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Investigating the Relationship Between Choreographer and Composer: Mapping the Journey of
an Emerging Artist with a Movement-Music Emphasis

THESIS

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

in Dance

by

Jacob David Machmer

Thesis Committee:
Professor Alan Terricciano, Chair
Assistant Professor Tong Wang
Professor of Teaching Diane Diefenderfer

2019

DEDICATION

To

my love, Tessa, for understanding and sharing this passion for music and dance, even from afar;

my parents, Joi and Dave, for introducing me to many of my greatest passions and for their
gentle support of all I pursue;

my sister, Holli, and aunt, Kim, for their love, enthusiasm, and support;

and my friends who inspire me daily.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

Investigating the Relationship Between Choreographer and Composer: Mapping the Journey of an Emerging Artist with a Movement-Music Emphasis

By

Jacob David Machmer

Master of Fine Arts in Dance

University of California, Irvine, 2019

Professor Alan Terricciano, Chair

This thesis investigates multiple collaborative modes that choreographers and composers employ to create new movement and new music for dance; and it documents the journey I took, as a choreographer, engaging in these types of collaborations. Throughout my research, I studied various collaborative methods utilized by choreographers and composers throughout the 20th century. These historical examples informed the methods I chose to use with three different composers to make new works. In each collaboration, the order of creating dance and music varied, resulting in three methods — choreography-first, music-first, and simultaneous creation. By working with the composers to create these dances, I gained valuable knowledge and made self-discoveries that will influence my future choreographic work. The results of this research will hopefully aid other collaborations that correlate music and dance and advance our understanding of the choreographer-composer dynamic.

INTRODUCTION

In this choreographic thesis, I set out to discover new information surrounding a deeper understanding of the nature of composer/choreographer collaborations. As a dance performer, I have a strong interest in and affinity toward music, and this connection to music has inspired me to investigate ways to work with it as a choreographer. When I began this thesis research, my experience with choreography was limited to having created only one dance. Therefore, I see this research as an opportunity to deepen my understanding of the history of these collaborations, as well as to discover choreographic working methods suitable for my interests.

My thesis project consists of three collaborations with three different composers to investigate multiple ways of creating work. My approach to these three collaborations was inspired by the varied processes I encountered during my research on the topic. In each collaboration, the order of creating dance and music is varied, resulting in three methods — choreography-first, music-first, and simultaneous creation. The composers and I adhere to a specific methodology throughout the processes to be able to compare the results.

My objectives for this research are both personal and general. Foremost, as a developing choreographer, I wish to acquire experiential knowledge about different types of collaborations with composers and to gain a better understanding of my personal affinity towards certain methods. By engaging in these methods, I aim to unlock a choreographic skill-set that was unknown to me previously. I also hope to deepen my comprehension of the long history of choreographer/composer collaborations that have come before me and place myself within this history. Generally, I hope to document my creative process and collaborative journeys in a way that is insightful and useful to both choreographers and composers. It is my goal to address this

topic in a way that enables the continual pushing of boundaries by myself and others, to learn what is possible with the intersection of music and dance.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND LITERATURE

For this thesis, I sought literature that would provide a rich historical survey on the topic of choreographer-composer collaborations; in addition to inspiring my own approach. I began by surveying the historic and often convoluted relationship between choreographers and composers in the 20th century. An understanding of these relationships helped me to better understand the context in which artists approached working together throughout time. I narrowed my focus to western choreographer-relationships because I wanted to focus on the individuals who have influenced the dance forms involved with my development as a dancer and choreographer.

Ted Shawn, an early pioneer of modern dance, imagines the early relationships between dance and music in his book, *The American Ballet* (34). He describes a situation in which people would have moved rhythmically, before there was music, and how they would have naturally begun singing to accompany their dancing. Shawn also imagines that instruments would have been created as accompaniments to the dance. He states, “Music as a separate art developed much later and achieved its first forms and its most interesting forms out of dance rhythms” (Shawn 34). Transitioning into modern European music, he shares, “Composers like Bach, Mozart, and Haydn wrote their best compositions as gavottes, pavanés, and minuets, all of which were dance forms and dance rhythms originally developed purely as accompaniment to actual dancing” (Shawn 34). Norman Cazden further describes how most of these dance forms such as the Passacaglia, the Chaconne, and the Partita were not used as dances during Bach’s time, but rather as “musical compositions... which use the movement and structure of the dance as a foundation” (29). Returning to Ted Shawn’s account of dance and music, he continues to describe a situation in which the art of music grew and “we found the tables being turned-- the

interest of the world lessening toward the dance and increasing toward music” (34). Following this shift, he describes the rise of ballet and its subsequent degeneration into an unprogressive system in which composers felt that they had to “write down” to the ballet (Shawn 34).

In 1935, Louis Horst discussed this same situation. He talks about how, not long before his writing, the dancer depended on music, “The dance had fallen into a low state; music had risen to heights of romantic grandiloquence, and the early pioneers of the new dance movement wisely realized that to attain an appearance of importance the dance should ally itself with such a significant art as music” (46). Horst discusses how the “next step towards freedom” was for the dancer to develop their own idea and find suitable music. But this did not always go as planned because the music did not fit the dance concepts perfectly. Horst believed that the next step involved collaborating with a composer instead of the printed page (46).

After the turn of the century, Shawn recounts how composers regained interest in dance again “with new forms beginning to appear in the dance world” (34). It is evident, from these descriptions, that the influence music and dance had on each other, as well as the hierarchy of their relationship, was in a constant state of ebb and flow across time. By the year 1926, Ted Shawn was proclaiming, “There are big ideas for productions which will remain unborn until original compositions are written for them” (35). Years later, choreographers such as Martha Graham and Erick Hawkins echoed this desire for new music, “I am involved with a new body discipline and new movement vocabulary that demands a new kind of music” (Hawkins 277). Hawkins also shared his opinion about how music and dance express the time one is in, stating, “I fail to see how ideas in movement coming out of our life today can be served well by ideas in music coming out of life of the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth century” (277).

During these formative years of modern dance, dancers were investigating movement that departed from the “smooth transitions of traditional ballet” and the new sounding movement of composers like Wallingford Riegger, Vivian Fine, Lehman Engel, Norman Lloyd, Henry Cowell, and Lou Harrison merged with the new movement (Teck, *Making Music* 42). As seen in Hawkins’ comments previously, there was a strong desire to reflect the current time and this desire was shared by musicians as well. They were seeking “to introduce dissonance and unpredictable changes of pace and rhythm more in keeping with the jagged tempo of the day; and to investigate sound itself as a separate entity from the classical musical traditions” (Stodelle 63).

20th Century Opinions on Dance and Music from Composers and Choreographers

The changing relationship between music and dance leading up to the 20th century led to some differing and newly expressed opinions on this relationship in the 20th century. A short survey of these opinions illustrates how composers and choreographers were revolutionizing their artforms at this time in many different ways.

I would like to begin by pointing out the wide spectrum of opinions on the importance of music in dance. Ted Shawn, for one, held the opinion that dance does not need music, “Fundamentally, the dance is an independent art, complete in itself, and needs no musical accompaniment” (33). In contrast, the composer, Virgil Thompson, expressed, “The music of a ballet has to hold the thing together” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 41). He continues, “Music walks down the street beside the dance. Music in a ballet, very much like music in a movie, makes a *structure*, which holds the whole thing together, and it goes on at the same time” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 43).

As music and dance continued to evolve through the 20th century, some artists pointed out that the nature of one artform is viewed differently when coupled with the other. Virgil Thompson, who expressed the importance of music in ballet, was also of the “opinion that music for ballet should not be too complex” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 43). Norma Reynolds Dalby, a composer, holds a similar view stating, “When I am composing for the dance, I want the music to be as complete as possible... but not in *combat* with the dance” and she warns that a musician can “wreck a dance” by showing off “his virtuosity at the expense of the dance” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 54).

Dance was no longer being seen as a handmaiden to music. Lehman Engel, a composer for Martha Graham, states, “[t]he dance has removed itself from the realm of the slight, the entertaining, the purely decorative, and has set itself through this one single gesture on a plane with the best of each of the other serious, independent, creative arts” (85). He continues to share his opinion that, “The dancer should no more have to consider music in the creation of his compositions than the playwright need bother about the color or texture of scenery and other stage props” (Engel 82).

Even though dance was reasserting itself as a stand-alone artistic practice at the start of the 20th century, the veneration for music did not diminish. Each artform carried its own recognized independence, but the relationship between the two persisted as fundamental. Vivian Fine, a composer, captures the individuality/connectedness of the two forms when she says, “Each art tells of this mystery with its own signs. Music speaks through symbols we hear; dance speaks to the eye. So the two sisters—one having no voice—can both speak at once, each telling us of their mysterious mother” (66).

To further demonstrate the importance of music's relationship with dance in the 20th century, I turn to the perspectives of the choreographer, George Balanchine. Balanchine said, "You do not go to the ballet only to see, but also to hear" (qtd. in Joseph 241). Balanchine went so far as to change the name of his ballet *Balustrade* to *Violin Concerto* so as not to draw one's attention away from Igor Stravinsky's music (Joseph 242). This choreographer welcomed musicians to come see this piece at the 1972 Stravinsky Festival and expressed, "They don't have to look at the ballet if it bores them, they can just listen to the music. And that's fine with me, that's wonderful" (qtd. in Joseph 242). According to Charles M. Joseph, years before collaborating with Balanchine, Stravinsky preached that his music "...would not stoop to abet the choreographer in privileging the dance..." (234). In 1921 Stravinsky asserted, "I have never tried, in my stage works, to make the music illustrate the action, or the action the music, I have always endeavored to find an architectural basis of connection" (qtd. in Joseph 234). Years later, in 1934, this view seemed to soften a bit when he publicly stated, "Music and dance should be a true marriage of separate arts, a partnership, not a dictatorship of one over the other" (qtd. in Joseph 234). A year later, he expressed his opinion that one form does not serve the other, but there is a necessity for "harmonious accord, a synthesis of ideas" (qtd. in Joseph 234). In the following section, I will delve into how choreographers and composers took many of these notions on music and dance, and sought ways to synthesize these ideas through collaboration.

