in the light of the perception-image this also engenders a *perception* of movement, as a “zeroness” in the deduction of types. Here the percept emerges as “a minimum before the void” (D&G, 1994: 181), where the proprioceptive sense seeks to attain the generative limit of the image as matter: “intensity = 0” (D&G 1987: 153).

For Deleuze, the Russian filmmaker Dziga Vertov was to most effectively realise Bergson’s materialist approach to the image, with his conception of the ‘*cine eye*’. Not a human eye, with its inherent limitation of relative immobility, but the eye of matter, with the image as universal variation or interaction (modulation). Vertov finds the ability of a non-human eye, “to carry perception into things, to put perception into matter, so that any point whatsoever in space itself perceives all the points on which it acts, or which act on it, however far these actions and reactions

¹⁰⁹ Historically, this refers to the pre-war period, although the distinction between classical and modern is not clearly fixed.

extend.” (Deleuze, 1986: 81). Perception is no longer only that which simply receives and carries out the interval of movement, for the interval is now shattered into micro-intervals, through “the differential of perception itself” (Deleuze, 1986: 83). The natural perception of organic movement and its molar intervals opens to the imperceptible virtuality of what Deleuze describes as a *gaseous perception* (see Glossary), where transverse movements trace the molecular intervals of matter itself.

In butoh, proprioception is always on the cusp of apprehending the ungraspable multiplicity of all possible movements, the pure virtuality of routes not taken but nonetheless perceived or imagined.

“For example, take these fingers. They are capable of catching objects. But I’ve asked myself in an extreme situation what their function could be between one articulation and another. There are things that are not apparent in our daily lives. This is what I want to show – those aspects of our lives which are not apparent to us.” (Hijikata, in V&M, 1988: 185)

What cannot be seen or is not apparent in the movement-image haunts *sensory-motor* expression (see Glossary), for it is that part which opens to the pure potentiality of the virtual, to a dark realm that seems to emerge between one articulation and another. It is as if the image of movement carries within itself what Deleuze calls the “eye of matter” (Deleuze, 1986: 81), a capacity for infinite virtual connections arising through the very faltering of sensory-motor schemata.

This is perhaps what Hijikata is talking about when he describes a relation to “invisible matter.” (Hijikata, 2000e: 77). What is attributed to the acquisition of *presence* in butoh is precisely the ability of the dancer to perceive a multiplicity of relations, anterior to their expression in movement, and to become activated by them with a sense of infinite potential. The transverse relations within this ‘invisible matter’ seem to emerge between articulations, as if through “the holes... in forms” (Deleuze, 1986: 85).

Perhaps then, this ‘invisible matter’ may be seen to have the consistency of an immanent material, appearing like a ‘being of sensation’ that is made up nothing other than what Deleuze describes as “particle(s) of matter or gaseous perception” (Deleuze, 1986: 84). In Hijikata’s butoh-fu *particles* occur frequently as a special kind of image, more modulation than mode. They facilitate the transformation or recombination of images; that is, they allow images to *pass on* or into one another. It is then an appropriate way of envisaging the butoh-bwo in theoretical terms, where it might be said that the percept comprises the very *particles* of the butoh-image in its pure becoming (in both seeing and the seen: proprioception and invisible matter). These particles consist only of an immanent substance – the differential of perception as pure modulation of matter.

ii. *Nerve circuits*

I will now describe how the dancer's movements relate to the affect and the affection-image, by redefining the articulation between butoh-bwo and butoh-body through the process of counter-actualisation.

If the percept *consists* in pure modulation itself, the affect *persists* as the result of this modulation. For butoh, this subtle distinction is apparent in the shadowy and often indiscernable relationship between seeing and the seen, that is, between the process of proprioception and the image of 'invisible matter' that arises in the butoh-body. It is not then in the molecular relations of the image(s) as such (via the particles of the percept), but in the *persistence* of their co-existing durations where new affects may occur. Similarly, the affection-image is that which *occupies* the interval within the movement-image. For Deleuze, the affection-image has both the quality of an immobile surface, as reflective or reflecting unity, and the pure power of micro-movements forming intensive series. In particular, he identifies this *quality-power* within the close-up of the face or its equivalent (Deleuze, 1986: 87).¹¹⁰ Following on from Hijikata's articulation of the fingers, these ideas will be discussed here using the hand as an equivalent to the face.

In another of his many childhood anecdotes, Hijikata relates how, as a child with nothing to play with he would often 'steal' the gestures of his family, even the neighbour's dog, and place them inside his body –

“Take the neighbour's dog for instance. Fragmented within my body, its movements and actions became floating rafts. But sometimes these rafts get together and say something, there inside my body. Then they eat the darkness, the most precious food my body has inside it. One time the gestures and movements I had gathered inside my body got connected to my hands and came out. When I tried to grasp something, the following hand held onto the grasping hand. A hand

¹¹⁰ The fossilised skin-plane of the butoh-bwo may be seen to constitute such a surface of inscription. Not that the butoh-body is immobile, but that it approaches the limit of motility via intensive movement. According to Nario Gohda, Hijikata once described the body as having the dark and absorbent qualities of charcoal (Gohda, in W&K, 1998), which suggests both the affect as inscription (to be affected), and the dark luminosity of its virtual relations (producing affects, and as self-affecting-self).

chasing a hand ends up being a senile hand unable to reach anything. It does not go directly to the thing.”¹¹¹ (Hijikata, 2000e: 76-77).

Here, Hijikata generates a pure description of the dog, selecting so many fragments through attentive perception. Within the *butoh-bwo*, these fragments become like floating rafts (or disparate cell-plateaus), which enter into virtual conjunctions by ‘eating the darkness’. In the sense that Hijikata’s darkness emerges as a figure of the virtual, the process of counter-actualisation may be seen to be generated by its gobbling. In the same manner in which Hijikata’s sister chastises his craving for expression, the grasping hand (actual hand) is in turn grasped by a virtual hand, which pulls it back from accomplishing the movement. Through the many gestures of the dog, the virtual hand gathers the weight or momentum of a certain persistence, as the cell-plateaus of the *butoh-bwo* accumulate their virtual conjunctions.¹¹²

And if, as Hijikata suggests, these rafts get together to ‘say something’, it is only in the senility of their own inexpressible potential. In this ‘saying’ the virtual hand attains the *utterable* of a signalitic material, grasping the actual hand in order to produce the reflective or reflecting unity of the affection-image. This reflection is one where the micro-movements of the actual hand are constantly oscillating within a multiplicity of gestural fragments, part-objects and luminous images. Like Hijikata’s fingers, the interval exists in the space *between* articulations, and it is here where the virtual hand appears, within a *spatium* of intensity, rather than a sequence of extensive movements. It is not the contents of the images themselves but the heterogeneous *duration* of their modes that allows for the emergence of new affects.¹¹³ Here in the interval there is a denial of the body’s motor

¹¹¹ See Appendices (The Ohno Studio) for a personal anecdote describing the senile hand of Kazuo Ohno.

¹¹² Of course, in Hijikata’s becoming-dog the virtual hand is not really a hand, but a *paw*. However, as Massumi describes at length, and as is also the case with Hijikata’s cow, this is not the imitation of a dog, but a “diagramming” (Massumi, 1992: 93). Massumi describes this becoming with reference to complex systems theory: “rather than establishing equivalences between organic wholes, it diagrams differences in potential associated with bodily parts as such (the organs “hand” and “paw” as part-objects governed by a fractal attractor).” (Massumi, 1992: 98).

¹¹³ Deleuze and Guattari describe planes of composition, which “must now be taken apart in order to relate them to their intervals rather than to one another and to create new affects.” (D&G, 1994: 187). Here they endnote Pascal Bonitzer’s notion of *deframing* in cinema, as crucial for the emergence of new affects. For *butoh* and cinephilosophy, this may be considered in the light of fragmentation and aberrant movement – underscoring the processes of transformation and metamorphosis.

extension, in favour of an internal diagram of virtual relations. Here the dancer is always and already 'caught' within a web of contingencies, thresholds and limit factors.

The accumulating weight of the virtual hand is forever dragging the actual hand back into the crack where it is endlessly relinked, to maintain the fluctuating modulation of its moulds. To repeat Waguri's words, the butoh-body is like "[an] unstable lump of flesh in a container. Being pulled out and back in, the flesh goes through multiplication and condensation." (Waguri, in W&K, 1998). In deducing the aspects of the butoh-bwo, it may then be said that the skin-plane of the metaplastic membrane (unstable lump of flesh) evacuates the interval of the hollow-body (multiplication), while also undergoing a process of condensation, as the accumulating weight of the dead-body approaches the limit of its own fossilisation.

In this manner, the virtual hand gouges out the *empty-time* (see Glossary) of the intensive spatium, by hollowing out the crack with the multiplication of its intensive series. On the other hand, the senility of the actual hand bears the shadow of the pure event as a *dead-time* (see Glossary), where the accumulation of virtual conjunctions outstrips its motor capacities, rendering the butoh-body with a strange fossilisation of aberrant movements and faltering gestures. The butoh-body is constantly being 'pulled out' by the process of actualisation, and 'back in' by the power of the crack. And so it is that fingers 'capable of catching objects', are instead caught by a *sense* of invisible matter.

To borrow again from Hijikata's butoh-fu, the affect and its power of counter-actualisation may be envisaged as a *web of nerves*. For it is within the crack where the dancer is apprehended by a web of contingencies, and where the internal circuit of the FACE – of self-affecting-self – is caught up with a broad circuit of dancer-affecting-spectator. Both are hollowed out in the conflation of circuits as the process of evacuation subtracts from the process of actualisation, while adding to the power of the pure event by multiplying the potential of its virtual conjunctions: "the crack runs its silent course and extends its web" (Deleuze, 1990: 155). The conflation of affects between internal and broad circuits constitutes a growing web of nerves whose tendrils appear to fossilise in the luminous contour of the metaplastic membrane. For if the affect is "a motor tendency on a sensitive nerve" (Deleuze, 1986: 87), while the proprioceptor is "a sensory nerve-ending receptive of such stimuli" (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 879),¹¹⁴ then it may be said that the particles of the image pass along a web of nerves – as the force of the percept carried by the power of proprioception, through a circuit of affects, to constitute a compound entity or being of sensation.

¹¹⁴ From *proprioception* – "pertaining to, or made active by stimuli arising from movement in the tissues; also *proprioceptive sense* – sense of muscular position (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 879).

iii. *The forgotten landscape*

Returning to the deduction of image-types, it is in the complex dynamics of the affection-image where Deleuze first situates the crisis of the action-image. This crisis of action is another example of the way in which counter-actualisation resists the process of realisation to preserve the power of the pure event. What is important here for the purposes of my argument, is how Deleuze situates this crisis within the historical conditions of post-war cinema. As I will show, the same conditions and features are also critical for the emergence of Hijikata's *butoh*. This sense of crisis brings about the appearance of what Deleuze calls the *time-image*. For the *butoh-bwo*, it is an image of time itself that emerges in the *butoh-body*, from the compound of percepts and affects generated through *butoh-fu*.

Deleuze first identifies the crisis of the action-image in Italian neo-realist films, where the situation itself outstrips the motor capacities of its protagonists, so that they can no longer act, but instead become *seers* (Deleuze, 1989: 3). They are no longer subject to the motor conditions of the situation, but instead enter into pure descriptions and faltering motor connections. The virtual dimension embedded within the setting then emerges as a 'pure optical situation', rather than being extended into action. By the same token, when Hijikata is apprehended by a senile hand, he does not act but is rather *activated* by the virtual images he carries deep within his body. He becomes a seer, diagramming pure descriptions (for instance a dog or cow), to draw out the purely optical and tactile qualities of percepts and affects. In considering a cinephilosophy specific to *butoh*, it is primarily the dancer's body that provides both setting and protagonist. In a manner of speaking, the *butoh-body* constitutes both an ontogenetic and a diegetic medium that generates and encompasses all facets of the image in terms of the interval – montage vs. depth-of-field, and frame vs. the out-of-field.

In Italian Neo-realism, Deleuze discusses the setting through the notion of an *any-space-whatever* (see Glossary),¹¹⁵ which is seen to typify the crisis of action that the affection-image brings about. Deleuze characterises the *any-space-whatever*, as it is found in Expressionism, as a space full of shadows and a darkness in depth.¹¹⁶ Here, the contours of things are broken, endowing them with

¹¹⁵ "Any-space-whatever is not an abstract universal, in all times, in all places. It is a perfectly singular space, which has merely lost its homogeneity, that is, the principle of its metric relations or the connection of its parts, so that the linkages can be made in an infinite number of ways. It is a space of virtual conjunction, grasped as a locus of the possible." (Deleuze, 1986: 109).

¹¹⁶ In fact, Expressionism was another early influence on the formation of *Butoh*, although more so for Kazuo Ohno, through the influence of Mary Wigam.

the luminous power of “a non-organic life in which they lose their individuality, and which potentialises space, whilst making it something unlimited.” (Deleuze, 1986: 111) A parallel may be drawn here to Tanazaki’s theory of shadows and Hijikata’s whole *oeuvre* of utter darkness in the depths of the butoh-body (see Chapter 1).

For the butoh-bwo, the any-space-whatever relates to the intensive spatium, where the skin-plane of the metaplastic membrane may be imagined as a kind of ‘forgotten landscape’. Motofuji says that the body has been forgotten in modern society and now runs away as we try to draw closer to it (Motofuji, in W&K, 1998). In a different sense, Hijikata discusses forgetting as a mechanism for endless renewal (Hijikata, 2000d: 66). Butoh is a way of *seeing*, in the sense that the dancer must ‘go looking’ for a body that is in disrepair or badly constructed (forgotten) and that must be dismantled or rebuilt (forgetting as re-membering). In another way, Deleuze and Guattari describe the percept as the landscape before or in absence of man, while the affect constitutes those becomings that populate it (D&G, 1994: 169). The forgotten landscape of the butoh-bwo is an impossible terrain, which the dancer struggles to enter, managing to do so only by removing himself from it (or at least his ego) and becoming what he is not.

Most importantly, Deleuze situates the crisis of the action image within a specific historical frame. In the wake of World War II, many cities in both Europe and Japan had been reduced to rubble, producing a plethora of any-space-whatevers in their despoiled and dehumanised landscapes. This is what Deleuze sees particularly in the neo-realist films of De Sica, and later Antonioni. But we may also posit these conditions as ripe for the emergence of Hijikata, and his appearance must be seen in the light (and darkness) of his time. Tōno Yoshiaki describes the anti-art (*han-geijutsu*) groups of the early 1960’s as the “post-Hiroshima generation” –

“The rubble, the smell of death and the social confusion of the postwar era had constituted their everyday environment. The ruins were their playground and this state of absolute void became necessarily the foundation for their art.” (Yoshiaki, in Munroe, 1994: 189).

For a new generation of young artists in post-war Tokyo, there was a distinct lack of faith in the mechanisms of action that had produced Auschwitz and Hiroshima, and yet at the same time this provided the conditions for a different means of expression. Motofuji describes butoh as being created by those who witnessed death but who, as teenagers during the war, could do little about it (Motofuji, in W&K, 1998). The 1960’s were all about expressing what they had seen through an aesthetic form. As I have indicated in relation to the *hitogata*, it would be oversimplistic to view the white make-up of butoh dancers as a representation of atomic death, or to regard the emergence of butoh as an explicit political statement against the superpower politics characterised by the AMPO

crisis.¹¹⁷ As discussed, Hijikata's approach to death and his critique of modernism is far more complex and engaging in its poetics. However, Munroe makes a valid point, when she cites the so-called "*Anpo-spirit*" as embodying a sense of rage and impotence, through which many of Hijikata's generation to question the mechanisms of identity and action; "to probe – [and she quotes Mishima] ... "the outermost edges of the body and spirit" in order to find the merest sign of original being, of reality other than void." (Munroe, 1994: 190). Indeed, it was Mishima who greatly influenced Hijikata, exposing him to literary and avant garde figures, through whom he came to embody a politics of his own – a "Rebellion of the Body".¹¹⁸ Regarded as his farewell to the west, this work provides the culmination of his first phase, a period characterised by expressions of perverse sexuality and primordial violence, rejecting the unified subject of modernism.¹¹⁹ His rebellion of 'naked soldiers' set out to dismantle the banality of everyday movement and its hegemonic accumulation. As Tanaka claims, Hijikata's body "was always like a weapon", adding –

"He was always angry about how our bodies are controlled historically. Behind the social face, we have many faces. He tried to take them off." (Tanaka, 1986a: 146).¹²⁰

iv. *A sense of crisis*

His brothers' bodies returning home in so many funeral urns, and his sister being sold into prostitution – the roots of Hijikata's anger are readily apparent. As Kurihara writes, Hijikata moved to Tokyo at the age of 23, intending to follow a career in classical ballet. Initially shocked by the postwar confusion, and then swept along by the chaotic sense of freedom that it provided the artists of his generation, he struggled to find a unique voice that might incorporate his rural upbringing and the visions drawn from his childhood experiences (Kurihara, 2000, 17-18). Many of Hijikata's early

¹¹⁷ The student uprisings of the Anti-AMPO movement protested the signing of the 1960 Security Treaty between Japan and the United States. Although *Kinjiki: Forbidden Colours* was performed in the lead up to the crisis, prompting some critics to view it's strangulation of a chicken as an Anti-American statement, Hijikata was to write later in 1961, of the body as: "a dreaming lethal weapon that has long ignored the poverty of politics." (Hijikata, 2000b: 48). Klein provides an analysis of the AMPO crisis as it applies to *butoh*. (Klein, 1986: 31-32)

¹¹⁸ As with the near coincidence of *Kinjiki* and the AMPO crisis, the performance of 'Rebellion of the Body' came shortly after the May '68 riots in Paris, and the student uprisings in Tokyo.

¹¹⁹ As outlined in the Introduction.

¹²⁰ Tanaka has also discussed the distinctions between farmer's bodies and soldier's bodies, of the former being transformed into the latter (Hakushu workshop, August 2002).

dance pieces contained parodies of his training in classical ballet and modern dance, and it is in this confrontation with the *classical* where I may posit a parallel with the ‘crisis’ of the action-image in which Deleuze invokes the shift from *classical* to *modern* cinema.¹²¹ As Mishima remarks –

“Almost every form of art has an awareness of crisis at its root... This is also true in classical ballet. Those unnatural dance shoes... seem to make the human beings lose balance; they impose a sense of crisis, since the body is barely and perilously standing. Avant-Garde dance does not use the dance shoes... If the requirement of the latter is to realize ‘the balance on the verge of crisis’, that of the former is to express the crisis itself.”

(Mishima, in Hoffman and Holburn, 1987: 123)

Umino offers a succinct summation of the differences between ballet and butoh, in terms of the body’s relationship to space. Ballet, he claims, is dominating and expansive, characterised by symmetry and figures of the arc and spiral, orientated around a perpendicular axis where centrifugal force is always active. Butoh on the other hand, is a *fusing* of body and space characterised by asymmetry and distorted figures, with no particular axis, where centripetal force is always at work (Umino, in W&K, 1998). What is important for my argument at this point is this fusion of body and space. Any ‘fusion’ seems at odds with the forces of fragmentation that characterise butoh, but it is precisely this paradox that creates the sense of crisis to which Mishima refers.

