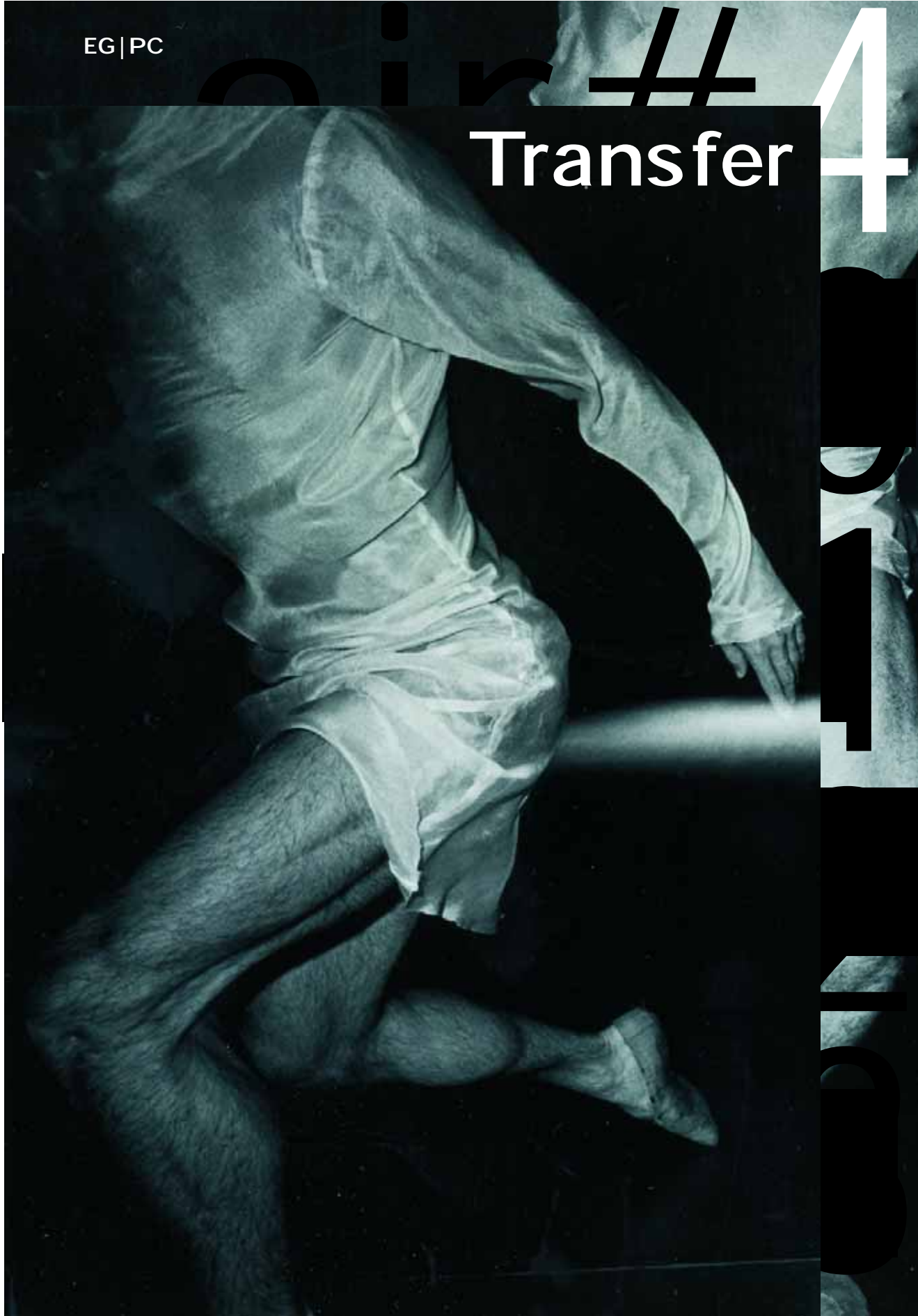


EG|PC

# Transfer



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# Dance and Discourse /

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For one year, choreographer Emio Greco and dramaturg Pieter C. Scholten will be connected to the Dance Department of the Amsterdam Theatre School. They will show their most recent performances, give workshops and hold open rehearsals with the EG|PC company. Furthermore, in the context of meetings and a salon they will enter into discussion with students and tutors about their work.

The passion that Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten have for dance is evidenced by the performances they make together and their entreaties for a theoretical foundation and scientific framework for dance. Dance education at the Theatre School seeks to strengthen the connections between theory and practice. The work of EG|PC can be used as a case study not only to effect an in-depth analysis, but also to make a contribution to a 'new poetics of dance'.

As Artist in Residence, EG|PC will operate in the area of tension between making, observing and writing. It is a unique pedagogical and artistic experiment that will yield new insights for the group, the school and the area of operation.

How, for example do renewal, authenticity and individuality relate to transferral, reproducibility and the creation of repertoire? EG|PC will place the discourse about dance and the consideration of their own practice into an international context, and will involve related disciplines such as theatre, film and the visual arts. A small workgroup of internal and external professionals will conduct the projects in the studio and also the salons and other aspects of the investigation into reflection.

# Looking back / 4

When we met in November 2004 during the Salon, questions were raised by EG|PC about the notation of contemporary repertoire. What artistic motives drove Emio and Pieter to do this?

In the ensuing discussion I came to realise that contemporary arts subsidy systems do not allow space to both make new work and continue presenting repertoire; dance practices of the last 30 years are rarely documented and archived and will consequently disappear before our very eyes.