The Influence of Music-Dance Opinions on Collaboration

The composer, Lehman Engel, once said, "It is too easy for the dancer and the composer to ruin each other's work in their collaboration because of insufficient understanding of the fusion of the two arts in the dance" (qtd. in Teck, *Making Music* 39). The following survey of views on, and methods of, collaboration help me to understand how I can approach my own

place in the history of these relationships and informs me of what to consider when I set out to choreograph.

Differing concepts of how music and dance relate to each other impact how composers and choreographers view their roles in a collaboration. Some pairs seek the creative liberty of dance and work together to maintain this independence. Some pairs work to seek the influence of music on the dance. Moreover, some pairs seek to avoid hierarchy of the art forms and work together at the same time to prevent the order of creation from dictating this hierarchy.

From a composer's point of view, the task of writing music for dance may look similar or very different than writing music for other purposes. Norman Lloyd, a composer who collaborated with choreographers such as Hanya Holm, Doris Humphrey, Martha Graham, and José Limón, suggested that "music for dance should not be judged in the same way as purely concert pieces, but rather evaluated for its success in contributing to a total theatrical form" (Teck, *Making Music* 44).

Another composer for many of the prominent figures of modern dance, Norma Reynolds Dalby, talks about methods that musicians and dancers can use while working together, mentioning that she "frequently would not develop material intended for dance in the same ways that she might for independent concert pieces" and insisted that people in her trade be called, "musicians for dance" (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 54).

This is similar to Walter Sorell's depiction of how Louis Horst saw his role as a composer in collaborations. Horst saw the music he wrote:

...not as music that stands by itself, but as music that was for the dance it accompanied... He did not mind the term *Gebrauchsmusik* [functional music] for what he did. The composer, he felt, gains a vitality and rhythmic strength from association with dance. Music serves, or should, not only to limit, to accentuate, to confine, to deepen the choreography, but specifically to discipline the very plastic instrument of the dancer. (Sorell, "The Music Man" 90)

From the point of view of a choreographer, Erick Hawkins was very clear on how he felt about collaboration when he said, “Right off the bat, I knew that if you were going to have new dance, you had to have a new music” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 20). Many choreographers valued the opportunity to work with composers and one of them, Hanya Holm, stressed the importance of effective communication in these collaborations, “It is very important in all arts, to describe... To make a musician understand ‘I want just this,’ you have to get the right words...” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 12). As a recommendation for collaboration, Ted Shawn went so far as to suggest that:

... if a composer really composes for the dance, he should study with dancers, live and work with them, and learn the principles of the dance from the ground up. He should learn the human body and the possibilities that are within the body and then forget the limitations of the established forms of music writing. (37)

Similarly, this expectation applied to choreographers as well, when Doris Humphrey exhorted, “In conferring with a composer, musical knowledge is particularly important for insuring clarity in the collaboration and for winning and holding the respect of the musician” (23).

All of these vantage points on collaboration, from both composers and choreographers, led me to explore further the procedures that these artists were participating in and developing. I categorized my findings into three collaborative categories based on the order that music or dance was created—choreography-first, music-first, and simultaneous creation.

In Katherine Teck’s book, *Ear Training for the Body: A Dancer’s Guide to Music*, the author discusses five possible methods of collaboration based on the wealth of knowledge she has attained from writing on the subject. I selected three of the five descriptions that best encapsulate the three categories I am investigating.

Choreography-first:

The choreographer may work out the total movement design of a piece in silence. The composer then attends a run-through, or more frequently nowadays, is provided with a videotape of the movement. The music composed is absolutely tailored to the movement... (Teck, *Ear Training* 57)

Music-first:

The composer creates a musical score after receiving only general directions from the choreographer... After the score is completely finished, the choreographer sets the dance and is in control of the relationships between sound and movement. (Teck, *Ear Training* 57)

Simultaneous-creation:

The choreographer and composer discuss the work, try out movement and sound together, edit and change as the joint piece evolves. The composer attends dance rehearsals; the choreographer listens to preliminary renditions... There is a give and take, and the relationship between movement and sound is a result of communication between the two artists. (Teck, *Ear Training* 57)

Throughout my investigation of these procedures, I encountered numerous examples of composers and choreographers who have worked together in each of the collaborative fashions described above. In the following, I will share more perspectives and inspiring collaboration examples that influenced my research.

In the choreography-first method, Louis Horst provides a strong insight on the freedom of the choreographer to work this way when he describes the:

...goal wherein the dancer began with movement plus idea, and fashioned the entire structure of his composition without the aid of a note of music... This independence achieved, the music-less dance exists. If the dancer then elects to have a tonal frame written *to* the dance, much as a painter has a frame made for his painting, it in no way compromises the dancer's achieved freedom. (46)

The collaborative pair that followed this method and intrigued me most was Erick Hawkins and Lucia Dlugoszewski. Erick Hawkins, the choreographer, briefly describes this relationship, "I did the movement first, and then she [Lucia Dlugoszewski] wrote the music. There is no other

composer that I would do that with. Most of them are not humble enough, and they are not aesthetically interested enough to really see the relationship of the music to the dance” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 20). One of Erick Hawkins’ dancers recounts the method enthusiastically, “He has sometimes composed the dance before music. Then Lucy Dlugoszewski would take the meter structure. She would watch the movement very closely, and then she would go back and compose. Wonderful pieces...” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 151).

Not everyone felt the same way about this method. The choreographer Paul Taylor expressed, “If you have a dance already made, then the composer is just going to go in and fit the music to what’s already there. That’s one way to do it, I suppose, but that’s terribly restrictive to the composer” (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 9). Dlugoszewski points out that an advantage of dance that has been composed in silence is the “new structure of the heard pulse”, in which the dancer’s own rhythmic composition can exist independently with that of the music (Dlugoszewski 262). Her collaborator, Mr. Hawkins, reinforces that he valued the unique contributions she made to his work creating an “instant-by-instant poetic dialogue with the movement” (Hawkins 281).

For the music-first method, I could not help but to choose the relationship between George Balanchine and Igor Stravinsky as a model. Katherine Teck expresses, “In all genres of theatrical art dance, if one had to pick a single collaborative pairing of creators that stood out in the entire twentieth century, it would likely be Balanchine and Stravinsky” (*Making Music* 118). Music is clearly the foundation of their relationship; between newly commissioned scores and original concert works, Balanchine choreographed a total of thirty-nine dances to Stravinsky’s music. George Balanchine’s view of music is captured well in his essay “Marginal Notes on the Dance”:

In my choreographic creations I have always been dependent on music. I feel a choreographer can't invent rhythms, he only reflects them into movement. The body is his sole medium and, unaided, the body will improvise for a short breath. But the organizing of rhythm on a grand scale is a sustained process. It is a function of the musical mind. Planning rhythm is like planning a house, it needs a structural operation. (43)

According to Baird Hastings, "The key to their fruitful collaboration is not only their personal relationship but Balanchine's musicality and his musical training..." (125-126). With his musical understanding, Balanchine would choreograph to the music and he "operated as a prism through which music became visible, and through which one could follow the creative craft of the composer..." (Hastings 129). From Stravinsky's point of view, his method for composition was a model of how to omit extraneous elements in creation and still be complete in the statement of a theme (Hastings 132). Both artists influenced each other greatly and aimed for the "best possible results under the conditions present" (Hastings 125). Much inspiration can be drawn from the collaboration between Balanchine and Stravinsky about this method of choreographing to music, an approach favored by countless others.

The final method I researched, the simultaneous creation process, yielded far fewer comments in the literature I focused on. For some, this concept manifests as a give-and-take between the composer and choreographer, whereas others attempt to sincerely create at the same time. The composer, Norma Reynolds Dalby, expressed that her preferred way of working with a choreographer involved utilizing elements of improvisation early in the process, followed by the choreography being developed in set patterns and the composer notating what is in her mind (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 53). While preferred by some artists, this method is avoided by others. Lehman Engel provides his opinion of the "dangers" and "limitations" of this process:

In the first place, simultaneous creation would require immediate externalization of all ideas—a method which is not compatible to every creator. There is a creative danger, for the two-fold progress of dance with music in creation is bound to result in improvisation

of both, and improvisation presents problems of danger. For purposes of exercise and practice, it might be used to a distinct advantage, but creatively, it employs the intellect to a lesser degree than the emotion and is apt to lead both composer and dancer far astray... In the opinion of this writer, the method of simultaneous composition and dance cannot therefore be widely successful. (82-83)

Aside from the strong opinions of Engel, artists have been able to find success with the simultaneous method and the collaborative pair I would like to focus on for this model is Hanya Holm and Trude Rittmann. They worked together in musical theatre and Trude Rittmann describes how the process would go, "...very often you do things at the very same time—I'd sit at the piano improvising, and they fiddle around also, and then we both stop and say 'That was good; let's repeat it.' If I can, I do it, and I write it down—quickly, like shorthand stenography: *very quickly*" (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 47). Interestingly, Rittmann composed with multiple choreographers for musical theatre, such as Jerome Robbins and Agnes de Mille, and instances of her simultaneous process were noted beyond her work with Holm. For example, she shared, "With Jerry [Jerome Robbins], *very often* I did it absolutely simultaneously—when he would start bubbling, you know, and I would too" (Teck, *Music for the Dance* 47). I speculate that the demands of the musical theatre conditions contributed to the occurrences of this collaborative process. Although, a detailed record of this method is limited, the creative approach of artists like Hanya Holm and Trude Rittmann provides sufficient inspiration for my collaborative work.

The examples of these three collaborative methods—choreography-first, music-first, and simultaneous creation—form a template for how I approached my own creative work in this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

METHODS

This chapter lays out my approach to the three collaborative processes – choreography first; music first; simultaneous creation – that I set out to explore in this thesis. As I describe the methods behind each procedure, I would like to state from the outset that my goal is not to articulate a ‘correct’ methodology, but to report on my experiences and approaches to each, and to suggest guidelines that I believe will be helpful in future collaborations.

Before beginning, I made the decision that each collaboration would be built on a separate theme to drive its creation. This choice reflects my personal preference of creating dances with a theme or narrative structure. I also made this decision to create a control in each process so that the composers and I could focus on creating with similar intentions. I wanted to avoid comparing different collaborations in which one method involved an abstract approach to creating while another method sought to convey a theme or narrative. In the choreography-first piece, we explored the theme of polarization and the divisive effect that affiliation with an ideology or group can have on people as they transition from childhood to adulthood. In the music-first piece, we decided on an apocalyptic theme that portrayed the consequence of the misapplication of technology in our society. Finally, in the simultaneous creation piece, we decided on the theme of reunions, portraying different circumstances of people meeting after a period of separation. While considering each of the following descriptions, I ask the reader to keep in mind that the composers and I developed a theme prior to beginning the process and based our creative methods on this theme.

