



Sound Gestures

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INTRODUCTION

SOUND GESTURES

Posing questions for music and dance

Danielle Goldman

This issue of *Women and Performance*, dedicated to exploring gendered divisions between music and dance, is animated by an important performance of which very few traces remain. In the summer of 1980, choreographer Dianne McIntyre presented two evenings of performance entitled *New dance*. Each night, she performed collaborative works with different musicians: the first night featured saxophonists Oliver Lake and Hamiett Bluet, while the second night featured saxophonist Gary Bartz and trumpeter Ahmed Abdullah. But the centrepiece of both evenings was McIntyre's collaboration with drummer Max Roach and vocalist Abbey Lincoln, in a performance both haunting and righteous. Together, the trio performed *Triptych: Prayer, protest, peace*, the middle section of a larger work entitled *We insist! The freedom now suite*, initially performed at New York's Village Gate in 1961, at an event sponsored by the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE). While *The freedom now suite* is inextricably linked with the civil rights movement, Lincoln explained that the album's message still applied in 1980. 'The protest isn't over', she said. '*The freedom now suite* and what it stands for are as valid as they were then.'¹

Insisting upon the ongoing validity of *The freedom now suite*, Lincoln draws attention to shifting yet persistent social ills such as racism and sexism. But, intertwined with this challenge to explicit social strictures, their protest also bears upon restrictive understandings of music and dance. It is thus a crucial touchstone for this issue of *Women and Performance*.² As Susan Foster explains when discussing the gendered differences between mid-century music and dance:

Music's visible abundance of 'structure', its close alliance with mathematics, and the viability of its notation system carried a masculine valence that contrasted with dance's feminine ephemerality and bodiliness. . . . Enjoying the full range of stereotypic attributes associated with the feminine, dance was often viewed

as ornamental or sensual, chaotic or emotional, fecund but insubstantial. (Foster 2002, 30)

Although these attitudes were prevalent mid-century, they preceded and continue to exist well beyond the New York avant-garde. Any tour through Western performance history or critical theory (or even a look at who attends which academic conferences), reveals that dance and music are analyzed consistently as distinct entities: one historically female, the other historically male; one of the body, the other of the mind; one seen, the other heard. The consequences of these binaries are far-reaching. Inextricable from power relations, entrenched institutional biases, and historical circumstance, gendered divisions between music and dance affect how we understand and respond to bodies. They also shape people's freedom to move.

Dianne McIntyre: 'Boom, Boom, Boom, Dah, Dah'

Born in Cleveland in 1946, Dianne McIntyre began taking ballet and tap lessons at the age of four. From an early age, both gender and race affected how McIntyre positioned herself in relation to a burgeoning tradition of 'modern dance'. Having taken beginning dance classes with black students primarily, McIntyre recalls:

I don't know, I thought modern dance was really like a black art form. Just a couple here and there, a white person might be kind of interested in it . . . I even thought back then that Martha Graham was black. (McIntyre 2000, 32)

She continues:

I would hear about Graham. Yes. I may even have seen a picture of her, but it didn't matter. I saw maybe a fuzzy picture of her, but I still thought she might be just a light-skinned black person. (McIntyre 2000, 32)

For McIntyre, by configuring a black Martha Graham, she negotiated a relation to modernism that enabled her to *dance*.³

One can imagine McIntyre's surprise when, thinking that modern dance was 'our ethnic dance', she enrolled as a dance major at Ohio State University, and became the only black student. McIntyre recalls, 'I was just blown away. I was like, "And they are good, too"' (2000, 33). McIntyre received a strong technical training in college and then moved to New York in 1970, where she studied with Viola Farber, Alwin Nikolais, and Gus Solomons Jr. Influenced by the US civil rights era and the Black Arts Movement, McIntyre was committed to forming a company of black dancers upon moving to New York. She remembers thinking:

It's going to be a force, an energy, behind what we do, but it's going to be as creative as possible. I've always felt like we've grown up in this culture, so we're trained in traditional, classical, European ways, in modern dance

ways. We have our own expression from our background and social dance. So all those can come through, but I didn't want to repeat some things that are thought of as the dance that black people do. (McIntyre 2000, 33)

Valuing innovation and desiring artistic autonomy, McIntyre didn't want to be limited by reductive notions of blackness or black dance. She wanted to incorporate both her modern dance training and a tradition of social dance, hoping to arrive at something culturally and historically honest. McIntyre explains, 'I felt that if I couldn't do all that stuff from the '30s and '40s, then what I'd be doing in a freer form wouldn't be honest' (Foster 2002, 88). So, in addition to studio training, McIntyre studied social dance forms with a number of dancers who had frequented Harlem's Savoy Ballroom during its heyday in the 1930s. She learned improvisational principles like the 'break', and explored possible relations between music and dance.

