

▶▶ Katja Šimunič:  
**Dance Sensitivity Vertigo**



< Marjana Krajač, *Variations on Sensitive*. In the photo: Lana Hosni and Irena Mikec. Photo: Damir Žižić >

► KATJA ŠIMUNIČ

# Dance Sensitivity Vertigo

On the performance *Variations on Sensitive* by Marjana Krajač

*It is true that we carry with us, in the shape of our body,  
an ever-present principle of absent-mindedness and  
bewilderment.*

Maurice Merleau-Ponty,  
*Phenomenology of Perception*<sup>1</sup>

## Ekphrastic fragments of *Variations on Sensitive*

**A**t the beginning of the performance, five dancers are standing next to each other facing the audience.

No make-up. Barefoot.

They are wearing stonewashed denim shorts and white blouses or white T-shirts, with the exception of one dusty pink T-shirt.

The venue is a white gallery and, apart from the white dancefloor, set design includes only the sound of the piano coming from the loudspeakers.

The dancers are standing motionless. They are looking ahead, around, at each other.

And then they *casually* begin moving, into the space. Stretched-out arm gestures are distinguished.

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Lana Hosni is listening to the ground, leaning her head and pressing her ear against the white dancefloor.

Motion is quickening, reaching into broader spatial trajectories, and the outstretched arm gesture in different directions every now and then stands out as dominant.

Turns.

Both arm stretched out above or in front, in different dynamics.

Four dancers then stand still and Lana Hosni is dancing. When she stands still, the others set themselves in motion. Irena Mikec is accentuating the gesture of a leg stretched up high.

All five of them are dancing, *running* around the space, their faces displaying the very first signs of blushing from physical exertion.

They are slowing the movement down, again resorting to outstretched arm gestures.

The motion seems to be going back to the beginning of the performance, the dancers seem to be closing a circle.

They stop in different poses, with the music circling around them.

Their hair is now wet, covered in sweat dripping down their foreheads, necks, shoulders, backs.

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, [https://archive.org/stream/phenomenologyofp00merl/phenomenologyofp-00merl\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/phenomenologyofp00merl/phenomenologyofp-00merl_djvu.txt), p. 27, accessed on 29 July 2016.

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The music stops, the dancers are still in their poses, looking around, looking at each other. In silence, they are reset in motion from their sculptural poses. We can hear the sound of their turns, how they drag their feet across the floor, the sound of their walking steps, the noise of turning. After about 40 minutes of the incessant captivating sound of the piano, silence seems – loud. So loud that every rustle is piercing.

Therefore, we are *listening* to the dancers' movement even more attentively than when we were entranced by music.

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At a certain point, Mia Zalukar grabs Lana Hosni's hair from behind.

This is the very first touch in the performance.

The hand that grabbed a wisp of hair.

After that, she starts tasting the "flesh"<sup>2</sup>. She bites the forearm. The taste of skin in her mouth. The smell of carnality in her nostrils.

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Lana Hosni responds in *touch* by lying onto Mia Zalukar, who continues to taste the other dancer's shoulder blade, biting her, hitting her with her fists. Lana Hosni is pressing her foot.

At the same time Irena Mikec touches the crown of Katarina Rilović's head, making her turn on the floor.

Piano music is heard again.

Lana Hosni and Mia Zalukar carry on with their dance, imbued with almost martial art movements. Bodies kicking against the floor at full blast, audibly. Rolling, they reach Katarina Rilović. Head, leg, bottom, elbow and hair intertwined.

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At a certain point, all five dancers are piled up in a heap.

A stack of legs, arms, denim shorts, light and dark hair...

Lana Hosni goes to the wall, sits on the floor and starts thumping her knee against the wall. She is listening to the wall.

Other dancers are still *exerting* themselves in a dance action to reach the body. To taste the body of the Other and thus feel one's own.

2 "Flesh" (*la chair*) is the notion of Maurice Merleau-Ponty that reflects the reversibility of the relationship between subject and object in a "lived body", exemplifying it by chiasmatic experience of sensations: touching-touched, watching-watched, hearing-heard, etc.