So far I have traced a circuit of affects, in the manner by which the dancer attempts to grasp the sense of an object, and is in turn grasped by it. But the senile hand does not stop there – it is always pulled back by the paw, always moving simultaneously in two directions at once, towards the expressed of the proposition (made by the actual hand) and the virtualised state of things (always hidden in the paw). Of course, the ‘paw’ is only a figure – there is no paw as such, only a complex entity of ever-changing affective singularities that generate the becoming-dog.

It is in the very senility of the hand where the two poles meet, and here where the *crisis* is located. The senile hand can no longer act because it cannot fully express the event. At the virtual pole, the dancer can only fail to grasp the sheer complexity of its heterogeneous durations – the accumulation of gestures, postures and attitudes of the dog, while at the actual pole s/he can only be grasped by

¹²¹ This distinction is a provisional one, for what constitutes the *modern* in dance and cinema is specific to each. However, it may be said that for both Hijikata and the filmmakers which Deleuze discusses there is an implicit critique, not only of the *classical* forms within either discipline (for Hijikata this can be seen to include ‘modern dance’), but of *modernism* itself, laying the seeds for a *post-modern* art practice. For the post-modern aspects of butoh, see Klein (1986: 20-23).

the fragmentary emergence of these characteristics. In butoh, the problem of expression is one that always falls back into the crack of counter-actualisation, creating “a sense of crisis or in that sense of terror that if you take even one wrong step you will fall backwards into a dreadful abyss” (Suzuki, in Hijikata, 2000d: 62). This is how Suzuki describes his impression of ‘Rebellion of the Body’, to which Hijikata replies in the same interview “I am not being visited by a sense of crisis, rather I am demanding it.” (Hijikata, 2000d: 64). The abyss of the virtual, gaping through the crack, makes its own demands upon the actual – never exhausted by it, always subsisting in that impersonal aspect of the event that its actualisation can never fully accomplish. And so the artist receives and carries out this demand upon himself, as if to ask of his own senile hand: “Can even expression, when it reaches the place it set out for actually accomplish anything?” (Hijikata, 2000e: 78).

As Umino suggests, a certain depth is created, where the dancer appears to pull space from every direction, both inside and outside, so they become indiscernible (Umino, in W&K: 1998). It is no longer only depth within the butoh-body that feeds the intensive spatium, for the internal circuit of self-affecting-self is now conflated with the broad circuit of dancer-spectator. For the latter, it is not exactly the same as that external space which ballet seeks to dominate, that is, to ‘fill’. There is instead a ‘hollowing out’ of space through the conflation of the two circuits, within which the complex entity of the affect generates a becoming. The interval between dancer and spectator is not a distance to be traversed, but a composite duration through which something else emerges – an *image of time* in a pure state.

Time and thought

To summarise at this point, butoh-fu generates a being of sensation that emerges as a composite image of multiple durations. This compound entity of percepts and affects, comprising heterogeneous speeds and durations, becomes *durable*, as something inexplicable appears to rise up in the luminous contour of the butoh-body: an *image of time* itself.

i. Time dancing

Deleuze talks about the *time-image* as a “transparent material” or “primary matter” (Deleuze, 1989: 34, 115), emerging as a result of the break or crisis in the sensory-motor schema. The time-image presents a whole new taxonomy of images and signs other than those of the movement-image, describing pure optical situations in which time and thought become perceptible. Time appears to

exist for its own sake when it is not merely a measure of distances traversed (hodology) but rather a durational multiplicity of co-existing, nonlinear relations irrespective of spatial coordinates (topology). “Time is out of joint” (Deleuze, 1989: 41) – spread out across a plane of consistency; just as Hijikata also created a plane from his dislocated joints when he sat down in the middle of the road as a child, denying the motoricity of his body: “Then the plane of my joints, dislocated from the confines of thinking with my head, stretched out wider and wider.” (Hijikata, 2000e: 76) The degree zero of intensive movement oscillates around immobility and multiplicity (absorbent surface and micro-movements), to generate anomalies of movement through the multiplication of their virtual conjunctions. Time is no longer subordinate to movement but the other way around,¹²² so that aberrant movement is now the norm rather than the exception. In a passage similar to Umino’s analysis of the differences between *butoh* and ballet, Deleuze identifies the characteristics of the time-image as an absence of centres, the predominance of aberrant movement, the co-existence of disparate speeds and durations, false continuities and constant changes in scale and proportion (Deleuze, 1989: 36). Perhaps it was these qualities which prompted Mishima, seeing Hijikata in *Rebellion of the Body*, to cry – “Its terrifying, this is time dancing” (Mishima, in Stein, 1986: 116).

The premodern Japanese notion of *yami* (the dark or gloom) seems to approximate the topological nonlinearity of the time-image, with a kind of temporal equivalence to the aesthetic of darkness described earlier in Tanazaki’s theory of shadows. David Goodman describes *yami* as “an endlessly repeating, constantly changing, shapeless form of time. Things are not orderly or predictable but as innumerable and conflicting as thoughts and images” (Goodman, in Klein, 1986: 40). Returning to my re-interpretation of Tanazaki’s luminous depth as it relates to Hijikata’s darkness, this definition

¹²² Deleuze distinguishes between an *indirect* and a *direct* representation of time, the former being where time is subject to movement, as a measure of distance and the passage of objects through space; while the latter subordinates movement to emerge for its own sake (Deleuze, 1989: 22). The distinction may also be drawn in terms of a *hodological* (indirect), versus a *topological* (direct) conception of space-time. Movement is subject to time when space becomes non-Euclidean, governed by topological intensities and heterogeneous durations, rather than a hodological measure of distances traversed. [*Hodometer*: “an instrument attached to a wheel for measuring distance travelled.” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 503)]. Deleuze talks about hodological space as one organised by the organic regime of the sensory-motor schemata. In tension with this, *pre-hodological* space (or what I have called topological in a slightly different sense) is characterised by disparate and overlapping sets. The body is “caught up in” contested and imbricated layers, much like Hijikata’s ‘floating rafts’. See my discussion of the interFACE schema later in this chapter, where the *butoh-fu* images are layered up as in the After Effects interface.

of yami may be situated within the 'setting' of the butoh-body. As with the any-space-whatever, the virtuality of the butoh-body is like a 'forgotten landscape', appearing in the luminous contour of an ephemeral fossilisation. For Hijikata this forgetting becomes a mechanism for endless renewal through constant metamorphosis, while as Motofuji also suggests, butoh is an attempt to reclaim a primordial body that has been forgotten in modern society. Assisting the fragmentation of aberrant movements, it is a forgetting which seeks to touch the infinite duration of a virtual body, caressing the intangible cell-plateaus of a metaplastic-membrane. For Deleuze –

“What aberrant movement reveals is time as everything, as ‘infinite opening’, as anteriority over all normal movement defined by motivity [*motricité*]: time has to be anterior to the controlled flow of every action, there must be a ‘birth of the world that is not completely restricted to the experience of our motivity’ ...” (Deleuze, 1989: 37).

Here, time is anterior to perception in the same way that the percept is anterior to man. Both the percept as “landscape before man” (D&G, 1994: 169) and the perception of time as birth of the world, take on a primordial sense here in the light of the forgotten landscape-body and its luminous contour. This sense of a primordial anteriority is evident also when Eguchi remarks, on seeing a butoh performance by Hoppo Butoh-ha: “What I saw on the stage was a world in which words and things had not been differentiated; in short, I beheld the dawn of the world.” (Eguchi, in Klein, 1986: 89).

It is in the shadowy indiscernibility of the virtual and the actual, through the process of counter-actualisation, where the pure event emerges as an entity that exceeds its actualisation. In a certain way the time-image corresponds to the pure event in the sense that it *counter-actualises* the signaleptic material of the movement-image. It is a perception of time where movement does not pass into action but enters into virtual conjunctions via proprioception.¹²³ For if time is anterior to perception, just as the image concerns the modulation of matter itself, then the time-image also subsists or inheres as an extra-being, resisting its accomplishment within the sensory-motor regime. This was already evident in the case of the affection-image, where for the butoh-bwo the any-space-whatever is re-visioned as the luminous contour of the skin-membrane. Now with the time-image, Deleuze posits a whole new taxonomy of image-types, with a totally different logic to that of the sensory-motor regime. It is not necessary to explicate these here. However, in summary, I will briefly discuss Deleuze's notion of the *crystalline regime* (see *Crystal-image*, in Glossary), as it concerns the role of counter-actualisation within the butoh-bwo.

¹²³ As I have said, intensive movements are apprehended by the power or faculty of proprioception, as a generative limit (degree-zero of immobility and multiplicity).

ii. *The dark crystal*

Deleuze sets out what he calls a crystal-image, in which an actual image coalesces with its virtual counterpart,¹²⁴ rendering both indiscernible through their continual exchange. One of the ways in which Deleuze illustrates this point is by saying that when a virtual image becomes actual it displays a *limpid* quality, while the actual image, in also becoming virtual, appears *shadowy* and opaque. These qualities resonate clearly with the luminosity of Hijikata's darkness and the virtual doubling of Artaud's shadows. For my purposes, this continual exchange between actual and virtual may be seen to constitute a process of counter-actualisation, in the sense that their indiscernible relation *turns upon* a degree-zero of intensive movement rather than extending into action.¹²⁵ Deleuze describes the oscillation between the actual and the virtual as a "small circuit that functions as internal limit for all the others and that puts the actual image beside a kind of [...] simultaneous double." (Deleuze, 1989: 68). This may be understood in the same way that I have used it to describe the small circuits of the FACE (self-affecting-self), where the internal limit determines the modulation of the attributes. It may also be said, following Deleuze, that the broad circuit of dancer-spectator may conjure up recollection-images (or world-images, dream-images), but where the circuits do not return an actual memory to the spectator, but a *durable duration*, a "pure recollection" carrying only the sense of a dream or movement of the world without fixing it in a representation (Deleuze, 1989: 54-55).

Theatre critic Kiyokazu Yamamoto defines a "metempsychotic" model of time where "there is only process, which is cyclical and endless" (Yamamoto, in Klein, 1986: 41); one which Klein describes as a "premodern, ritualistic model of time and being" (Klein, 1986: 41), linking it both to the primordialism of *yami* and to Hijikata's method of constant metamorphosis and fragmentation. In the butoh-bwo, this cyclical process is one where the attributes endlessly modulate one another to determine its articulation with the butoh-body.¹²⁶ Metempsychosis is defined as "the passing of the soul after death into some other body" (Chambers: 1968: 668). Of course, with the dead-body there is a transmission of affects between bodies, as a becoming. With the conflation of small and broad

¹²⁴ The virtual constitutes the multiplicity of time, the absolute depth of its heterogeneity.

¹²⁵ The two poles turn upon a generative limit, where the time-image finds its "genetic element" (Deleuze, 1989: 69).

¹²⁶ For the hollow-body this is an endlessly cyclical process of counter-actualisation through evacuation and sedimentation (or multiplication and condensation), while for the dead-body it concerns the virtual accumulation of things and the fossilisation of their pure descriptions.

circuits, something passes through the fossilising membrane – not a ‘soul’ *per se*, so much as the particles of the percept – “a minimum before the void” (D&G, 1994: 181). It is here where the faculty of proprioception *catches* an image as the pure modulation of matter.¹²⁷ In the sense that proprioception is where perception lays hold of time (the latter being anterior to the former), it may be said that the particles of the percept are like Deleuze’s crystals of time, where a process of crystallisation occurs when the fossilising membrane takes on a luminous quality. In this sense, Hijikata’s method of fragmentation and metamorphosis may be likened to what Deleuze calls the darkening or decomposition of the crystal (Deleuze, 1989: 94).

In the end, it is the modulation of the attributes that determine the ‘pressure of time’¹²⁸ within the *butoh-bwo*. It is this pressure which places the *butoh*-body in a state of perpetual crisis, a chronic rather than chronological time. Here, the crisis of time involves a splitting into “two dissymmetrical jets, one of which makes all the present pass on, while the other preserves all the past.” (Deleuze, 1989: 81) With the crystal-image, the present which passes is the actual image, while the past that is preserved is the virtual image. And yet, at the same time there is a continual exchange between the two. For if the visionary can see the splitting of time in the crystal (Deleuze, 1989: 81), it is because this indiscernible relation requires the creative power of counter-actualisation.¹²⁹ This problematic operation is akin to what Nietzsche calls the *untimely*,¹³⁰ which for *butoh* recalls that “something can be born, can appear, living and dying in the same moment.” (Hijikata, in Stein, 1986: 125).

¹²⁷ Proprioception is a power of ‘pure awareness’, while the ‘soul’ is perhaps here not so much an individuated packet (personality), as an opening to and by the outside (individuation). These aspects are similar to the notion of the All-Mind in Zen meditation.

¹²⁸ Deleuze discusses Andrei Tarkovsky’s notion of “the pressure of time in the shot” – the flow of time as tension or rarefaction (Deleuze, 1989: 42).

¹²⁹ With the time-image, Deleuze makes a distinction between what he calls virtual sheets of past and *de-actualised* peaks of present (Deleuze, 1989: 105). Within the frame of the *butoh-bwo* these correspond to the dead cells of the intensive plateaus (virtual sheets as the accumulation of dead forces and everyday movements); for which their singular points (actual peaks) are evacuated within the intensive spatium of the metaplastic membrane, through the multiplication of virtual conjunctions (de-actualisation or counter-actualisation).

¹³⁰ Deleuze says the *untimely* is “to go back into the event, to take one’s place in it as in a becoming, to grow in it at once, going through all its components or singularities.” (Deleuze, 1995: 170).

iii. *The thinking body*

The sheer weight or pressure of the virtual past, as well as the impossibility of fully occupying the pure event, constitutes something *unbearable* within the crisis of the time-image. In the first instance, there is the sense of something intolerable in the world, whether it is the secret terror of a despoiled landscape or the dead forces of a forgotten-body. And then, what is truly unbearable for the artist is the problem of adequately expressing this perception of an intolerable situation. According to Deleuze, it was Artaud who formulated this same problem in relation to *thought*. As I will explain, this dilemma prefigures that of expression and it is one through which Hijikata develops the notion of a *thinking body*.¹³¹

According to Deleuze, Artaud says “that the image must produce a shock, a nerve-wave that gives rise to thought...”¹³² (Deleuze, 1989: 165) – in the sense that it automates in the viewer a series of linkages and causal relationships. It is not so much that the image comprises certain codes by which the spectator may be manipulated, but that it reveals the very fact that “thought is a matron which has not always existed” (Artaud, in Deleuze, 1989: 165). In the same mode as his critique of innateness, Artaud claims that thought must be created and that *we have not yet begun to think* (just as we seem content to live dead). In this way, the cinema does not allow us to think the Whole, but to *realise* the fact that we are not yet thinking; and then to *create* through this inherent impossibility. This necessity is the same as that which concerns the problem of expression (as discussed in Chapter 1), *turning upon* the impossibility of an internal or generative limit. In fact, Deleuze paraphrases Blanchot’s discussion of Artaud, when he says “what forces us to think is ‘the inpower (*impouvoir*) of thought’.” (Deleuze, 1989: 168).¹³³

When Artaud invokes the image as a “dissociative force”, presenting a “figure of nothingness” or “hole in appearances” (Artaud, in Deleuze, 1989: 167), Deleuze relates it to the impower of thought – describing it as the *unthought* in thought (see Glossary). To Artaud’s ‘matron’ of thought, Deleuze posits a *spiritual automaton* (see Glossary) as the figure of this unthought, haunting the cinematic image as a force from the outside. When Deleuze discusses Dreyer’s films, the figure of the spiritual

¹³¹ Although this term does not appear in Hijikata’s available texts, it is one Tanaka used in his discussion of Hijikata (Hakushu workshop, August 2002).

¹³² For the FACE, the ‘nerve wave’ delivers the shock to thought, extending its web through the circuit of affects.

¹³³ Deleuze translates it as ‘*impower*’ (Deleuze 1989: 166), while here Blanchot gives it as ‘*inpower*’.

automaton takes the form of a mummy or a vampire (Deleuze, 1989: 170).¹³⁴ In the case of Hijikata's butoh-fu, it is the *hitogata* that serves this function, in the way it characterises the functioning of the dead and hollow bodies within the butoh-bwo.

It is in the fossilisation of the butoh-body where the twofold problem of expression and thought crystalise. Indeed, Deleuze describes the effect of the spiritual automaton as a "fossilisation", where the moving images substitute themselves for the spectators' thinking, committing a "theft of thoughts" (Deleuze, 1989: 166).¹³⁵ What is most critical for butoh-fu is the way that it constructs a *thinking body*, through which time and thought may be seen to rise up in the luminous contour of the butoh-body.¹³⁶ The *shock* occurs when the dancer tries to keep track of multiple images – each in different parts of the body, with different durations and modal features.¹³⁷ However, as Tanaka said during the summer school which I participated in (Hakushu workshop, August 2002), it doesn't matter if you go into shock or forget the images, the most important thing is to maintain the sense. That is, it is necessary to preserve the intensive spatium through which this shock may be modulated by the attributes of the butoh-bwo.¹³⁸ It is necessary, even if this means that the condensation of cell-plateaus loses the fluidity of the butoh-bwo, drying up with the fossilisation of the butoh-body.

¹³⁴ Deleuze also describes the ordinary spectator as a 'mechanical-man' or 'experimental dummy' (Deleuze, 1989: 169).

¹³⁵ The luminous contour, as it emerges via the facet of fossilisation, engenders a process of crystallisation (as in the crystal-image), where the coalescence of the actual and the virtual produces a shimmering of time in a pure-state, rising to the surface of the butoh-body. The resulting theft of thoughts occurs as a transmission of affects along small and broad circuits, between dancer and spectator.

¹³⁶ For Deleuze it is the *opsign* that makes time and thought perceptible; while for butoh this concerns the faculty of proprioception. [The *opsign* is "an image which breaks the sensory-motor schema, and where the seen is no longer extended into action." (Deleuze, 1989: Glossary)].

¹³⁷ See Appendices for a taxonomy of butoh-fu 'transfer modes' (and their theorisation in Chapter 3).

¹³⁸ In the Hakushu workshop, Tanaka presented two methods for maintaining the fluid multiplicity of images: constant scanning or panoramic survey. For the dancer, the shock to thought may occur with the anxiety of remembering how many images are in play; although of course, this anxiety appears as the result of self-critique (subjectification), which the dancer constantly attempts to go beyond (destratify).

This total senility still imparts a durable sensation, attesting to the fact that the body has not begun to think.¹³⁹ “To block, to be blocked, is that not still an intensity?” (D&G, 1987: 152).