McIntyre's training in social dance is evident in her work. When improvising, she frequently breaks into shimmies, hip-shakes, or even quick struts that one would likely see in a dancehall. In 1972, she choreographed *Smoke and clouds*, which contained pockets of improvisation, where dancers could invent their own phrases or group relationships within parameters set by McIntyre. In a clear outgrowth of her training, the piece draws from abstract modern dance moves (with extended limbs, clear shapes, and a dramatic sense of timing), and social dance idioms (with hip-shaking, stomping, and casual walking around the space). Similarly, the music alternates between recorded rock and roll, live conga drumming, and vocalization by the dancers. *Smoke and clouds* begins with couples dancing a slow dance in a typical embrace, swaying back and forth to the beat of 'Come on baby let the good times roll', sung by Shirley and Lee. The recorded music then stops abruptly as the dancers fall to the ground. Then, in a shock to the seemingly carefree world of social dance, the dancers get up, screaming, and cluster toward the corner. Live conga drumming begins, as the dancers strike out with bold moves diagonally across the stage. Different idioms overlap each other throughout the piece, interrupting each other, challenging each other, mixing the worlds of 'high' and 'low' art. Knowing her history, McIntyre comes from all these places.

In addition to studying social dance, McIntyre immersed herself in the free jazz or new music scene during her first years in New York. She listened to as much as she could and knew that she wanted to work with musicians. McIntyre frequented places like The East in Brooklyn, a black cultural center that was a school by day and a club in the evenings and on weekends. At The East, she heard Gary Bartz and Pharaoh Sanders—'all the great ones', according to McIntyre (McIntyre 2000, 67). Listening to this music, she immediately understood its emergence in relation to civil rights struggles. According to McIntyre:

[The music] was very expressive of the feeling of that time, that freedom, just breaking through with freedom. The musicians who were the most brilliant in that area, you could really soar on the music. . . (McIntyre 2000, 63)

Soon after moving to New York, McIntyre came into contact with a collective group of musicians called the Master Brotherhood, a 1970s name that suggests the extent to which free jazz and notions of blackness were equated with masculinity. The group included Ahmed Abdullah, Joe Rigby, Arthur Williams, Mustafa Abdul Rahim, Les Walker, Joe Falcon and Steve Reid.

Forging an opening in this male world, McIntyre asked the group if she could attend their rehearsals, explaining that she wanted to think critically about relations between improvised music and dance. Joining the musicians' rehearsals in a Brooklyn daycare center, a space that complicates visions of a 'master brotherhood', McIntyre began by moving aside the children's playthings, so she could dance while the musicians played. Initially, she tried to make her body move like the music sounded. She explains, 'I would do it over and over again, and sometimes I was doing some things that seemed almost impossible. It was very invigorating' (2000, 65). Attempting to learn from the structures and gestural impulses within free jazz, McIntyre explains, 'There are certain things they (Jazz musicians) do in runs that are intricate and very very fast. I hadn't seen parallel things in movement' (Foster 2002, 85).

But McIntyre's relation to the music quickly went beyond mere emulation. Before long, McIntyre began to feel like another instrument, and she and the musicians developed a back-and-forth rapport where they influenced each other. McIntyre invited four musicians from the Master Brotherhood, along with four dancers, to be a part of her first New York performance, entitled *A free thing*, which was totally improvised. The dancers and musicians rigorously rehearsed for this performance, knowing the importance of spontaneously created structure.

In 1972, McIntyre founded Sounds in Motion, an ensemble which employed both musicians and dancers. Initially, the company rehearsed in a Harlem office building called the Ministerial Interfaith Association, as well as Harlem's Studio Museum. But in 1978, Sounds in Motion moved into its own studio on 125th Street and Lenox Avenue. While McIntyre worked with numerous musicians over the course of her career, Cecil Taylor was her most consistent early collaborator. They first worked together in 1974, creating an improvised tribute to Syvilla Fort, a well-known dancer from the Katherine Dunham Dance Company. In rehearsals, they quickly developed a rapid back and forth process where both Taylor and the dancers took cues from each other, attentively listening to and watching each other's improvisations. McIntyre recalls, 'Work with Cecil was totally cyclical. It was all coming at the same time: fast and furious' (Foster 2002, 87). Perhaps more than other musicians, Cecil Taylor had a dancer's sensibility and was able to recognize and remember sequences of movement. As McIntyre fondly recalls, 'Cecil was a very, very dance-oriented person. He knew dance back from, he would tell us back in 1940 dah, dah, dah, he saw the original ballet at the boom, boom, boom, dah, dah' (McIntyre 2000, 121–22). For McIntyre and Taylor, improvised dance was intensely intellectual and bound with an understanding of social dance history. Perhaps most important, the rapid, improvised exchanges that occurred between the musicians and dancers that worked within Sounds in