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Irena Tomašić is moving her hair off her face.

Katarina Rilović is taking a hair out of her mouth.

Irena Mikec is removing a hair from her wet leg. She is *throwing* it down, shaking it off onto the floor.

Dishevelled, exhausted, they hold still for a second, in the group.

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To feel the weight of a body, to feel the weight of individual body parts.

The dancers lie on top of each other, holding the body weight.

They are *dragging* one another across the space and falling down on the floor. The sound of the piano is getting louder.

Piano accents.

Irena Tomašić is trying to put her hair back into place more and more often.

Irena Mikec is also tending to her hair.

Katarina Rilović is holding tight to Mia Zalukar while jumping on the floor.

Later, Mia Zalukar is playing, *testing* her long, rich, heavy, light, undone hair, and putting it on her own head. Their hair gets tangled.

Hair as "flesh". As a material.

Music is *fading*... until it stops.

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The dancers are again moving in silence.

All five of them are, so to speak, standing up against the back wall (so it seems from the point of view of the audience, but the wall is circular), still. Looking in front of themselves... and occasionally around... or at each other...

The sound of the piano is heard again.

After a strenuous intercorporeal *fight*, the pace continues along direct spatial trajectories.

Straight lines are outlined, order is restored.

Walking across the space and stopping. Lifting both hands above the head as in a "surrender", but without expressive *charging*.

Simply: accentuating verticality.

Lying down chest against the floor, with arms stretched out above and palms facing the floor.

Lying down back against the floor, with arms stretched out above and palms facing upwards.

Simply: accentuating horizontality.

Variation: occasionally they lie on top of each other in the identical gesture of bodies and arms stretched out as in a "surrender".

Simply: doubling the senses.

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Mia Zalukar is lifting her hands over the head right before the audience, revealing two delicate tattoos on the inside of her wrists: a hat (*Ceci n'est pas un chapeau!*) and an elephant in a hat. From Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince*.

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Irena Tomašić is breaking the order: walking, "surrendering", lying on the floor and bursting into free dance motion, but quickly returning to the sequence of walking, gesturing and lying down.

Irena Mikec is also breaking the order by lifting up only one hand.

Lana Hosni is the next to break the order: on the floor is she changing irregular positions.

Irena Mikec continues to break the order by lifting one leg while lying on the floor.

All five of them keep on interweaving the pace, the gesture and the contact with the ground.

The choreographer's voice is heard from the microphone (in English): "The last twenty minutes".

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The piano music is getting louder in an indiscernible long crescendo, from a fully quiet to a powerful sound.

Lana Hosni drops down and hits the floor loudly, with free variations on the "surrender" gesture. She comes up and starts walking, but *drops out* of the vertical. In a "surrender" gesture, she is destroying the vertical, as well. She again drops down on the floor, but does not lie down, but rather *seeps* to the ground. Then she returns to the seemingly ordered state like the other dancers, who are walking, stopping, walking again, stopping, walking, stopping...

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The dancers stop. In an irregular group, in the middle of the stage, marked only by the white dancefloor.

They are looking at the audience.

They are making half-turns in an unpredictable order. Calmly.

And again stand still. And turn. Consistently.

All five of them are suddenly still and motionless, facing the audience... Looking at us.

One by one they close their eyes.

And now they are standing still, facing us with their eyes closed.

We are watching them.

Marjana Krajač's voice is again heard from the microphone (in English): "The end, thank you. We are finished."

The choreographer's voice. The voice's *body*.

### Post-hybrid dance

Creating her performances *Choreographic Fantasy No. 1 (Koreografska fantazija broj 1)* (2013), *Variations on Sensitive (Varijacije o osjetnom)* (2014) and *Choreographic Fantasy No. 2 (Koreografska fantazija broj 2)* (2015), Marjana Krajač persists in resorting to choreographic strategies that construct the dance work by dance itself. The choreographer advocates for the independence and self-sufficiency of the dance discourse, at the same time conjecturing the importance of the history of dance art, both the distant and the most recent one. This leads to believe that Marjana Krajač rejects the hybridisation of dance and different artistic and other discourses and favours creating autonomous dance pieces or at least pieces that powerfully invoke dance autonomy.

