

PARtake: The Journal of Performance as Research
Volume 3, Issue 2 – March 2021
ISSN: 2472-0860



Protean Knowledge

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Once questions reside in the body, they arise to be asked, sometimes in unexpected contexts. A continual engagement with these questions can constitute a lifelong pedagogy—at least that has been my experience. As an artist/scholar who creates both performed and written work, I have been drawn to arts-based educational models such as PaR (Practice-as-Research, also called Performance-as-Research or Performance-Based Research) and PiR (Practice-in-Research) that recognize the embodied knowledge of kinesthetic experience. I see the ongoing formulation, testing, and refining of one's assumptions about embodied archives as an essential part of this research and pedagogy. While discourses on the embodied archive recognize lived experience as expertise, these archives also have a politics to their collection and selection.¹²³ Like the assembly of documents in more traditional archives, such as photos, notes, textual material, audio, video, and other fragments, embodied archives go through a similar research, collection, and selection process. Elements like movement phrases, technical principles, knowledge of their historical development, a performer's intention, and a work's performed reception collaborate in the movement researcher's body, further layered with that body's individual and collective memories. The relations between these elements are all potential sites of embodied inquiry.

Bringing this knowledge to a pedagogical context raises new complexities that can alter initial knowledge relations. Thus, pedagogical operations are opportunities for reshaping the archive of a researcher's embodied knowledge. For instance, asking how a particular aspect of a current dance recalls an earlier work may inform the researcher's understanding of the current work's social relevance. Learning the specific choreographic operations applied to original phrase material may say something else about this same performed reference. An artist-researcher works with their bodily understanding by layering these knowledge referents, allowing new perspectives on known materials to alter their form and relation to one other. In this way, by affecting the tensegrity structure that holds an embodied archive's elements in place, new perspectives on a researcher's process for assembling embodied knowledge, and insights on its significance, can come into focus. That is what happened to me while attending a workshop led by performer and researcher Sherwood Chen.

As an artist/scholar researching dance lineages, pedagogic transmission, and the relationship of language to bodies in avant-garde dance after 1960, my research output includes both creative/performed work and written scholarship. While the two are not the same—a movement performance and an essay clearly take different skills to shape and communicate—I believe engaging them in conversation with each other deepens and advances the questions then taken back into each area to be crafted into final form. As a movement artist, I often attend trainings and workshops conducted by other artists in order to find ingredients to fold back into my performance work, or to gain new perspective on the preferences and choices I habitually employ. As a writer on embodied practices, I similarly read theoretical texts whose principles I then take into movement. I test ideas in different forms against each other to find new language for kinesthetic sensations in my writing. One of the main areas of my research is Japanese butoh, with a focus on its contested lineages and the various ways language moves through its bodies and practices.

In Chen's workshop, I encountered nuances regarding the relation between language and movement that I had not fully considered—ones that altered my understanding of an embodied archive's creation and transmission. The transformation in my understanding is apropos to the context. While the workshop was not explicitly designed to transform my embodied archive, its content highlighted questions concerning how dancers create, maintain, and transmit movement material. Chen's background further informed how untangling layers of ambiguity is not an attempt to clarify so much as to pose new questions. Chen is a peripatetic performer, movement researcher, and teacher working primarily in Europe, Brazil, and the US. He is one of a small handful of practitioners that lead the Body Weather-based training developed by Japanese artist Tanaka Min, along with Horikawa Hisako in Japan, Oguri in Los Angeles, CA, Katarina Bakatsaki and Frank van de Ven in Europe, and De Quincey Co in Australia.⁴ Tanaka's lineage contains many ambiguities, which the workshop amplified through a pedagogic lens. By tasking me with learning to create, care for, and pass on an embodied legacy that was inherited and only partial, I altered the way my researcher body operated as a site of learning. The workshop also highlighted the imperfections of any research process: the

informed yet often difficult decisions a researcher makes in relation to materials and how bodies fill in gaps to accommodate the present moment.