Motion engendered a radical understanding of embodied ensemble. According to McIntyre, 'It was like Cecil and I and the dancers, we all came into be like one body' (2000, 113). Elsewhere, she explains:

As I went on and on, I realized that music was so special to me that the dance actually was the music, so that the dancer's body became a musical instrument. So it began more and more to merge with the music, and I found that there is no difference between the dancer and the music. (Goler 1994, 77)

McIntyre's collaborations with free jazz musicians, which emerged out of a deep love for the music and a vested interest in the era's black radicalism, resulted in critical insights regarding gendered relations between music and dance. As noted earlier, McIntyre's work challenged the notion of a 'master brotherhood'. In 1976, Marcia Siegel tried to make sense of McIntyre's place within an emerging genre of 'black dance', explaining:

McIntyre's dance is black in a particular way that hasn't previously been explored by black choreographers, and that perhaps even McIntyre hasn't fully crystallized yet . . . I think her being a woman is part of it—not only because virtually the entire contemporary black dance idiom has been shaped by men, but because McIntyre is the kind of woman she is. (Siegel 1976, 25)

According to Veta Goler, 'Chronologically and artistically, after Katherine Dunham and Pearl Primus, Dianne McIntyre was the next major African-American female modern dance choreographer' (Goler 2005, 293).

Still, most of the musicians with whom McIntyre collaborated during the formative years of Sounds in Motion were male—Cecil Taylor, Butch Morris, Doug Hammond, Ahmed Abdullah and Olu Dara. In a recent conversation, I asked McIntyre to discuss her early work with musicians. Specifically, I asked whether she was aware of gender at the time—whether her being a woman affected dynamics within the ensemble.⁴ McIntyre agreed that she worked primarily with male musicians during the 1970s, although there were a few exceptions: Sharon Freeman (pianist and french hornist), Amina Claudine Myers (pianist and vocal composer/arranger), and Gwendolyn Nelson Fleming (vocalist), who was a part of Sounds in Motion from the very beginning. After noting these female musicians, McIntyre explained, 'I was enamored by the music, and wasn't really thinking about gender at the time'. Still, she noted that, because there was very little precedent for the ensemblic work she was doing, getting the musicians on board required a certain degree of 'diplomacy'. Few of the musicians had worked with dance. According to McIntyre, 'There might have been a bit of male dominance, but I didn't think about it in those terms at the time'.

Before long, however, memories began to flow and McIntyre recounted an instance where gender played a big role. It involved a duet with a male drummer, whom McIntyre declined to name. The two had rehearsed together for hours, developing a plan for their upcoming performance. Like much of McIntyre's work, it would be a structured improvisation, determined mostly by energy, tempo,

and rhythmic concerns. Although rehearsals were great, the drummer adopted an intensity in performance that had been entirely absent in rehearsals. According to McIntyre, he didn't pay attention to anything she was doing (the antithesis of ensemblic improvisation); instead, he sat there, laughing as he aggressively pounded upon his instrument. McIntyre recalled dancing with her back to the audience, screaming at the musician: 'What are you doing?' She explained that, at the time, they couldn't have had the same power. He was in charge. McIntyre exclaimed, 'it was like he was trying to beat me down'.

The effects of gender on McIntyre's early work were far-reaching, even in performances far less spectacular than the incident described above. These effects certainly aren't reducible to the fact that there were more male musicians in the new music scene than female musicians, and more professional dancers in New York who were women than men (although these differences are certainly important to note). It is important to reckon with the fact that McIntyre felt she didn't have access to the same power that the male drummer drew upon. It is also important to think about form. Although McIntyre's ensemble shared space and developed vibrant improvisational exchanges during rehearsals, performances typically occurred in conventional settings with the musicians offstage and the dancers visually framed, front and center. The musicians were heard and the dancers were seen. McIntyre departed from these gendered conventions, however, in a performance with Abbey Lincoln, a radical performer who greatly expanded the role of the black female vocalist. According to McIntyre, working with Lincoln for the first time was a 'magical' experience. It is particularly important for this issue of *Women and Performance*.