It is a matter of forgetting the self, of no longer thinking with one’s head. Then aberrant movements may appear as if of their own free will, erasing and re/membering a forgotten body, in the continual forgetting that is metamorphosis. When this occurs (and I have witnessed it on several occasions), the shock of the unthought is carried to the audience like a nerve wave through the conflated circuit of affects, resulting in a strange amnesiac effect where neither dancer nor spectator can be sure of exactly what happened, nor can their respective perceptions of the event be extricated one from the other. They have fallen into the crack of a becoming, a zone of indeterminacy, grasped by a ‘theft of thoughts’ via the inexplicable entity of the affect. Here, the unthought becomes tangible, durable even, hollowing-out the space between them with an impower.

The solution for Artaud, as for Hijikata, is not to link the images in a cohesive chain of sensory–motor relations, but to *unlink* them, always delimiting their extension by multiplying their virtual conjunctions, finding the ‘AND’ between articulations.¹⁴⁰ Here, the image is “a fissure, a crack” (Deleuze, 1989: 167) within which the depths of the body may be apprehended in all its dissociative force. Faced with a sense of the unbearable, Deleuze advocates a return to the body, to believe in the body, “giving discourse to the body and, for this purpose, reaching the body before discourse.” (Deleuze, 1989: 172).¹⁴¹ This is precisely what Hijikata does with the *thinking-body* of his *butoh-fu*. He provides an innovative method for discovering what Deleuze sought in his appraisal of Spinoza:

¹³⁹ That is, it must always *begin* to approach this impossibility, always being whipped by thought, creating itself as a pure event. “The body does not exist unless one is astonished at its ingenuous state” (Tanaka, 1986b: 153).

¹⁴⁰ Deleuze goes on to discuss the notion of the “AND” in what he calls Godard’s ‘interstitial method’ (Deleuze, 1989: 179–181). Within the multiplication of the intensive spatium the interval of the movement-image does not pass on, but instead finds the interstice of matter, or gaseous perception. Hijikata’s ‘space between articulations’ may be imagined in just such a way. In the Appendices, this idea of matter vis-à-vis ‘the space-between’ is discussed via the Japanese notion of ‘*ma*’ (in-between space), with Hijikata’s neologism, ‘*ma-gusare*’, translated as ‘rotten interval’ (PARCO, 1987: 50). For the etymology of ‘*butoh*’, an equivalent Japanese term for ‘*bu*’ is ‘*ma-i*’, meaning to do the action of ‘*ma*’. ‘*Ma*’ is a sense of the space between things, contrary to the rational Western notion of distance (Yoshie, in Moore, 1986).

¹⁴¹ Or as Motofuji suggests, returning to a primordial sense that may restore the intolerable disconnection of body and world (Motofuji, in W&K: 1998).

“We do not yet know what a body can do. To think is to learn what a non-thinking body is capable of” (Deleuze, 1989: 189). Hijikata turns this around (or inside out), to deprive the self of this knowing; *whipping* the ‘impossible kennel’ of a thinking-body so that time and thought may rise to the surface of a luminous contour.

With the notion of the *butoh-bwo* as transient membrane, the distinction between body and brain becomes somewhat fuzzy, as the thinking-body demonstrates. Just as the *butoh-bwo* may only exist through the perception of a thought-matter which both passes and posits itself there, in the same manner Deleuze says, “The identity of world and brain, the automaton, does not form a whole, but rather a limit, a membrane which puts an outside and an inside in contact” (Deleuze, 1989: 206). For his part, Hijikata said that the brain is merely a part of the body, a comment which Kurihara claims is borne out by recent findings in cognitive science, that the mind is inherently embodied (Kurihara, 2000: 16). As Tanaka remarks, the body is always slower than our awareness (Hakushu workshop, August 2002).¹⁴² Although it is not exactly a matter of making the body think at the speed of the brain, but rather of perceiving the heterogeneous speeds particular to it. To reiterate Tanaka’s remarks, these are –

“The speed of thought, of nerves, of blood circulation, of muscular tissues, of the spirit; the chaotic coexistence of various speeds...” (Tanaka, 1986b, 154).

To summarise, the thinking body provides *butoh-fu* with a conceptual figure, through which the *FACE* operates as a technical template for tracing the complex dynamics of the *butoh-bwo*. In the following and final chapter I will take this one step further, in devising a working method of diagrammatic notation that may provide a systemic frame for plotting the multiplicity of images and their trajectories. With this model I hope to develop a “thinking way” for my own *butoh*, by implementing a functional schemata that may generate “Thought [as] a dance in a different form” (Wakabayashi, in W&K, 1998).

¹⁴² This is where Tanaka’s strenuous aerobic training called MB (‘muscles and bones’, or ‘mind and body’) is specifically designed to confound the body with simultaneous and contradictory instructions – to force it to think (Hakushu workshop, August 2002).

***pneu babel* as generative system**

With the notion of the *butoh-bwo* I have attempted to construct a conceptual model that may re-examine Hijikata's *butoh* in the light of Deleuze and Guattari's materialist philosophy, in particular Deleuze's approach to cinema. This has given rise to a system of *special affects*, of particles and nerves passing through a whole assemblage of various conceptual bodies,¹⁴³ whose modes and attributes generate a transmission of sensations, traversing the actual bodies of dancers, spectators and other things. In its entirety, Deleuze and Guattari's pragmatic philosophy involves the *creation* of concepts, and it is in this manner that I have sought to develop the *butoh-bwo*, as a process of experimentation. This call to invention is also readily apparent in the constructivism of Hijikata's *butoh-fu*. Breaking with the traditional *sensei* model (where formal techniques are perfected by rote), Hijikata encouraged his students to generate their own *butoh-fu* schemas (as Tanaka does also), to discover *their own butoh* (Tanaka, Hakushu workshop, August 2002).

With this in mind, Chapter 3 proceeds as a generative praxis, in which I seek to develop my own schemas, sources of inspiration and creative materials, in light of the concepts investigated through previous chapters. Central to this undertaking was the production of a short film, entitled *pneu babel* (see DVD), for which I fulfilled the key roles of writer, director, producer, production designer, editor and animator, in addition to performing with a cast of 12. *pneu babel* is an experimental work-in-progress, and so its description here does not follow the usual expository treatment, as an explication of themes issuing from a predetermined set of scripted ideas. As I will demonstrate, the project evolved as a systemic process in which its material foundation was designed to resist (or counter-actualise) any clear interpretation of the narrative. In that way it may continue to traverse other disciplines and formats; 'extending its web' as the implications of its basic premises continue to multiply. This approach is situated within my previous discussion of Hijikata's *butoh*, through Deleuze and Guattari, although the interpretive model used here draws on complex systems theory as much as it does philosophy. This is intended to reflect the systemic approach to the work, while at the same time situating the systems model within the ideas developed thus far.

¹⁴³ See Appendices (figure 4) for a summary of the *butoh-bwo* using the FACE diagram.

Firstly, I begin with a detailed analysis of the basic narrative premise and the material components upon which it is founded, outlining how the narrative itself (not only the process of its production) may be seen to function as an open system of autonomous images, each with potentially heterogeneous linkages. Through this theoretical diegesis, the narrative develops in a direction that goes beyond what is evident from a viewing of the film alone. In its current state the ‘film’ is considered to be only a provisional entity, a proposition. The ‘systemic narrative’ outlined here enables the consideration of future work, which may actually *implement* these generative mechanisms through new performance methodologies and multimedia platforms. Firstly, a butoh-fu schema is devised which installs the systemic configuration of *pneu babel* within the butoh-body, by translating the ‘FACE’ diagram into a working methodology for compositing¹⁴⁴ images via the butoh-bwo. This ‘interFACE’ incorporates features drawn from Hijikata, Waguri and Tanaka, while also developing the cinephilosophical implications of butoh-fu by customising the video-compositing interface used in the film’s post-production – Adobe After Effects 4.1. This interFACE is intended both as a methodological tool for future performance practice and a vehicle for further research.¹⁴⁵

Next, the systemic analysis of *pneu babel* is further implemented with the description of a proposed multi-screen video installation. This provides an essential staging mechanism for performing the work, with a technical configuration that corresponds to the interFACE schema.¹⁴⁶ The video installation is installed on a nonlinear playback platform with generative programming, in such a way that each image may trigger the appearance of any other, according to their common features or singularities. While the linear montage of the film delimits the range of virtual conjunctions each image is capable of, this nonlinear, generative platform enables the technical realisation of the systemic narrative. At the same time, it allows the false narration or pure description of the narrative to extend its web of nerves still further. Here, the terms of its title – ‘*pneu*’ and ‘*babel*’ – are

¹⁴⁴ Compositing is a technical term in motion graphics software for the layering of multiple images within a single picture plane.

¹⁴⁵ Content for future work is indicated by a number of examples in the Appendices. These are presented as diagrams of intensity, drawn from specific images in the film and developed using the interFACE schema. Structural features of the interFACE architecture are also illustrated in a series of diagrams, taxonomies and templates in the Appendices. Possible directions for further research are also indicated here as well as in the footnotes of this chapter.

¹⁴⁶ In the first instance, this correspondence is made only through the intensive features of the image. It would be possible however to also sync the dancer’s movements to the projected images through MIDI triggering and motion-sensing apparatus’ (this may be a direction for further research and development).

discussed through the concept of the *phantasmagoria*,¹⁴⁷ while also relating this to the generative platform through a *pandemonium model* (appropriated from systems theory).

Systemic narrative

i. The premises of an open set

The images in the film were initially devised through an intensive improvisation period, using a limited number of props and no dialogue, and it is the interaction of the cast with these objects that provides the basic framework for the film. *pneu babel* was essentially constructed from two primary elements or initial conditions – an old chair and several kinetic sculptures consisting of old windows and curtains.¹⁴⁸ I will firstly describe the generative function these elements perform within the systemic narrative, then the nature of their interaction with the characters themselves. My film synopsis here provides a rough guide for the diegesis that follows –

“Time [is] the ghost of space haunting the reflexive consciousness” (Bergson, 1888: 99)

“pneu babel is a phantasmagoria for charting a topological landscape – a dark, dynamic terrain navigated by ‘The Settlers’. They are the ghosts of Time, bearing marks of passage across multiple durations. Using a broken old chair as an organising principle, they surf shards of fragmenting windows and billowing curtains, haunted by the reflections of a phantasmatic perception.”

The initial script for the film took its departure from an experimental theatre production, *=peripheral city* (Wellington Fringe Festival, 1998), in which an ensemble of four characters were encased in various costume-assemblages using familiar objects and appliances (a chair, a shopping trolley, a television, and an old washing machine). My character, the chair-man, had a chair sprouting from his back, the result of some inexplicable accident of science. The initial script for what has now become *pneu babel* first involved an inquiry into how this accident may have come

¹⁴⁷ As I will discuss, this term relates to the history of mechanical illusionism in cinema, and in this way it draws out a number of implications for *pneu babel*, mainly in terms of its systemic architecture and the place of the phantasm within it.

¹⁴⁸ See also *:plugins, drifting...* (1 minute), following *pneu babel* on the DVD. This work informed the development of *pneu babel* in its reflective imagery and the use of found materials. See also Appendices (*Ghost Spatium: Description*) for the history behind this project.

about. However, during the improvisation period approximately 30 different interactions with the chair were devised, at which point the original script was completely abandoned in favour of an open schema of intensive states, without any preconceived linkages. The final cataclysm of the chair erupting from my back was omitted, as was any overt explanation or 'original cause' as to the meaning of the chair. Instead, the chair was used primarily as a mode of construction (in what is essentially a physical theatre production), its material foundation acquiring a systemic dimension through post-production, creative analysis and further project development.

The generative basis of the narrative is built upon a set of premises deduced initially from the chair as the main locus of activity. These premises proceed as follows. There is always only one chair, appearing in just about every shot. It is always with only one of a whole ensemble of characters, who never appear together in the same actual space, or if they do it is only in the digital fragmentation of the picture plane. Therefore, if each character occupies the same location (that of the chair), then they must be doing so at different *times*. Nonetheless, their gestures seem to be linked somehow, one being received for another, or where they trace a set of fragmented bodies that come together through the chair. The chair then becomes a kind of organising principle, one that serves to both intensify and multiply relations between the characters, even when they do not actually occupy the same spatio-temporal frame.

It is in this way that *pneu babel* may be imagined as an open system where all possible movements generated by the chair may be seen to arise from it. The chair functions as a topological mechanism for navigating the virtual depths of *pneu babel*, or rather, as an intensive spatium through which the depths emerge and are evacuated (or counter-actualised). The chair is a locus of the pure event, where each gesture arising from it may appear to be haunted by a knot of virtual conjunctions with other gestures, separated only by a degree-zero of intensive movement. In this accumulation and multiplication the chair emerges as a composite of affects, extending its web of nerves through the micro-movements of their intensive series. Through the chair, *pneu babel* may be envisaged as an 'open set' of matter-images in which local and global affects are in a state of constant modulation and mutual exchange, where every gesture acts upon and is acted upon by every other. In this generative manner the set of premises from which the film stems is considered to be an open system, which may continue to develop through the complex relations arising from its initial conditions, states of emergence and series of transformation.

ii. *The Hero Chair*¹⁴⁹

The hero of the film (if there is one) is the chair. But this Hero Chair is not an *agent* which assures a sense of the Whole (as the passing of the interval into action). The Hero Chair does not act, but is rather activated, becoming the figure of a *spiritual automaton* through the activation of the images that arise from it.¹⁵⁰ The chair as hero sits astride both subject and object, like the *deus ex machina* of a pure subjectivity, objectifying the film as a systemic or virtual Whole¹⁵¹ in which the subject of the film is *pneu babel* itself. And yet, while the Hero Chair is not a subject it does have a face, albeit a ghostly one. The holes in the backrest are like two huge dead eyes, a pair of black holes in the white wall of the face.¹⁵² In the luminous darkness of these voids the Hero Chair seems to harbour the silent witnesses of a plastic spectre.¹⁵³ The dead eyes register the accumulation of so many *meanwhiles*, reflected upon the immobile surface of an expressionless and inexpressible infinitude, within which the image does not reveal the Whole as something that may be seen, but rather the image itself appears to see, with the mirror-like visage of the Void.¹⁵⁴ The dead eyes seem to give the Hero Chair the power of a *seer*, of seeing that death that arrives as an impower from the outside, haunting the locus of the event with a *dead time*.

¹⁴⁹ A crew-joke started by cinematographer John Christoffels – the chair is in just about every shot and so it became part of the production setup to at some point ‘summon the Hero Chair’.

¹⁵⁰ The images in the film came from an intensive auditioning and workshop improvisation process, arising solely from physical interaction with the chair.

¹⁵¹ This is opposed to an organic Whole that passes into action. There are two ways of perceiving the Whole – one defined by the temporal interval and the spatial frame of the shot (*montage* and *mise en scene*), the other being the unbounded domain of the virtual. The latter is what I mean by a ‘systemic whole’, which for *pneu babel* encompasses the entirety of the ‘film’. Here the sum of its objects and their relations are generative and therefore unlimited: an *open set*. In this sense the pure event haunts the temporal interval, just as the intensive spatium does the spatial frame; constituting what Artaud describes as a “hole in appearances.” (Artaud, in Deleuze, 1989: 167).

¹⁵² Deleuze and Guattari discuss the notion of the white wall and the black hole of the face, in relation to the strata of signification and subjectification (D&G, 1987: 167).

¹⁵³ “The plastic and never completed specter, whose forms the true actor apes, on which he imposes the forms and image of his own sensibility.” (Artaud, 1958: 134). This quote recalls Deleuze’s notion of counter-actualisation (as noted in Chapter 1), but also the spiritual automaton in Chapter 2.

¹⁵⁴ Of course, the Whole and the Void are in a sense interchangeable, determined by the relationship between subjectivity and Chaos. In a manner of speaking, they are the necessary co-existence of everything and nothing.

The Hero Chair has an empty seat and is missing one leg. It is a mere phantom of a chair, incapable of fulfilling its organic function – *to sit*. Instead, it becomes the *site* for a series of incorporeal transformations, the locus of a pure *situation*. The hollow seat is like a vast mouth that *gobbles* the accumulation of gestures, multiplying their virtual conjunctions and evacuating the chair’s capacity to be accomplished as an organic entity. The hollow seat marks the *empty time* of an intensive spatium, an any-seat-whatever that can never actually carry a subject for it is always in an unsettled state of forever forgetting itself. The face of the Hero Chair is not then that of a subject but rather the FACE of a plastic specter, whose dead and hollow visage is always in a constant state of modulation. Like the mask of a *hitogata* or a spiritual automaton, the FACE is a spectral effigy which ‘acts’ only as a generative limit to the systemic whole. The FACE of the Hero Chair is not the film’s subject but its double. It is an image of time, miming the emergence of a purely systemic subjectivity, with gestures that are forever tied up in a web of nerves, “from which the affective powers radiate” (Artaud, 1958: 134).

iii. Vector-particles and wave forms

I will return again to the chair, but for now it is important to introduce the other main component of the system – the spinning window sculptures. There are in fact three sculptures with various characteristics, although for *pneu babel* they can be said to function as a singular assemblage in a perpetual state of formation and dissolution. In fact, the window assemblages comprise several discrete stages of metamorphosis, given by fragmenting the image of the sculptures using digital effects filters. This fragmentation is achieved by compositing (or in a sense, decomposing) the sculptures with two other more abstract images – a series of little lumpy traces¹⁵⁵ criss-crossing the

¹⁵⁵ These lumpy traces are optical effects, giving the illusion of scratches. They are actually the result of a laboratory error when processing a roll of single8 film (the Fuji equivalent to super8). The traces were selected by separating them with digital masks, adding colour-correction, speed adjustment, and an alpha channel applied to render the background transparent so they may be superimposed onto another image. (An alpha channel is an ‘empty’ channel of visual information, in addition to the three channels of red, green and blue (RGB) that make up the video image.)

frame and an internal framing device of burning borders.¹⁵⁶ The former generates the latter, both through the process of digital compositing and in the way they represent different aspects of the narrative schema as a generative system. In this manner I aim to posit (or composite) a kind of isomorphism for the image,¹⁵⁷ couched in terms of a false narration and yet grounded in a relation to the materiality of technical composition.

The three images – little lumpy traces, burning borders, and spinning sculptures – constitute the three components of a *becoming-window*. This becoming-window functions as a way of *seeing* the film as a systemic whole, unfolding along a continuum comprising different states of consistency. In brief, this involves a process of actualisation and counter-actualisation – passing from the realm of pure virtuality (registered by the optical effects of the lumpy traces), towards the actual windows of the spinning sculptures, which appear and disappear through their virtual counterparts in the burning borders. In this systemic imagining, the lumpy traces, or scratches, function as ‘vectors’¹⁵⁸ (hereafter referred to as ‘the vectors’). The vectors criss-cross the entire system in an infinite state of survey, constantly evaluating all possible movements and gestures for the chair. In this manner, the vectors carry the virtual trajectory of an image or gesture, prior to its actual appearance. Following the conceptual figures of the *butoh-bwo* established in Chapter 2, each vector is made up of ‘cell-particles’ whose lumpy traces articulate transverse movements which traverse the entire system of matter-images.¹⁵⁹ The becoming-window emerges in its most rarefied form with the appearance of

¹⁵⁶ The burning borders were generated by painstakingly overlaying millisecond fragments selected from a 4-minute duration of lumpy traces, producing variations via a system of six progressively nested projects, to create modular surface areas for the application of an alpha channel. A second alpha channel was also applied so both the inside and outside of the burning border may be rendered transparent. Two digital effects, *vector blur* and *time displacement*, were also applied to make the burning borders appear more fluid.