I also came to realise that present methods of documentation are inadequate for many contemporary makers.

And I came to realise that the work of EG|PC in particular is challenging formalist notions of documentation and notation.

One of the issues I wish to address in the context of the discussion surrounding notation and transfer of repertory is the notion of culture: the cultivation of a community. It seemed to me that I was not getting answers directly, but only through practices. I wanted to propose the cultivation of a collectivity as a vital issue in relation to the notion of transfer. How is this community fostered, and what is this commitment that I see in the dancers, particularly Bertha Bermudez? These are issues that cannot be reconstructed on an interactive DVD or by using any existing dance notation tool.

When I look back over the last eighteen months, it seems to me that despite all the words produced, it is not what is said that is most important, but rather the drive to move on.

The initial idea for the Residency was, as Pieter formulated it, to 'shoot a canon' at the school, and then follow the many and various resonances throughout it. In the end, all the activities contributed to the preservation and the cultivation of the EG|PC company's work, and they were a testament to the broad range of processes, connections and thought taking place within the company.

Pere GaylFaura's show was about that very idea of transfer from the point of view of the dancer, of how the dancer perceives the work of the choreographer in relation to his or her own dancing. He used and reconstructed part of a choreography from EG|PC, and presented three EG|PC dancers in video interviews in the performance. In this and so many other ways that could not have been predicted, collectivity was created in the school.

## Jeroen Fabius

Policy Advisor, Dance Education at the Theatre School.  
Supervisor of Dance Unlimited, second-phase education in choreography and new media.

# Il faut que... / 5

The EG|PC Artist in Residence plan states that they want to rid the body of the dancer of imposed forms. They wish to achieve an individual and authentic commitment of the body to the movement repertoire of EG|PC. Elsewhere too, phrases pop up such as 'the truth of the body', 'the autonomy of dance', and 'the dancer as visionary'. Such terminology could easily be viewed as fundamentalist – as if there existed an ahistorical, original, autonomous dance body that could arrive at dance movements that were likewise ahistorical, original and autonomous. Should Western dance be unmasked, in order that true movement will see the light?

Utmost concentration, extreme effort and physical exhaustion play important roles in the work of Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten. By moving at the boundary of the achievable, the dancers lose control over the *image* of the movement. They find themselves in a state that not only transcends the social body, but also, in a sense, the private. Because of the organic development of the movement repertoire, the dancer cannot conceal himself with decorative variations; he is forced to concentrate on how the movement comes into being and what differs each time it is made. The trancelike quality thus created can only be generated by a consciously agitating dancer and a highly lucid articulation of the body.

# Il faut que je vous dise qu'il faut que vous tournez la tête /

There is similarly fascinating effect on the visual experience of the spectator. A frequent attendee of EG|PC performances will find it almost impossible to make a clear distinction between the individual works – the oeuvre is characterised by too limited a number of physical themes subject to exceedingly gradual phasing. The minuscule detailing of the body which thus takes the foreground, arising from the individual physical relationship of the dancer to the gradually expanding EG|PC repertoire, sharpens the senses of the spectators and intensifies their connectedness with the

dancer. What communicates most of all is not the effort it requires or the excellent control that lies at the heart of dance, but the specific route the dancer takes. This evokes physical memories in the observer.

The performances are enacted in a deserted or empty space. The actual body of the dancer, which by its very materiality offers resistance to abstraction or aesthetics, contrasts with the artificial emptiness it finds itself in on stage. It appeals frankly for interpretation. Not so much from a symbolic perspective, but from movement itself, from the texture of the body in time. In the emptiness, there comes into being a meaningful connection with all that is not. The outer – the real world, the context of representations and discourse – presents itself in the perception of the observer.

Fundamental to the choreographic work of EG|PC is the regaining of the body. The training that Greco and Scholten use (incorporated in the Double Skin/Double Mind workshop) is significant here. Using intense and lengthy breathing exercises as part of their 'back to the body' approach, the dancer is confronted with the specificity of the private body, the body as repository for countless influences: personal histories, psychological complexities, social frameworks, cultural-political reflexes, and so on. 'An awareness is developed of the resonance in one's own body, to perceive oneself and to start to perceive the world around through the body.' 1)

**Il faut que  
je vous dise que je  
peux contrôler  
mon corps et en  
même temps jouer  
avec lui /**

Emio Greco describes the process set in motion by this training as a withdrawal, an inner reflection. It is made impossible for the dancer to explore solely the external form or to only make his body available (altruistically, noncommittally) for one use or the other. First, the diversity and instability of one's own instrument, the body, must be investigated. Initially this can be disconcerting. Fear and aggression rise to the surface, but: 'This preparation can actually empower the dancer to deal with the specifics in the body and to employ them, instead of being unconsciously regulated by them or to cover them up.'

By emphasising sensitivity and reflection within the body during the training, and taking this as the basis for development of the choreography, Greco and Scholten achieve a resonance in the body of the dancer in relation to form. In this sense, a choreography is never complete. The dancer is aware of the intention, but continues to explore the relationship between body and form in accordance with his own commitment and the possible meaning that flows from it. And if a distinct or significant pose emerges within the movement repertoire, this does not precede the dance or the dancer like a mask, but rather it becomes part of the game the dancer plays with his body.