The Freedom Now Suite

Born Anna Marie Wooldridge in Chicago, 1930, Lincoln was raised in Michigan. Moving to Los Angeles in 1954, she assumed a variety of stage names as she built a career as a sultry supper club singer, marketed as a black version of white sex symbols, most notably Marilyn Monroe. During the mid 1950s, she changed her name from Anna Marie to Gaby Wooldridge, to the popular Gaby Lee. *Ebony* introduced the young star to its public, exclaiming 'The hottest new singer to hit Hollywood this season is a tall, shapely, torch-voiced lass who is billed as Miss Gaby Lee' (Griffin 2001, 163). Not long afterward, in 1957, *Ebony* presented a series of photographs with Lincoln clad in famous dresses of Marilyn Monroe, imitating many of the blonde's poses. As Farah Jasmine Griffin explains, Lincoln was being groomed for a particular role, 'poised to inherit the mantle of black sex symbol, a browner version of... café au lait chanteuses' (2001, 163). Lincoln recalls that, with a repertoire that consisted entirely of love songs, 'I didn't yet think of myself as a serious artist or as a serious person either. All I wanted was to be thought of as beautiful and desirable' (2001, 165).

This would soon change. In 1956, at the instigation of her manager, Gaby Lee changed her name yet again, this time to Abbey Lincoln, derived from the country's sixteenth president. The civil rights movement was gaining momentum and Lincoln found herself diverging from the seemingly simple chanteuse. 'It was the early days of the civil rights movement', Lincoln recalls:

and we were all asking the same questions. But they were questions that glamour girls weren't supposed to ask. As I toured the country, I noticed that black people everywhere were living in slums, in abject poverty. I wanted to know why. (Porter 2002, 151)

Paralleling McIntyre's collaborations with the Master Brotherhood in the 1970s, Abbey Lincoln moved to New York in 1957 and stepped into a scene of politicized black male musicians. She started to write her own lyrics, and began to record with Max Roach. In 1959, just as black male musicians began rejecting the term 'jazz', Lincoln embraced the term as offering possibilities for political assertion not otherwise open to black female singers. She explains to *Jet* magazine that year, 'I'm a black woman, and I have to sing about things I feel and know about—jazz. In the supper clubs something inside me isn't content' (Porter 2002, 153). Soon after moving to New York, she stopped straightening her hair and stopped visiting her voice coach, with whom she had worked to remove her 'Negro' intonation (2002, 153).

Expanding the role of the female jazz vocalist, Lincoln committed herself to socially conscious songs and adopted an increasingly instrumental approach to singing. She experimented with timbre and vocal technique, and participated in Roach's musical arrangements much like the other players. While this move toward instrument widened Lincoln's range of vocal expression (moving away from lyrics toward abstract sound), it also opened up an increasingly participatory role for the female vocalist within the male-dominated world of jazz ensemble. As noted by Eric Porter, one can trace Lincoln's shift by comparing three consecutive Riverside recordings, all made in the late 1950s: *That's him* (1957), *It's magic* (1958), and *Abbey is blue* (1959). In these albums, the influence of Billie Holiday's timing and self-assured approach to lyrics becomes more apparent. In addition, the songs Lincoln selects increasingly show signs of the black freedom movement, engaging with social problems beyond those that occur within romantic relationships. Although *That's him* contains mostly love songs and standards, Lincoln presents sorrowful tales about injustice in *Abbey is blue*. This stark album contains a song called 'Lonely house', with lyrics from a Langston Hughes poem about loneliness and urban alienation, as well as 'Let up', a 14-bar blues with lyrics written by Lincoln herself (Porter 2002, 166). Mid-way through this song, Lincoln repeats the phrase 'ease up' three times, and then plaintively asks, 'When will trouble ease up? How much can a body abide?'

In the late summer of 1960, Lincoln performed the vocals for *We insist! The freedom now suite*. The drummer Max Roach and lyricist Oscar Brown Jr. intended this work to commemorate the centennial of Abraham Lincoln's 1862

Emancipation Proclamation. However, fueled by the 1960 student sit-ins, Roach created a shorter version to express solidarity with the civil rights movement. First recorded in the fall of 1960, the album featured Nigerian drummer Michael Olatunji and tenor saxophonist Coleman Hawkins, in addition to Roach, Brown, and Lincoln. In the work, Lincoln exploded expectations regarding 'song' and conventional comportment for the female 'singer', screaming and wailing rather than merely singing lyrics. Her experimentation with vocal range reached an unprecedented dynamism in *Triptych: Prayer, protest, peace*, a duet for Lincoln and Roach that constitutes the powerful middle section of the five-part *Freedom now suite*.