¹⁵⁷ By an isomorphic image I mean one that may traverse technical and conceptual processes, rather than strictly in the Bachelardian sense.

¹⁵⁸ A ‘vector’ denotes the direction and magnitude of something, the carrier of a quantity but not the quantity itself (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 1224).

¹⁵⁹ It would be possible to posit a correspondence to Deleuze here, in the sense that the vector-particles constitute a highly mobile, *gaseous* state of perception. The particles carry out an interstitial function, marking an internal limit *within* the interval (rather than one of extension): “so that any point whatsoever in space itself perceives all the points on which it acts, or which act on it, however far these actions and reactions extend.” (Deleuze, 1986: 81-83). The vector may then be envisaged as describing a wave-form of non-localisable relations, just as it comprises wave-particles which articulate the interstices of any-points-whatever.

these cell-particles.¹⁶⁰ Carried by their vectors and moving at the speed of thought, they trace aberrant lines of flight across the multiple durations of *pneu babel*.

On one hand, the vector-particles constitute points which perceive and act upon all other points in the system, so that each gesture has a regulative function in relation to every other. On the other hand, the actual emergence of a gesture is acted upon (or counter-acted) by every other so that its appearance is always and already haunted by an invisible relation to the systemic whole. In terms of the FACE and its facets, the vectors constitute an accumulation of preindividual singularities, while the flocking of their virtual conjunctions generate in turn the burning borders of the virtual windows. Here, their aberrant particles define a set of fluctuating boundary conditions. To borrow terms from systems theory, the burning borders describe a *phase-space* (see Glossary), or intensive spatium, through which an image or gesture may actually emerge from the *state-space* (see Glossary) of the overall system.¹⁶¹ The preindividual singularities of the vectors burn up on entry to the phase-space; that is, ‘they die’ in order to return to the undifferentiated dead-time of the state-space. And yet, at the same time the ‘cell-contents’ they have been ‘carrying’ are deposited in the empty-time of the phase-space,¹⁶² where their particles acquire consistency to generate a change of state for the becoming-window.¹⁶³ They become plateaus of intensity – the cell-plateaus of the *butoh-bwo*. Like Hijikata’s floating rafts, they settle in the condensation of their conjugated flows

¹⁶⁰ For the percept this becoming first appears as “a minimum before the void” (D&G, 1994: 181).

¹⁶¹ The *state-space* refers to the overall state of the emerging system as a generative whole, while the *phase-space* is where a set of non-localisable intensities ‘come into phase’; that is, when a cluster of preindividual singularities acquire consistency to allow the emergence of an actual image in the interval of the film frame. The boundary conditions delineating the transition from one to the other occur as a process of actualisation (state-space to phase-space) and counter-actualisation (phase-space to state-space).

¹⁶² This depositing engenders a twofold bifurcation of the system at both actual and virtual poles. Firstly, the strange attraction of singularities produces an individuated event (actualisation). But instead of exhausting their preindividuality, the conjunctions between singularities also multiply (counter-actualisation), to produce a change in the system as a *whole* (its virtuality). There is then an aspect of reflection between actual and virtual poles.

¹⁶³ To clarify, the plateaus do not constitute actual gestures (etc), but rather intensive states of potential that have acquired a degree of autonomy or consistency, so that through their condensation a process of actualisation may arise.

(towards actualisation), while at the same time being buffeted by the evacuation or multiplication of their non-localisable wave-forms (counter-actualisation).¹⁶⁴

iv. *Warp and woof*

What I have sought to demonstrate above is how the systemic analysis of *pneu babel* may mobilise the image in a generative manner, with reference to the theory of complex systems and D&G's materialist philosophy. I have done this using a series of corresponding conceptual *sets*, including the FACE model of the *butoh-bwo*, its facets of modulation and their conceptual figures.¹⁶⁵ In this way, the becoming-window emerges as a compound of heterogeneous durations, an entity of systemic perception and topological metamorphosis, tracing a continuum of diverse consistencies. It appears as a singular assemblage, though one encompassing multiple states of emergence and transformation.

The third and final phase of the becoming-window is where it attains an actual materiality with the physical appearance of the spinning window sculptures.¹⁶⁶ The warp and woof of their two sides constitutes a double face, enacting an enfolded movement of opening to the outside and encompassing its force. On one hand, the double face dissimulates itself by turning away, towards the dead-time or absolute depth of the state-space. Opening a hole in appearances, it receives the accumulated force of the outside and then delivers its momentum with a whipping, in the fossilised detritus of sculptural fragments (actualisation). On the other hand, the double face turns within itself, hollowed out by the burning borders and carried off again by the vectors (counter-actualisation).

¹⁶⁴ In this manner, the continuum of the percept may be seen to shift from a *gaseous* to a *liquid* state of perception, in which there is a fluid or porous relation between actual and virtual domains.

¹⁶⁵ See Appendices for a series of diagrams showing correspondences between the FACE model, its conceptual figures, Deleuze and Guattari, and systems theory.

¹⁶⁶ It may be said that the sculptures embody the *solid state* of the percept, carried by the pure mobility of the vectors and drawn into being through the phase space of the burning borders. In Deleuzian terms, it may be said that this solid state of perception invokes his analysis of a *camera-consciousness*, where subjective and objective poles become indiscernible (Deleuze, 1986: 74). As I will show, the window-assemblage operates as a perceptual mechanism that objectifies the phantasmatic subjectivity of the characters.

The tripartite window-assemblage is like a dark crystal, in which the oscillation of the double face reflects the coalescence of the actual and the virtual, as it is forever erased and renewed in the continual modulation of accumulation, condensation, evacuation and fossilisation. These luminous facets combine to present an image of time with the spectral visage of a FACE. The momentum of its multiple durations and co-existing states of consistency appear as if to haunt the characters, chasing and ensnaring them. It is as if the weight of time bears down upon them, carrying something that cannot be borne. Like an architectural *wind daruma*, the FACE emerges as a vertiginous force from the outside, delivering a ‘shock to thought’ in the warp and woof of its sculptural detritus. The final phase of the becoming-window reduces its divergent multiplicities to fossilised fragments, attesting to the impossibility of actually perceiving the systemic whole, except perhaps in the cracks and fissures of its smouldering ‘skin’.¹⁶⁷

In summary, it is here where the window-assemblage and the chair become integrated components: the former delivering the shock to thought (as a function of the percept), and the latter receiving it (as a function of the affect).¹⁶⁸ As I have said, the chair also has a FACE, not that of a subject, but the mask of a double for whom the film generates the pure subjectivity of a systemic entity. By the same token, the double face of the windows is also like the simultaneous application and removal of a mask. In this manner, the window-assemblage and the chair represent two aspects or mirrors of the same FACE. Indeed, a narrative premise was devised whereby whichever behaviour or emotion the characters enact through the chair, the window-assemblage would somehow respond in kind. At the same time however, this raises the question as to how the characters may *act*, when their status as subjects seems so uncertain. For if it is *pneu babel* that is the subject of the film, in which the integrated components of the window-assemblage and the chair function as its masks or doubles, what position do the characters occupy in this ontology?

v. *The settler-phantasm*

The inspiration for the characters came from the local history of my hometown, Christchurch, New Zealand (where the film was predominantly shot). Described as the most English of towns outside

¹⁶⁷ One of Hijikata’s *butoh-fu*, ‘From Dolls to Ghosts’, describes a smouldering doll that turns into many things, including a hundred goblins, a gown worn by one of Buddha’s disciples, a ghost, people with burns, faces and shadows (Hijikata, in W&K, 1998). This also recalls the *hitogata*, in its sacrificial transmission of affects through the ‘human shape’ of a doll.

¹⁶⁸ See Appendices (figure 4) for a diagrammatic configuration of the systemic relations between the chair and the window assemblage.

of England, the deforested terrain is for me imbued with the quality of a forgotten landscape, despoiled by the spectre of those 'dark satanic mills'. And yet, the darkness of the Victorian aesthetic is absorbed into the landscape, where it settles uneasily with the ancestral darkness of the land's Maori heritage. Though cleared of its ancient forests, the landscape is still imbued with the primordial quality of a darkness best captured perhaps in the paintings of Colin McCahon. It is this quality of a dark, despoiled luminosity which I sought to generate with the Victorian settler costumes, broken chair and fragmented windows. The characters are the settlers of *pneu babel*, although their migration is one that traverses multiple durations rather than actual locations, where their settlement is situated in a purely topological landscape; maintaining a state of emergence that is definitively *unsettled*.

The chair is a composite of affects, occupying the interval of an intensive spatium through which all possible gestures may emerge from the open set of the systemic whole. Here, the gobbling mouth of the hollow seat finds its corresponding component in the phase-space of the virtual windows. For this is where the preindividual singularities that support these gestures first allow the settlers a point of entry. Here, 'they' that die render the heat-death of their burning borders on the settlers' costumes and decaying skin; a heat-death borne from the accumulation of so many meanwhiles, in which the settlers are actually created through this strange fossilisation. For just as 'they' die, they give to the settlers the singularity of 'a life', even if this is merely the chance to occupy the dead-hollow of the pure event. What must be made clear here, is that the settlers do not exist prior to their emergence, but attain individuation only as a result of these preindividual singularities acquiring consistency. They do not come to occupy a real, actualised body, but only "the phantasm [as] a variable combination of singular points" (Deleuze, 1990: 215).¹⁶⁹ Just as the chair is a composite of all possible gestures, it is also the control mechanism or organising principle by which the settlers come into being. The setter-phantasm exists only as so many aspects of the chair, so that each gesture arises not by its intention but according to an invisible knot of virtual tendencies, delimited by other gestures, which produce still other settlers through endlessly variable points of settling. If the chair

¹⁶⁹ As Deleuze points out, the phantasm resides in the realm of the pure event, like an infinitive verb. It is neither the action nor passion of a body, but the result of an action or passion (Deleuze, 1990: 210).

is the film's double, the settlers are merely its proxies¹⁷⁰ – occupying a dead-hollow-body to carry the momentum of a FACE that is not their own. The settlers are in a sense summoned from the void of the state-space via the purely contingent nature of their proxy status, existing only as composites of the preindividual singularities from which they spring.¹⁷¹

The window-assemblages mirror the settlers' behaviour just as the chair also operates as a systemic double or mime. And yet, in the light of my recent comments it is clear that the windows do not so much mirror the settlers (for they lack intention), but rather the chair itself (or the affects it comprises). The settlers seem to be caught then in the middle of a chain of doppelgangers. On one side they are haunted by an impower that reduces their gestures to the fossilised senility of a mime, while on the other they are pursued by phantasmatic reflections which seem to mock their proxy status as 'non-subjects'. To refrain Derrida's remarks on Artaud, the vertiginous window-assemblages appear to carry – "the force of a void, the cyclonic breath of a prompter who draws his breath in and thereby robs me of that which he first allowed to approach me and which I believed I could say *in my own name*." (Derrida, 1978: 176).

v. *Ghosts of the pneu*

And yet all is not lost for the settlers. Through the proxy status of the phantasm, they occupy those aspects of the pure event that are both infinitely accretive (dead time) *and* endlessly deferred (empty time). While they may seem haunted by the fragmented accumulation of a dead-body, they are also granted a hollow-body that floats in the unfolding of the interminable new. Their position as 'non-subjects' is not a lack but instead a capacity for desubjectification. It is not that they are caught in a chain of imitation, replicating an idealised realm of pure forms. Rather, their gestures are the mime

¹⁷⁰ In an isomorphic sense, in After Effects 4.1 a *proxy* is a condensed video file that has been 'rendered out' as a composite image, and then reimported into the project because the complexity of its individual components (images and their properties) may slow the program down to the extent that it becomes difficult to develop further transformations. In this sense the settlers are composite beings of sensation comprising so many preindividual components, made up of percepts and affects (extra-beings valid in themselves) that exist anterior to their emergence.

¹⁷¹ Their appearance is like Tanaka's method for "inviting a body to enter" (International Workshop Festival, Melbourne, 2001). Through fluctuating points of intensity a 'character' or 'atmosphere' emerges momentarily, gathers itself along a coherent trajectory of expression (coming into phase), before dissolving once more as the individual vectors, comprising different directions and velocities, tear it apart.

of what effectively occurs (counter-actualisation), emerging from an always contested knot of relations, to which they eternally return when their actualisation summons another gesture that both erases and renews them. The chair and the window facilitate the mechanisms (continuum and intensive spatium) by which their gestures may traverse multiple durations, constantly transforming into one another.¹⁷² The settlers are not really ‘trapped’ in the middle of a chain, for the middle is precisely that region where their gestures constitute plateaus of intensity that may enter into n dimensions.¹⁷³

The settler-phantasm is like time’s ghost, haunting the dead emptiness of the pure event.¹⁷⁴ As Hijikata says in his *butoh-fu*, a ghost has “...the ability to sense a thousand branches of a tree at the same time.” (Hijikata, in W&K, 1998). In the same manner, the settlers are able to sense one another through the various dimensions of the becoming-window.¹⁷⁵ For just as each one arises from an intensive plateau of variable points, they are able to sense a thousand other plateaus, each having the potential to generate a settler. Hijikata also says in the same *butoh-fu*: “Ghosts are always transforming into other things at tremendous speeds.” (Hijikata, in W&K, 1998).¹⁷⁶ From the

¹⁷² The chain of doppelgangers is then like Deleuze’s “chain of forgers” (Deleuze, 1989: 146), in the way the impower may be reclaimed as “the metamorphoses of the false which replace the form of the true” (Deleuze, 1989: 134). The chair and the window-assemblage ‘forge’ the mechanisms through which the settlers generate the forgery itself, as a process of ontogenesis.

¹⁷³ “A plateau is always in the middle” (D&G, 1987: 21).

¹⁷⁴ “[We] shall see that time, conceived under the form of an unbounded and homogeneous medium, is nothing but the ghost of space haunting the reflective consciousness.” (Bergson, 1888: 99). Following the implications of Bergson’s original formulation (via Deleuze), it would seem that time appears as the ghost of space only as a result of its *indirect* representation (what Bergson calls ‘false time’), where time is subject to movement. The ghost may become that of time itself when this is reversed via its *direct* representation. Indeed, Deleuze describes how the direct time image has always *haunted* the cinema (Deleuze, 1989: 41).

¹⁷⁵ This communication occurs in the way the vectors criss-cross the entire system, to trace an infinite state of survey, constantly evaluating all possible movements and gestures for the chair.

¹⁷⁶ One of Waguri’s *butoh-fu* also concerns the transformative capacity of ghosts, in a way which recalls the multiplication of the hollow-body: “Burnt by the fire of life, the disintegrated body is further reduced to grains and floats in the air like smoke. The hollow-body is divided into many ghosts. They sway in the air, mingling and colliding.” (Waguri, in W&K, 1998).

fragmentation of the percept to the metamorphosis of the affect: the smouldering phantasm¹⁷⁷ generates a series of becomings, in which the settlers are constantly transforming into one another through the intensive spatium of the chair. It is this mode of metamorphosis that ensures the unsettled state of the system; where the virtual *must* be actualised through a series of transformations in order to ensure the emergence of the *new*, even though the *new* can never be fully realised (for it is always in a process of continual becoming).

The ghosts of time are not really haunted by the spectre of the FACE,¹⁷⁸ so much as they persist or inhere through the ‘unbounded and homogeneous medium’ of this haunting; what Deleuze calls the “transparent material” of the time-image (Deleuze, 1989: 34; 115). In *pneu babel*, this material finds a peculiar internal resonance in the word-play of the term ‘*pneu*’. Firstly, the term is derived from the Greek word *pneuma*, meaning breath, and denoting in a theological sense the dimension of spirit. Secondly, *pneu* is pronounced in the same way as ‘*new*’. Here, the word-play of phonetic and semantic elements may encapsulate a way of understanding the film. For *pneu babel*, the *pneu* invokes that aspect of the pure event that is never accomplished, the phantasm as infinitive verb, witness to the emergence of the interminable *new*. Now, if the new is an aspect of the pure event, and hence time, then it may be asked what image might this transparent material assume? If the *pneu* may offer such an image of time and the pure event, it would surely consist of an ‘unformed substance’, where time is conceived as continual becoming and the image is immanent to matter. These creative principles do not invoke a notion of transcendence, as would be the case with the *pneuma* of the Holy Spirit, but instead the *transcendental empiricism* (see Glossary) with which Artaud rejects the hand-me-down existence of the Father, in favour of a hidden god whose cruelty is like a living whirlwind that devours the darkness. The *pneu* is then infinitely smaller than *pneuma*, having the gaseous consistency of the void itself, an unformed quality of pure “thought-energy” (Artaud, 1958: 78).¹⁷⁹ The *pneu* is like the particles of the percept, or rather the molecular intervals

¹⁷⁷ Hijikata’s *butoh-fu* of a smouldering doll becoming a ghost (Hijikata, in W&K, 1998), suggests here a blurring of subject-object relations, where chair, window-assemblage and settlers are all implicated in the becoming of the phantasm.

¹⁷⁸ The settlers do not actually receive the shock to thought which the warp and woof deliver, so much as pass it on to the chair where it is gobbled up within the intensive spatium, to be returned again to the crack of the burning borders. They may appear to be shocked (etc.), but the emotions they register are only the result or representation of their plateau – that is, of an intensity.

¹⁷⁹ Like that which appears in many cultures, under various guises – Qi, Ki, Prana, Ether – for which the breath is considered to be only a coarse form. Artaud’s notion of an Affective Athleticism concerns a study of breath as it is used in actor training, which is where his reference to the ‘plastic specter’ appears (Artaud, 1958: 134).

which they traverse; where the cyclonic breath of the hidden god gathers in the vacuoles of innumerable durations, to erupt with the impower of the *pneu-matic* window-assemblages.

The continual emergence of the ‘interminable pneu’ occurs not as a simulacrum of original forms, but in the variable shape of the settler-phantasm. The settlers are its *pneu-mata*,¹⁸⁰ or ‘unclean spirits’, propagating themselves in the phase-space, not by the divine license of innate being, but through the ontogenesis of continual becoming’ – gobbling the impower. The settlers are a living whirlwind of endless metamorphosis, acquiring the singularity of a life through the impower of *pneu-matic* reflection. But above all, it is the phantasm that facilitates the series of their transformation, devouring or gobbling this reflection in order to ensure the eternal return of a dark luminosity.¹⁸¹

Butoh-fu schema

i. Towards a generative interFACE

To summarise at this point, the systemic analysis of *pneu babel* illustrates and develops the concept of the butoh-bwo, by giving a FACE to the *special affects* of particles and nerves. In this section I will now describe how a butoh-fu schema may be devised which ‘installs’ the systemic configuration of the FACE within the butoh-body of an actual dancer. I will do this by translating the FACE diagram into a working methodology for ‘compositing’ choreographic images, according to the modes and attributes of the butoh-bwo. This model applies the cinephilosophical implications of butoh-fu by appropriating elements of the video-compositing interface used in the film’s post-production – Adobe After Effects 4.1. At the same time, this ‘interFACE’ incorporates an understanding of butoh-fu and butoh-sei drawn from the work of Hijikata, Waguri and Tanaka. What I seek to reveal here is the way in which the comprehensive systemic differentiation of the image that is facilitated by video compositing software, may be used to further develop Hijikata’s choreographic method.