Physical challenge is more important to Greco and Scholten than the corporeal image. This is not to say that they do not apply technique, or that they get by without form. But whereas many dance makers emphasise the command and display of the 'correct' form in choreography, the work of EG|PC is characterised by physical effort, hesitation, the proposing of questions, the showing of preparation and the crossing of physical and mental boundaries. Their work evinces the processes that the body endures as it strives to achieve form. More than that, these processes are the very focal point of the work. The countless minutely detailed improvisations bear witness to this fact. There are few dance makers whose language makes such an intensely deep impression. We seem after all to be dealing with a distinct form. It raises the question of what the essence of choreography is understood to be.

**Il faut que  
je vous dise que je  
ne suis pas seul /**

The Netherlands has a particular dance tradition and it is within the context of this tradition that Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten decided to collaborate ten years ago.

Il faut que  
je vous dise que  
mon corps est  
curieux de tout et  
moi: je suis mon  
corps /

Italian choreographer **Emio Greco** blends classical and contemporary elements to create a new language of movement. He is more occupied by the exploration of connections between body and mind than by the dancing body's physical limitations. Following his classical ballet training in Cannes, Emio Greco danced for several years with Ballet Antibes Cote d'Azur. From 1993 onwards he performed in several stage productions by Belgian visual artist and theatre director Jan Fabre, and also in Japanese choreographer Saburo Teshigawara's work.

The search for a new dramaturgy of the body has always been a central motivator in the work of Dutch theatre director and dramaturg Pieter C. Scholten. His early stage productions include performances on Oscar Wilde, Yukio Mishima and Pier Paolo Pasolini. Scholten worked for several years as a dance dramaturg and advisor to a number of choreographers, and he initiated Dance Instants, a work-in-progress programme for Netherlands-based dance makers.





- 11 The reception by the Dutch dance world of their first work was equivocal. The power of the work was acknowledged, but when it came to assigning meaning, there was much fumbling in the dark. Spasms, crawling: such things were surely more suited to the work of a dancer than of a choreographer. People could not place the work. Greco and Scholten, however, were very clear about their fundamental principles. Their first performance, *Fra cervello e movimento – bianco*, coincided with the publication of a declaration of intent in one of the last editions of the dance periodical *Notes*; at the invitation of the magazine, they formulated a manifesto. In it they named Luther and Marx as their patrons, which evoked a disquieting image of physical existence in general, and dance in particular: decadence, exploitation, neglect and loss of personal integrity. Although the seven propositions that formed the core of the manifesto did shed a positive light on their motivation as makers, it could also be read as an indirect criticism of the dance world. The urgency with which the writers feel dance should be freed from its stubborn shackles is clear throughout.

During the same period, the mid-1990s, conceptual, or 'anti', dance began to manifest itself on Dutch stages. These were performances that questioned the very notion of physical movement and concentrated on the manner in which the body has been 'colonised by the dominant discourse', as it is expressed in postmodernist terminology. These makers were anyway disinclined to appreciate the liberating effect of movement that has been celebrated both inside and outside the dance world since time immemorial. During these years, the Dutch dance establishment excelled in the uncomplicated application of accepted formulae, and the quality of what it produced was increasingly unable to match that of the international competition. Greco and Scholten found themselves in a new artistic territory: on the one hand, although their ideological commitment equalled that of the conceptualists, they did not share the conceptualists' directly critical approach to society (whereby the body should primarily relate to representation and image formation), and they continued to dedicate themselves to the possibility of an obstinate corporeal voice and to movement itself; on the other hand, they broke entirely with the paradigms of style, form, technique and method as practised by the established order, Dutch modern dance.

I must tell you that my body is slipping away from me.

**Il faut que  
je vous dise que  
mon corps  
m'échappe /**

I must tell you that my body is slipping away from me.

Greco and Scholten claim to have no technique. They consider unjustified the central position taken by technique and form (reproducible, transferable and tangible) in dance and dance education. They want to question the position of technique: 'You know the technique, then you know dance. Technique and style fall together and through this construct you simply access the art. Schools seem to have a tendency to take a privileged approach, to be exclusive rather than inclusive. There are so many different trainings in the academies, but all these approaches are considered to be fundamentally different, because of the difference in technique or form. Departments communicate little with each other, let alone with the outside world of movement, physical culture or intellectual reflection.'<sup>1)</sup>

No body is original, and no performance is autonomous. Bodies, movement and events – staged or otherwise – gain form and meaning in a continually variable context. Why would anyone be bothered about authenticity? What desire is expressed when Greco and Scholten talk of the authenticity of dance?

I must tell you that I am able to reproduce my body.

**Il faut que  
je vous dise que je  
peux multiplier  
mon corps /**

The attitude of Emilio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten can perhaps best be understood in the context of resistance to the manner in which certain schools of thought within modern dance have prioritised the presentation of the body. Over the past decades, the image of the body has become more important than the experience of the movement or the person moving.

The obsession with form and movement technique is perhaps more prevalent in the Netherlands than neighbouring countries. Besides the new breed that sprang in profusion from the ballet tradition during the 1960s and 1970s, the influence of the New York avant-garde was very influential in this period.<sup>2)</sup> A whole generation of Dutch dance makers were inspired by it. Both American modern dance and the dominant Dutch neoclassical or modern ballet concentrated more on form and matter than on the expression of a theme or investigation of the necessity for movement. The axiom 'dance expresses nothing but dance' still influences the working methods and perceptions of many Dutch dance makers. The visual ordering of the body and of the bodies in space and time – whether or not bound by a conceptual contract – has led to the image of the body becoming more important than the experience of the movement of the person moving. This predilection for a 'correct' form can also be detected in the most recent generation of dance makers that concentrates especially on forms of

<sup>1)</sup> Quote from a conversation between Emilio Greco and Pieter Scholten and 'the author', February 2006.