Choreography-First

To me, there exists an unlimited realm of creative freedom when designing movement prior to music composition. The requirement here is that the movement be created prior to the creation of the associated music for the piece. Also, for the purposes of this research, I created the movement in such a manner that it was not influenced or inspired by any music. To clarify, I did not exclude somatic rhythms and melodic tunes created by myself during the creative process, however the sound of music was not played in the background, so as not to influence the impulses to move.

With music taken out of the equation, it becomes my responsibility to seek movement inspiration from a different source. Examples include narrative structure, improvisation, and dancer input. My main goal here was to seek ways of creating movement that were not responsive to preexisting music but generated “rhythmic” and “melodic” ideas somatically.

The second part of the process required that the composer create music in response to what they saw in the choreography. Rather than independently creating a piece of music that had the same duration as the dance, the composer scored to a video of the dance, responding specifically to the movement.

In the following discussion, I share the specific details of how this approach was followed as I completed the choreography-first method. I explain decisions that were made in an attempt to adhere to the method and provide a thorough outline of the creative process.

I began by collecting movement inspiration that was drawn from several sources. The absence of music provides me a special opportunity to listen to the sounds of a dance studio without music. Early on in the process, I observed that one of the most powerful sounds in the dance studio is the sound of breath. With this observation in mind, the dancers and I began a

movement exercise that was inspired by the pace and motion of breathing. Initially, this movement was rehearsed to the cues ‘inhale’ and ‘exhale’, but eventually, I established counts to the movement.

I set the movement for the next section in response to the concept of ‘child-like playfulness’ within our theme of polarization. I created several phrases of movement that could be counted in eight. This movement ended up being a resource for multiple sections of the dance. For example, the final partnering movement was constructed by finding ways for the dancers to execute this phrase with another person, rather than individually.

As the process continued, I relied more heavily on the thematic ideas for inspiration such as childhood games and the notion of polarization, and, at this point in the process, a sense of chronological order did not exist yet. We were simply generating movement and I had a general idea of how the piece would progress. When it came to responding to the topic of childhood games, I asked the dancers to engage in these games by dancing instead of running and playing. Some of the games we chose to portray were musical chairs, toilet tag, and red-light green-light. For each of these games, we began by actually playing them to get a sense of the movement qualities and then I set choreography to represent the essence of the game.

Around this same time in the rehearsal process we explored the concept of polarization. During one rehearsal, I guided the dancers through an improvisation in which they explored the intentions of expansiveness, undulation, opposition, and energy polarization through distal parts of the body. The dancers were split into two groups and we created movement based on what was experienced in the improvisation. The objective was to represent polarity through the choreographic concept of oppositions. As one group moved in low space close to the ground, the

other group moved in high space away from the ground. This result of this work became a section that was used later in the piece.

At this point in the process, the dancers and I had worked on enough material that I began to imagine the full progression of the piece and notate its structure. I planned where the existing material would fit in the order of the dance and was able to fill in the remaining parts with my imagination. I used the subsequent rehearsals to create the unfinished sections of the piece based on descriptions in my journal. Some of these sections were repetitions or variations of work we had already created.

Props provided another source of inspiration for representing the theme. I wanted to use handheld objects, that were two complementary colors, to fortify the concept of polarity. Eventually, with the help of the dancers, we decided that balls of yarn would be most practical to dance with. The section of the dance that focuses on the visual choreography of these objects was made without a sense of metered time. Through the creation of the piece, it was important to articulate how time was kept by the dancers so this information could be transmitted to the composer later.

Once all of the sections were fleshed out, I pieced them together with the dancers and we rehearsed progressing through the piece with a clear sense of time. In order to create this sense of time, I counted for a majority of the piece, while they danced, or I made audible sound effects to convey duration of unmetred movement. When the dance was ready to be filmed, we recorded a run-through of the entire piece with my counting and sound effects included. The video was sent to the composer with notes about the underlying meaning behind each section, energy dynamics of the movement, and timing (appendix A).

The composer worked with the video and my notes to score the dance, for one month. During this time, I worked with the dancers on rehearsing the movement. The first draft of music that the composer provided for me included the overall music ideas in response to the different sections of the dance. I received a video file of the dance with the musical ideas replacing the audio of my voice. I approved of the composer's music and then sent another document that included detailed notes on the initial video (appendix B). The notes reference time markers in the video and explained the different sections of the dance, included how many counts the dancers are using in each section, and explained cues that they would need for certain movement. The composer and I discussed these details over a video chat and then they produced another draft of music. I rehearsed the dancers with this music and made note of requests for changes in the music. Because of my chosen research method, it was my intention to give the composer full creative liberty on the musical response. Therefore, the changes I requested did not have to do with the overall sound of the music, but slight adjustments for the dance such as the insertion of a four second rest between two sections. After the small changes were made to the music, they produced a final audio file that we rehearsed with leading up to the production.

Music-First

The purpose of the music-first method is to seek choreographic inspiration from music. Therefore, the composer created a complete musical structure prior to the creation of movement. Many choreographers have worked along these lines, where movement ideas are directly influenced by the compositional choices the composer makes. These choices include the form of the music, instrumentation, use of counterpoint, narrative development, and emotional qualities to name a few. The composer and I set out from a common theme, allowing me to respond to the theme through the lens of what I hear.

I also chose to respond intentionally to musical elements choreographically. It would also be possible for the music to be created prior to the choreography and the two elements to be completely independent, but this approach was not desired for this method. As I choreographed, I intentionally studied the music and responded to what I heard. In the following descriptions, I discuss how I approached the piece I created following the music-first method.

To begin the process, the composer and I had multiple detailed conversations about the piece we wanted to create. We established the apocalyptic theme, which happened to be more influenced by concepts that were inspiring the composer at the time. I shared information regarding the approximate piece length and a deadline by which to provide the first draft of music to me.

Once I received the first draft of music, I began the choreographic process by studying the music extensively. I listened to the music many times to get an idea for structure, feeling, emotion, and narrative portrayal.

I began the first rehearsal by engaging more of a choreography-first methodology. Interestingly, my initial response to the music was to play with some movement qualities inspired by the overall sound of the music. I began working with the dancers on a partnering phrase that had a rigid, metric, and robotic quality. After working out the movement, we set it to counts and set it aside until I knew specifically where I wanted to add it to the dance.

My next objective was to respond to the part of the music that interested me the most. There is a singular section of the music that completely stands out from the rest of the piece. To me, the meter is not clear, and the sound of voice with an overall noisy feel motivated me to respond with contrasting movement. I worked with the dancers to create a fluid and metered

phrase of dance to accompany this section. I used counts for the movement and this section was rehearsed repeatedly to develop an overall understanding of its duration.

Following the creation of the section described above, I moved to the beginning of the piece and continued to study the music. From this point on, all of the movement generation was developed in direct relation to the music. As I repeatedly listened to the music, I gathered ideas of the type of movement and spacing I wanted to set on the dancers. For each section I worked on, I would have the dancers listen to the corresponding music before choreography commenced. I received their observations and asked them to listen to specific elements of the music such as arpeggios, dynamic changes, dissonance in harmony, and melodies, to name a few. After the dancers became familiar with the music, I set the choreography and corresponding counts. Typically, the order in which the music was choreographed to depended on whichever sections were inspiring me most at the time. If I were to break the dance into seven chronological sections, the following is the order that each was created: Section 3 followed by Section 5, followed by Section 1, followed by Section 4, followed by Section 6, followed by Section 2, followed by Section 7.

To address why sections were choreographed out of order, I will explain why I choreographed Section 4, instead of Section 2, after Section 1. Section 2 has a very complex musical soundscape with repeated phrases that are broken up at seemingly random times. There are arpeggios layered with bass tones and faint melodies. As all of this is going on, there is no clear way, from a dance perspective, of counting to catch a movement cue. Therefore, the dancers rely on cues from the successive completion of movement from other dancers and on their memory of the music. Section 4, on the other hand, has a very clear pulse and a simple repeated melody. After choreographing Section 1, my mind was more inspired by the simplicity

of Section 4 than the complexity of Section 2. Therefore, I followed my creative impulses that day in rehearsal and let my ideas marinate for the more complex section.

The choreography for this dance was not actually completed before I submitted musical requests to the composer. As described earlier for this method, my intention was to create the dance after the entire piece of music was composed. Although the music was technically finished, I felt that the resolution was too brief. Interestingly, the musical resolution inspired clear choreographic ideas, but from a movement perspective, the amount of time felt rushed. Therefore, before I even set choreography for the last section of music, I asked the composer if they could extend the duration. The composer was able to extend their musical ideas about thirty seconds and sent me the new music. I choreographed this section with the same ideas that were generated from the original music, but in a longer time-span, and then the piece was finished. Although we met most of the objectives for this collaborative method, the input for the ending was the one exception.

Simultaneous Creation

Instead of dance or music coming before the other, I conceived the simultaneous creation process as a fusion of the previous two processes. The goal behind this method was to create an environment in which ideas of the creators could both flourish independently and be exchanged freely. Without a clear model on how to implement this method, we established certain guidelines for the process at the outset.

By simultaneous creation, I mean the composition of music and dance within the same time frame with the possibility of both elements influencing each other. The influence that each component has on the other can be thought of differently than the influence they each have in the other methods. In this method I intended that the choreography and music being created could

have equal influence on the other and on the decisions that both creators were making throughout the process.

We anticipated that the entire procedure would not be able to be carried out in a purely simultaneous fashion, therefore the primary goal was to avoid falling into a strict adherence of one of the other methods outlined above. In other words, avoid falling predominantly into one of the other two methods. This plan came with the expectation that the choreography may precede the music composition at times and vice versa. Within the context of this collaboration, we felt that this approach fit within the concept of simultaneous development. The following discussion addresses the numerous approaches that were used to produce the simultaneous creation piece.