Even recordings of *Triptych* can be harrowing, pulling the listener through the arc of the work. Although 'Prayer' begins with sparse, steady runs of a snare drum, Lincoln's voice then emerges, projecting a wordless spiritual over and around Roach's accompaniment. Her voice pushes out in deeply resonant tones, emitting round sounds, full of undulation. Direct, purposeful wails waft out from deep cavities. 'Protest' then pierces this resonant prayer as Lincoln begins to scream. The drumming picks up with crashing symbols and furious rolls. Again and again, she screams. Shrill, urgent sounds shoot through her throat, like there's not enough space. But they extend outward, piercing everything in their path. Each shriek evokes rape, witness, passage, horror, murder, protest, song. But Lincoln's voice returns to a lower register in 'Peace'. With deep sighs and ample breath, the work concludes as Lincoln's lilting voice streams over a steady rhythmic pulse. Roach describes this final section as 'the feeling of relaxed exhaustion after you've done everything you can to assert yourself. You can rest now because you've worked to be free' (Porter 2002, 169).

The freedom now suite offers a keen articulation of protest, inseparable from Lincoln's screams. Lincoln maintains that screaming 'freed her up', which she attributes to the male musicians with whom she worked, most notably Roach, whom she married in 1962 and divorced in 1970. Their relationship, however, was both inspiring and frequently brutal. Lincoln recalls, '[Roach] was willing to give me everything as long as I did what he said' (Griffin 2001, 181). Elsewhere, she recalls, 'Max and I were divorced in 1970 and I was like a wounded animal' (2001, 181). She then checked herself into a psychiatric hospital for five weeks. As much as Lincoln's screams exorcised pain and projected urgent protest, they doubled back and took a psychic and bodily toll. Lincoln damaged her vocal chords in the performance of 'Protest' (2001, 172). It hurts to scream like that.

The more one listens, the more one realizes that there's no easy division between art and life in *The freedom now suite*. This becomes particularly clear in Fred Moten's 'improvised notes', taken during a Jazz Study Group interview with Abbey Lincoln in 1999:

I was born the tenth of twelve children . . . /I visited a psychiatric hospital 'cause Roach said there was madness in the house. He said it wasn't him, so I figured it must be me/they had me hollering and screaming like a crazy person;

I ain't hollering and screaming for my freedom. The women I come from will take something and knock you . . . /Monk whispered in my ear, 'Don't be so perfect'. He meant make a mistake; reach for something/ I didn't think a scream was part of the music/We were riding in the car with my nephew who was eight years old and who said 'The reason I can scream louder than Aunt Abbey is 'cause I'm a little boy'/Went all over the world hollering and screaming . . . I got rid of a taboo and screamed in everybody's face/We had to go to court; somebody thought Roach was killing me in the studio/My instrument is deepening and widening . . . It's holy work and it's dangerous not to know that 'cause you could die like an animal down here. (Moten 2003, 23)

Moten explains that his notes are 'a recording, an improvisation, of her [Lincoln's] words, troubled by the trace of the performance of which she tells and the performance of which that performance told' (2003, 22). Moten's passage of 'improvised notes' has an undeniable intensity. The words relentlessly spill onto the page, where some sentences break abruptly and others trail off unfinished. Perhaps an improvisation on Lincoln's words, crafted with attention to form and flow, is the only way that writing could approach the feeling of her performance. Regardless, this improvisational recording makes it clear that the sound of Lincoln's 'music', the 'holy work' of her screaming, is bound with real life horror that is racialized, gendered, sexualized, and frequently played out on the body. Immediately after Lincoln states that people thought Roach was killing her in the studio, she claims that her instrument—her voice, her body—is widening. As if an 'instrumental widening', which has everything to do with Lincoln's body, could justify the pain.

In the last chapter of *If you can't be free, be a mystery*, referring to the same presentation discussed by Moten, Farah Jasmine Griffin quotes Lincoln as explaining, 'I'm not the kind of woman that screams. I tried, and I couldn't scream' (Griffin 2001, 172). Despite these early feelings, Lincoln's experience with her nephew, and Monk, and Roach, and a whole lot of pain eventually led her to start screaming, and she has been doing so ever since. But what does it mean to be 'the kind of woman that screams'? The very fact that such a category exists, one from which a younger Lincoln wanted to distance herself, shows the gendered significance of Lincoln's urgent sound. On the one hand, it's what makes and signifies a woman as 'crazy'. But on the other hand, as Lincoln maintains, 'It's part of the protection of a woman that she can scream' (2001, 172).