<sup>2)</sup> For descriptions of the 'interrupted' tradition of the Dutch art of dance, see p.61 onwards of 'Holland danst! Danscultuur in de twintigste eeuw' (Holland Dances! Dance culture in the twentieth century), Klazien Brummel, Walburg Pers, 2004.

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13 representation of the body, and has little faith in 'original expression'. The obsession with the image of movement could also be seen as a masking of that which is unstable and variable within the body itself: a defence mechanism against keen eyes and impertinent questions. The mandatory vitality – expressed in the discipline of perfection of the body, the confident expression of the dancer and above all the self-evident availability of the body – reflects rather than receives the gaze of the observer. In silent admiration the observer is able to forget his own body. Conversely, authenticity in dance can be understood as a truly original experience of movement. A movement neither autonomous nor ahistorical, but detached from the image. Bound and anchored in the interplay of resonances between and within the bodies of dancer and observer. This is movement that makes the image of the body relative and places the individual histories of dancer and audience into a physical perspective. The call for authenticity, then, presupposes the communicability of an inherent truth in the movement of the body when it is confronted with, or is receptive to, the bodies around it.

I must tell you that I am abandoning you  
and that I leave behind my image

**Il faut que  
je vous dise que je  
vous abandonne et  
que je vous laisse  
ma statue /**

And thus the words of Emilio Greco from a recently published interview can be understood: 'The body can do more than the dance; it is eclectic and in constant mutation. The dance is more limited and choreography is almost an old word that doesn't really apply anymore. (...) It doesn't really speak enough to the source itself: the body. That source is needed to articulate the construction. That is why I think choreography is still worthwhile, as long as it is defined by other ingredients and elements than those normally thought of as dance and composition.'<sup>3)</sup>

#### Fransien van der Putt

Fransien van der Putt (1965) read Theatre Studies and is an active dramaturg, publicist and radio maker. She leads Bodies Anonymous with Jack Gallagher, and has worked with choreographer Dylan Newcomb since 2000. Together with Pieter C. Scholten she has organised dance and theatre projects, both independently and for Cosmic Theatre. Fransien van der Putt's articles have been published in *Notes, Etcetera, Theatremaker* and elsewhere. She mixed textscapes on Radio100 for fifteen years, until it was removed from the airwaves.

Programme EG|PC

07.03.2005 + 07.04.2006 / Performance

**Bertha** / the Bermudez Triangle by Bertha Bermudez Pascual, in the Theatre School dance theatre. Post-performance discussion led by Francien van der Putt.

02.07.2006 / Studio presentation

**Double Point: Hell** / in Studio Amsterdam, Zuidoost

11—13.10.2005 / Performance

**Conjunto di Nero** in the Universiteitstheater.

07.03.2005 + 07.04.2006 / Performance  
**Bertha** / the Bermudez Triangle by Bertha Bermudez Pascual, in the Theatre School dance theatre. Post-performance discussion led by Francien van der Putt.

02.07.2006 / Studio presentation  
**Double Point: Hell** / in Studio Amsterdam Zuidoost

07—11 March 2005 / Workshop

11—13.10.2005 / Performance  
**Conjunto di Nero** / in the Universiteitstheater.

**Double Skin/Double Mind**

Workshop for third-year students and tutors. The groups consist of maximum twenty participants, students and/or tutors of Ballet, Jazz, Modern, SNDO, Dance Teacher and Dance Unlimited. The central theme of the workshop is authenticity and the relationship between repertoire and renewal in dance. Participants not exclusively dance practitioners; also academics and dance critics.

07.03.2005 + 07.04.2006 / Performance

**Bertha** / the Bermudez Triangle by Bertha Bermudez Pascual, in the Theatre School dance theatre. Post-performance discussion led by Francien van der Putt.

**Website forum**

A forum at [www.emiogreco.nl](http://www.emiogreco.nl) set up to serve as a place for reaction to, and input on, the programme of the work of EG|PC?

**Two readers**

These combine to offer an introduction to the work of EG|PC: one containing background material about the work of the company, and the other containing a variety of materials relating to reconstruction, notation and cultural transfer within dance. Both readers available to all workshop participants, and for use in two theory courses: one at the SNDO, and one for an international exchange

# Programme EG|PC / residency at the Theatre School

21.03.2005, 01.06.2005 + 08.04.2006 / Salons  
Title: **Transfer**  
On the problematic relationship between repertoire and renewal in modern dance. Participants not exclusively dance practitioners; also academics and dance critics.

Website forum  
A forum at [www.emiogreco.nl](http://www.emiogreco.nl) set up to serve as a place for reaction to, and input on, the programme of the work of EG|PC?  
Two readers  
These combine to offer an introduction to the work of EG|PC: one containing background material about the work of the company, and the other containing a variety of materials relating to reconstruction, notation and cultural transfer within dance. Both readers available to all workshop participants, and for use in two theory courses: one at the SNDO, and one for an international exchange programme, DIHS, supported by Socrates at the Theatre School in July 2005.