With the initial uncertainty of how to approach the method, the composer and I experimented. To begin, we started out with conversations between the dancers, composer, and myself. We thoroughly discussed the theme of the dance and generated ideas on how this theme could be conveyed through movement and music. The theme of this dance concerned the topic of reunions, so each person contributed their own concept of what a reunion means to them. The dancers, composer, and I also discussed ideas of how to go about working with the composer to develop the piece. Following the discussions, we proceeded into the experimental phase of the process.

During the experimental phase, the primary focus was discovering how the dancers and composer responded to a thematic idea together. In the beginning of this phase, we did exercises such as walking around at different paces to establish a sense of pulse. Once established, I began improvising with my voice and the composer began improvising in response. The composer explored the resultant musical ideas continuously as the dancers and I began responding with movement. The dancers improvised a movement response first and then I began to pull

movement from the improvisation to create repeatable phrases. Because the music was playing continuously, it was challenging to continue adding to the phrase and repeating it, so a very limited amount of choreography was developed this way.

The following week, the composer was not able to join us in the studio, so the dancers and I engaged in a guided improvisation in response to the theme we were exploring. We chose different elements of reunions that we had discussed, such as seeing one's partner after a long time away or hesitantly approaching a family reunion. I decided to find music with the dancers that captured the feeling of the reunion idea we were playing with. My primary intention was to embody the concepts of reunions and develop choreographic ideas built on how the dancers respond to the theme.

In another rehearsal during the experimental phase, the composer and I, along with the dancers, played with specific character development. I split the dancers into partners and assigned each duet a reunion scenario with an accompanying emotion. I then asked them to improvise to the scenario in silence. While watching the dancers, I gathered a sense of rhythm in their movement and instructed them to fortify the rhythm by vocalizing it to them. The resultant rhythms provided me with musical ideas during the improvisation and I would sing or scat them to the composer. The composer would work out the notes, if what I sang was melodic, and began to improvise within that framework alongside the dancers. At one point in this process, the composer was playing a developed improvisation with the dancers and I asked the dancers to provide input on how the music they were hearing corresponded with their movement intentions. The dancers were able to provide feedback that influenced the composer's decisions. For example, the dancers were embodying the feelings of two characters who were unexpectedly reunited after an earlier date. One character feels hopeful for the prospect of another date, and the

other character is not interested in the least. Upon hearing the music, the dancers expressed how the music captured more of the feeling of the hopeful dancer and not as much the feeling of the uninterested character. The composer was able to respond to this by adding elements to the music that captured more of the discomfort.

In the next rehearsal, mindful of finishing the dance, I focused on movement creation. I drew movement out of each of the improvisations from the previous week to create a “melting pot” phrase with the dancers. This took a majority of the rehearsal time. The composer took note on the intention that went into each step and worked on developing some musical ideas at the piano. As we danced parts of the phrase, the composer drew a rhythmic idea from the movement and continued to improvise from that point. I requested that the composer continue to play the musical idea and remain at the same tempo. As the composer played, the dancers and I repeated the movement phrase several times until we worked out a repeatable rhythm and counts for the movement. This ended up becoming one of the sections of the dance.

In the following week, I came prepared with more of a sketch of how the piece would start and where it was going structurally. The composer and I had discussed how this would be helpful, compositionally, so we would not feel like we had a large sampling of disconnected music. One of the sections I had imagined was a movement accumulation in which dancers represent the hustle-and-bustle of life by one dancer at a time joining a phrase in unison. We began developing this phrase together in the studio. As I thought of the initial movement of the dancers taking constant steps in different directions, the composer got the idea of a constant pulse that matched the feel of the steps. With the dancers, I proceeded to create four eight-counts of dance as the composer watched us and notated some musical ideas. One of the musical ideas

that they experimented with was a musical accumulation. As the dance steps were created, we assigned dance counts to the movement and experimented with dancing the phrases to the music.

In the next phase of creation, the reunion duets were expanded from their improvisational concepts to set choreography. I introduced another element to influence both the choreography and music composition. The meaning and rhythm of spoken words were used as an inspiration for this section and dancers were instructed to write a short poetic excerpt from the point of view of their character. After the words were written, the dancers were instructed to speak the words and extract a rhythm from the natural scansion of the phrases. From this rhythm, the dancers were instructed to develop movement that reflected the words and represented the nature of the reunion they were experiencing. Following the dancers' creations, I worked with each duet to modify and expand the movement. In this case, I shared a video of the finished movement, in addition to the written phrases, with the composer and they responded to this material to create the music.

At this point in the process, enough material had been produced that I was able to finalize the structure of the piece. In addition to providing the structure and order for the sections that had been worked on together, I was able to detail what I had imagined choreographically for the rest of the piece that had not been accomplished. The composer and I decided to explore different methods at this point to accomplish the rest of the creative tasks within the guidelines for this simultaneous process.

I wrote a detailed document for the composer to lay out the entire design of the piece (appendix C). This included the sections we were already familiar with in addition to sections to be created. The document included information about the meaning and intention behind each section as well as musical or movement ideas. As time continued, I updated the document to be

as specific as possible about the details of the progression of the piece. This information included the tempo and duration of each section, how each section would transition to the next, and the specific amount of dancer counts that were being used for the movement.

With this information, the composer and I decided to continue creating with two methods. One was to consider the information and create the movement and music independently, but within the guidelines articulated above. The other method was for the composer to think of musical ideas based on the document and then to compose the music after having seen the choreography. In the latter method, the choreography was carried out without the influence of music, but with musical ideas in mind. For example, there is one section that represents the separation of partners from the duets. In the document, I explained the movement ideas in addition to the musical idea of having the dancers on each side of the stage represented by two different phrases of music in counterpoint with each other. Similarly, there is an additional accumulation section, titled “Partnering Accumulation” in the document. This section occurs towards the end of the piece and the dancers repeat individual movements that gradually accumulate into partnered movements. The musical idea proposed in this section was another accumulation that increased in density of sound as the partnering movements accumulated.

In “Partnering Accumulation”, the initial intention was to play with this idea simultaneously before movement or music had been set. The dancers were instructed to improvise while constructing the general accumulation idea. I participated with them and sang the counts of the accumulation as the composer observed. In the end, it ended up being more beneficial for the composer to be able to see the full choreographed idea before composing the music. Therefore, the movement was created in silence and I then provided a video of this section as well as the descriptions in the document to the composer.

After a period of independent work, the composer joined me and the dancers in the studio again. We were able to share developments in music and choreography since the previous combined rehearsal. It was interesting to witness, in my opinion, how well the music and choreography suited each other when performed for the first time simultaneously. Although there was a solid relationship between the music and choreography, there were some sections that demanded adjustment upon rehearsal with the composer. For example, the composer and I decided that the tempo of the music created for the “Partnering Accumulation” section was suitable for the desired intention, however it was too fast for the dancers. I made the decision to keep the music as it was and adjust the choreography for the next rehearsal.

At this point in the process, all the sections of the piece had been created and the composer and I began putting them together. While determining the musical and choreographic transitions, there were many instances in which the composer and I made requests to each other. One example of this is when we were rehearsing an early section of the dance. The choreography includes eight distinct movement gestures by the dancers and the music contains a series of chord progressions. Hearing the music gave me an idea and I asked the composer if they could isolate the chords as the dancers progressed through their eight movements. In this case, the composer was able to adjust the music according to an idea that came up as we rehearsed together.

Similarly, the composer made a request to me as we rehearsed the four reunion duets. Throughout the entire dance, the four couples appear in the same order every time they enter the stage or have a duet. During the section when they appear for their reunion, the composer felt that the music transitioned better in a different order than what was choreographed. I was able to change the order during this section in order to accommodate the music in this case.

Finally, further modifications to the movement and music resulted from the dancers' input. While working out numerous transitions in the piece, the dancers were instructed to begin their movement right as the music started, or after a set number of bars in the music. After rehearsing these transitions several times, the dancers would provide feedback on what worked or what would be easier. In a few instances, the composer ended up adding a few bars of music as a lead-in or the choreography was changed to suite the transition.

Once the transitions were all worked out, we rehearsed the dance and music continuously from beginning to end. In order to practice the transitions, tempo changes, cues, and subtle variations of live musical performance we rehearsed the dance and music simultaneously with the composer present and performing through the time of the production.

CHAPTER 3

COMPARISON OF METHODS

Choreography-First and Music-First

When comparing the working relationships between the composer and myself, the choreography-first approach and music-first approach share the most in common. Prior to the creation of each piece, the composer and I made joint thematic decisions that articulated the “narrative” for each work. Both methods provided an equal amount of creative independence because we operated separately, the major difference being the order in which compositional decisions were made. In the choreography-first method, I choreographed the entire piece without consultation with the composer once the process began. Subsequently, the composer created the music in its entirety without the direction of the choreographer. These conditions were the same for the music-first method. The composer provided the completed musical score to me prior to the movement creation.

With both approaches, whoever created first determined the structure of the piece. In the case of the choreography-first method, we used the theme of polarization as the foundation for all the compositional decisions. I made decisions about the number of sections, the dynamic changes between each section, the duration of each section, and therefore the duration of the whole piece, without input from the composer. Similarly, in the music-first method, the composer decided on the piece duration, emotional landscape, and the narrative progression without my input. Comparing the composition of these methods led me to consider differences in feedback between the two. Although the composer established the structure of the piece in the music-first method, I still had suggestions to provide and questions regarding the musical intention. This was not the case in the choreography-first method, as the composer did not

approach me with questions or feedback on the structure of the choreography. This is possibly due to personality differences or differences in how we saw our roles in the collaboration.

Beyond the collaborative relationships, there are many other points of comparison regarding the choreographic processes. For example, I noticed considerable differences in my movement inspiration and generation between the two methods. In the choreography-first method, most of the movement creation was a direct response to elements of the theme. The theme revolved around ideas of childlike behavior and polarization of beliefs, and I created the movement to reflect these ideas. The dancers were often involved in the development of movement phrases and their interpretations of these ideas provided inspiration. On the other hand, the movement generation in the music-first approach was more often influenced by musical impulses. Although the apocalyptic theme still informed my movement invention, it did not inspire me as much as the music. Sonic elements such as the rhythm, tempo, sound layers, arpeggiations, and computer-generated effects strongly influenced my movement impulses and those of the dancers.