New Dance: Prayer, Protest, Peace

In 1980, when it came time for McIntyre to perform *Triptych*, Roach and Lincoln hadn't performed together for 11 years, and neither of them had worked with McIntyre. Although McIntyre collaborated with other musicians on the bill to create fresh works for the *New dance* concert, *Triptych* was a pre-existing,



FIGURE 1

Dianne McIntyre, Abbey Lincoln and Max Roach rehearsing *Triptych: prayer, protest, peace* (1980). Photo by Laura Levine.

very famous piece, inextricably linked with the civil rights movement. But the addition of McIntyre's movement transformed the work.

As seen in rehearsal photographs (see Figure 1), McIntyre is lean and long-limbed, with narrow hips and broad shoulders. She wore dark tights and a three-quarter sleeve leotard, typical dance attire for 1980, showing lines and curves and slight motions of the body, including the dancer's breath. There's something fierce and austere in McIntyre's bodily exposure, a far cry from the Marilyn Monroe dresses that Lincoln modeled in the 1950s. McIntyre's hair is pulled back in a headscarf and, while clearly dressed for dancing, she is also dressed for work. Lincoln and Roach stand on either side of McIntyre, clad in street clothes. While their bodily positions are not as extreme or symmetrical as McIntyre's, one can imagine the sounds they emit as they move, especially knowing the *Freedom now* score. An urgent sound animates these photographs.

According to McIntyre, her dancing in 'Prayer' was clear and choreographed, even reverential. She felt supported by Lincoln's voice, even as it pushed her into the next place. In contrast, 'Protest' was explosive and almost entirely improvised. Dancing to it was 'very, very hard'. Although McIntyre recalls jumping and falling to the ground during 'Protest', frequently bruising herself in the process, the tone of her voice in a recent conversation suggests that this 'hardness' transcended mere scrapes and bruises. It also had something to do with the social-historical weight of Lincoln's sound. According to McIntyre,

although her relationship with Lincoln during the performance of 'Protest' was hard, it differed dramatically from her experience with the male drummer who attempted to 'beat her down'. Occasionally, McIntyre would move close to Lincoln, relating to her as another dancer. 'Peace', the final section of the work, was much calmer. McIntyre explains: 'It was real. What do you have to do to come back to your center? We found this from each other'.

Unlike most collaborations between musicians and dancers, particularly during McIntyre's era, *Triptych* moved beyond a relationship where Lincoln and Roach solely provided heard sound and McIntyre solely provided a seen body. The three performers took the stage together in their articulation of protest. In unusual fashion, reviewers responded. They acknowledged dancerly aspects of Roach and Lincoln's performance, while also noting McIntyre's musical approach. According to Linda Small:

[Lincoln] wrenches horrifying screams from her soul, actually rearing back and shaking the sounds out of her body. McIntyre explodes and flails as Roach creates a military drum roll overlaid with irregular, gunshot-like accents. (Goler 1994, 108)

While Small describes the ways in which Lincoln and Roach 'danced', Julinda Lewis Williams notes the musicality within McIntyre's motion:

As [Lincoln's] voice sighs and screams into the microphone and golden lights bounce off Max Roach's drums, McIntyre flings herself about, gliding on the notes and translating the rhythms into different parts [of] her body. (Lewis Williams 1994, 108)

As the reviewers attest, the performance magnified relationships between Lincoln's screams and her moving body, shaking and wrenching to release sound. As for Roach, even though his instrument differs from voice, his militaristic drum rolls also emerged out of gesture. And while McIntyre illustrated complex rhythmic structures, the performance indexed her body's interior space as well as her capacity to scream. In this unique performance, the three performers pushed with and against each other, screaming and moving in an articulation of protest that moves the gendered, sexualized and racialized worlds of music and dance—perhaps toward a space where neither is bound behind the other.

New Dance/New Dance Studies

The essays in this issue of *Women and Performance* further the critical movement of McIntyre's *New dance* concert. They all contain a rigorous vein of ethical questioning, and resist reductive configurations of music and dance. But the authors assembled here are not the only ones to pose questions, although they do so with remarkable skill. Rather, the essays in this collection are important, in large part, precisely because they recognize the questions

posed by the objects (which frequently are also subjects) of their inquiry. In *Exhausting dance: Performance and the politics of movement*, André Lepecki urges the field of dance studies 'to consider in which ways choreography and philosophy share that same fundamental political, ontological, physiological, and ethical question that Deleuze recuperates from Spinoza and from Nietzsche: what can a body do?' (Lepecki 2006, 6). Related to this question, although not identical to it, is a question that animates the field of performance studies: not 'What does a performance mean?', but rather 'What does it do?'⁵ The essays in this collection make it clear that, among other things, performing bodies have the capacity to pose questions—to engender, but also enact, *critique*.⁶