For this type of choreographic works I propose the term "post-hybrid dance", leaning on the definition of "hybrid dance", as defined by French philosopher François Frimat. He writes that "today we speak of "hybrid performance", since representations of *dancelike* description rely on video, computers placed on the stage, text reading or many elements originating from visual arts. However, a contemporary choreographer is not haunted by a Wagnerian dream of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, but also does not feel restricted by materials or practices authorised by the dogmatic notion of genres."<sup>3</sup>

Giving privilege to the hybridisation of dance in relation to other elements in her pieces preceding the three mentioned ones, Marjana Krajač crossbred dance and opera in her stage performances *Lady Macbeth in Furio* (2006) and *Ariadne on Naxos (Ariadna na Naxosu)* (2008), juxtaposed dance representation to the representation of the utterly mediatised en vogue female body in the piece *Victoria Beckham Has a Migraine (Victoria Beckham ima migrenu)* (2006). In a solo named *Short Fantasy About Reclaiming the Ownership Over My Own Body (Kratka fantazija o ponovnom uspostavljanju vlasništva nad sobom)* (2010), also performed by the choreographer, dance is imbued with the subject of the (in)ability to appropriate one's own body by assimilating dance art and social engagement. Dance exploration takes place in front of a large-scale photograph of an activist action of defending a street in Zagreb from planned construction development, now a steady exploitation of a newly-built residential/office building.

In her *Manual for Empty Spaces (Priručnik za prazne prostore)* (2012), Marjana Krajač focused on protocols,

3 François Frimat, *Qu'est-ce que la danse contemporaine? (Politiques de l'hybride)* [What Is Contemporary Dance? (Policies of the Hybrid)], PUF, 2010, pp. 16-17.

methods and strategies for occupying spaces where dance is created, occupying work spaces and stages with dance action and processuality of creating a performance. Using edited video sequences of work on the piece, juxtaposed to the live performance of one of the dancers who took part in the process, she hybridised not only dance and video, but also two different places and two different times, the dancing *now* and the dancing *then, here* (on the stage) and *there* (in the rehearsal room).

So, if Marjana Krajač's pieces made between 2006 and 2012 could be defined as extrinsic material (opera, hypertrophied mediatisation of female body, social engagement, performance-making video etc.) impinging upon the choreographic part and categorised as "hybrid dance", in her recent creative endeavours dancing corporeity is the predominant, essential imagery of the dance performance. In these pieces, dance itself is persistently and stubbornly intrinsic. This is particularly evident in *Variations on Sensitive*<sup>4</sup>, which I take as an example of what I propose to call "post-hybrid dance". However, if *Variations on Sensitive* are an example of "post-hybrid dance", if they were made *after* an entire series of as now consecrated conceptual and hybrid dance pieces at the turn of the millennium and hybrid dance pieces at the turn of the millennium, could *Variations* even be deemed contemporary? Contemporary in the sense of breaking with a certain art practice and implementing a *novelty*? In so many words, I would say: they are contemporary in that they do not resemble a single (as far as I am familiar) choreographic signature we recognise as current European dance. They are contemporary in that by focusing on the essential characteristics of dance art they focus on some of the burning issues of today: autonomy and precarity.

### Sense of dance

**V***ariations on Sensitive* is a durational dance work whose running time, depending on the particular performance, oscillates between two and three hours without a break. It takes place in a circular gallery, in a space almost completely white, bathed in natural light coming through the dome. The performances are by definition scheduled during daylight. In autumn or winter they start at 2pm and in spring or summer at 6pm. Naturally, the question is whether a two or three-hour dance performance could even be called durational, given

that this term is used to denote performances of truly excessive duration, such as those by Marina Abramović, for instance. However, devoid of any stage *attractions* or narrative, with a strictly set subject of testing the sensation of dance, *Variations on Sensitive*, during its uncompromising *dance* performance indeed *becomes* that. In the dancers' effort to reach the sensitive, the strenuous endeavour mobilising the observers and drawing them into an intercorporeal dialogue, this indeed is a durational performance. One observer personally close to me commented how during the three-hour performance the dancers at any given moment seemed determined to pursue – art. And another observer I know said that the performers during all three hours incessantly and genuinely – danced. This *every danced moment* faces the observer with a challenge of a demanding focus-keeping throughout the performance; the dance duration is thus materialised as not dictated by production conditions, as evolving freely, freely *long*.