**Double Skin/Double Mind**  
In the workshop programme Double Skin/Double Mind, Emio Greco and Pieter C. Scholten challenge the participants to apply physical choices to various impulses: words, qualities and sounds. The main focus is on how, with the dancers as individuals as well as in relation to each other, movement can be redefined through a synergetic environment where the body must confront its helplessness and hopelessness in order to reach its strength.





After such an intense and deep personal work and being so close to how Emio verbalized and guided the process, but also as an expectator, I have to say that I saw the result and change of qualities in my own movement and as a student. My going back on Monday to the normal day in the AHK was influenced a lot

Extracts from [www.emiogreopoc.nl/](http://www.emiogreopoc.nl/) / Maria's weblog



A few of the key words we got from Emio to go through a long journey into the body. After all your body becomes an anonymous body, a material that can be re-shaped, a group of bonds, liquid, muscles covered by a very soft skin. Then the 'body' is ready to receive Emio's material without representing something else, erasing the previous identity, memories... arrived at this level of exhaustion there is no more space to go from your own background or movement vocabulary. Extracts from [www.emiogreopoc.nl/](http://www.emiogreopoc.nl/) / Maria's weblog



A body is always reinventing itself. A body tends always to react. An intelligent body acknowledges every different second. A long body. An elastic body. A curious body. An awake body. My body is not the one of Emio's work. The body becoming... The body that doesn't allow the tiredness to stop the movement. A body carried from a long thin vertical: elastic skin that allows the movement to come out. Extract from [www.emiogreco.nl/forum](http://www.emiogreco.nl/forum), student

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BARBARA

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## Workshop Emio Greco | PC

Part of the residency is also to stimulate reflection on the work of Emio Greco | PC, and how ideas in dance get transferred to others (like in a dance class or rehearsal). That is why we prepared some questions for you to write about – one paragraph or more, what you feel like. We will collect the writings and they will become part of the forum discussion on the website:

<http://www.emiogreco.nl/forum/>

(you are also free to add your own forum discussion directly through internet). At the end of the residency this will contribute to a reader, a reportage of what has happened.

### Questions

Please choose one question to answer, or add one of your own liking

- describe (the position of) the body in the work of Emio Greco | PC
- how do you deal with new information in relation to your own background
- how do you recognise / connect to intention of movements

Please hand in your writing to the teacher of your class, thanks.

A loose body with tone and sharpness. Rhythm and intensity. Extreme body that reaches out, far away, but always connected to its centre. Challenged body with a lot of training.

EXHAUSTION. REPETITION. ENDLESS PHYSICALITY.

NO JOINTS. BODY without joints but extremely precise and fast.

EXTENDED BODY.

FORM WITHOUT FORM. The travelling of the energy from in to out, from down to up is what produces the form of this dance.

LET IT GO! FEEL IT, DON'T COPY IT!

BODY build ~~inside~~ from a technique based on the experience. (physical experience).

# Notation project /

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From within the framework of EG|PC's tenure as Artist in Residence, a new research project emerged that is being conducted within the programme of the research group Art Practice and Development. Scott deLahunta and Bertha Bermudez Pascual explore innovative ways of documenting, analysing and representing the work of EG|PC, with the aim of creating a unique system of notating dance and archiving company repertory (starting with *Bianco*, 1996).

In a recent article deLahunta describes the aims of the research project and the interesting opportunity it potentially offers:

'In addition to research into the theory and history of live performance documentation, movement analysis and notation practices, various combinations of media tools and approaches will be explored, including: written description; video/film documentation; graphic modelling/visualisations; interactive media; and existing notation systems and additions to them.

One of the intentions of the notation/archive project is to produce a living or dynamic source of information about the work, based on principles of movement and movement creation that are constantly evolving. This has inspired inquiries into how to preserve *processes* instead of finished artworks, how to maintain the fundamental reflexivity of the making process in relation to the made, and how to name, but retain the openness of, generative processes and structures.

In seeking solutions, this project has the opportunity to learn from the movement research and techniques briefly described in this essay. For example, and taking inspiration from Forsythe and Downie, the project can make use of the latest developments in computer graphics to create traces or notations that redraw themselves, rendering visible what cannot be seen – and helping to solve the problem of notations that cannot be read.

The researchers can participate in increasing interdisciplinary exchanges between cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists researching movement and its perception, and can help identify movement research ideas and tools to be openly borrowed from and shared with others: both artists and scientists.

Until now, the work of EG|PC was nourished through rigorous physical and philosophical research. The scientific and technological research connected to the notation/archive project will generate new input to be integrated into this creative foundation.' 1)

1) From: deLahunta, Scott. 'Sharing questions of movement', in *Theater Topics II*, de theatermaker als onderzoeker. M. Bleeker et al (ed.). Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006.

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# The Salons /

In January 2003, the EG|PC dance company initiated a series of informal gatherings devoted to discussing and debating dance. The impulse; this initiative was provided by the perceived inability to adequately verbalise new developments in movement. The overall theme chosen for the Salons was Andre Lepecki's statement: 'Where can dance come to rest after it has been done? Where does dance move to? How is it revived in the memory during writing? The issue of the fate and purpose of dance, of its quest and conviction, coincides with that of our limited perception: the blindness of the eye that sees dance as a purely physical manifestation.'

The goal of the (ongoing) Salon series is to actively intervene in the ways in which, as Lepecki puts it, 'dance comes to rest', to question the ways in which this happens (or does not happen) and to contribute to the development of new discourse. This is to be done from the departure point of the experience and expertise of the dance maker and in close connection to the practice of dance making. EG|PC actively engages in the production of reflection about dance instead of leaving it to critics and academics. They represent a new generation of dance makers that, rather than being mere objects of reflection, politics, and eventually history, present themselves as partners in dialogue, becoming involved dynamically in questions of vocabulary, reflection, dance criticism, dance education, art politics and the future direction of dance.