For Michel Foucault, the body's capacity to pose questions, often precisely by posing *as* a question, lies at the heart of his preferred mode of critique—something he calls 'problematization'. Rather than adopting the type of critique that methodically searches for singular solutions, Foucault analyzes the acts, practices and thoughts—the experiences—that pose questions for politics, as well as the social–historical conditions that enable specific and often contradictory responses to those questions (Foucault 1997, 114). In 'Polemics, politics, and problematizations,'⁷ Foucault explains:

For a domain of action, a behavior, to enter the field of thought, it is necessary for a certain number of factors to have made it uncertain, to have made it lose its familiarity, or to have provoked a certain number of difficulties around it. These elements result from social, economic, or political processes. (1997, 117)

Here, it is important to recognize that the 'difficulties' produced by certain actions and behaviors result from their relations with shifting processes. Nobody moves in a vacuum. It is also important to note that Foucault defines thought in a specific way. For Foucault, thought 'is what allows one to step back from this way of acting or reacting, to present it to oneself as an object of thought and to question it as to its meaning, its conditions and its goals' (1997, 117). In other words, thought is the motion by which one detaches oneself from one's actions in order to reflect on them. For Foucault, this is the terrain of ethical practice, something considered by several of the essays in this collection.

For example, drawing from Deleuze and Guattari's 'On the line' (and the attendant injunction to 'Form a line, never a point!'), Reginald Jackson discusses an ethical practice of slide guitar, where 'ethics' suggests an improvisational practice that differs from static 'moral' knowing. According to Jackson, this practice involves 'playing in the middle' rather than adopting the hitting approach exemplified by James Brown, who insisted on the power of the rhythmical 'one'. Recognizing that the 'one' is inseparable from a particular style of black masculinity, Jackson grapples with the presence of black female voices in slide guitar. Jackson also makes a vital distinction between sounding good and sounding well. He draws from his experience as a musician to discuss the gesture and touch that such playing requires.

Although music frequently emerges out of gesture, ethical sound production also requires listening. Recognizing this fact, several of the essays question the Western primacy of vision. As a choreographer who has danced in the companies of Trisha Brown, Douglas Dunn and Lucinda Childs, Hope Mohr reflects on her recent collaboration with acoustic ecologist Michelle Nagai, where the two artists embarked on urban soundwalks to explore somatic practices of 'listening well' through movement. For Mohr, listening serves as a metaphor for social and ecological awareness, as well as the foundation for an environmentally-based movement practice. Aural attunement is also imperative in Jenn Joy's 'Scattering sound: Choreographing movement as language,' where Joy analyzes the sonic force of DD Dorvillier's *No change or 'freedom is a psycho-kinetic skill'* (2004). Paying careful attention to Dorvillier's interactions with objects in the work (microphones, curtains, and a blue bucket), as well as listening for those objects' sonic reverberations, Joy argues that sound plays a vital role in choreography—emphasizing the limits of linguistic signification, but also providing a social critique of value. The journal also contains an interview with Zeena Parkins, a composer and improviser who, in addition to training as a dancer, has spent decades collaborating with experimental dance artists including DD Dorvillier, Neil Greenberg, John Jasperse, Jennifer Lacey and Jennifer Monson. Parkins reflects on the physicality of her playing and notes relations between gender and the need for amplification. She also explains how her work with dance has triggered musical concerns regarding gesture, force, and architecture.

When discussing their practice, musicians frequently invoke masculinist tropes of mastery, especially when discussing their instruments. Often, this represents an attempt to convey rigor. But what happens when the instrument is one's voice, or one's body? What does it mean that both Abbey Lincoln and Dianne McIntyre speak of their politicization and role within ensemble as requiring a move toward instrumental sound and motion? In 'Something's only "technical" when you don't know it,' Barbara Browning reflects on her conversations with musician Steve Coleman and dancer/choreographer Rosângela Silvestre, who have performed together frequently and maintain a vibrant exchange of ideas, even across continents. Considering the gendered significance of Silvestre's role within an ensemble full of musicians, Browning posits *instrumentality* as a critical concept that evokes both Austinian performativity and 'what's called in Candomblé cosmology *axé*: the power to make things happen'.

In 'Taste dissonance flavor escape,' Fred Moten discusses the history of the pose (being posed) in Western art. Presented as a prelude to a trumpet solo by Miles Davis, the essay begins with a discussion of Harriet Jacobs, then moves on to discuss Edouard Manet's *Olympia* (1863), Titian's *The Venus of Urbino* (1538), and a photograph taken in Thomas Eakins' studio entitled *African-American girl nude, reclining on couch* (1882). The essay is concerned primarily with the nexus between music, photography, and cinema. But through his careful reading of a

photographed little girl (with analyses of Immanuel Kant and Theodor Adorno along the way), Moten reckons with the convergence of movement and picturing, gesture, imagination, and, perhaps most importantly, choreography in confinement. Toward the end of his essay, Moten claims that Miles Davis ‘narrates a constriction that he dances out of by dancing in’. This suggestion of dance is more than mere metaphor. It’s critically important.