At the beginning of the performance, as we enter and take our place in the improvised auditorium, the five dancers are already lined up, shoulder to shoulder on a white dancefloor. And this lasts. Leaving us enough time to observe them meticulously: their different body shapes, height, musculature, face forms, feet, arms, different hair colour. To register one common trait: all the five dancers have long hair. Enough time to feel the micro-movements, barely visible, reflecting a constant and infinite struggle with gravity, inherent to both the dancers and us, to keep a standing or sitting position, respectively. We can almost feel the rhythm of the dancers' breathing, creating organic score chiselled from myriad repetitive sinusoidal chest movements.

However, despite the differences in physical appearance, an impression overshadowing all others is created: what the dancers have in common is general, almost everyday, almost ordinary corporeality. Watching their bodies, it is at first hard to single out signs of a specific dance technique, even demanding athleticism which could have potentially shaped their musculature. They seem to be inhabiting quite usual bodies, but despite that these bodies are not easily legible. With all the five dancers, the bodies seem to be extraordinarily *ordinary*.

And although the performative introduction evokes profound serenity, there is still something in the overarching peace of the dancers that causes unease in the observers' perspective. The informed view activates, elements of the seen are singled out: five young women, standing next to one another, almost in a straight line, shoulder to shoulder, in a gallery, a display space for large-scale visual art... variations on sensitive, sensitivity,

4 The piece premiered in October 2014 at Bačva Gallery of Croatian Association of Visual Artists in Zagreb. The text refers to the performance of *Variations of Sensitive* that took place at the 32<sup>nd</sup> Contemporary Dance Week on 12 June 2015 at the same gallery. Author and choreographer: Marjana Krajač. Dancers: Lana Hosni, Irena Mikec, Katarina Rilović, Irena Tomašić, Mia Zalukar. Production: Sodaberg Choreography Laboratory.

senses, five senses... All of a sudden, a certain image comes to mind, a piece by Austrian painter Hans Makart, his pentaptych called *Five Senses*. These five oils represent: *Touch* (a woman who just took a bath and is carrying a child on her shoulder), *Hearing* (a woman surrounded by reed), *Sight* (a woman observing her face in the mirror), *Smell* (a woman inhaling the smell of roses) and *Taste* (a woman picking pomegranates).<sup>5</sup>

All the five characters are subject to idealising the female figure in the form of a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century academic nude, with *irrevocable* motionlessness inherent to painting. The five women representing five senses, standing in a line, next to one another, forever in the same, carefully picked poses and *eternal* stasis. Contrary to that, after a long period when the dancers stood upright activating gravity muscles, as well as utterly individual postures attempting to stand upright, with almost a dreamlike aura, they began moving more conspicuously, with more accent. In fact, they began walking. Walking and walking, each in her own way, in her own energy register, along their own unpredictable spatial trajectories. They let go to "a pedestrian movement", treating gravity as an ally.

It is with this first walking cycle that I immediately dropped the association of Hans Makart's pentaptych, of the decoration and narrative of female body in five episodes, so academically "sensitive", as inappropriate and unsuitable. I abandoned the hybridisation of dance I was watching with some external association and immersed me in the motion itself. A wish to recognise and contextualise possible references inscribed in the choreographic piece completely faded and turned into a view prone to kinaesthetic empathy and gravitational contagion. Hubert Godard, a French dance theoretician and practitioner, claims that they are established while "transported by dance, losing certainty about one's own weight, an observer becomes part of someone else's weight"<sup>6</sup>. Consequentially, my body becomes porous to sensations caused by dance, I become imbued with dance gestures.