The order of creation differed as well. In the choreography-first approach, the creation of the movement seemed to follow a more chronological pattern, most likely reflecting my natural approach to composition. I worked on each section from beginning to end and most of the movement was created in this order. There were times when I worked on developing dance phrases without knowing where exactly they would be inserted, however when it came to choreographing each section, the process was chronological. This was not the case with the music first process. Because the order of each section was already established by the music, I began working on the sections that gave me the clearest ideas at first. As detailed in the Methods

section, the order in which this took place was very unpredictable. I am interested by the fact that I choreograph in different orders depending on the nature of the collaboration.

Choreography-First and Simultaneous Creation

The working relationship with the composer differed more drastically between the choreography-first and simultaneous creation methods. In both methods, we held thematic discussions prior to beginning the creation of the pieces. In the choreography-first method, once the thematic discussions were finalized the composer and I worked rather independently. I attempted to represent the narrative through choreographic ideas without the influence of the composer. This method required that the composer respond to the narrative based on the sequence of events I had established. On the contrary, the simultaneous creation method involved input from both the composer and myself on representing the narrative throughout the whole process.

In both methods, I felt that I, as the choreographer, had greater influence over the response to the narrative. Although we both developed the themes, I ended up being more of a driving force to establish narrative structure. This dynamic would seem more obvious in the choreography-first method, as I began working on the piece first, but it is not as clear in the simultaneous creation process. Based on the methods we used for the latter process, the early rehearsals were workshops addressing the theme and developing material. Without an outline, the material did not seem to structure itself naturally. Therefore, I took more of the responsibility of piecing it together with a narrative sensibility, creating a challenge that was not present in the choreography-first method. With two creators providing input, the direction of the piece was more mutable. Due to limited time in the studio together, and pressure to keep the piece moving forward, I took the responsibility to make a majority of the decisions on narrative structure.

Furthermore, I noted several differences regarding the collaborative dynamic of each method. In the choreography-first method, the influences were more unidirectional and only occurred after whole drafts of the piece were completed. During the time that the composer and I worked, we were not sharing creative suggestions. Even after I sent a video of the choreography to the composer, I did not receive any feedback on my work. Also, only after the composer was free to finish an entire draft of the music, did I provide my input. Conversely, the simultaneous method involved a working process that welcomed feedback and suggestions from both collaborators throughout creation of the dance and music. There were times when the composer provided input on how specific movement did not seem to capture the idea of the theme or, when I sang to the composer to suggest musical ideas. In the latter method, I believe the final choreographic and musical result turned out much differently than what would have been created using one of the other approaches.

Concerning the choreographic process, each method involved both shared and unique procedures. In both processes, I used improvisational techniques in the early phases of creation. Similarly, I ended up creating multiple dance sections in the simultaneous creation process prior to hearing music. When I created these sections, in both methods, I still had a strong intuition of what the music landscape might be. In considering how music was able to affect the choreographic process in each method, there were significant differences. In the simultaneous process, there were sections in which music was crafted, and played immediately following movement creation. In this case, the rhythm of the music determined the rhythm of the movement. On the other hand, in the choreography-first method, I based the rhythm of the movement on the natural somatic response to movement. Each approach inspired different ways to generate rhythm.

The final comparison between the two methods concerns the order of developing each piece. In both methods I began with the process of developing movement phrases without being certain of how they would be used. In the choreography-first method, I integrated these phrases into sections and created new ones in a chronological order. During the simultaneous creation process, I developed the phrase work and sections in a rather arbitrary fashion. The composer and I started by just creating material, and the first task was to establish an order of this existing material. Once I had an opportunity to lay out the narrative structure, we “filled in the holes” to complete each section in a non-chronological order. I think that developing material and distributing it in different section of the piece, as well as having two collaborators working simultaneously, are two reasons for the difference in order of creating each.

Music-First and Simultaneous Creation

Like the comparison between the simultaneous creation approach and the choreography-first method, the simultaneous creation approach and music-first method had many differences in common. As for the collaborative process, these two approaches required different levels of communication and creative freedom between the two artists. As described previously, the music-first method required that the composer and I discuss thematic ideas and then proceed to accomplish our work at different times. In this method, the composer had full freedom to respond to the theme as they saw fit and they did not receive input from me while creating the music. Therefore, the composer developed the narrative structure, and I responded to the theme through the lens of what the composer established. In the simultaneous creation method, the composer also responded to the theme, but typically wrote music after having seen movement. This process resulted in constant communication of ideas in the studio and out of the studio, influencing our creative choices.

Feedback processes and amounts were different as well. As discussed in the first comparison above, I asked the composer questions and offered minimal suggestions in the music-first method. In return, the composer was able to provide me with notes and thematic details, impacting the choreography. The simultaneous creation method involved significantly more feedback and in both directions.

For the composer, the sources of inspiration were not quite the same. In the music-first method, the composer did not receive any inspiration from dance movement. The composer was free to explore musical ideas and expressions in response to the theme. In the simultaneous creation process, the composer experienced both ends of the spectrum. There were sections where they composed without having seen any movement and most sections were composed in response to the movement of dancers.

Concerning the choreographic process, there were a greater variety of approaches in the simultaneous process as compared to the music-first process. In the music-first approach the music itself dictated the creation of the choreography. As I listened to the composition, ideas about spacing, emotion, timing, and movement were drawn out of the music. My response to the theme occurred through ideas that were already ignited by hearing the music. Musical influence on choreography also occurred in the simultaneous process, but to a different extent. The strongest influence that music had in this process was on movement ideas. Because the two processes were happening at the same time, decisions about spacing, groupings, timing, and response to theme were carried out apart from the movement invention.

Another pronounced difference between the choreographic processes was the time-frame of movement invention. Due to my preferred methods of movement creation, both processes involved on-the-spot movement creation, however I discovered that the simultaneous creation

method relied on this creative approach more heavily. Unlike the music-first method, I typically did not have access to music to prior to rehearsal sessions. This absence prevented me from creating movement prior to working with the dancers and contributed to the effort to make the process simultaneous. Although the music-first method also involved on-the-spot choreographing, I typically had movement quality ideas for each section planned ahead of time after having listened to the music.

I would also like to point out that the role of the dancers differed between the approaches. In general, I employed the ideas of dancers throughout the creation process, but each method involved this engagement to a different extent. In the music-first method, I drew a multitude of ideas from the structure and sound of the music, so the dancers contributed their own voice in response to my movement ideas. In the simultaneous process, I utilized the dancer's choreographic voices more deeply, partially due to the larger cast and the time constraints embedded in the approach itself. With more dancers and a limited amount of time, each dancer was instructed to improvise to the ideas that we discussed, and I instructed the dancers to respond differently to the music they were hearing based on their characters. While we each heard the composer's improvised responses to an idea only once, it was impossible for me to consider all of the different choreographic intentions for each character while hearing the improvisation one time. While each method involved different practices, the engagement of additional minds was certainly more frequent and necessary during the simultaneous process. I note how these two methods either facilitate or challenge the choreographic methods I am already accustomed to.

CHAPTER 4

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter focuses on the overall lessons I learned, the challenges I faced, the successes felt, and recommendations for future collaborations. Above all, I wish to reflect on my personal journey as an emerging choreographer in the context of collaborating with musicians. As a choreographer, listening to music stimulates me to move most creatively. Without this stimulus, I feel that my choreography tends to be stiffer and less free flowing due to relying on other inspirations, like the architectural structure of a piece. For this reason, I felt the greatest impetus to create movement in the music-first method of collaboration. Nonetheless, in the choreography-first method I enjoyed having free rein to determine the direction of the piece and experience creative inspiration without the direction of the music. Over all, the music-first process was most interesting to me, however I found it more difficult to convey narrative meaning when the dynamic progression of the piece was already determined by the composer. The simultaneous creative process felt the most collaborative to me but was also the most challenging. Many of the pros and cons of the former two methods were present in the simultaneous creation approach. Overall, it was very rewarding to experience the influence that the composer and I had on each other throughout the process, but a sense of flow and cohesiveness was harder to attain with the final product. By considering all three of these collaborative processes, I will reflect on my research methods through a lens of what I learned as an artist.

The Collaborative Process

While engaging in each collaboration I observed repeatedly the influence of collaborator personality on the research method. Every collaborator will have a different personality; every

collaboration will have a different dynamic. These dynamic differences affect our willingness to experiment with new methods, other than what we are accustomed to. Differences in personality also bring different means of communication and different means of settling differences. What I have learned through this research is that it is crucial to get to know the individual that you are collaborating with prior to working together. In future collaborations, I will assess the nature of the collaboration I am pursuing and how it aligns with methods the collaborator is comfortable with. Even if it is a method that the collaborator is not comfortable with, it is important to assess their comfort with taking risks and trying new methods. If I were to observe a discrepancy in any of these areas, I would seek to pursue a different method with the composer or seek a different composer who is comfortable with the work I am proposing.

Another collaborative component that was illuminated for me through these methods was the act of providing feedback. I observed that the order in which decisions are made in a collaboration influences the extent to which feedback is welcomed. Each of the composers I worked with were open to receiving feedback. I noticed, however, that in the choreography-first and music-first methods, I felt more prohibited from providing feedback when compared to the simultaneous creation process. I speculate that my reluctance was in part due to the research method of allowing the collaborator to create their work in its entirety prior to responding to it, and, I think there was room for more as I reflect on the processes.

In my opinion, it is very important that the collaborators provide feedback on any work produced. It would be beneficial to discuss the acceptance and means of giving feedback with a composer prior to beginning the collaborative process. In the simultaneous method for example, even though the composer and I provided more feedback to each other, we had also established boundaries regarding what each artist was willing or able to do. For example, some of the

improvisational methods I wanted to explore in the simultaneous creation process were not available based on feedback from the composer indicating their preference to not work that way.

The cumulative amount of labor involved with each process also differed and I learned that it is important to recognize these discrepancies, especially with respect to a timeline. The amount of necessary communication between collaborators or the dependence one collaborator had on the other proved to be a significant factor contributing to the amount of labor involved with each method. The simultaneous method required the most amount of time and effort by a considerable amount. This is because the composer and I depended on each other for information prior to each stage of the process. For the other two methods, there was a larger amount of independence during the creative work, so less communication was necessary. For future collaborations, it is crucial to determine how much time there is available to complete a project, and how available the composer is to rehearse or communicate, before one determines their collaborative approach. If there are limitations in these areas, then I would pursue the music-first or choreography-first method over the simultaneous creation process.