The intensive was held at Dock 11 in Berlin in summer 2018. Titled “Protean Progressions,” the week comprised a highly physical morning training session, followed by a series of afternoon compositional and experiential exercises. The workshop overall tracked sensations through a series of translations and transmissions led by language, both absent and present. The morning across-the-floor sequences were instructed through visual-physical demonstration nearly devoid of words. Questions, if they arose at all, were answered through further demonstration or at times via touch as Chen guided our awareness to certain areas of our bodies. Afternoons, in contrast, focused on language as a force to be reckoned with. We rapidly traversed through a series of transmutations between words, sensations, music, and movement phrases that we generated and then further altered. Our experiments seemed less geared toward revealing our own creative processes than toward a curiosity about how to engage and literally handle cultural materials. Choreographic scores, moods or atmospheres, images, sound—each was approached as an artifact or fragment. These documents, if you will, passed through a series of operations that altered their materiality as they were processed through our bodies. A newly fashioned embodied archive then informed the primary movement sequence for the week, including its motivation and final performance. Pedagogically speaking, each element we worked with was presented as a thing of value and ushered forward into a new world through creative prompts, yet with the knowledge that its initial form or worth would also be altered. The process was rapid, adding a level of precariousness and danger to the ethics of our actions. Discovering *what* was important to preserve in these protean progressions and *how* to care for them while keeping them alive was for me the research that unfolded throughout the week.

Japanese artist Tanaka Min developed Body Weather (*Shintai kisho*) in conversation with cultural critic Matsuoka Seigo in 1978. The practice is less a technique than an ideology.⁵ In the words of practitioner and scholar Zack Fuller, Body Weather “conceives of the body as a force of nature: omni-centered, anti-hierarchic, and acutely sensitive to external stimuli.”⁶ The most known aspect of the practice is the floorwork training, referred to as “MB.”⁷ Comprised of physical coordinations and repeated

patterns, sustained over time as movers proceed across the floor in lines, the process exhausts the body while sharpening the mind and ability to relate to the larger environment. While the teacher presents a specific sequence, in my experience the purpose is less to master movement than to rise to the challenge and maintain one's own inner "weather" amidst the many changing external elements. Body Weather also includes Manipulations—a hands-on practice between a giver and receiver that addresses joint mobility and flexibility—and a third aspect sometimes called Workshop or Laboratory, which includes a wide range of sensorial and image-derived practices for exploring aspects of perception and relation.⁸

Chen was a member of Tanaka's company Maijuku in its later years, yet he neither considers himself an authority on Body Weather, nor what he imparts to be the only approach to this movement research. He clearly credits the knowledge gained during his time with Tanaka, yet he also claims ownership of the direction he has taken the practice within his own teaching. Chen's "technique classes"—two-hour MB trainings that are often positioned at dance centers alongside other more standard movement forms—are highly physical and energetic. Sweaty and rigorous even for an advanced dancer, they include little or no spoken instruction. MB sessions easily sit alongside other dance techniques because they include similar elements, only flipped. They bring the principal of challenge found in Western dance classes to the forefront, relegating movement vocabularies, placement, form, and specific movement combinations to secondary consideration in service of this aspect. Some may leave these classes thinking this *is* Body Weather, particularly since they can be stand-alone offerings, and in my experience with several teachers there are recognizable coordinations and a similar across-the-floor structure. However, there are also signature patterns that are of Chen's design. Certain rolls on the floor with quick changes in direction, for instance, are not aspects I have experienced with other teachers. Chen also sees MB as linked to the afternoon research sessions, even though he does not always teach the two components together.

Questions of lineage and language came into relief in the afternoon sessions. These extended periods took a considered yet ambivalent view of codified methods and their transmission, anchored in Chen's relation to Tanaka and to butoh. Other

composition and research-based workshops of Chen's I have attended both prior and since this one have touched on similar themes regarding ancestry, knowledge, and the student-teacher relationship. Their quality of being both intellectually stimulating while at the same time evoking strong feeling states and raising poignant ethical concerns is what intrigues me as a researcher working through embodied sensibilities in both words and movement.