¹⁸⁰ In Biblical theology, *pneumata* translates as the plural term for *pneuma*, often denoting evil or unclean spirits, or devils. For the Chinese they are perhaps the ‘hungry ghosts’, while in occult circles they are known simply as “the entities” that feed on human emotions.

¹⁸¹ Deleuze describes the phantasm as “the site of the eternal return” (Deleuze, 1990: 220).

The interFACE is intended both as a methodological tool for a future performance of *pneu babel* and as a conceptual vehicle for further research. In this section I will describe briefly the systemic features of the butoh-fu schema, with reference to the After Effects interface and the work of Hijikata, Waguri and Tanaka. Examples of my own butoh-fu are presented in the Appendices as ‘diagrams of intensity’, indicating the trajectory of future work and work-in-progress. These are developed using the interFACE model, in accordance with the systemic analysis of the film as discussed above. This process is illustrated through a series of graphic diagrams (see Appendices), outlining the systemic features of the butoh-bwo and the interFACE model. The butoh-fu images themselves are drawn from *pneu babel*, as well as other sources of inspiration relevant to the film and/or its development. These range from childhood memories and personal experiences during the production, to theoretical considerations, previous work, as well as the work of other artists (illustrations provided where possible). There are also notes and diagrams of a more systemic nature, which draw out important details for the understanding of *pneu babel* as a whole.

The discussion to follow provides a broad overview of the schema. It should be made clear that as a work-in-progress, I am not presenting the research findings of a proven model, but rather a proposed methodology based on research to date. Reference will be made to sections in the Appendices where appropriate, while some butoh-fu will be discussed in more detail when they serve to illustrate systemic or structural features of the interFACE.

ii. Systemic features

(a) Vectorscope

To begin with, the butoh-fu images need to be given a graphic framework in which to determine their positions over time (within the duration of the choreography) and space (within the depth or frame of the dancer’s body).

To do this, the time-line layout of the After Effects interface provides a basic framework for situating the images, giving them a provisional location for generating a series of relationships and transformations. Here each image is represented as an independent ‘layer’, stacked one upon the other (see Appendices, figure 1.). This is where the process of construction occurs, where images are combined to make up the composite image of the total *mise-en-scene*. Each layer is represented as a bracketed bar (the length of the bar describing the duration of the image). Here a *time-marker* indicates the progress of time as it moves from left to right, while also drawing a *time-line* down through the layers to indicate the synchronous positions of each image within the overall *mise en*

scene. In this way, the time-line also draws a sight-line that establishes the *depth of field*, where the top layer represents the foreground and the bottom layer the background.

The After Effects composition window is of course a specific tool for compositing digital images for output to video or film. For the purposes of my choreographic interFACE I have customised this template, to arrive at a simple graphic representation that may provide a *diagrammatic* form of notation, designed to further systematise the process of devising and combining the images of butoh-fu. It is not intended (at least at this stage) to function as an operating interface within a digital environment, but as a written form of notation that may be easily used in a dance studio setting. The first distinction to be made then is that the interFACE has no moving parts. The interFACE model retains the essential features of image layers demarcated by a timeline, although here the timeline remains stationary. This is not a limitation, so much as a generative limit which actually reflects the findings of the FACE model, as set out in Chapter 2. Instead of an *indirect* or ‘hodological’ representation of time, where time is subject to movement (as in the case of the After Effects layout where the time marker moves from left to right), the interFACE establishes a direct or topological representation where the images establish multiple virtual conjunctions according to their intensive features.

Firstly, the images are given a provisional position and duration as layers.¹⁸² As an overall butoh-fu with which to envision the schema, these layers constitute shifting plateaus of intensity, like Hijikata’s floating rafts, or the ‘cells’ of the butoh-bwo. Secondly, their ‘particles’ are posited as singular points representing multiple intensive features of the image (their pure description),¹⁸³ while the virtual conjunctions that combine or relate the various images to one another are imagined as ‘vectors’ passing back and forth between these points. Together these elements trace a topological diagram of intensity, for which the cell-plateaus constitute the dead time of the state-space, while the vector-particles delineate the boundary conditions of the phase-space. The compositional schema is transformed into a *vector-scope*,¹⁸⁴ in which the time-line no longer moves

¹⁸² The order of perspective from foreground to background layers may be retained, although depth-of-field can mean many things in the butoh-body; for instance, foregrounding more predominant images and backgrounding those of longer duration or of lesser intensity. Tanaka would often have a total image (or images) for the whole body, plus many individual images for different parts (Hakushu workshop, 2002).

¹⁸³ How this comes about is described in the following section, (b) Transforms.

¹⁸⁴ This term is appropriated from *Avid*, a non-linear editing system used in the preliminary stages of post-production for *pneu babel*. In *Avid*, the vector-scope gives a diagrammatic survey of the stability of the video signal in terms of its component colours (RGB etc.). In a different way, the

across the layers (indirect representation), but rather provides an *immobile surface* through which the vectors generate *micro-movements*, unfolding their heterogeneous durations to create aberrant series of transformation (direct representation). The time-line becomes a *world-line* (see Glossary), charting the modulation of these singular ‘objects’ as they pass through its intensive spatium (see Appendices, figure 2).¹⁸⁵ This world-line does not stabilise the synchronous positions of the layers, so much as delineate a *boundary-surface* through which their heterogeneous durations may co-exist. This boundary-surface is in a continually fluctuating state, for it is only an aggregate defined by the boundary conditions or wave-forms of the vector-particles. Like the skin-plane of the metaplastic membrane, this boundary surface modulates the consistency of the plateaus, while at the same time being created and affected by the process of modulation.

Such a process of becoming that moves in two directions at once is a difficult thing to imagine let alone represent. As a systemic butoh-fu for *pneu babel*, I envisage a kind vortical movement of transverse relations, where the horizontal and the vertical (state-space of the layers and phase-space of the world-line) are drawn into a process of continual exchange. Their vortical coalescence produces the figure of a *spiral* (see Appendices, figure 4.),¹⁸⁶ through which an image of time may arise to appear on the emergent surface.

For *pneu babel*, the pneu-matic assemblage (in its various states of consistency) continually traverses a topological region of intensity – a *spiral-sector*¹⁸⁷ – in which the whole system multiplies relations to the point where it whirls around, creating endless correspondences. Of course these correspondences are at the same time always delimited by those aspects of modulation that circulate through the FACE. The impower inherent to fragmentation emerges (accumulates) and is transformed through the spiral (being both condensed and evacuated) in the continual metamorphosis of *a life*. Even still, this becoming is always haunted by the void, as the weight of a dead time leaves fossilised traces of its vector-particles in the luminous contour of the butoh-body.

interFACE vectorscope indicates the fluctuating stability of the overall image, through the modulation (F-A-C-E dynamics) of its individual images, via their intensive features.

¹⁸⁵ For *pneu babel*, it is the chair that charts the world-line of the system (see Appendices, figure 4.).

¹⁸⁶ For Deleuze, the spiral constitutes the open form of the whole (Deleuze, 1989: 161).

¹⁸⁷ This refers to the ‘sectors’ in Constant’s architectural project, ‘New Babylon’ (Sadler, 1998).

These aspects of *pneu babel* are discussed towards the end of this chapter. Spiral sector is also a term used to describe different ‘sectors’ of the film, in delineating progressive states of complexity within the post-production process. These were: ‘alphaville’, ‘border-town’, ‘cluster-city’ and finally, ‘spiral-sector’.

This contour is the boundary surface between *butoh-bwo* and *butoh-body*, where time in a pure state may be seen to appear.

(b) Transforms

At this point, I will retrace a few steps in order to outline the functions by which these *butoh-fu* images may be transformed. For while the vectorscope may provide a visual model for locating these transformations, it is the functions of the *interFACE* which actually bring them about. As noted above, each *butoh-fu* image (or *cell-plateau*) is firstly given a provisional location on the vectorscope. The images are then given a set of values that determine their spatial characteristics within the *butoh-body* itself. In the *After Effects* interface these ‘transforms’ locate the image in terms of anchor point (centre of orientation), position, scale, rotation, and opacity. These terms also provide a useful set of guidelines for *butoh-fu*, in light of the cinephilosophical implications discussed in Chapter 2.¹⁸⁸

Firstly, a degree of opacity / transparency is attributed when a new image emerges to replace another in the same part of the body. In the *Hakushu* workshop (August 2002), we were instructed to allow the second image to emerge from behind the first, generating a gradual transition between the two, like a slow dissolve. Opacity may also be considered in the way several images co-exist within the *butoh-body*, where each ‘layer’ has a degree of transparency to other images in other parts, or where one predominates, becoming opaque.¹⁸⁹ In a different manner, the theatre group *Gekidan Kaitaisha* demonstrated a *butoh-fu* exercise that incorporated several images in different parts of the body (Sydney workshop, June, 2002), but instead of operating simultaneously, the dancer repetitively switched back and forth between them with increasing rapidity until they were no more than a hesitant flickering of disparate frames. Their discrete durations became increasingly fragmented, to produce a kind of surface luminosity where their broken contours were endlessly retraced through a multiplying web of overlapping fissures within and between the images. In the former case, there is a kind of darkness in depth, the luminous interval of the *butoh-body* as an any-

¹⁸⁸ A qualitative analysis of *butoh-fu* examples, in terms of systemic features for *pneu babel*, is illustrated diagrammatically in the Appendices (see figure 4).

¹⁸⁹ Following from the organisation of layers in *After Effects*, the prioritisation of images in the *interFACE* may indicate a transition from the absolute transparency of accumulation (bottom layer), to the opaque fossilisation of broken gestures (top layer).

space-whatever of co-existing durations. By contrast, the latter is more *montage* than *mise en scene*, though one of decomposition between any-points whatever, dismantling discrete units of time and space as it accelerates the survey of its micro-intervals.¹⁹⁰

With this deployment of multiple images and co-existing durations position and scale become of utmost importance. For example, during the Hakushu workshop we had four separate images going at the same time, in four different parts of the body - head and face, arms and hands, torso, pelvis and legs. Or sometimes, as in the case of animal-becomings, there would be an overall image and a series of smaller ones for each separate part. Of course, each image has an anchor point and axis of rotation, but these do not always privilege either subject or object (dancer or image) as its centre of orientation. For not only are there multiple centres, there are also multiple trajectories, so that each centre is constantly fluctuating, or dissipating altogether. The butoh-body is forever torn by a knot of contrary forces, always being pulled apart and put together again by its multiplying relations. Whether the images are of discrete duration following a specific motion-path,¹⁹¹ or of constant duration with a continuous sense of direction,¹⁹² their co-existence is always generating aberrant movements. They are always thrown askew by their contingent relations, images toppling and vanishing just as other images emerge from the false centres and phantom trajectories of their interstices.¹⁹³ The images proliferate as they dissipate, the composite image ‘mimicking’ the automatism of a *hitogata*; of parts within an uncertain whole – endless morphogenesis.

¹⁹⁰ As in the animated *photogramme* of Vertov’s “gaseous perception” (Deleuze, 1986: 82-83).

¹⁹¹ The path of an objectified image, changing in terms of position, scale etc. may be plotted over time using the motion-settings feature, with key-frames for various transforms and transfer modes.

¹⁹² Tanaka stresses the importance of both position and direction in catching the sense of the image. Deleuze also equates sense (*sens*) with direction (Deleuze, 1990: 1).

¹⁹³ This process of counter-actualisation is characterised by what Deleuze calls “decentred [or] false movement” (Deleuze, 1989: 143); an idea that rejects innate truth, in favour of continual becoming through the power of the false. In terms of danced movement, it relates to the use of multiple images in Bodyweather (‘omni-central imaging’ or what Tanaka just calls ‘image work’). Here, different points or centres of orientation may lie outside the body, or in the case of multiple images comprise false centres that are no longer located only within the images but also between them. For the Bodyweather-body, the concept of complex weather systems provides an image of multiple centres in continual flux and tension – as a process of metamorphosis through fragmentation.

(c) Transfer modes

While the vectorscope provides a visual model for plotting the images and the transforms execute a series of spatial transformations upon them, there is still another layer of detail to be investigated within the butoh-fu schema of the interFACE.¹⁹⁴ This function involves going within the image itself to extract a range of singular, intensive qualities, through which the images may not only be transformed but also combined and proliferated. As discussed in Chapter 2, in butoh-fu these qualities concern such things as texture, temperature, humidity, weight or gravity (etc), qualities which draw out the specific materiality of the image. As a 2D medium, the After Effects program limits this materialism to the properties of light, as in the 'transfer modes' feature where these intensive properties are mathematically calculated according to hue, luminosity, colour and contrast etc.

Not only do these qualities change the nature of the image, but the properties of one image may be transferred upon another. A parallel may be drawn here to the exhaustive notes Waguri provides for each butoh-fu, including directions for sensing the particularities of each image, but also links to other images and notes on their recombinations (Waguri, in W&K, 1998). In this manner, the transfer modes feature may provide a conceptual template for surveying the internal dynamics of the image, sampling its many layers to extract a pure description. The image is progressively erased and renewed, where the positing of singularities destratifies its representational content, allowing it to unlink itself and relink with other images (which are themselves unlinked) so that new images may arise from the confluence of their pure intensities. This occurs in a complementary way to the emergence of phantom trajectories and false centres through the contingent knot of their transforms. The distinction between transforms and transfer modes lies in the manner in which the former establishes the spatial relationships between images, while the latter modulates and combines the material qualities they comprise, irregardless of distance. While the transforms suggest a darkness in depth through the co-existence of layers, it is the transfer modes which lend this simultaneity a certain luminosity through their combinative becomings.

For the butoh-bwo, the modes are those things that come to pass, while their modulation consists of the very particles they comprise, henceforth generating the affective aspects of the FACE. Similarly, the tranforms determine the spatial characteristics of the cell-plateau (image or layer), while the

¹⁹⁴ For now I have limited the scope of this inquiry to transforms and transfer modes, in order to focus on the specifically *material* qualities of the butoh-fu image. Other aspects like speed and duration or more conceptual butoh-fu such as distance to the subject, may correspond to other features of the After Affects interface (for example, in the 'layer' or 'effects' menus).

transfer modes affect the cell-particles themselves. For *pneu babel*, the chair provides a set of approximately 30 images as an initial departure point for generating a performance using the butoh-fu interFACE.¹⁹⁵ Firstly, the chair is reduced to a cluster of singular qualities, tracing the sum of its possible movement (or 30 of them at least): the arc of a gesture, the angle of a posture, the nature of an attitude. Installed within the vectorscope, these cell-plateaus establish a *diagram of intensity*. (Here a provisional distinction may be made, in which the transforms establish the diagram and its boundary conditions, while the transfer modes constitute its intensities.) Of course, because the chair itself is left out of the equation, these intensive states may be moved around the dancer's body, according to shifting anchor points and motion paths; while also acquiring additional qualities of humidity, texture, mass, and so forth.

Video-installation

Up until this point, the discussion of *pneu babel* as a complex system has operated through the systemic analysis of a false narration and its proposed application to a diagrammatic method of choreographic notation (interFACE). To further justify the former and supplement the latter, I will now describe the proposed development of a multi-screen video installation, in order to track the future trajectory of the project as a more open system, with a technical configuration that may actually implement the generative mechanisms discussed. The installation component also provides an essential staging mechanism for the butoh-fu schema described above, while integrating all aspects of the project into a cohesive model of transformation.

i. Platform and tableau

The video-installation is conceived as a multi-screen configuration, in which several screens are placed side by side to form a seamless tableau. The images are installed on a nonlinear video playback platform with generative programming, in which each image is defined according to a set of attributes, relating to its specific visual and emotional content. This set of attributes functions as a diagram of intensity that determines when and how the image will be 'invited to enter' the tableau, in a similar manner to Tanaka's method for "inviting a body to enter" (International Workshop Festival, Melbourne, 2001). This occurs by establishing a range of adjustable parameters or boundary conditions through which a common index of singular attributes may be governed. In this

¹⁹⁵ See Appendices for a 'systemic butoh-fu' of *pneu babel*, using some of the chair images.

way, several images with common attributes and threshold values will emerge as candidates for entry, in response to any given image within the tableau.¹⁹⁶ The system undergoes a bifurcation¹⁹⁷ when one of the images enters the tableau, either dissipating or actualising other images in the chain of selection, singly or in groups (multiple bifurcation). Bifurcations may be local to the domain in question, or deduced globally according to the state of emergence across the entire tableau. Depending on content parameters, the proceeding image may appear in line with the motion path of the previous one, or in juxtaposition to it, or even generating a patterned response of duplicated images.

In translating the film to the tableau, the majority of the images will be scaled down so that many bifurcating series of metamorphosis (or world-lines) may be combined at any one time.¹⁹⁸ Content parameters and rules of engagement may be set to allow for a greater or lesser extent of random bifurcation. The phantasmatic population of the tableau may be generated along one or several world-lines, accumulating density to unleash their 'dead forces' in catastrophic collisions and recursive manoeuvres. The screen-image ratio may also be configured in order to accommodate emerging states of order and chaos. For example, as the population of *pneu babel* spreads the image-sizes may decrease, until the whole tableau is covered in a cacophony of little phantasms.¹⁹⁹ In this way also, there may be a complementary proliferation of images within the dancer(s), given the common systemic configuration between the interFACE schema and the generative-media architecture.

¹⁹⁶ Of course, the schema may be set to also allow for opposing attributes, perhaps where several images collide to create a knot of tendencies with potentially catastrophic results.

¹⁹⁷ Bifurcation refers both to a line of linked (or unlinked) images within the tableau, and the overall modulation of attributes it implies for the system as a global whole. In this way, bifurcation has implications for both actual and virtual aspects of the system – the phase-space of the tableau and the state-space of encoded information (the media database).

¹⁹⁸ Although their actual size in the projection should be usually no smaller than 100% on a 17 inch monitor. Variations for each image may also be selected according to their transforms eg. position, scale and rotation.