Navigating the need to edit or change the work that a collaborator has already made provided many lessons as well. In the simultaneous creation method, we created an environment wherein suggesting changes was welcomed. For example, when the composer felt that a different order of the duets suited the music better, I was open to changing the choreography. Likewise, the composer was able to add additional bars to the music when requested by the dancers. In the other two collaborative methods, the composers did not suggest any changes to my choreography, but they were both willing to revise, upon my request, the initial drafts of music. The ability to make changes to established material makes the creative process interesting and yields unexpected results. It can also come at the price of frustration if the two collaborators hold

differing artistic views on an idea. I learned that if an artistic suggestion is not received well, that it is important to be open minded and willing to make compromises. One final observation I made during the simultaneous creation process was how much easier it was to offer changes or ideas to the composer after we had already created something of substance. We began the process with the intention of being able to simultaneously influence the work that was created, but this influence ended up being more effective once we had brought our own ideas to the table.

Rewards and Challenges

The gratification that can come from this artistic experimentation was powerful and varied. Each method brought its own gratifying moments, ones that could not have been anticipated at the start of this research. For example, I witnessed the dancers moving to music that had been composed based on the choreography. This occurred in the choreography-first method and the simultaneous creation method. In each case I had provided a significant amount of information to the composer and to see how the music and the dance meshed together at their first meeting was quite satisfying. Along a similar thread, it was gratifying to have set choreography in silence and see the dancers respond to the music for the first time. The music did not change the choreography, but it inevitably changed the quality of movement as the dancers responded to it. Although there were many more gratifying moments throughout this research, being able to discuss themes and ideas with another individual and then absorb their creative response to those ideas was particularly rewarding.

With all of the gratifying moments in each process also came many challenges inherent to each method. In the simultaneous creation method, it was very difficult to create work at the same time as another artist. As the choreographer, I felt as if I was confining the other artist's creative freedom when we were attempting to produce dance and music in a given moment; a

majority of the ideas were coming from me. I feel that I had a better vision for where the dance was going, so I tried to direct this without impeding the composer's creative freedom. Another challenge of the simultaneous creative process was a consistent absence of choreographic flow. In the other two methods, I had the opportunity to begin working on a movement concept and continue working out the choreography uninterrupted. While working simultaneously with the composer, I did not want to take too long working on one concept for several reasons. First, I did not want to keep the composer waiting very long in the rehearsals and also, I felt the urge to communicate with the composer frequently to get their input and ideas.

The previously mentioned challenges involved with the simultaneous creative process would not have felt like challenges to me if our final goal was an improvisation. The task of creating set music and choreography, instead created a heightened sensitivity to producing work in consonance with one another. Therefore, I felt challenged by the sense that I was dominating the process when I pressured myself to keep work moving forward.

Within the context of the music-first method, I faced different types of challenges. While simultaneously engaging in the other two methods, I speculated that I might prefer the freedom of choreographing outside of the confines of music. Interestingly, I never felt like my choreography was restricted by the structure of the music that had been composed. I did, however feel that it was more challenging to convey narrative or thematic meaning within the context of what the composer had established. I do not perceive this challenge negatively, yet more as an artistic test of my abilities to synchronize thematic ideas with those that have already been established.

The most significant challenge of the choreography-first method was the temptation to involve music. Even before I began choreographing, I found myself wanting to listen to music to

help generate movement ideas. I was also tempted to play background music while choreographing and chose to resist this temptation. Furthermore, I found it challenging to communicate the concept of time to the composer for sections of the dance that did not have a clear meter. In these cases, the timing was based on physical movement and it was difficult to equate this to musical timing or clock time.

Both the choreography first-method and the simultaneous creation method had a similarity in that they required me to provide substantially more information to the composer, as opposed to the music-first method. Many details about this communication were mentioned above in my Methods chapter, but I would like to draw attention to the time and energy spent sharing this information with the composers. While working on the music-first creation, I was able to focus more of my time and energy on the choreography and rehearsal process. I was challenged by the other two methods in that a significant percentage of the time and energy available to me went into communicating details of the dance instead of refining the dance.

Lessons Learned and Historical Context

As I reflect on the challenges I experienced throughout these processes, it interests me to consider the challenges other artists have faced while engaging in similar collaborations throughout history. These collaborative challenges exist in both directions. For example, Vivian Fine speaks from the point of view of a composer and has shared her experiences with the choreography-first method. Speaking of her collaboration with Charles Weidman on *Opus 51*, in which music was written after the dance was composed, Fine states, “In composing for choreography there is the problem of developing a musical structure and continuity. I was able to do this by not composing for individual movements or patterns, but by sensing the impulse that moved the dancer” (67). Fine offers her solution to this challenge, which brings me to a personal

point. Throughout each challenge I faced in my research, I felt that there was a solution to pursue or a valuable lesson to take away. The composer, Henry Cowell, expressed a similar sentiment in 1934 when he observed:

Arguments occupying half the night and getting nowhere, fights lasting half the rehearsal time and still getting nowhere, comments from all sides in the dance press: these frequent happenings are but symptoms of the puzzling problems presented today in the relation of music to the dance. Each dance leader will have some sort of solution to offer. (52)

Having explored more deeply the collaborative relationship between choreography and musical composition, I believe I have arrived at several “solutions to offer,” articulated as recommendations for future collaborations. First of all, as a dance maker, it is important for me to know what I want to get out of a dance before engaging in a collaboration. I need to think about what the dance’s relationship is to music and how that can be achieved. I also need to determine what is practical, relating to time and resources. Personally, I have learned that if time is limited, it would not be advantageous for me to engage in the simultaneous creative process or choreography-first process. If I want the choreography to be more musical, I will engage the music-first method. If I want to utilize more improvisational techniques to create the dance, then I have learned that the simultaneous creative process or choreography-first process would better facilitate that approach for me.

If I were to engage in these methods again, I have several recommendations for how each process could be improved. In the simultaneous creative process, I would develop a clear outline for the concepts of the dance prior to working with the composer. I would also suggest that the composer and I show up to the first rehearsal with a few motifs already developed so there is less pressure to create on the spot. In the choreography-first method, I would invite the composer to rehearsals so that they could gain a better understanding for the physical timing and intention of the movement. In this method, I would also challenge myself to develop movement outside of

the familiarity of eight-count phrases. Although the eight-count phrases helped the composer with a sense of timing, this method provides the opportunity to develop movement without the influence of traditional music phrasing. Finally, in the music-first method, I would attempt to gain more familiarity with the composer's music and reference compositions of theirs that I would feel more inclined to choreograph to. That would give them a better understanding of what aspects of their own music are moving to me.

Returning to the concept of solutions and recommendations for collaboration, I have had an opportunity to better understand my role in composer-choreographer collaborations. Initially, I saw the role of the choreographer in a more limited view, focusing on the responsibility of creating movement. What I have learned is that to create a dance, it is important for me to recognize the parallels between being a choreographer and a director. When making a dance, the choreographer is the one who holds the vision for the piece and is the point of contact for all other collaborating artists such as costume designers and lighting designers. Although, I went in to the creative process with an open mind and desire for the composers to contribute to the development of the pieces, in the end, I walked away with the valuable lesson that I, as the choreographer, have the freedom to make the ultimate artistic decisions for each piece. My goal in future collaborations with composers is to establish clear boundaries and intentions for the piece and enable them to freely contribute their artistic expertise to the collective whole in a way that makes the most sense for them.

Another solution, or rather, precautionary recommendation for future collaborations is to assess personality compatibility for a given project. I have learned that beyond a composer's abilities, the composer needs to know whether they are willing to work in a manner that is being proposed by the choreographer. If a composer is creating music that I enjoy but is not

comfortable with a collaborative method being proposed, then I would avoid working with the composer, as I feel that it would not be conducive to producing the desired result. Likewise, if a composer does not exhibit the same investment or interest in the purpose behind the dance I want to create, then this would be another collaboration I would avoid.

Carrying out this research has inspired several ideas for the further study of composer-choreographer collaborations. For example, the consistency of the narrative in narrative-driven pieces is not a necessary condition, but a choice. It would be interesting to observe the results of participating in similar methods with a composer, but without the thematic inspiration used in this research. It would also interest me to develop a guided improvisation workshop with dancers and composers to develop material that could be expanded into full pieces. Of course, there are several other possibilities for how composers and choreographers could collaborate, and my hope is to continue exploring these options along with the other artists of today. Katherine Teck shed light on this curious spirit by remarking:

For though life is more complex and the arts more competitive than they were a century ago, musicians and choreographers still go into bare studios with dancers and ask themselves:

*What kind of music would be good for our new dance?
And how shall we make it? (Making Music 301)*

Conclusion

There are many ways that a choreographer and composer can work together. The composer, Wallingford Riegger, spoke to the potential of the two forms combining to create one well-rounded work of art:

An analogy exists in opera, which is not drama with the accompaniment of music nor music enlivened by action, not music plus drama, but music drama. Perhaps if the word choreography were used to denote dance action apart from music, the word “dance” itself would be adequate. One then could speak of synthesizing music and choreography to form the dance, regardless of which came first in order of creation. (61)

Riegger's concept of synthesizing music and dance captures my position of the goal of a collaboration between a composer and choreographer. The methods may vary, but the final result is a dance with a relationship to music that can be perceived as one work of art.

In this research, I set out to achieve this goal by exploring three different methods of collaboration with composers: simultaneous creation, music-first, and choreography first. Each method yielded a unique result and brought various challenges and successes. One of the successes was the conception of new choreographic ideas that would not have existed had I not taken part in the different methods. Each dance ended up being very unique and the research caused me to step out of my comfort zone as a choreographer resulting in profoundly different works. Furthermore, I grew as an artist, becoming more open minded to creative ideas, honing my attention to detail for the sake of my collaborators, and becoming a better communicator.