Over the course of his essay, Moten makes a series of significant turns—away from reified notions of freedom toward ongoing escape. This of course harkens back to this journal’s starting place: *The freedom now suite*. What does it mean to move (or not) in relation to a host of shifting social and historical constraints? Why was it hard for McIntyre to dance within Abbey Lincoln’s screaming sound? In what ways are divisions between music and dance entwined with other social strictures, and how does this impact one’s ability to move? In thinking about these questions and the various essays collected here, it seems important to return not only to *The freedom now suite*, but to its qualifying exclamation: *We insist!* Each term warrants consideration, both the exclamation and the suggestion of collectivity. Once again, Foucault’s discussion of problematization is informative:

I do not appeal to any ‘we’—to any of those ‘wes’ whose consensus, whose values, whose traditions constitute the framework for a thought and define the conditions in which it can be validated. . . . Because it seems to me that the ‘we’ must not be previous to the question; it can only be the result—and the necessarily temporary result—of the question as it is posed in the new terms in which one formulates it. (Foucault 1997, 114)

The essays in this collection do not present a singular program, and they both come from and move in multiple directions. They do not depend upon a pre-existing ‘we’. Yet they present a series of ethically grounded questions—provocative, diverse, and sometimes contradictory—that *do* something in the world. Resistant to tropes of mastery and delusions of arrival (what Foucault might call an ‘empty dream of freedom’, 316), their questions pose problems for gendered divisions between music and dance—with an energy that is nothing short of insistence.

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NOTES

1. *New York Post*, Friday, 13 June 1980, 42.
2. Portions of this introduction appeared in a chapter of my dissertation (*I want to be ready: Improvised dance as a practice of freedom*) that discusses Dianne McIntyre, along with the eight-year collaboration between Judith Dunn and Bill Dixon. While thinking about the role of improvisation in these collaborations between musicians and dancers, I began to analyze the gendered and racialized divisions between music and dance more broadly. The idea for this journal emerged as an extension of that work.
3. Here, McIntyre's relation to Graham constitutes an act of dis-identification, a concept José Muñoz develops in *Disidentifications: Queers of color and the performance of politics*. As a quintessential example, Muñoz describes James Baldwin's encounter with the white actress Bette Davis, as described in Baldwin's extended essay, *The devil finds work*. Gazing at the white female actress during a Saturday matinee, Baldwin explains, 'I gave Davis's skin the dead white greenish cast of something crawling from under a rock, but I was held, just the same, by the tense intelligence of the forehead, the disaster of the lips: and when she moved, she moved just like a nigger'. According to Muñoz, The example of Baldwin's relationship with Davis is a dis-identification in so far as the African-American writer transforms the raw material of identification (the linear match that leads toward interpellation) while simultaneously positioning himself within and outside the image of the movie star'. For both McIntyre and Baldwin, dis-identification proved to be not merely a fanciful act of imagination, but an important survival strategy.
4. Direct citations from Dianne McIntyre, unless otherwise noted, are from a telephone interview I conducted with her on 16 March 2007.
5. In their book reviews, both Jill Lane and Tavia Nyong'o note that this question is foundational for the field of performance studies.
6. Both Reginald Jackson and Fred Moten make this point explicitly in their essays. In 'Toward tensile humility: Gender, race, and the ethical praxis of slide guitar', Jackson writes: 'Each sounding of a note is suppositional to the extent that the total knowledge of its exact pitch is withheld by the slide's presence: each slid movement, in this sense, enacts the posing of a question: a gestured call to which the listening player lends response'. In 'Taste dissonance flavor escape', Moten discusses *African-American nude girl, reclining on a couch*, a photograph taken in Thomas Eakins' studio. He writes: 'The little girl is posed as an unarticulated question. She poses a question. The posing of the question is a gift. The little girl is posed. She poses. The little girl is (ap)posed, apposes. She is embedded in the history of a pose . . .' Later, he continues: 'The little girl poses a problem, posing as a problem, as a kind of thrownness, thrown into a problem and a pose and that pose's history'.
7. Polemics, politics, and problematizations: An interview with Michel Foucault' is an interview conducted by Paul Rabinow in May 1984, the month before

Foucault died. The conversation aimed to answer some of the questions frequently asked by American audiences.

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