EG|PC's Salons are a model for generating reflection on contemporary dance in a way that literally moves along with dance practice: it is a nomadic institute that travels with them wherever they perform. During the past two-and-a-half years, Salons have taken place in Amsterdam, Paris, Leeds, Vienna, New York and Chicago. They have brought together several recurring guests (Jeroen Peeters, Tang Fu Kuen, Helmut Ploebst and Maaike Bleeker) with local theorists, critics and practitioners working in the field of dance, theatre and performance.

EG|PC also organised a Salon (Salon 6) during the company's term as Artist in Residence. It spanned three meetings and focused on one theme: transfer. Installments: 6/1 on 21.03.2005 – 6/2 on 01.06.2005 – 6/3 on 08.04.2006.

The last Salon formed part of the conference *The Anatomical Theatre Revisited*.

# Transfer / Agenda for Salon 6

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## Definitions, signature and styles /

Smaller modern dance companies have scarcely any positive models available for the continued survival of their dance style or company when the choreographer who conceived the work – and after whom the company is often named – or the dancer on whose body the dance language relies is no longer present. Frequently, the *raison d'être* for the company vanishes and there are no strategies for transferring individual movement language to other dancers. Could strategies for transfer be invented?

## Creation and preservation of creative legacy /

A possible method of transfer is notation and video registration. However, existing notation systems are inadequate when dealing with new developments in dance and are largely based on existing concepts from classical and modern ballet: they relate primarily to steps. Video registration is equally unsatisfactory when attempting to render either the intention or the various views on the space from the perspective of the dancer. Perhaps one should first ask oneself what the current notions about choreography are. What role does the dramaturg play? Can this role be significant in the search for an accurate description and notation?

By extension the question also arises as to what motivates another choreographer to reprise an existing performance. To what extent is interpretation possible?

And to what extent should we view a choreography as an 'elastic container' as Andre Gingras described it. What do we understand choreography to be and what should be taken into account when recording its products?

## Institutes and strategies for change /

A small gap must be bridged in order to 'park' work at large institutions: national ballets – the 'banks'. Insofar as it can be copied, the choreography gains status and is secured for future generations. The weakening of the original intention is unavoidable in this context. And thus the questions again arise as to how the choreography can be seen as an elastic container and to what extent the notation must be supplemented with written documentation of mental state and intention. How can these be brought into being and what criteria must they fulfil. Do we wish to record material that can be copied, or are we actually concerned here with the conveying of an idea or language that can be actualised according to circumstance.

## Memory and archive in the context of modernity and tradition /

What should be done about the accessibility of the archives, the deteriorating video archive material? Dance is apparently underrepresented in archives such as the Netherlands Theatre Institute (TIN). How does a particular repertoire relate to cultural relevance – whether regional or national?

Under what conditions can dance gain a satisfactory place in the archives?

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# The last Salon /

The Salon at The Anatomical Theatre Revisited conference concludes EG|PC's tenure as Artist in Residence. They have invited three speakers to each present a 'first move' towards a discussion about meaning and movement.

**Bertha Bermudez** / who will introduce her own project and some of the questions it raises.  
Bertha Bermudez Pascual (1976, Spain) received training in classical ballet at the Rudra Bejart Dance School in Lausanne and the John Cranko School in Stuttgart. She was a member of the Frankfurt Ballet and Compañía Nacional de Danza in Madrid. She performed in productions by William Forsythe, Nacho Duato, Jiri Kilian, Mats Ek, Ohad Naharin and Hans van Manen. Bermudez Pascual joined EG|PC in 1998. Bertha stopped performing at the beginning of 2005 and started working for EG|PC as répétiteur and researcher.

**Scott deLahunta** / who is collaborating with Bermudez on this project and will discuss some of its implications and complications from the perspective of movement research.  
Scott deLahunta is an Associate Research Fellow at Dartington College of Arts and an affiliated researcher with Crucible, an interdisciplinary research network within the University of Cambridge. He is a 2006 Research Fellow with the Art Theory and Research and the research group for Art Practice and Development, Amsterdam School for the Arts. He is also 2005–2006 Visiting Researcher at the Dance Department/Advanced Computing Center for Art and Design, Ohio State University. Writings and project documentation are available online at [www.sdeleta.dds.nl](http://www.sdeleta.dds.nl).

**Tang Fu Kuen** / who will reflect on the 'missing link' between movement and perception from a philosophical point of view.  
Tang Fu Kuen (aka Deng Fuquan) works in the heritage conservation of Southeast Asia at SEAMEO-SPAFPA (Regional Centre for Archeology and Fine Arts) based in Thailand. He read literature and performance at the National University of Singapore, and Media and Cultural Theory at Goldsmiths College, London. From 1991–1999 he collaborated with TheatreWorks (Singapore). He then worked as a dramaturg and critic for contemporary performance and dance, travelling between Asia and Europe. He now programmes for the Bangkok Fringe Festival.

# Pass on, record, register... /

This third and final Salon 6 is also part of EG|PC's activities as Artist in Residence at the Amsterdam School of the Arts. A recurring motif is the importance of repertoire in the context of contemporary experimental dance, as well as related questions such as: What do we want to pass on? How do we pass on, record or register *transitory* work? What are the implications of transferring or recording work?