The five dancers are walking, persisting in the *effort* of walking, feeling their weight as acceleration force. Suddenly, one of the dancers falls *brutally* on the floor. At the same time, another dancer starts violently rubbing the arm of the third dancer and hitting the muscle of the

same arm with her fists. Finally, she bites the "flesh" of the arm she previously explored by touch. In this dance action, the dancers are exploring the touch spectrum: they poke, press, squeeze, tighten, caress, and hit each other's "flesh". They pull each other's hair and throw themselves to the ground. But without even a hint of aggression or deliberate eroticism. The performers seem like passionate explorers of the yet unexplored zones of sensitivity, like five explorers determined to grasp, grab, bite the five senses through the body of the Other. The body that is not their own, but has become familiar, close, reliable thanks to countless rehearsals, the body with which they have struck an uncompromising dance alliance.

### Close distance

The *Variations of Sensitive* performance could be perceived as a durational dance improvisation on the subject of sensitivity, but the internal dramaturgy of the performance is deeply probed in the very title: variations. And indeed, there is a carefully deliberate procedure of accumulation of changes in the dancers' corporeal conditions, as they produce dance gestures as a consequence of irregular pulsation between the exhaustion of physical energy and its reinvigoration. The opulent performance duration is equally demanding to both the performers and the audience, as evidenced from the visible corporeal *wear* of the dancers which adds to the audience's awareness of their own *wearability*.

Despite the fact that the audience was accommodated quite conventionally, in several rows of chairs, in no way does this create an impression of the theatrical *black box*<sup>7</sup> because the gallery is a much more fluid and unrestricted venue. The space-time of the cylindrical spacious white gallery liberates the observer's view to glide freely, while listening takes place circularly in a double sense: as the existing spatial circular floor plan of the gallery and as the complementary inherent structure of the musical background. Choreography, more accurately, consists of many dance gestures in an inseparable continuity and in union with the circular musical context of American composer Dennis Johnson's piece *November*<sup>8</sup>. Choreography is set against a few excerpts from his five-hour piano composition composed in 1959, which was completely forgotten until 2009, when it was revisited by American composer and musicologist Kyle Gann. Today this miraculously crystal *November* by Dennis Johnson

<sup>5</sup> Hans Makart (1840-1884) is an Austrian painter, a prominent representative of decorative and historic European painting of the 1870s. *Five Senses* (made between 1872 and 1879) is a series of five oil on canvas paintings (each 314 x 70 cm in size), today on display at the Belvedere Gallery in Vienna.

<sup>6</sup> Hubert Godard, "La geste et sa perception" ("Gesture and Its Perception"), *La Danse au xx<sup>e</sup> siècle*, ed. Isabelle Ginot and Marcelle Michel, Larousse-Bordas, 1998, pp. 224-229.

<sup>7</sup> *Black box* is a flexible theatre space which can in different ways settle audience, performers, stage props and technical equipment.

<sup>8</sup> Performed by pianist R. Andrew Lee (CD *Irritable Hedgehog Music*, 2013).

is considered a predecessor or even the founding father of minimalistic music.

This powerful audio element affects the gestuality of the choreography of *Variations on Sensitive*, just like the imperfect permeability of the swimming pool water which affects the eye of the painter (and philosopher). Maurice Merleau-Ponty writes:

“When through the water's thickness I see the tiles on bottom of the pool, I do not see it *despite* the water and the reflections; I see it through them and because of them. If there were no distortions, no ripples of sunlight, if it were without that flesh that I saw the geometry of the tiles, then I would cease to see it *as* it is and where it is – which is to say, beyond any identical, specific place. I cannot say that the water itself – the aqueous power, the syrupy and shimmering element – is *in* space; all this is not somewhere else either, but it is not in the pool. It inhabits it, is materialized there, yet it is not contained there; and if I lift my eyes toward the screen of cypresses where the web of reflections plays, I must recognize that the water visits it as well, or at least sends out to it its active, living essence. This inner animation, this radiation of the visible, is what the painter seeks beneath, the words *depth, space and color.*”<sup>9</sup>

A one-minute video<sup>10</sup> made on an autumn day in 2014 at a deserted outdoor swimming pool in Šalata, Zagreb, could be taken as a trailer to *Variations on Sensitive*. It represents an excerpt of the stage-making process, but is not a simple citation, one *slice* of work, but rather more than that: an excerpt of the *form* of work process. Again I succumb to my wish for ekphrasis and I shall describe that video:

Five dancers are standing in a line behind one another, by the pool.