¹⁹⁹ They may also increase in size, where larger images indicate more individuated states of order. As the images multiply, and disperse again into an absolute depth, a series of secondary bifurcations may emerge from them.

ii. *Phantasmagorical pandemonium*

The control mechanisms of attributes and parameters described above are influenced in part by the *pandemonium architecture* of O. G. Selfridge, a psychological theory based on perception and later reworked by John Jackson for the control of autonomous agents in computer science.²⁰⁰ What is useful for my purposes is the way that the pandemonium model posits an “architecture of emotion” in the contingent behaviour of autonomous agents, while also illustrating a systemic ‘demonology’ that is similar to the phantasmatic migration of the settlers. The pandemonium model also reflects the architectural aspects of *pneu babel* in the way it is structured. Selfridge conceived the pandemonium model as a series of pits with increasing orders of complexity, while in Jackson’s version it is conceived as an arena, sub-arena and stands.²⁰¹ For *pneu babel*, the arena or uppermost pit constitutes the phase-space of the tableau, where the phantasm summons the settlers, while the underlying layers (pits or stands) comprises the multiple orders of the state-space, where their preindividual singularities accumulate and gather consistency.²⁰² There is also a correspondence here in the confluence of circuits between the internal architecture of the *butoh-fu* schema (vectorscope, transforms and transfer modes) and that of the generative media installation itself. As delineated through the *butoh-bwo*, the former turns upon an internal circuit while the latter traces a broad circuit. Or rather, there is an enfolded or recursive doubling of the broad circuit, firstly in the mimicry of the dancer’s movements in relation to the proliferating pandemonium of images, and secondly when the spectator may feel apprehended both by the *hitogata* of this dead-hollow-body, and by a spiritual automaton (in the Artaudian sense) as it may be seen to appear in the corresponding tableau.

²⁰⁰ See Selfridge (1959) and Jackson (1987).

²⁰¹ Selfridge’s original formulation considered four layers or pits, whose shrieking demons displayed increasingly complex states of mental function: memory (data storage), computation (pattern identification), cognition, and decision-making. In Jackson’s version of the model, the top output layer is conceived as a playing arena, surrounded by a sub arena, and then the stands. In both versions the passage of information is carried by the shrieking of the demons; their shrieks being passed on in a more individuated form. Selfridge’s demons occupy a kind of proxy status, in their processing of information through stratified layers, where it is only by their shrieks that they may ‘assume’ a body; albeit a phantasmatic body of individuated singularities.

²⁰² It would be interesting perhaps to indicate the emergence of these underlying orders of complexity in the configuration of screen-image ratios, as described above.

There are a number of architectural references in *pneu babel*. Most of all, it may be considered as a phantasmagorical construction. The term *phantasmagoria* is one associated with the mechanical art of illusionism from pre-cinema to virtuality, particularly in relation to the ‘magic cinema’ of motion-picture pioneer Georges Méliès.²⁰³ It is an appropriate term for *pneu babel*, not only in the sense of its phantasmatic origins, but above all in the manner in which its systemic analysis and proposed developments together present a contemporary invocation of mechanical illusionism and its hidden machinery. The cinematic legacy of ‘the man behind the screen’ is apparent in the boundary conditions of phase-space vis-à-vis state-space – as an arena occupied by the phantasm, whose proxy status is generated through the gestural accumulation of the settlers. It may also be seen in the spectral effigy of the FACE and in the spiritual automatism of the *hitogata*, as I have formulated it via the cinephilosophical implications of *butoh-fu*.

Finally, *phantasmagoria* refers (though the etymology is somewhat obscure), to *agora* – an assembly (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 814). This notion may be taken in several ways – as a place of assembly, a gathering of people, or a series of transformations (the process of constructing an assemblage). In *pneu babel*, the settlers enter the topological locus of the phase-space – the *phantasm’s agora*, where they enact a continual metamorphosis through their proxy status. Their assembly therefore denotes both locus and process, in which they are constantly transforming into one another, to become a *people* through the generative nature of their gathering. In league with the phantasm, the settlers generate a ‘becoming-chair’, and in so doing become a ‘chair-people’. Never sitting but always settling, they are a *set* or *ensemble* in a perpetual process of assembling.²⁰⁴

iii. Destroying the tower

Turning once again to the title of the film itself, the peculiar nature of this generative architecture is reflected in the figure of “*babel*”. There are many art-historical nuances to the calamitous tale of the

²⁰³ Méliès’ film, ‘A Trip to the Moon’ (1902) was one of the earliest examples of cinematic animation techniques and optical effects. *Phantasmagoria* is defined as “a fantastic series of illusive images or of real forms” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 814). It has its origins in a late-18th century magic-lantern show by Etienne Gaspar Robertson in Paris. Robertson conjured up “terrifying illuminated phantasms and blithe apparitions which moved through the projection space via a combination of mechanical and optical tricks.” (Callas and Watson, eds., 1996: 1)

²⁰⁴ In Deleuzian terms, they are “the seed of a people to come” (Deleuze, 1989: 216) – forever in a state of fabulation.

‘Tower of Babel’ – in painting, literature, architecture and theology. Some of these provide useful points of reference for the theoretical subtext to *pneu babel*.

The Babylonian tale relates how God demolishes the Tower of Babel as punishment for the ‘assault on heaven’, thereafter condemning mankind’s unbroken tongue to the multiplicity of languages.²⁰⁵ As Klein suggests, butoh reveals a desire to return to a “pre-Babel” world, where language and meaning have a motivated rather than an arbitrary relationship: “a world in which words and things had not yet been differentiated” (Klein, 1986: 42). Of course, butoh offers a *silent body* that may provide the audience with many possible interpretations, just as butoh-fu privileges the image over language.

Hijikata has been described as the ‘Architect of butoh’ (V&M, 1988: 60), even if in his own words, “butoh builds a tower and destroys it” (Hijikata, in W&K, 1998).²⁰⁶ By this he invokes the necessity to build structures that contain the seeds of their own dissipation, in the same manner that I have characterised butoh-fu as simultaneously constructing and erasing the butoh-body according to the generative contingencies of the FACE. If the butoh-bwo may be imagined then as a tower that is both built and destroyed, it is not by the wrath of God but by the implacable necessity of cruelty and suffering. This ‘tower body’ constructs and erases itself, ‘living and dying at the same moment’, ‘standing in the shadow’ of a *life* built through continual becoming rather than innate being.

As Steiner points out, the tower may be interpreted as a form of worship, or rebellion, or both (Steiner, 1975: 67). The tension between transcendental empiricism (as both worship *and* rebellion) and transcendence (as worship *or* rebellion), may be seen in the tower’s art-historical development in painting, in which the figure of God has a relationship either to the workers in the tower or to the aristocracy of the day (Pelletier, 1994: 190). This conflict is also evident in Hijikata’s ‘rebellion of the body’ – refusing the robbery of a primordial body within modern society, while reclaiming this very impower as none other than the pain of existence.

In the generative-media installation, the tower-body is built through the accumulating cacophony of the ‘phantasm’s agora’ (phase-space), while the proliferation of settlers is always offset by the

²⁰⁵ Nevertheless, Kafka muses: “Had it been possible to build the Tower of Babel without ascending it, that would have been allowed”; which for Steiner suggests that if language could be used “without pursuing meaning to the forbidden edge of the absolute, [we] might still be speaking a veritable and undivided tongue” (Steiner, 1975: 67).

²⁰⁶ Quoted by Waguri, in Waguri and Tanigawa (W&K, 1998).

endless dissipation of a hidden machinery (state-space).²⁰⁷ As Tanaka remarks: “When words are stirred up and erect themselves, the body trembles and recalls phantasmagorical movements” (Tanaka, 1986b: 154). For the dancer, the tower-body is erected through the *butoh-fu* schema of the interFACE, where his/her movements generate a recursive automatism that mimics the tableau imagery. Their ghostly gestures arise from the modulation of multiple durations, to cast their shadows in the luminous contour of the *butoh-body*.²⁰⁸

iv. pneu babel

Finally, the two terms of the title come together to qualify exactly what kind of *babel* this *pneu babel* may bring about. In the first instance, the original ‘inspiration’ for the coupling of these terms actually comes from Constant’s ‘New Babylon’, an unbuilt architectural folly comprising a jumble of deconstructed sections, elevated off the ground and spreading like a lattice work through the countryside, even over entire cities.²⁰⁹ Originally conceived in the 1950’s, the revolutionary impetus for ‘New Babylon’ emerged from the Situationist movement,²¹⁰ the radicalism of which shares the same historical moment as the appearance of Hijikata’s *butoh*. Of course, *pneu babel* does not

²⁰⁷ The screen configuration might also make reference to the tower, following its representation in the medieval painting by Breugel the Elder (see Illustrations, figure 13). Forming a circular, continuous enclosure in the shape of a cone (ascending perhaps towards higher states of individuation, after Selfridge’s pits), the *spiral-sector* of *pneu babel* may be imagined as a vast, revolving assemblage comprising strands of rising windows and encircled by vectors spiraling around it.

²⁰⁸ It is important that the dancer uses his/her own *internal* imagery via the interface method, rather than be distracted by responding directly to the tableau (at least exclusively). The correspondence of small and broad circuits could be made with the aid of motion sensors, but there may then be a lack of specificity and random play. The best solution may be to augment motion triggers with video technician(s) mixing the images live – in response to the dancers using a common notational schema. Above all, the audience must be affected in the sense that they may also ‘move’ along these circuits and through the fissures created by their overlapping.

²⁰⁹ See Sadler (1998: 122). Also see Illustrations (figure 12.), where this jumbled architecture indicates its influence on the development of the window-assemblages.

²¹⁰ Constant’s project responded to notions of ‘unitary urbanism’ and ‘urban drift’, as championed by Situationist founders Guy Debord and Asger Jorn (although they were to later reject it). ‘New Babylon’ has had a considerable influence on *pneu babel*, following the trajectory of my earlier work and continuing as an inspiration towards future development.

propose an architecture that may actually be built, and certainly not on the Babylonian scale of its predecessor.²¹¹ Instead, it explores the dissipative *unbuilding* of a phantasmagoria, whose hidden machinery turns upon the materialism of nothing other than images and bodies.

In terms of *pneu babel* itself, there is already an equivocation of terms between *babel* and *pneuma*. According to Steiner, theologians and “metaphysicians of language” have attempted to link the gift of tongues to Babel, in the sense that the scattering of languages constitutes a second fall of man for which the Pentecost offers a partial redemption. The visitation of the Holy Spirit, bringing the ‘inspiration’ of speaking in tongues, is seen to harken back to the universal language of Eden, albeit in a garbled form. (Steiner, 1975: 59). For *pneu babel*, it is not an original and universal language that the settlers seek, nor its divine inspiration, but the desire to occupy a pure event, to transform the pain of life via the impower of the phantasm. The *spiral-sector* of *pneu babel* is like the turning of a vast *pneu-matic* turbine, a diabolical machine impowered by the outside and fueled by the babble of images. In this monstrous assemblage of correspondences, ‘*babel*’ gives the ‘*pneu*’ a dynamic structure, while the ‘*pneu*’ lends ‘*babel*’ a different kind of transcendental principle – one of endless metamorphosis, in which the brink of existence is always haunted by the spectre of the void.

Conclusions

In this research I have examined what it means to generate a body specific to *butoh*, and to investigate how the image may be seen to affect this body, as well as enable it to produce affects. Using the ideas of Hijikata and Artaud, via the materialist philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari, I have sought to contribute to scholarship in the fields of dance, cultural theory and the moving image, while also developing my own praxis, both in terms of systemic methods and creative work.

With Chapter 1, I traced the luminous contour of a hollow corpse standing upright, while also plunging the dark depths within it, to find a whole corpus of bodies – a body of knowledge including both corporeal and incorporeal bodies. From actual and organic bodies to pure or virtual ones, I have sought to describe how a specifically *butoh*-body may construct (or be dismantled by) the chaotic fiction of a *butoh-bwo*. The attributes of the *butoh-bwo* are identified here as the dead-

²¹¹ A criticism of New Babylon is that its scale, plus Constant’s artistic flair, slanted its development more towards a utopian schema, rather than a realisable project. Constant was ultimately rejected by the Situationists on these grounds.

body and the hollow-body. The former traces the co-existence of the actual and the virtual, harbouring the suffering of everyday movement, the lineage of dead spirits and the nakedness of human solidarity or animal-becoming. The latter generates the intensive spatium of a transient membrane, where a body of pure singularities is constantly hollowed out by their multiplication. The conceptual model given to articulate these facets is that of a FACE, its spectral visage generating a system of affective circuits, constituting what may be called the special affects of the *butoh-bwo*.

In Chapter 2, I sought to draw out the implications of Hijikata's choreographic method of *butoh-fu*, via the conceptual model of the FACE. Here, the materialism of the image was situated in relation to the *butoh-body*, using Deleuze and Guattari's ideas on the percept and the affect. For the *butoh-bwo*, the intensive qualities of the image constitute its modes. These pass through the moulds (or attributes), while the facets of the FACE determine the modulation of both. Following a critique of metaphor and sense, I arrived at the notion of a metaplastic membrane, in order to articulate the process of becoming that the dancer undergoes through *butoh-fu*. This was the first of a series of conceptual figures designed to give the *butoh-bwo* its own *butoh-fu*. These images intersected with the materialism of Deleuze and Guattari, while also referencing several recurring tropes within Hijikata's *butoh-fu*. In addition, the *butoh-bwo* is given an aesthetic figure in the doll-like shape of the *hitogata*, for which the clay-body provides an example of the way it may appear.

Turning to Deleuze's cinephilosophy, I then sought to mobilise the materiality of the image, by comparing the percept and the affect to the perception-image and the affection-image. Here, the intensive spatium of the affect leads to the notion of a primordial body as forgotten landscape, in which the image brings forth a sense of crisis. This enabled a comparison of the historical conditions underscoring Hijikata's *butoh* and the emergence of modern cinema (as conceived by Deleuze), where the crisis of action allows an image of time to appear. For *butoh*, time may be seen to dance in the image of a dark crystal, through the gloom of *yami* and the *metempsychotic* transmission of affects. Finally, *butoh-fu* is given the figure of a thinking body, in which the shock to thought that the time-image delivers is distributed through the affective circuits of the *butoh-bwo*.

In Chapter 3, I developed my own experimental praxis through the generative analysis of *pneubabel*. This took three forms – a systemic narrative, *butoh-fu* schema and video installation – where each successive stage developed and/or implemented those preceding it. Firstly, the narrative was described in materialist terms via the conceptual figures of the FACE. This was posited as a 'false narration' arising from the film's two basic components – chair and window assemblage – where the generative system was conceived as a play of doubles and mirrors, through which the characters

came to acquire the singularity of *a life*. I then devised a diagrammatic model for butoh-fu notation, seeking to further Hijikata's choreographic method with reference to video-compositing interfaces and complex systems theory. Next, I described the proposed development of a generative-media video-installation, to further develop the systemic narrative of *pneu babel* and to implement a staging mechanism for using the butoh-fu schema in a future performance. Finally, the emergence of *pneu babel* as a generative system was illustrated through the architectural transfiguration of a 'tower-body', in which the three aspects (systemic narrative, butoh-fu schema, video-installation) were seen to correspond.

To summarise, with this research I have sought to establish a conceptual model (the butoh-bwo), that may provide a systemic taxonomy of terms for 'imaging' the relations between the butoh-body and butoh-fu. This will contribute to the ongoing development of my own praxis, through which I seek to investigate the systemic embodiment of the image.

Finally, there is a sense that the body of this writing is as much in a recursive "state of survey" (D&G: 1994: 20) as its object, inexorably tracing a circuit of nerves whose nodes constitute a perpetually ramifying series. It's Appendices, having been removed, develop those things that go beyond the scope of this textual body, where the thesis becomes reactivated by a larger project. Here, *pneu babel* can be seen to endlessly create and erase itself, for it is in the Appendices that this most useless of organs may multiply, to dismantle the organism of this thesis with the dis/integration of the butoh-bwo.

Butoh Dance Workshops

- Min Tanaka, International Workshop Festival, Melbourne, June 2001
(four-day intensive).
Bodyweather Summer School, Hakushu, August 2002
(four-week intensive).
- Gekidan Kaitaisha Sydney, June 2002 (three-day intensive).
Tokyo, December 2002 (one casual class).
- Kazuo and Yoshito Ohno Ohno Studio – Yokohama, September 2002 – January 2003
(six casual classes).
- Tony Yap Melbourne, September 2003 – (ongoing casual classes).
- Yumi Umiumare Melbourne, November 2003 (1 casual class).
- Peter Snow and Frank Van de Ven Sydney, February 2004 (one-day intensive).

Illustrations

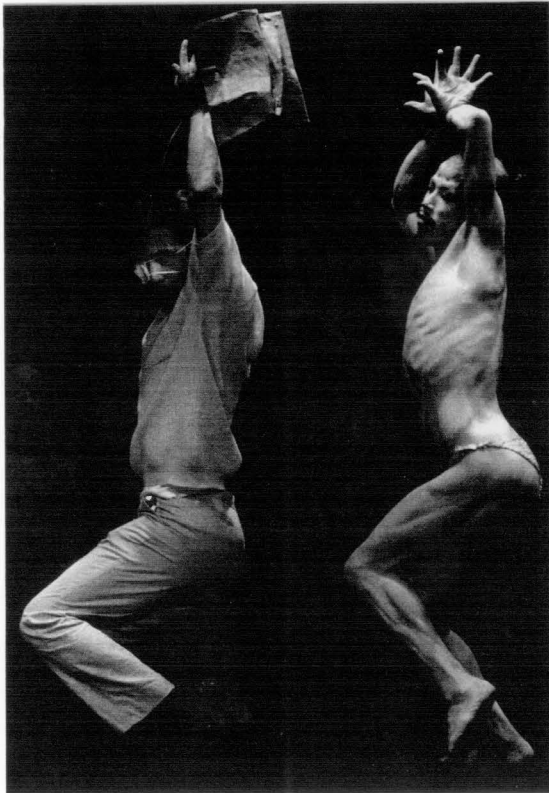


Figure 1.

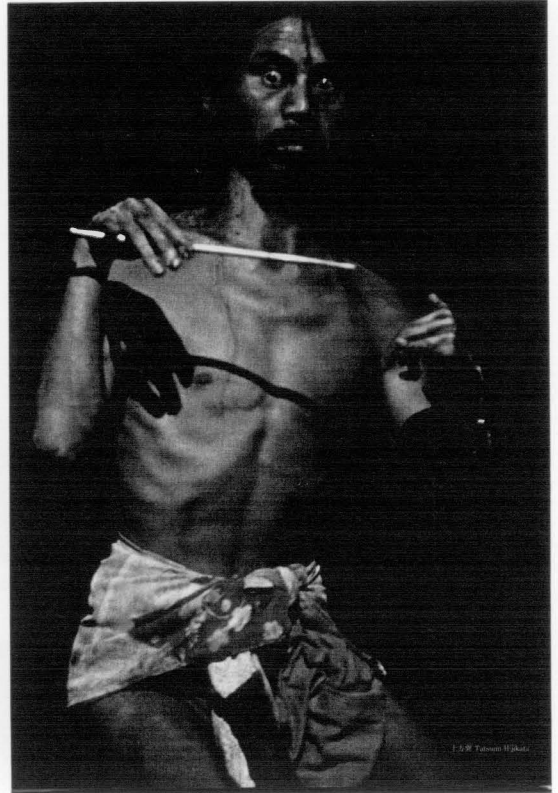


Figure 2.