The guiding focus for this Salon is on the research project on dance notation and documentation by former EG|PC dancer Bertha Bermudez, and Brian Massumi's critique of positionality in this book *Parables of the Virtual* (2002).

Bermudez' project began with the attempt to find or develop an adequate notation system that, as she puts it, 'can capture the indispensable elements involved in a dance performance' – in particular an EG|PC performance. The aim of this project is to develop a living and dynamic source of information about the work, based on principles of movement and movement creation that are constantly evolving. This has inspired inquiries into how to preserve processes instead of finished artworks, how to maintain the fundamental reflexivity of the making process in relation to the made, and how to name but keep open generative processes and structures.

This research project involved Bermudez studying various existing systems of movement notation and dance documentation in order to find out exactly what these systems notate or document, and how. What are the indispensable elements of dance performance according to these systems? How can these be notated or documented in an accurate way? What does accurate notation involve? What is felt to be missing when the information captured by these systems is compared with her personal >> p.27



**Conjunto di NERO (2001) /**

In Conjunto di NERO the dancers, lighting and space combine to create an ever-changing world where, by turns, the dance propels the light and the light determines the direction of the dancers' movement. Light and dark alternate, separating the tangible from the intangible, movement from stillness.

Boundless depth and an intrepid disregard for gravity are evoked as the company's six dancers explore darkness: moving from pitch black to emerge from splashes of light and disappearing again. Intense and classical one moment, tribal and gutsy the next, the dancers push physical limits to the extreme. The lone figure of Emilio Greco is left behind to consider the next move.



**Double Point: Bertha – the Bermudez triangle (2002) /**

Through email correspondence with Austrian writer and critic Helmut Ploebst, Bertha Bermudez Pascual examined her past as a classical dancer and her experiences of working with EG|PC and William Forsythe. Ploebst and Bermudez Pascual questioned each other on the position of the dancer, choreographer and spectator, and on the transitory character of dance: the notion of where dance remains once the performance has ended.

The performance's leitmotif is the story of Giselle, who is rejected by the prince, dies and returns as a ghost. The story is a metaphor not only for Bertha's disillusion but also for her unconditional loyalty to the dance she tries to win back for herself.

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27 knowledge of EG|PC's work, as well as her experience with transferring her role in these performances to other dancers?

Apart from the question regarding which elements of dance performance are considered indispensable, Bermudez' project also raises the issue of what it means to *capture* these elements. What do we do by attempting to capture dance? At this point, Bermudez' difficulty with capturing the indispensable elements involved in dance performance touches upon an observation described by Brian Massumi in *Parables of the Virtual*, namely that the transitory character of a body in movement is at odds with attempts at describing or explaining which proceed from a dissection of their object into its essential elements and the pinpointing of these elements in their mutual relation as well as at their location in time, space and discourse. Massumi: 'The point of explanatory departure is a pinpointing, a zero-point of stasis. When positioning of any kind comes a determining first, movement comes a problematic second. After all is signified and sited, there is the nagging problem of how to add movement back into the picture.'

On the very first page of his book Massumi describes the aim of his project as being 'to explore the implications for cultural theory of this simple conceptual displacement: body-(movement/sensation)-change.' Cultural theory of the past two decades, he argues, has tended to bracket the middle terms and their unmediated connection. In doing so, cultural theory has, significantly, missed the two outer terms, 'even though these have been of consistent concern – perhaps the central concern in the humanities.' Bracketing movement/sensation reduces the body to a particular subject position or, at best, a series of subject positions, and defines the body/subject in terms of its pinning to the grid of culturally constructed significations. 'Of course, a body occupying one position on the grid might succeed in making a move to occupy another position. In fact, certain normative progressions, such as that from child to adult, are coded in. But this doesn't change the fact that what defines the body is not the movement itself, only its beginning and endpoints. Movement is entirely subordinated to the positions it connects. These are predefined. Adding movement like this adds nothing at all. You just get two successive states: multiples of zero.'

Massumi's critique concerns cultural theory of the past decades, but its implications are more substantial than this alone. His discussion engages with assumptions about the relationship between meaning and movement that are integral to ways of thinking and knowing, and in which defining the meaning of something begins by subtracting movement from the picture. Seen this way, Bermudez' difficulties with finding a notation system that can adequately capture dance might be paradigmatic for what Jonathan Sawday (*The Body Emblazoned: Dissection and the Human Body in Renaissance Culture*, 1995) terms the 'culture of dissection', in which knowledge is the product of separating out the elements that together make up the object of investigation, and fixing them in their place on a map or in an atlas. On the other hand, it seems that at this point, the experience of dance and of dancers may have important things to say about cultural theory, inviting a reconsideration of the relationship between meaning and movement starting from the primacy of movement over positionality, as well as the intricate relationship between movement and perception.

# Spin-off — unplanned extra developments /

**Summer and Autumn 2005** / Students of SNDO and Modern follow the company to ImpulsTanz in Vienna as part of their training and participate in the workshops.

**July 2005** / Students from dance academies and various universities in Europe and the United States join an exchange programme, DIHS, at the Theatre School, in which they focus on the work of EG|PC in their writing through an e-learning trajectory and by a four-day intensive in Amsterdam.

**November 2005 and July 2007** / Bertha Bermudez and Barbara Meneses continue to teach workshops at the Modern Theatre Dance Department.