The pool area is perfectly neat, perfectly static and completely empty.

The water is intensely blue. Almost turquoise. Reflecting the colour the pool walls are painted in.

The water surface is completely smooth.

In the background are the springboards. And sky, subtly covered by light grey gauzy clouds.

The dancers are looking ahead, their gaze is both dreamily internalised and subtly observant. Leisurely anxious.

<sup>9</sup> Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *L'Œil et le Esprit (Eye and Mind)*, <https://pg2009.files.wordpress.com/2009/05/eye-and-mind-merleau-pontymmp-text1.pdf>, p. 142, accessed on 1 August 2016.

<sup>10</sup> The video was made by Damir Žižić. It can be viewed on the website of the Sodaberg choreographic laboratory: <http://sodaberg.hr/projekti-radovi/osjetljivi-plesovi>. Accessed on 14 June 2016.

One by one, they fall in the pool. Sideways they plunge into the water.

The camera is perfectly static, the shot frame is always the same.

The dancers dive out of the water and swim out of the frame.

The water surface is rippled because of their bodies. It reflects shine.

The ekphrasis is defined in its broadest sense as a literary description of a work of art, appearing in ancient Greek literature and evolving continually until this day, establishing different interrelations between art and text. In terms of dance, ekphrasis could be described as always dramatically inadequate: insufficient, immobile, all in *images*, static. As though by describing it, we limit and cut out the beginning of the movement and its ending. And movement indeed happens *in between*. The fluid, vibrant *in-between*. I could find examples in animated film, made between two motionless images blending into each other. Animation, this internal animation, always takes place in between the frames. In a sort of anticipation of the future frame and the memory of the one that just passed, vanished.

We might say we can feel/sense/guess how the dancers' movement in a light-saturated gallery produces a certain sensation of *friction* with air, akin to the one they had in the pool water. The dancers seem to remember their water experience as they were working on this performance, as though they were indelibly kinaesthetically aware of the density of liquid space and its aqueous power, syrupy and glistening. But then again, they only necessarily resort to the upcoming movement, without yet knowing what it will be.

The dancers knead the “flesh” like a sculptor who moulds consistent clay, testing its structure, without yet knowing the shape of the future sculpture. The dancers are pressing the “flesh” of the body, biting it, hitting it. They pinch the skin, stretch the hair, pull on the clothes' fabric. The bite is felt by both the biter and the bitee. It is precisely the internal “fleshy” animation, the reflection of the gestural, that the five dancers are exploring throughout the performance: dance movement feeding on its corporeality. By disclosing also the sensitive zones, which are the inherent part of every person's sensitivity, but are not normally explored by touch with such attention in their immanent reversibility of touching and being touched, be it in the position of a specific, material touch in a dance co-action or in the position of an observer. The one who touches with the eye, who touches from a *close* distance.

How to describe the presumed taste of flesh in the dancer's mouth, which also comprises a sense in this piece? How to put in words this refined intercorporeality established between the performers, but also the between the space-time and each of them individually? And us, doubtlessly, who are both watching and being watched.

### Dance gesture, utopian gesture

In conclusion, by the term *post-hybrid dance* I mean dance consciously refraining from references to other arts, media or discourse, dance which well knows, acknowledges and keeps a memory of the accomplishments and knowledge of historical ancestors, and especially its contemporaries among which it indirectly follows in the footsteps of those who privileged "hybrid dance". However, it ultimately strives to pursue dance in the essence of its artistic autonomy. To validate the dance gesture at the moment it is made, as it vanishes and reappears, the creative dance gesture incessantly aware of its constitutional ephemerality.