This particular workshop, however, activated my research questions more astutely, in large part due to the pedagogy itself. The way the research questions were delivered as a learning tool for participants, and the speed at which transformations took place, left little time for sentimentality or preciousness, yet in doing so called forth the foundation of our own decision-making processes and the ways each of us organize movement and linguistic knowledge in order to move on and take further action. Chen posed rigorous and specific compositional strategies without mandated outcome, allowing me to locate my research questions alongside the material. Specific points included: What kinds of "corruptions" get incorporated into embodied archives through transmission processes? What choices and obligations do researchers have in acknowledging them, and are these different than choices dancers make within another choreographer's work? What responsibilities do students have to a teacher's intention? Finally, what can be learned under conditions of partial knowledge, particularly when one needs to assert a position and "perform" that knowledge?

Chen provided his own background within Tanaka's lineage as a model for our investigations. Using language as the entry point to questions of transmission, he highlighted that lived experience is necessarily a process of both respect and "corruption" within our global and multiracial world. Chen is Taiwanese American and was raised in California. He noted that while he speaks some Japanese, he is not fluent. Thus, the score he would share with us was already suspicious in its English translation from Japanese. While "corruption" is often defined negatively as gaming the system for personal advantage, one could equally approach it as a means of survival, especially if continuing within a given circumstance leaves no other choice. Perhaps all actions carry a degree of dishonesty, if honesty is understood as complete reverence to an original, without room for adaptation. Following this view, despite intentions toward preservation of artifacts

and their histories—which include intangible aspects such as artists’ legacies and our own ethnic heritage—transmission is never total. Instead, people and objects necessarily transform. Thus while language often betrays dance by attempting to represent or otherwise describe experience, its betrayal in this case was invited into the process.

Chen presented us with an order for 21 movements from one of Tanaka’s language-based scores, delivered verbally. The score’s specific movements were originally developed with dancers of the Body Weather Laboratory workshops in Hachioji, yet Chen denied us access to that particular movement sequence. Instead, we were to translate the word-based score into a specific set of movements, and then back and forth again between these modes in subsequent steps throughout the week. Here, movement was neither more nor less revered than language, and in their exchange something else started to sift out. I was reminded time and again that how we observe, hold, and move with materials as they transform is how knowledge becomes liberated—a view held by many active learning pedagogies and examined via PaR.

The language score itself was exacting. It involved a creature with long hair in water up to a specific level on the body. There were certain off-balance angles, the sensation of bubbles and of being pushed on the shoulder, looking back and crying out, wiping tears from the face, falling asleep, seeing oneself at a distance, and other conditions and gestures of transformation, all to return again to the sequence’s beginning. We each found our way through the sequence as Chen first read, then asked us to memorize the order. We then assembled in a tight line to move through it together. Spacetime was elastic,⁹ expanding and collapsing through our various connections: to the score’s progression, to its dynamic qualities, and to each other, literally shoulder to shoulder in the line, moving as a kind of collective consciousness. If one forgot what came next, another’s gestures would provide the insight, less through vision than through proprioception. The aim was to inhabit the same world, even if a viewer might not know what that was.

The overall project of manipulating language into movement and back again through the body was complemented by a series of other stand-alone exercises. Prior to learning the score, we had engaged one on “other power dependence,” a Buddhist value here practiced as a movement principle rather than as a spiritual goal. Chen asked us to

move in contact with a partner where one is a “passenger” to the other’s wills and desires. It was difficult to affirm individuality when one was also literally supporting and caring for another body’s weight in contact with one’s own; thus, the exercise early on called out the tension between asserting oneself while not harming another. Blindfolds were then added to eliminate the primacy of vision for orientation. Then there was language. We were asked to talk from various perspectives, such as third person plural future tense, as a way to both find and lose subjectivity. We also wrote from these perspectives in notebooks and read the writings to partners to inspire further action. We overloaded the senses as a way to disorient more common, direct, and autonomous methods of transmission. Instead, we had to partly rely on another body to maintain the task, while also stepping up to take responsibility for our actions.