**May 2007** / The Movement Analysis course at SNDO opened to students at the University of Amsterdam. This is a result of discussions to stimulate access to the practice of dancing for academic students interested in dance, and to stimulate 'dance writing' closely connected to the making of dance.

The first Theatre and Dance Professorship at the University of Utrecht:  
from **1 September 2006** / Maaïke Bleeker takes up the position of Professor for Theatre and Dance.

**June 2006** / Performance at the Melkweg SNDO Graduation Works by Pere Gay|Faura about how dancers relate to the movement work of a choreographer. With the collaboration of dancers from the company EG|PC: Barbara Meneses, Ty Boomershine and Bertha Bermudez.

**July 2006** / Notation project presented at Cinedans.

**July 2006** / Documentary by Maïte Bermudez presented at Cinedans.

**June 2007** / start long term exchange of the modern Dance Department with EG|PC's educational programme, Academia Mobile.



The AIR programme at the Amsterdam School of the Arts is an initiative of the research group Art Practice and Development and is carried out in cooperation with the Academy of Architecture, the Netherlands Film and Television Academy, the Amsterdam Conservatory and the Theatre School.

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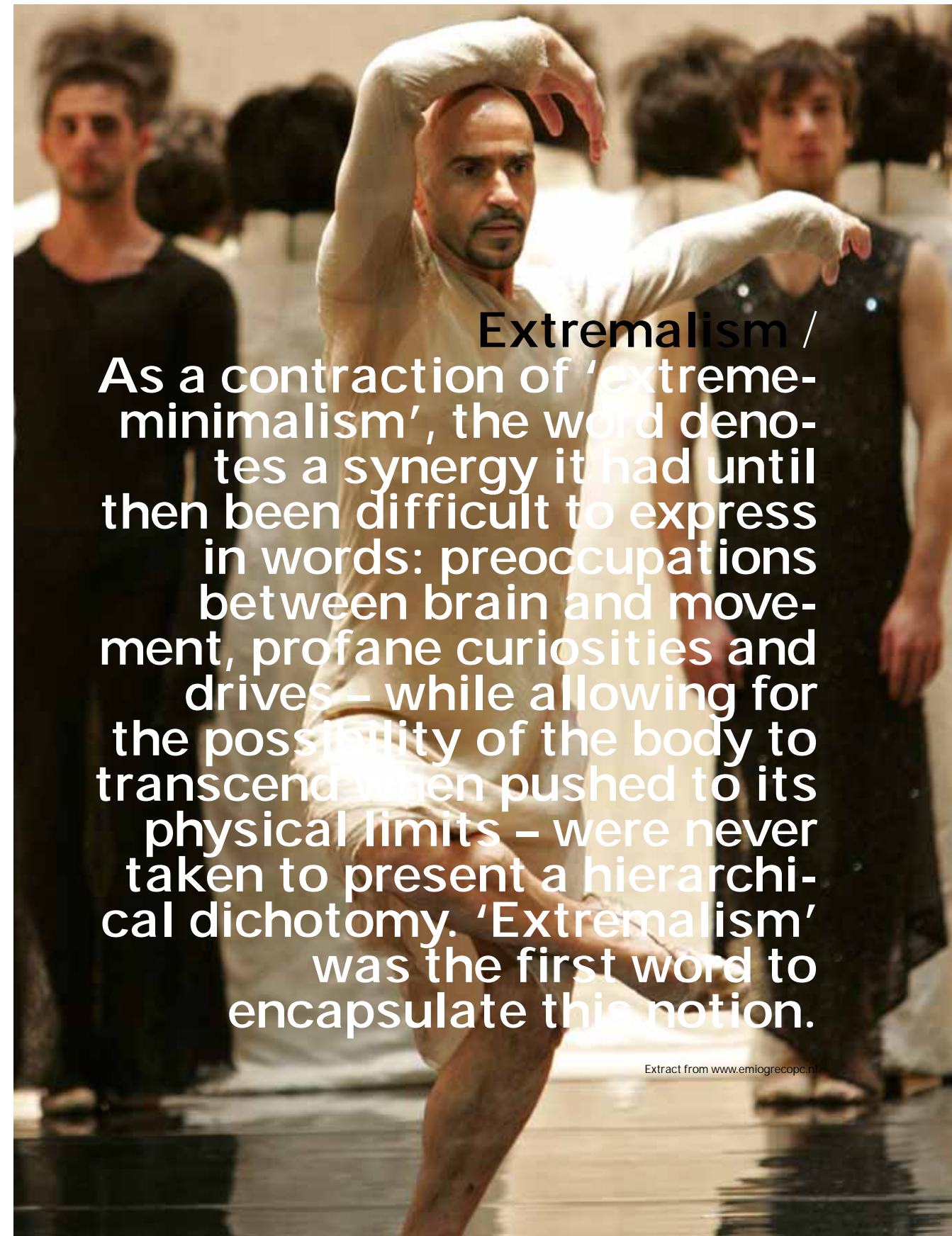
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**Extremalism /**  
As a contraction of 'extreme-minimalism', the word denotes a synergy it had until then been difficult to express in words: preoccupations between brain and movement, profane curiosities and drives – while allowing for the possibility of the body to transcend when pushed to its physical limits – were never taken to present a hierarchical dichotomy. 'Extremalism' was the first word to encapsulate this notion.

Extract from [www.emiogrecop.nl](http://www.emiogrecop.nl)



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