The practical application of my research applies to opportunities I may have to collaborate with composers in the future. I hope to be able to apply the lessons I have learned to future projects and feel inspired to push the boundaries of what is possible with these collaborations. I heed the call of José Limón when he declared, "Be truly a revolutionary, not a mere mutineer or rebel. Remember that art is redemptive, that your life will be half debacle, half apotheosis. You will be wounded. Wear your scars as the most exalted of decorations!" (292). There are certainly aspects of this research that I would prefer not to repeat and other elements that impacted me positively, that I would like to continue to refine. One thing I learned about myself as a choreographer is that I am very inspired by music and I gravitated towards the processes that involved hearing music prior to making movement. As I continue to learn as a choreographer I am inclined to pursue collaborations in which music can be developed prior to

the choreography. I hope to be able to explore other interesting ways that this method could be done.

I also hope that my experiences and the knowledge acquired through this research may benefit, motivate, and inspire other choreographers and composers. Vivian Fine describes music and dance as two languages with a common source, stating, “Out of this sensation of movement the dancer creates choreography; the composer, music” (64-65). I would encourage all choreographers and composers to learn from one another by collaborating and finding the commonality of their sources and their means. Dancers and choreographers have much to learn from music and composers and musicians have much to learn from dance.

These relationships between dance and music and choreographers and composers will continue to exist as long as the artforms exist. It has brought me great joy reflecting on the multitude of ways other artists have approached these relationships and having the opportunity to explore these relationships firsthand. I find it to be very humbling to discover my own place amongst the historical traditions of composer-choreographer relationships and look forward to how I may continue to be a revolutionary, as Limón exhorted, in this area. While I focus on future opportunities with one eye and keep the other eye on the achievements of the past, I feel a great responsibility to make art that advances the choreographer-composer dynamic.

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APPENDIX A

NOTES FOR COMPOSER IN CHOREOGRAPHY-FIRST METHOD

These notes are to:

- Describe some of the intention behind each section and the meaningful progression of the piece,
- Clarify what the dancer's intentions are,
- Clarify some of the rhythms the dancers are moving to,
- Explain the use of props that are not existent in the video.

START

0:00-0:09 Dancers are taking part in child-like movements. They are in their own worlds at this point.

0:10 A sudden cue to send dancers into spiral formation.

0:23 Dancers (pairs) are doing the same movement but in canon 4 counts apart.

0:36 Each dancer begins a canon that is two counts apart.

1:18 The dance rhythm at this point (moving in a circle) is:

1	+ 2	3	4	5	6	+ 8
1		3		5		7

2:49 The dancers discover blocks sitting downstage, half of them one color, half of them another color. NOTE: Up to this point the dancers have been representing childhood games, a sense of playfulness and openness to each other. The colors of the blocks represent a polarizing force and once the blocks are discovered, the polarization of the dancers begins to take place.

Their first interaction with the blocks in this clump is still playful and curious.

3:46 This is a slower phrase. The movement was inspired by breath and its pacing.

4:23 The repeat of this phrase will not be in unison as seen in the video, it will become a canon of movement.

5:02 This part is described as a surprise cannonball blast to the abdomen. The dancers will actually throw the blocks towards the wings on each side of the stage. All blocks of one color go to one side of the stage and the other color blocks go to the other side.

5:19 The dancers go to pick up the blocks and this is the first time they are really polarized based on the color of the block. The circular phrases that follow are constantly in contrast to each other in which one group is in high space while the other is in low space.

6:23 The two circles collide and the dancers drop the blocks to the ground.

6:31 The blocks are picked up swiftly and the dancers run into the same spiral seen at the beginning of the piece. They are also partnered with the same partner as earlier.

6:42 At this point they begin the 4 ct. canon with similar movement. The first time, this movement represented children playfully annoying one another. This time they are polarized adults with blocks in hand. They sense the repelling force of the blocks as if they are two magnets pushing away from each other.

7:50 The dancers release the blocks downstage again to shed the polarity. They will exit the stage with their partner to find reconciliation.

END

APPENDIX B

UPDATED NOTES FOR COMPOSER IN CHOREOGRAPHY-FIRST METHOD

***Time on the left represents the time marker from the video.

- 0:00 Generalized childhood playfulness, ambient
- 0:10 Clear shift as they jump into a spiraling frenzy
- 0:20 Dancers accumulate in corner and start counting their movement
8 sets of [8 counts]
On count 8 of 8th phrase, one dancer jumps into air
- 1:18 Dancers move in circle
2 sets of [8 counts]
Dancer gets excluded
ct 1 of [3rd 8] and pushed on cts 7&8 of [3rd 8]
Dancers runs toward others to start tag
Ct 5 of [4th 8]
TOTAL of 6 [8 counts] from beginning of circle until dancer tantalized
- 2:07 Dancer tantalized, we talked about adding more subdivision here
Same tempo, 4 sets of [1+2+3 4]
- Can think of all of the above as 16 [8 counts]
- 2:20 Slow motion (red-light, green-light game) * I like how you changed it here
- 2:45 Dancers drop (silence)
--We talked about doing either silence here or some ambient environment noise for the different illusions/movement ideas of the blocks
--1st idea (2:54) they do reach-reach-turn around; 2nd idea (3:00) they do the ripple wave effect, 3rd idea (3:06) they do the tank belt wheel on the diagonal; 4th idea (3:18) they do the diagonal shape change and line folding in on itself through the middle; 5th idea (3:27) they build a pyramid with the blocks and there are 2 people left with only one spot to finish the pyramid, they fight over it a little and then crash down breaking the whole pyramid (3:31).
-- I am liking the idea more and more of having silence, but I definitely want there to be a strong bass sound or powerful sound to represent when the pyramid breaks. It would be challenging to time the silence... that is why it might be nice to have a really subtle sound for the duration of each 'idea' so the dancers could time the crash better.
--Whatever the sound of the crash could resonate/echo/reverberate throughout the time that the dancers disperse across the floor and slowly stand up (~15 seconds)
- 3:45 Dancers do more of a breath driven phrase, we talked about having more of pulse here.

- There are 6 sets of slow [8 counts]
 Tempo is about 40 BPM with a duple subdivision feeling in the movement
- 5:02 After the slow 8 counts, rest for a breath and then another clear BOOM/CRASH cue.
 This will sustain and resolve (~18 seconds) until about 5:20 in the video
- 5:21 New Tempo and beat established after sustained sound
 This time it is around 50BPM
 Dancers will fit their movement into 5 sets of [8 counts] at this tempo
- 6:21 Their circles will undulate for 2 more sets of [8 counts]
 STOP beat after count 5 of the second [8 count], this is when the two circles will collide and the dancers will drop the blocks.
 You can think of it as a total of 6 whole [8 counts] plus 5 more beats.
- Brief PAUSE as they reach down for blocks
- 6:31 Clear cue here as the dancers grab the blocks and hurry into spiraling frenzy as earlier
- 6:43 Clear pulse develops again when dancers start accumulating in corner.
 About 72 BPM. Total of 9 sets of [8 counts]
 On the 3rd set of [8 counts] could be interesting to layer in the tantalizing rhythm (1+2+3 4) ... Up to you
 During the last 4 sets of [8 counts], I could imagine a very subtle decelerando, but not necessary
- 7:49 Dancers ditch the blocks
 Fade into ambient feel reminiscent of the playful environment from the beginning.

FINISH

APPENDIX C

DOCUMENT FOR COMPOSER IN SIMULTANEOUS CREATION METHOD

Start:

1. Beginning (~1:30)

(~10seconds)<new>**Video "Beginning of Dance"** (This will likely be more continuous and faster, the video is the first time they've done it.)

Gentle, amorphous sound. Group starts in a big circle with hands linking. (this idea represents the initial connection between people that is required for reunions to occur)

<new>Circle breaks up as dancers spread across the stage.

(~15seconds)<new>**Video "Partnering Accumulation without 2 8count lead in movement"** (First 8 gestures of the video, but at a slower tempo) Introduction of slow pulse. ~35BPM where each dancer is spread out on stage and does 8 slow movements individually on the pulse. (See section 6)

=PAUSE/REST=

<Vignette>(~1 min)

Dancers quickly form into 4 pairs and spread across stage. A **short vignette** (concentrated pool of light on pair) is presented in which the couple dances together briefly. This is a glimpse into the past showing what their connection was prior to the reunion. This would happen for each pair. Musically, it would be nice to have a little glimpse of their music from the reunions section.

NYC Couple Vignette (first part of this video, until about 0:12)

=PAUSE/REST=

Middle School to college friends Vignette

=PAUSE/REST=

Parent and Child Vignette (second part of video after 0:45)

=PAUSE/REST=

Best Friends Vignette (3rd couple in video)

=PAUSE/REST=

2. Hustle and Bustle of Life (~1:30)

Back to reality representing the **hustle and bustle** of individual life. Everyone's individual movements eventually become **group synchronized movement** with one person adding in at a time. **Full Section 2 Video** (I am counting too fast)

<=> accumulation > (~30 seconds) **Video "Accumulation with Composer"**

Music theme starts (Tempo~100BPM)

8 count lead in

{8 counts - quick steps changing directions

8 counts - Person 1 starts accumulation phrase, person 2 joins on count 5
8 counts - Person 3 joins on count 1, person 4 joins on count 5
8 counts - Person 5 joins on count 1, person 6 joins on count 5
8 counts - Person 7 joins on count 1, person 8 joins on count 5}

///No transition-continues into///

Phrase extension. 12 more 8 counts(~1 minute).

After the accumulation phrase the group unison dancing continues with this phrase.
(music does not necessarily need to be kept from this video, perhaps it could influence the accumulation phrase?)

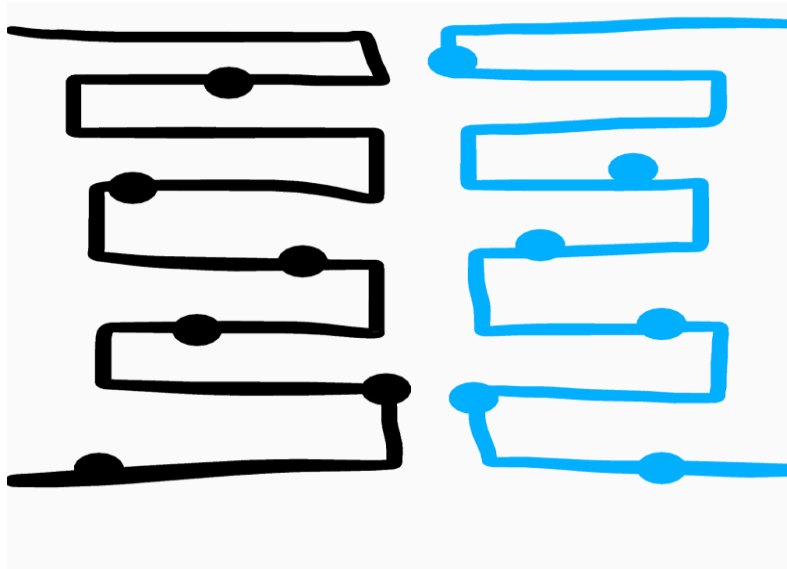
All dancers off into wings.