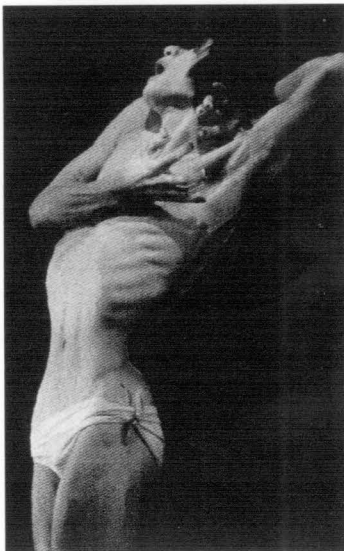


Figure 3.

Figure 1.
Tatsumi Hijikata choreographing Kohichi Tamano.

Figure 2.
Tatsumi Hijikata, in *Rebellion of the Body* (1969).

Figure 3.
Tatsumi Hijikata, in *Rebellion of the Body* (1969).

Illustrations in W&K, 1998.



Figure 4.



Figure 5.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.

Figures 4 – 7: Michael Hornblow, video-performance, *Doujunkai Die*, January 2003.

Figure 8.



Figure 9.



Figure 10.



Figure 11.



Figures 8 – 11: Michael Hornblow, Shinjuku / Kabuki-cho street performance, September 2002 – January 2003.

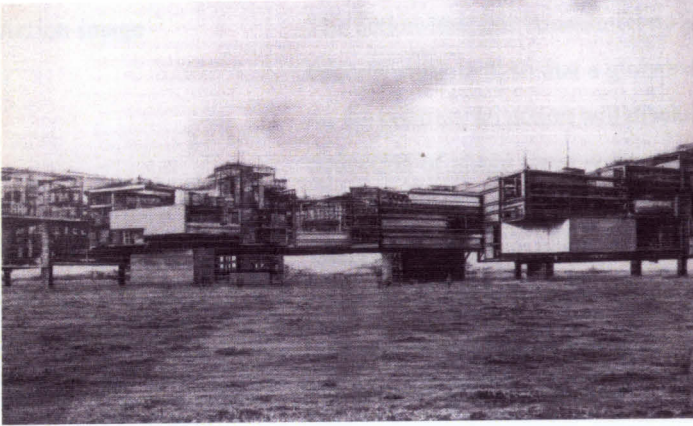


Figure 12.



Figure 13.



Figure 14.

Figure 12.
New Babylon
Constant Nieuwenhuys
in Sadler (1998).

Figure 13.
The Tower of Babel
Bruegal the Elder
in Steiner, 1975.

Figure 14.
Abstraktes Bild
Gerhardt Richter, 1995
in Obrist (1996).

Glossary

Italics indicate other Glossary terms

Action-image

The action-image is constituted by a real, actualised setting that has become sufficient, so that a global situation will provoke an action, or on the contrary an action will disclose a part of the situation. In the deduction of image types within the *movement-image* (see *below*), the action-image is what executes the movement on the other side of the *affection-image* (see *below*).

The action-image is characterised by linear causality and narrative coherence, signatures of ‘classical cinema’ (historically, this refers to the pre-war period, although the distinction between classical and modern is not clearly fixed.) It undergoes a crisis with the arrival of modern cinema, in the faltering of motor connections within the action, involving protagonists who become *seers* instead of active agents, and the emergence of purely optical or affective scenarios.

Actual / Actualisation

The process of actualisation is one where a potential or *virtual* situation (see *below*) becomes an actual event or thing, ie. one actually existing as a *state of affairs* (see *below*). This process is not so much one of realisation, of something becoming ‘real’, for the real is seen to be both virtual and actual. Actualisation proceeds as a process of *difference* (see *below*), divergence and creation (Deleuze, 1988: 97). It is delineated in terms of an *event* (see *below*), which sits astride the threshold of the virtual and the actual.

Although the process of actualisation goes from the virtual to the actual, the latter does not exhaust the former, for the virtual accompanies the process of actualisation without being fully accomplished by it.

Affect

For Deleuze, the affect is not considered in the usual sense of feelings and affections. It goes beyond the lived experience of a subject or even an actual body, to constitute a ‘being’ whose validity lies in itself. The

affect has a reflective and intensive quality, which appears either as the attribute of a *state of affairs* (see *below*) or the expressed of a proposition. The affect has the pure power of inscription that galvanizes potential forces, *percepts* (see *below*) and perceptions, which through the interval of its persisting duration creates a *becoming* (see *below*) from the sum of its parts.

The affect is “a motor tendency on a sensitive nerve” (Deleuze, 1986: 87).

Affection-image

In the deduction of image types, the affection-image occupies the interval within the *movement-image* (see *below*). The affection-image has both the quality of an immobile surface as reflective or reflecting unity, and the pure power of micro-movements forming intensive series. In particular, Deleuze identifies this *quality-power* within the close-up of the face or its equivalent. As with the affect, it is an image that carries a quality or power that is only expressed, without being actualised.

Any-space-whatever

An *any-space-whatever* is a particular type of *affection-image* (see *above*). It is a singular space, not an abstract universal (in all times and places), but rather an intensive site of virtual conjunctions, with the potential for infinite linkages between the different elements it contains. The any-space-whatever typifies the crisis of action that the affection-image brings about, in the way its heterogeneous relations create a knot of virtual tendencies which delimit the situation passing into action.

Becoming

A process of becoming occurs when a body, quality or thing is transformed through its interaction with another body, quality or thing. This transformation may be abstract and incorporeal, involving a contiguous coupling between two sensations without resemblance to one another.

A becoming involves a transmission of *affects* (see *above*), and is effectuated through the persistence of their co-existing durations. A

becoming is a mutual process that moves in two directions at once, both towards the thing that one or another is becoming, and towards the proposition of their co-creation.

Being of sensation

A being of sensation is made up of *percepts* and *affects* (see *below* and *above*). Like these, it does not so much exist as persist, subsist or inhere. It is a compound of pure qualities, of sensations that are not necessarily felt by a body, but is instead a kind of extra-being whose validity lies in itself.

Body-without-Organs

A Body-without-Organs (BwO) is not a physical organism, governed by its unitary functions and the organisation of parts; but is rather an open conjugation of common principles or intensive features, defined only as a mass of singularities.

The BwO is not opposed to the organs themselves, but rather to the organisation of the organism, being neither reduced to the functional articulations of the body, nor attributed to the sovereignty of a subject.

The BwO does not assume the given facts of an organism, nor a subject whose phantasies are decoded by interpretation and signifi-ance, but rather develops a program of experimentation. It is first and foremost a matter of constructing a set of practices, in order to determine the specific type of BwO, and what it is that circulates through it, according to the intensive modes and singular attributes it comprises.

BwO

See *Body-without-Organs*.

(The) Crack

The crack is a conceptual trope that Deleuze develops from several sources, including Fitzgerald's *The Crack Up* (Deleuze, 1990: 154-161), and Zola's *La Bête humaine* (Deleuze, 1990: 321), where it concerns alcoholism and morbid hereditary flaws respectively. Under Deleuze, the crack becomes an incorporeal and imperceptible event, irreducible to any such cause (although these may accompany it). The crack produces a dissolution or disintegration of the self, and yet goes

beyond the subject, menacing its metaphysical surface with the unfathomable depths of the body in all its virtuality.

Here, the crack relates to the process of *counter-actualisation* (see *below*), where it emerges as a necessary tension between creative and destructive forces; of an edge both desirable and dangerous that must be trodden even at the risk of one's health.

Crystal-image

The crystal-image is a particular kind of *time-image* (see *below*), in which an actual image coalesces with its virtual counterpart. Here an actual image acquires a quality of virtuality, for example through the conceptual figure of the mirror or seed, or a public role and a private crime. The oscillation of actual and virtual images occurs where the time-image may be seen as a splitting of time into two dissymmetrical jets – a present which passes and a past that is preserved.

The crystal-image functions as a small circuit or internal limit where the actual image contains within it “a kind of [...] simultaneous double.” (Deleuze, 1989: 68). This doubling between actual and virtual may be considered in relation to the process of *counter-actualisation* (see *below*). Although Deleuze doesn't make this connection in *Cinema 2, The Time Image* (Deleuze, 1989), it may be inferred comparatively.

In terms of the *crack* (see *above*), Deleuze discusses a flaw in the crystal with reference to Renoir's films. Although he doesn't explicitly relate this to the crack and its depths as it is understood in *Logic of Sense* (Deleuze, 1990), this is perhaps similar to when he describes mirror-images in which the “depth of field always arranges a background in the circuit through which something can flee: the crack.” (Deleuze, 1989: 85).

Counter-actualisation

The process of counter-actualisation accompanies that of *actualisation* (see *above*), deferring its accomplishment by producing the ‘mime’ of what effectively occurs. Counter-actualisation invokes that secret part of the *event* (see *below*) within which the *virtual* (see *below*) is

preserved, that is, the event as pure reserve. It is a doubling, in the sense of differentiation via repetition and divergence. For the artist, it involves an intuitive and creative potential that always subtends the movement towards expression.

Dead-time

Dead-time is an aspect of the pure *event* (see *below*) for which *empty-time* is its companion (see *below*). It is where the event is marked by the weight of the past, as a potential accumulation of *virtual* conjunctions (see *below*), which the present can never fully accomplish or *actualise* (see *above*).

Dead-time is an accumulation of ‘meanwhiles’, “an infinite awaiting that is already infinitely past, awaiting and reserve.” (D&G, 1994: 158).

Destratification

Destratification describes a process of decoding, destabilising or otherwise loosening of hierarchical structures and forms of organisation, articulated using the geological metaphor of ‘strata’ and/or processes of stratification.

Desubjectification

The decoding or destabilising of processes and structures which concern subject formation. Desubjectification is conceived as a *nomadic* movement (see *below*), in which a more open or destabilised subjectivity may traverse multiple modes of being and processes of *becoming* (see *above*).

Desubjectification and its nomadic ontology are hallmarks of the *Body-without-Organs* (see *above*).

Deterritorialisation

Deterritorialisation involves a transverse movement or ‘line of flight’ beyond the strictures of a codified territory. It is a mode of resistance, towards for example a *molar* organism, form of hegemonic subjectivity, or other *stratified* organisation (see *below*).

Detournement

A term coined by the Situationists, describing an experimental or aesthetic intervention that parodies, quotes or otherwise ‘turns upon’ conventional values and cultural codes.

Difference	<p>Deleuze develops an ontology of difference derived from Bergson, in which he puts forth a view of difference-in-itself; that is to say, a tendency internal to difference. This function constitutes an internal limit particular to <i>immanence</i> (see <i>below</i>). In <i>Matter and Memory</i> (Bergson, 1988), Bergson sought to distinguish two aspects of difference: quantitative difference or difference in degree – between matter and perception; and qualitative difference or difference in kind – between matter and mind or memory.</p> <p>Deleuze amends Bergson’s twofold formulation, looking for a singular conception of difference that may subtend these – hence difference in itself. This view of difference concerns a creative principle in which something enters a <i>becoming</i> or a process of <i>individuation</i> (see <i>above</i> and <i>below</i>) by essentially differing from itself.</p>
Empty-time	<p>Empty-time is an aspect of the pure <i>event</i> (see <i>below</i>) for which <i>dead-time</i> is its companion (see <i>above</i>). It is a locus of possibility, a supplementary dimension that is always awaiting and already past, accompanying the process of actualization without being fully accomplished by it.</p>
(The) Event	<p>The event is an entity sitting astride the threshold of the <i>virtual</i> and the <i>actual</i> (see <i>below</i> and <i>above</i>). It is actualised in a <i>state of affairs</i> (see <i>below</i>), but it also has a ‘pure’ or secret aspect that accompanies this process, without being accomplished or exhausted by it. This is its virtual part, preserved by the power of <i>counter-actualisation</i> (see <i>above</i>).</p> <p>The locus of the event carries the shadow of the virtual, and it is here where the actual and the virtual coalesce, where the hidden force of <i>immanence</i> lurks (see <i>below</i>), carrying with it an infinite abundance of pure potential.</p>
False power / narration	<p>See <i>Power of the false</i>.</p>

Gaseous perception	<p>Deleuze derives from Vertov and his ‘cine-eye’ the notion of a gaseous perception, which he sees as an effective realisation of Bergson’s materialist approach to the image. This gaseous perception is not the natural perception of the human eye, but the very eye of matter, where every point perceives and acts on every other. It is one that apprehends space in all its <i>virtuality</i> (see <i>virtual</i>), where the <i>perception-image</i> (see <i>below</i>) no longer only receives and carries out the interval of organic movement (see <i>movement-image</i>), for the interval is now shattered into micro-intervals, where transverse movements trace the molecular intervals of matter itself.</p>
Immanence	<p>A creative principle that pervades all matter and thought, which Deleuze and Guattari envisage in terms of an unformed substance. This conception of immanence is one which becomes <i>actualised</i> (see <i>above</i>) through the function of an ‘internal limit’ particular to <i>difference</i> (see <i>above</i>).</p>
Individuation	<p>Individuation does not denote the formation of an individual identity or subjectivity, but is rather the act or process of something <i>individuating</i>. It may be considered to be the sum of forces mobilised within a <i>becoming</i> (see <i>above</i>), where this becoming concerns the total duration of an individual.</p>
Impower	<p>Deleuze develops from Blanchot the notion of an impower (<i>impouvoir</i>), which in his cinephilosophy concerns the powerlessness to think which Artaud finds in the cinematic image.</p> <p>Deleuze goes on to describe this as an ‘unthought’ in thought, which surfaces in the image as the apprehension of something intolerable in the world; carrying with it the realisation that the image stands in for our ability to think, while also granting us an absurd link with the world, and life, as something impossible or unthinkable. This is its impower, at the same time robbing and liberating us, revealing the automatism of our thinking and the ineffable mystery of thought itself as an ungraspable <i>immanence</i> (see <i>above</i>).</p>

The impower functions in a similar way to Deleuze's understanding of death, also derived from Blanchot. Here, death is conceived as a force accompanying that aspect of the *event* (see *above*) that eludes its accomplishment or *actualisation* (see *above*). In my comparative interpretation of Deleuze, the impower is a force, just as death is a figure, of the *outside* (see *below*), in the sense that the outside is the form (or perhaps 'non-form') in which the *virtual* (see *below*) appears in relation to subjectivity. See also *spiritual automaton*.

Intensive spatium

A *virtual space* (see *below*), though no less real, populated only by intensities and their virtual conjunctions. In a similar manner to the *pure event* (see *above*), the intensive spatium is a locus of possibility that subtends the process of *actualisation* (see *above*). It is a philosophical concept that functions in a similar way to a *phase-space* (see *below*) in complex systems theory, although it does not describe an object as such (even in a topological space), so much as an unformed matter comprising pure intensities.

The intensive spatium functions as a space of production and distribution for the *Body-without-Organs* (see *above*). See also *Plane of Consistency*.

Interval

See Movement-image; also Affect and Affection-image.

Movement-image

The movement-image constitutes the primary vehicle in Deleuze's sensory-motor schemata (see *below*). Following from Bergson's conception of the universe as comprising the movement of 'matter-images', Deleuze defines the movement-image as a 'signaletic material' founded upon the idea of movement as an interval.

Within the sensory-motor schema of the movement-image there is to be found a whole typology of images – of *perception*, *affection*, *action* and *relation* (see *above* and *below*), each of which serve a particular function in differentiating the interval of movement. With this differentiation, the movement-image is set in motion, assuring aspects of causality, linear progression and narrative coherence – signatures of the pre-war ‘classical cinema’ and characteristic of mainstream narrative cinema to the present day.

Nomadism / Nomadology Deleuze and Guattari’s ‘nomad thought’ is an approach to thought and subjectivity that resists hierarchical structures and hegemonic processes. It champions *detrterritorialised* movements (see *above*) and transverse or non-localised relations, distributed within qualitative aggregates comprising purely intensive features.

(The) outside The outside is not something attributed to a unified space where things are demarcated one from the other according to their material surfaces. It is a philosophical concept concerned with an absolute exteriority that passes both beyond and into all things – being bound up with interiority, or hollowing it out.

Deleuze draws on Blanchot for his understanding of the outside. For Blanchot it is death that becomes a figure of the outside, in the way it haunts the subject with the impossibility of ever fully apprehending its interminable nature. For Deleuze, this relates to the *virtuality* of the *event* (see *below* and *above*), and to the *impower* of an ‘unthought’ (see *impower*), which hollows out our thinking with the impossibility of grasping the Whole.

Percept The percept is a *being of sensation* (see *above*) in a similar manner to the *affect* (see *above*). It does not exist in the domain of natural perception, but is rather a quality internal to matter. The percept is like a non-subjective aggregate of matter that ‘perceives itself’ as a pure persistence of *matter-images* (in the Bergsonian sense), via their intensive relations.

Deleuze and Guattari describe the percept as (for example) the landscape before or in absence of man (D&G, 1994: 169).

Perception-image

In the differentiation of types in the *movement-image* (see *above*) the perception-image does not so much express the movement, as the relation of movement to its interval. Deleuze describes the sense in which the interval receives and executes movement, as ‘perceiving’ and ‘carrying’ it out (Deleuze, 1989: 31).

If the movement-image is already perception (the image of matter as a plastic mass of pure modulation), then the perception-image is perception of perception. It constitutes a degree-zero in the deduction of image types, facilitating the passage of one to the next, as a function of the movement-image: perception of affection, of action, of relation etc. (Deleuze, 1989: 31).

Phase space

A term in complex systems theory referring to a topological space that describes an object according to intensive features distributed across discrete yet non-Euclidian co-ordinates.

Plane of consistency

The plane of consistency is an abstract dimension that cuts through the chaos of a purely unformed substance – *immanence* (see *above*). It is a fluid continuum marked by pure intensities, continuous variations, events, and incorporeal transformations - features immanent to matter and thought (D&G, 1987: 507). It is the *body-without-organs* (see *above*) that establishes the plane of consistency and populates it with *becomings* (see *above*); while it is *difference-in-itself* (see *above*) that facilitates their propagation.

The overall conceptual model of planes, *plateaus* (see *below*) and other diagrammatic features, is given the term *mechanosphere* (D&G, 1987: 514).

