
CyberHuman Dances Series: An Articulation of Body, Space, and Motion in Performance

The CyberHuman Dance Series is an experimental dance work exploring simulations of physical and virtual phenomena in the context of performance. By integrating innovative digital technology with the choreographic and design process, this work investigates all aspects of design and performance in cyberspace, with particular emphasis on issues of real and perceived boundaries between virtual space and real space, and the possibility of a blurred distinction between two intersecting worlds.

Questions are raised as to possible metaphors for construction of virtual spaces and the bodies that inhabit them, leading to new ideas about the behavior of the body and its expression through motion. What, for instance, are the ways in which the cyberdancer begins to claim a virtually constructed space through movement? What kind of relationship (physical, emotional, psychological) can be established between real dancers and their cyberspatial counterparts? How can narrative identities be exchanged, modified, or made explicit? Finally, how can these investigations be brought to performance as a means of formulating an appropriate language for dance in the virtual age?

An analysis of the work in progress offers an opportunity to discuss design issues related to the development of cyberspatial environments and virtual bodies. Issues of space, time, physicality, and gravity are visited, as is the question of how the body is to be represented and inhabited within a

virtual space. What is the connection between humans and their representational presence in cyberspace and what, exactly, does it mean to be cyberhuman? How can an articulation of the process of the design of the cyberfigure provide an answer to this question? What is an appropriate representation for a physical figure in a space that lacks physicality? How can a sense of bounded space be accommodated within an environment defined through its lack of edges?

In offering an analysis of the design and performance process, and the questions raised in the development of both cyberfigure and environment, a model for collaboration is proposed between individuals and across technologies. This model illuminates how a collaborative technological investigation infuses the work with a concern for methods of expression in virtual spaces and how innovative digital processes can be explored through experimentation with choreographic software, three-dimensional rendering programs, and their combination into output to digital video.

The creative process of making the work is examined in the collaboration between choreographer, designer, composer, and video artist. The conclusion argues that integration of the working methods of a group of individuals trained in different aspects of the arts offers insight into the range of methodologies available for study and infuses the series with an energy of human discovery.



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