\Transition\ Additional 8 counts. Accelerando to ~120BPM

3. <new>**Split/Separation.** (~1min) Tempo ~110BMP

Video

I would have the pairs split up with half of them on one side of the stage and half of them on the other side of the stage. I imagine a sort of ebb and flow of movement in which each side moves towards the center line but does not cross or connect.



The dancers will start from the upstage wings and begin moving on the pathway toward downstage.

Dancers on the black line will do the same movement as each other, but it is different than the movement the dancers on the blue line are doing. Dancers on the blue line also do the same movement as each other.

As the dancers approach the middle of the stage, it seems as if they will connect, but they are too busy with their own lives that they are unable to even realize the other person's existence.

Musically, I imagine a 2 part counterpoint of sorts that could capture the idea of each side doing their own movement in unison that is different than the other side.

Total of 13 [8 counts] after previous transition
8 counts: First 2 dancers start on blue and black pathway approaching each other
8 counts: First 2 dancers moving away from each other on respective track
8 counts: Next 2 dancers join each pathway approaching each other, doing same movement as first 2 dancers.
8 counts: All dancer moving away from each other
8 counts: Next 2 dancers join the pathway moving towards each other
Etc.
Etc.
...
Total of 13 [8 counts]

On count 8 of 13th set. Dancers and music stop. Dancers run off into wings.

\Transition\ -- Silence. The last couple leaves the stage going separate directions. As they enter the wings, the first reunion couple enters the stage from opposite wings moving toward each other. New music starts up for first reunion.

4. **REUNIONS (~2 minutes)**

<First Reunion>(~30 seconds) **Video- Second part, after they separate**
First reunion of a couple (NYC Couple) representing that type of reunion. The NYC couple works well as the first reunion because in their story they encounter each other accidentally. It as if the two are walking past each other on the street and “run in” to each other unexpectedly.

TEMPO ~128 BPM
8 sets of 8 counts.

< Second reunion>(~30 seconds) **Video**
Middle School to College friends

TEMPO ~115 BPM
9 sets of 8 counts

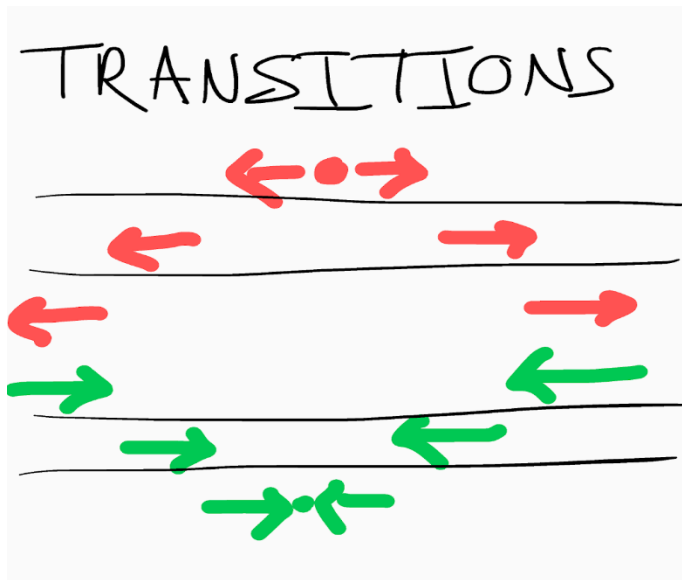
<Third reunion>(~30 seconds)**Video-First part, until about 0:39**
Parents with child

TEMPO 180BMP 6/8 time
18 sets of 6 counts.

<Fourth reunion>(~30 seconds) **Video 4/22/19**
Best friends

TEMPO ~110 BPM
6 sets of 8 counts

\Transition\ between each reunion will look as follows.



Because each reunion has a different musical feel, I think taking the last 8 counts of one reunion to **fade** to silence and the first 8 counts of the next reunion to **fade** into the next piece of music would be one solution for transitions between each reunion. The feeling of the fade in/out would correspond with the dancers walking on/out of the wings.

\Last Transition of Reunions\ PAUSE/REST The final couple will not separate and leave the stage. The strength of their relationship will be used to demonstrate the difficulty of the timing of death in a close relationship. The concept of reuniting after this is up to the viewer's interpretation.

Following the PAUSE/REST comes a significant shift in mood after the last 30 second reunion. The two will begin a duet that represents their close life-long relationship. More description in next section.

5. Death (~1 minute)

The mood shift will transform into a more nostalgic old-age feel. The two dancers will engage in a duet that represents the strength of their relationship but also how life is slowing down. Eventually one of the dancers will slow down to the point of representing death and slip out of the partnering duet to the ground. The other dancer will continue as if part of the duet still and slow down, until it represents their time "to go", reaching the ground as well. There will be a brief moment of stillness on the stage as the whole space shifts

Video (This is not the whole section, we did not have time to continue, I have made adjustments with the dancers so that all of the movement seen in this video represents 4 [8counts]) What is not seen in the video: The dancers restart the exact movement seen in the video (5th 8 count phrase). On **count 5** of this phrase one dancer falls into the arms of other dancers and is carried off the stage. The other partner continues the phrase without her. On the 7th 8 count phrase, the second dancer falls, on **count 5**, into the arms of the other dancers. Dancers carry her off stage on the 8th 8 count phrase. 1-2 more sets of 8 just solo piano.

TEMPO ~75 BPM
9[8 counts]

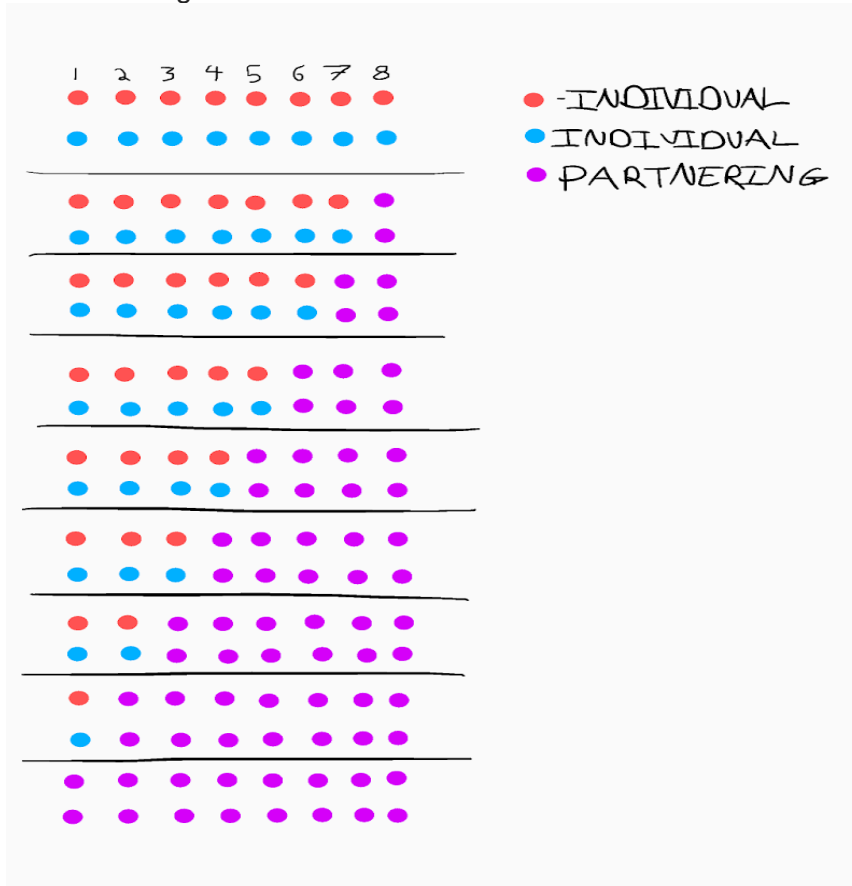
/Transition/ Into very sparse, empty, light, music.

6. Partnering Accumulation (~1:22 seconds)

Video (The tempo in this video is slow. Ideally, I think 60 BPM is a more manageable for the dancers compared to the 100BPM I said initially. 2 [8 counts] of lead in not seen in video. Dancers will enter the stage from up-stage corners during this time)

Updated Video (with 2 missing dancers)

This final section represents a gradual easing back into the previous mood/"world"/feeling of the piece before the mood shift. This section is a choreographic accumulation based on the concept of reunion. The whole progression of the section moves from completely independent, to completely partnered. See diagram below. Red represents the independent movement of one partner and blue is the independent movement of the other partner. Purple represents partnering movements that the two dancers do together.



Musically, it would be nice to ease in very gently with low density of sound and gradually build up with the accumulation. By the end of the accumulation, when all of the movement is partnered, this would be a full climactic moment prior to the resolution.

TEMPO ~100 BPM (~60 BPM) Total of 11 [8 counts]
2 sets of [8 counts] to ease in as dancers enter stage again (NOT IN VIDEO)

9 sets of [8 counts] with crescendo and accumulation with climax on last set of 8. (These counts represented by diagram above)

/Transition/ Sustain the chords on the last count of the last set of 8

7. Resolution (~10 seconds)

Video (Just the reverse of what is seen in the video)

The dancers will move in formation to recreate the circle from the start of the piece. The circle represents unity and being reunited. Once in the circle, the dancers will shift their weight, supporting each other in a way. This is the last movement of the piece as the lights begin to fade.

Resolve into a similar musical feel as the opening. Gentle, soft, uniting, resolving.

A musical idea that could be played with is finding a harmonious chord that symbolizes the unity of the circle. After the climax, the individual notes could be played around with during the resolve in a gentle ambient way. During the final movement shift in the circle, the chord could be played in an ascending arpeggio and sustained as the lights go out. Just an idea.

END PIECE