- Plane of immanence
- The plane of *immanence* (see above) is an abstract dimension upon or through which the image may be seen as a ‘plastic mass’, following from Bergson’s vitalism of ‘matter-images’ in continual modulation (see *Movement-image*). Deleuze and Guattari also discuss the plane of immanence in *What is Philosophy* (D&G: 1994), in relation to thought and the philosophical *concept*.
- The *plane of consistency* (see above) and the plane of immanence are very similar. While the former concerns the *Body-without-Organs* (see above) as laid out in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the latter sets out an ontology of the image (in Deleuze’s *Cinema Books*); exploring the capacity of the cinematic image to go beyond the subject, to reveal the immanent nature of movement and matter, time and thought.
- Plateaus of intensity
- In apposition to the hegemony of the *strata* (see above), Deleuze and Guattari describe multiple plateaus of intensity to suggest the multiform architectonics of the *plane of consistency* (see above).
- The overall conceptual model of *planes* (see above), plateaus and other diagrammatic features, is given the term *mechanosphere* (D&G, 1987: 514).
- Power of the False
- Following from Nietzsche, Deleuze regards the claim to truth as a prescriptive system of judgment. He counters the form of the true with the *power of the false*, an iterative power of metamorphosis that champions the pure description of things rather than a presumed transmission of their innate properties.
- This false power is seen to embrace the unfolding of the *event* (see above) and the creation of the new, through a capacity for transformation that characterises life and *becoming* (see above). In *The Time-Image* (Deleuze: 1989), it is a power that often explicitly rejects true forms through false movements and centres, falsifying narrations and temporal discontinuities, with characters that create a chain of forged identities through stories that often appear to only simulate what actually occurs.

Preindividual singularities	Singular attributes or qualities that exist both anterior and adjacent to the formation of an individual subject, thing or <i>state of affairs</i> (see <i>below</i>), yet are also part of the process of its <i>individuation</i> or <i>becoming</i> (see <i>above</i>).
Proprioception	The faculty of internal awareness in the body, “made active by stimuli arising from movement in the tissues”; also <i>proprioceptive sense</i> – “sense of muscular position” (Chambers Dictionary, 1968: 879).
Pure event	See <i>Event</i> .
Relation-image	In the deduction of image types within the organic regime of the movement-image schema, the <i>relation-image</i> reconstitutes the whole of the movement with all the aspects of the interval (including perception-images, affection-images, and action-images); that is to say, it expresses the <i>whole</i> and makes it vary according to the distribution of movement. (Deleuze, 1989: 32-33)
Sense	<p>Under Deleuze, <i>sense</i> does not concern the physical senses, nor is it a matter of making sense in terms of interpretation. Sense is both the quality or attribute of a thing, and the pure expressed of a proposition, as in a <i>becoming</i> (see <i>above</i>). It moves in two directions at once – both towards a <i>state of affairs</i> (see <i>below</i>) and towards a pure description of it. The former is not an innate property nor is the latter an interpretation of this property, for sense is something that exists for its own sake, in the boundary between the two.</p> <p>Sense possesses the quality of an ‘extra-Being’ in a similar manner to <i>affects</i> and <i>percepts</i> (see <i>above</i>). It may be said that sense is like an <i>aliquid</i> medium through which percepts and affects may be apprehended. Sense is an <i>event</i> (see <i>above</i>), ‘in the sense’ that the event is understood as a pure entity that is extra or adjacent to the <i>actualisation</i> of a <i>state of affairs</i> (see <i>above</i> and <i>below</i>).</p>

Sensory-motor	<p>The sensory-motor schema of the <i>movement-image</i> (see <i>above</i>) is one where the cinematic image is determined by the sensory-kinetic qualities of movement. Here, movement is conceived in terms of an interval, the passage of which is seen to guarantee narrative causality and linear coherence (at least as it appears in classical or mainstream narrative cinema).</p> <p>Sensory-motor schemas are cinematic forms of organisation that are determined by the distribution of organic bodies and forces within the <i>montage</i> (the temporal sequence of shots) and <i>mise-en-scene</i> (the spatial frame); in which the interval constitutes the whole of the movement, and ensures the movement of the Whole.</p> <p>The sensory-motor regime comprises a typology of movement-images, in which the interval is delineated by its component functions of receiving, occupying and carrying out the movement – in terms of <i>perception-images</i>, <i>affection-images</i>, <i>action-images</i> and <i>relation-images</i> (see <i>above</i>).</p>
Spatium of intensity	See <i>Intensive spatium</i> .
State of affairs	A state of affairs refers to situation or thing which has become <i>actual</i> (see <i>above</i>).
State space	A term in complex systems theory referring to the global state of a system.
Strata / Stratification	See <i>Destratification</i> .
Spiritual automaton	<p>Inspired by Artaud and Blanchot, the spiritual automaton is a thematic figure that expresses or reflects the sense of a <i>powerlessness to think</i> which Deleuze finds in the cinematic image. Deleuze conceives this problem in terms of the psycho-perceptual automatism of the moving image and its linkages.</p>

The powerlessness to think invoked by the spiritual automaton is associated with the *impower* (see *above*), or what Deleuze calls an ‘unthought’ in thought (see *impower*). This impossible situation emerges as a sense of something intolerable in the world, where the spiritual automaton often takes the form of *death* (see *impower*), as in the figure of a mummy or vampire.

Time-image

An image of time appears when a sense of duration within the interval of the cinematographic image emerges for its own sake, rather than being extended into movement (see *movement-image*).

The *sensory-motor schema* (see *above*) collapses, as movement becomes subject to time rather than the other way around. Movements falter in their passage towards action or closure; or go off on a tangent (the trip or ballad). Situations arise that do not pass into action but emerge for their own sake as purely optical (and aural or mental) situations; or are subsumed by a sense of something intolerable in the world (see *spiritual automaton* and *impower*).

In answer to the typology of the *movement-image* (see *above*) Deleuze devises a whole new schema for the time-image. For example, elements within the *mise-en-scene* (the space of the frame) acquire a depth of potential in an *any-space-whatever* (see *above*). Or there is a sense of the *virtual* persistence (see *virtual*) of the past (and its many ‘sheets’) within the present; or of the present being fragmented into multiple points or ‘peaks’ of intensity; or of these relations forming invisible ‘circuits’ between *actual* (see *above*) and virtual aspects within the image. Characters appear who are either unable to produce action within a situation – becoming only *seers*, or who disrupt the causal mechanisms of the story according to *false* narrations, simulations, and forged identities (see *power of the false*).

The time-image is a cinematic locus of the *event* (see *above*) in all its virtuality, in the sense that it contains qualities and conjunctions whose meanings can never be fully exhausted by their thematic content or the flow of the action.

Transcendental empiricism A term inspired by Arthur's rejection of innate being, through which Deleuze champions a transcendental principle founded upon *immanence* (see *above*), with an empirical method hinging on *difference-in-itself* (see *above*).

Transcendental empiricism is a matter of creating one's life as a process of continual *becoming* (see *above*), instead of falling back on a sense of innate being guaranteed by a higher power. It is not the transcendence of God the Father, but of constantly working with the impossibility of an *internal* limit common to matter and thought, body and mind. (See also *impower*).

Unthought See *Impower*

Virtual The virtual is a realm of pure potential, a limitless reserve accompanying an *actual state of affairs* (see *actual* and *state of affairs*). The virtual is not exhausted by the actual for it constitutes the irreducible Whole itself, the open set of all conceivable choices, simultaneous with and yet exceeding the process of *actualisation* (see *above*).

The virtual is not opposed to the real but is rather contrasted with the actual. It is a realm of absolute efficacy without materiality; founded upon an *immanent* principle (see *above*) and actualised through *difference* (see *above*).

World-line A term in complex systems theory used to describe the path of an object through a *phase-space* (see *above*), as a non-Euclidean trajectory.

Appendices

Conceptual models

Figure 1.

The FACE of the butoh-bwo:

Attributes:

Hollow-body (HB), Dead-body (DB).

Facets:

Fossilisation (F), Accumulation (A),

Condensation (C), Evacuation (E).

The butoh-fu interFACE:

Vectorscope:

Butoh-fu images (I),

Diagram of intensity (DI).

After Effects:

Time-line (TL),

Layers (L).

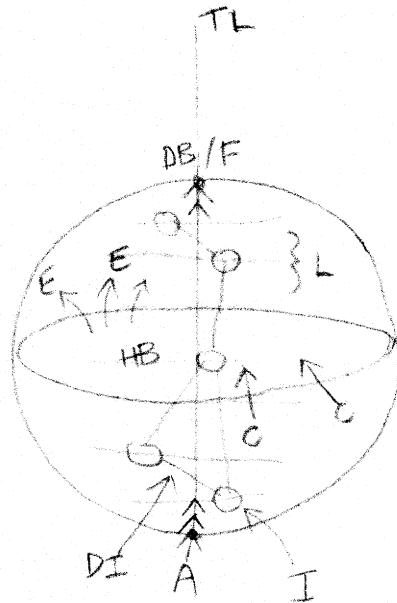


Figure 2 and 3.

Theoretical implications:

Deleuze & Guattari –

Percept (PC), affect (AF), actual pole (AP),
virtual pole (VP), counter-actualisation (CA),
internal or small-circuit (I/SC), broad-circuit (BC),
intensive spatium (IS), plane of consistency (POC).

Complex Systems theory –

Emergence (E), transformation (T),
state-space (SS), phase-space (PS),
world-line (WL).

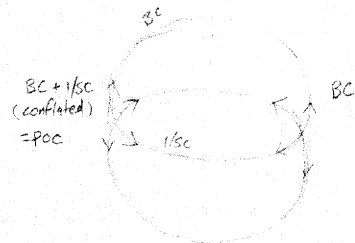
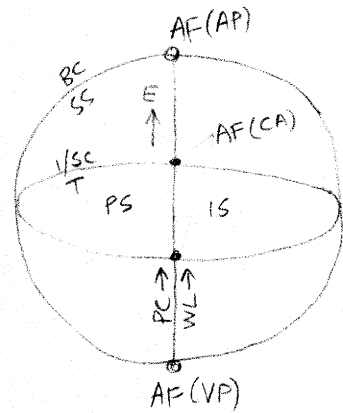


Figure 4.

The FACE of pneu babel:

Filmic elements

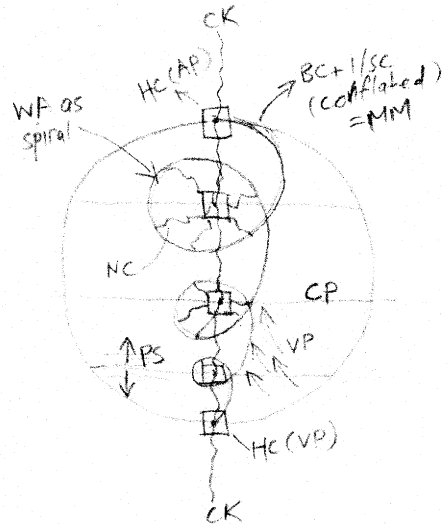
Hero Chair (HC), window-assemblage
(WA), vectors-particles (VP).

Conceptual elements

Particles (P), nerve circuits (NC), cell-plateaus
(CP), pus (PS), skin/metaplastic membran (MM),
the crack (CK).

Theoretical implications:

Internal or small-circuit (I/SC),
broad-circuit (BC).



Transforms:

Position, scale, rotation, anchor point, opacity, speed, direction, route or trajectory (some appropriated from After Effects 4.1; others to be developed).

Transfer Modes:

Butoh-fu – texture, temperature, humidity, weight, gravity, smell, sound, distance to the subject or perception of subjectivity, formation and disintegration, melting etc. (others to be developed).

After Effects 4.1 – dissolve, dancing dissolve, add, multiply, screen, overlay, soft light, hard light, colour burn, colour dodge, darken, lighten, difference, exclusion, hue, saturation, colour, luminosity. [Some of these may be appropriated for butoh-fu in future dance research].

Butoh-fu

The following butoh-fu are works-in-progress. They are not intended as poetry but as incomplete impressions and partial instructions for performed movement and gesture. The notational method of ‘working-out’ its transforms and transfer modes may then be marked in shorthand, and plotted using the vectorscope diagram.

These butoh-fu are intended to be porous and ghostly in authorship, diagramming references to other authors, my own childhood experiences, my ‘research sabbatical’ in Japan, some of my previous works, and work by other artists.

pneu babel

Eat the chair’s broken limbs, caress its skin, trace its orifices, lung through them, embrace its body, kiss it gently, play its music, mould its shape, look through its frame, invent its weaponry, it is a mechanical lung...

Description:

These chair-images are all taken from the film. It would be interesting to generate accelerating repetitions and problematise their recombinations (as seen in a workshop with *Gekidan Kaitaisha* in Sydney, June 2002), while also assigning different transforms and transfer modes to the images.

Gap_ing a chair

You approach an old chair,
Pick up the chair and put it back again in the same place.
But it is not in the same place,
And so you must pick it up again,
And put it down exactly in the middle of the first and second positions.
But now this third position is not exactly in the middle,
So you must pick it up again,
And put it down in the gap between these three places,
And so on...

Description:

This is from an obsessive-compulsive disorder I had when I was 13. It was used as a basis for the auditioning process, in which candidates had to transform the chair into a sacred object, using the ritual above, while also exploring the chair's dimensions and functions.

Notes:

Each time you return the chair, experiment with entering the critical point of placing and releasing the chair – for example, weight, texture, direction, motion path or trajectory. This butoh-fu may be done with any imaginary or real object, or as an approach to movement only. To lose the chair and improvise freely, select different gestures instead of positions for placement, increase motor speed and the rate of fragmentation, until there is only broken movement. Remember, you are intently scrutinising an invisible and intensive spatium. Try recombinations with *Hands of Glass* and *Ghost Spatium*.

Butoh-bwo of pneu babel

Your body is hollow,
And all the dead people inside are shrieking to get out.
Their screams become particles of glass streaming through you,
Forming nerve threads.
The threads trace your gestures like multiplying cells.
Some cells get together to form skin.

Your body is a fluctuating membrane,
That exists only in the multiplication of the cells.
Pus forms around the cells to stem the tide of multiplying gestures.
Your thoughts are things crumbling from your flaky skin.

Description:

This follows from the analysis of *pneu babel*, in relation to Hijikata's butoh-fu and the conceptual model of the butoh-bwo.

Hands of Glass

Grasp your life tightly in senile hands.
The clenched hands become two flowers.

The fingers of one hand are petals opening slowly.
The petals peel off endlessly,
And the fingers count them on an invisible abacus.

Your gestures become shimmering shards of glass,
As you are enwrapped in the warp and woof of billowing curtains.

The other hand is kissed by a dying man.
The crumbs on his lips become particles,
Like pins and needles from cells moving very fast,
In the immobility of a senile hand.

Description:

The ‘shards of glass’ refer to Hijikata and Suzuki talking about Hijikata’s gestures being like glass fragments, as illustrating a sense of crisis in relation to the Whole (Hijikata, 2000d: 64-65). The shards also refer to the window-assemblage in *pneu babel*, as do the ‘billowing curtains’. The senile hands and the dying man refer to a class I attended at the Ohno studio in 2003 (see below, *Kazuo’s Senile Hand*). The speed of opening fingers being equal to the duration of the hand, is adapted from exercises with Min Tanaka and Yoshito Ohno, while the flower image refers to Waguri, when he says – “The speed of the opening petals is removed by the flower” (Waguri, in W&K, 1998). The feeling of cells moving very fast is taken from my own childhood and may be linked to the OCD experience described in *Gap_ing a chair* (above).

Ghost spatium

A phantasm maintains an equal distance in front of you
As you walk towards it.
The phantasm draws its presence outside
From a black abscess in your chest
It is a shimmering double to the dark gap in your chest.
Space is rotting in the gap within this doubling.
You walk because you are being deprived,
As you slowly become the phantasm.

Your body becomes a flaking concrete wall in an abandoned room.
The wall is held together by the ghosts of former occupants,
Who pass through the wall with each step or gesture.
The room is inside the wall.
The wall-room becomes a New Babylon sector stretched across the landscape,
Traced by pigments of thought-perception by Gerhardt Richter.

Description:

The relationship between the phantasm and a hole in the chest is taken from my own childhood, while the notion of it being a rotting-space (*ma-gusare*) is taken from one of Hijikata’s childhood experiences. The notion of being deprived and of becoming a wall refers to some of Hijikata’s *butoh-fu* (W&K, 1998), but also draws experientially from my own life. The sense of an

abandoned room is taken from a period squatting an old apartment block (now recently demolished) in Harajuku, Tokyo (September 2002 – January 2003), shortly after the Hakushu workshop and before writing-up the thesis. In 1996 I made a video-performance called *:plugins, drifting...* (post-produced in 2000, see DVD), using costume items taken from the roof of this building; while another video-performance in the squat itself, *Doujunkai Die* (January 2003) uses items taken from the same roof (a traditional Japanese bath, old doors and sliding partitions).

As discussed in Chapter 3, Constant's 'New Babylon' (see Illustrations, figure 12.) was an inspiration for the window-assemblages in *pneu babel*, as well as for the project's continuing development. The paintings of Gerhardt Richter were an inspiration during the post-production of *pneu babel*, especially for the optical and digital effects of the vectors and burning borders (see Illustrations, figure 14.).

The Ohno Studio

While Kazuo Ohno doesn't use butoh-fu as a strict choreographic method, he does use images as inspiration for his improvisations. Yoshito Ohno is clearly influenced by his father, but also by Hijikata (who he performed with in *Kinjiki: Forbidden Colours*, and who he also trained with for a time). Yoshito would often use illustrations (as Hijikata had done) and other mental images in classes at the Ohno studio, in Yokohama. The experience I relate here occurred during a class at the Ohno studio in January 2003. It is one of the inspirations for my own butoh-fu, *Hands of Glass* (see above).

Kazuo's Senile Hand

Yoshito Ohno appears wearing a suit inherited from a friend who had died 3 days previously. By a strange coincidence, the class is also the day after the anniversary of Hijikata's death. Yoshito relates how his father Kazuo witnessed Hijikata's last dance, on his deathbed, using only his fingers. Now 94, Kazuo is quite senile and so frail he can no longer stand. Nevertheless, at every class he dances the same dance. Sitting in his comfy chair, his senile hand raises to grasp something so tightly that it shakes violently. Then he releases the image of whatever it is, perhaps a flower (the flower was his favourite image - in the previous year he made a film where he dances in a landscape with thousands of flowers raining down from a helicopter). Flinging it up in the air, his long slender

fingers open dramatically. Suspended for a moment, he catches the thing again, his fist shaking as he grasps it and draws it back down to clasp it gently in the other hand. Then he repeats the process, over and over.

At this class Kazuo doesn't just dance from his chair. With considerable effort he slowly gets down on the floor (assisted by his students) and spends the rest of the time crawling around the room, knocking things over, moving through the middle of other dancers. Yoshito instructs us to imagine Kazuo as a dead body while we dance. Later we stand in a circle and clench our hands as tightly as we can, Yoshito imploring "Don't dance, pray!" Our hands tremble as Kazuo's did, and in the stiffness afterwards we feel what it is like to have senile hands, the intensity of a dead body wringing every ounce of life from each moment. This is my last class. Yoshito gives me a poster from one of Kazuo's performances (from 1996 and one that I missed the last time I was in Japan. I subsequently forget the poster on the plane). Taking my hand firmly in his, Kazuo kisses it goodbye with the frail delicacy of a child, his lips covered in the crumbs of our last supper together. Wondering now if Kazuo is still alive and marvelling at the effect he had on me, I am reminded of something Hijikata once said – "We ought to try living with the dead. Then we would appreciate the hidden flavor of life and food. They are not bad when sprinkled with it" (Asbestos Kan, 1987: 84).

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