It is a gesture that fluctuates between a dance action impregnated with ordinary, everyday movement and a dance aestheticisation of the sensitive. At the same time, these realisations are deeply aware of what philosopher Frédéric Pouillaude refers to with his term "choreographic unworking"<sup>11</sup>, analysing the sustainability of the notion of a dance work. Frédéric Pouillaude points to how philosophers, art theorists and critics throughout history perceived dance as a minor art, of weak autonomy, which does not leave reliable and certifiable traces that could be unequivocally reproduced and continually examined.

It is this issue that Marjana Krajač addresses in her *Variations on Sensitive*, exposing dance itself, demanding its full-fledged artistic autonomy. She does it not by persisting on idealising the body, on the canonised virtuosity of the dance gesture. Rather, her procedure implies exploring the aesthetical in the corporeal sensibility, establishing a well-developed understanding with pedestrian dance. Philosopher Barbara Formis says that pedestrian movement (from the lexica of post-modern dance) means: "both pedestrian movement in the sense of walking, simply walking, and the pedestrian dimension in the sense of banal, as something of no importance. (...) It is about perceiving the gesture as something banal and fragile, but nevertheless important in its banality and fragility."<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Frédéric Pouillaude, *Le désœuvrement chorégraphique, étude sur la notion d'œuvre en danse (Choreographic Unworking, a Study of the Notion of Work in Dance)*, Vrin, 2014.

<sup>12</sup> Barbara Formis, "Le geste entre philosophie et performance" ("Gesture between philosophy and performance"), a lecture given at

Marjana Krajač transforms the *dancelike* in "hybrid performances" into dance with as few references to other discourses supposed to *guarantee* artistic legitimacy to dance as possible. By creating a dance gesture in its fragile self-sufficiency, by establishing dance in its precarious autonomy, by attesting the banality of dance, i.e. its everydayness and *on-going* vibrancy, *Variations on Sensitive* speak of the World whose 'flesh' is made of the same matter as our body. Indirectly they speak about the world here and now, the contemporary world.

In Paris, at one international symposium<sup>13</sup> I spoke precisely about *Variations on Sensitive* as the streets were flooded with several hundred thousand people walking and protesting against the new labour act which was to be passed by the French parliament. On one of the lamp-posts, a protester's sticker was left saying *Utopiste debout, Rêve générale*<sup>14</sup>. *A utopian has risen up, General dream*. And a sight of persisting in a vertical position at the beginning of the performance and the same posture at the end of it with closed eyes (staring at the general dream?) synaesthetised with my experience of the current reality into a sense that a utopia of a better world still lives, an absent-minded and vertiginous utopia, a banal and fragile utopia, a multitudinous and heteroclitic utopia, but nevertheless a utopia of the autonomy of the world in which it will be unequivocally evident that we are all made of the same *matter*. Irrevocably perishable, but infinitely creative.

*English translation: Ivana Ostojčić*

the Forum of Marseille-Méditerranée School of Art and Design (lecture cycle 2014/2015: *Gesture and Word: Art, Tool, Body*) at Friche Belle de Mai, 4 April 2015. Accessed on 1 June 2016 at <https://vimeo.com/150896191>.

<sup>13</sup> The lecture with the title "Mordre les cinq sens: Variations sur le sensible chorégraphiées par Marjana Krajač" ("Biting the five senses: *Variations on Sensitive*, choreographed by Marjana Krajač") was delivered on 14 June 2016 at the international symposium *Le théâtre et les cinq sens, Théorie, esthétique, dramaturgie (Theatre and Five Senses, Theories, Aesthetic, Dramaturgies)*, organised as part of the Senses Project / Creative Europe 2015 with University of Milan, University of Avignon and University of Galati. The symposium was scheduled for 13 and 14 June 2016 at International University Campus in Paris, Italian House (Cité internationale Universitaire de Paris, Maison de l'Italie).

<sup>14</sup> The pun is not translatable: in French, *rêve général* means *general dream*, and *grève générale* means *general strike*. The slogan is grammatically incorrect in terms of matching the noun *dream* (*rêve*) and the adjective *general* (*général*); the adjective in the female form (*générale*) was kept from the expression *general strike* (*grève générale*) to make the association of the connection between these two slogans as evident and powerful as possible.