The next step in the main score’s progression was to take the movement sequence and corrupt it further by writing it in our own language from the third person female perspective, as we’d practiced in the stand-alone exercise. Here, my imagination took hold, yet with the specificity that the original score delivered by Chen also entailed. I created a fantastical situation of beautiful tragedy in which to place my creature. In writing, we were also granted that ability to infer other elements like costume, make up, and hair to create this image, as well as setting a vantage point for a viewer. For instance, perhaps this image is seen from above. The result was that each of us would hold a shared world based in reference to the earlier score, yet with our own specific flavor. Chen referred to the process as “reverse engineering,” where the corruption in language would not be simply solved by movement. Language and movement colluded, and both had to be handled as materials that were simultaneously intimate and distanced from us, embodied as ours but also from elsewhere. In this way, our own language was folded into the movement process alongside the original in its corrupted translation. This new artifact was then once again transmitted through embodied means when we worked with a partner. As we formulated the language that would become the new score danced by another, we had already created an archive of memories in our own bodies that would serve as a reference for the language each of us would then receive once we switched roles.

The permutations of the score progressed each day, coupled with other one-time experiences like that of the earlier-mentioned “other power dependence,” which added perspectives to the process. A second exercise mid-week accessed the memory, sensation, and duration of our body’s repertoire more directly. We assembled in a large circle, each having contributed a recorded song. Keeping our eyes closed, we were instructed to move to the music, and when our own song came on, we opened our eyes and watched others move to it. It was easy to see which songs awakened memories or held resonance in which bodies, and which for whom there was no connection. The process took many hours, and was followed by an individual performance of one’s song with a partner. Here, I experienced the duration of an emotion as I followed the sensations of the memories the song stirred up. While somewhat peripheral to the language transformations, this exercise provided a personal and emotional context to the final steps in the larger language-movement transmission process.

Explorations of language and body memory throughout the week recalled the earlier work of Hijikata Tatsumi. Purported founder of *ankoku butoh* or dance of darkness, Hijikata was part of an artistic circle in the 1950s and 60s in Tokyo that included cultural critics and writers such as Mishima Yukio and Tanemura Suehiro. Hijikata sought to develop a current art practice that was uniquely Japanese and that would speak through the body against modernism as a Western advancement. Hijikata wrote surreal and imagistic scores meant to invoke situations in which dancers had to track multiple details and various transformations. Scholars have characterized Hijikata’s choreographic language innovation, *butoh-fu*, as effectively “tying the body up with words” and “turning it into a material object, an object that is like a corpse.”¹⁰ The language scores are sometimes described as disconnecting the joints of sentences, with the intention of eliciting the same effect on the socialized body’s connective logic.¹¹

Hijikata was neither alone in his thinking about the relation between bodies and language, nor in his desire to experiment by continually changing forms as a method of cultural commentary. Ohno Kazuo often accompanies Hijikata as a co-founder in *butoh* histories and has written eloquent poetic directions for archetypal improvisation,¹² while Kasai Akira also worked with Hijikata but has taken his own language-body experiments in a more sonic and contemporary direction.¹³ There are also key women in this lineage

such as Ashikawa Yoko who are often missing from the literature. Thus while *butoh* histories tend to return to a singular male figure, there are multiple pathways into and out of this lineage, not all of them housed in a singular archive.

It is important to stress, particularly within this conversation of lineage and corruption, that Tanaka has assertively distanced himself from the label “*butoh*,” a word Chen approaches with caution as well. While Tanaka was impressed by Hijikata’s sense of presence early on, he developed his career independently, and his focus has been on the sensitivity of the body to stimulation from the environment. However, Tanaka did work briefly with Hijikata in the 1980s shortly before Hijikata’s death, and the image-based component within *Body Weather* research is a direct result of Hijikata.¹⁴ Chen sees this link as well and shared the *butoh-fu* for *Rose Girl* in our explorations. In addition, Tanaka similarly sought a community-based art practice, and it is through his group training that many in the US and Europe know and perpetuate his work. Eschewing art that “relies on rehearsals and works toward a fixed date” feeling that it forms a barrier between the dancer and the audience,¹⁵ Tanaka established a farm in the Yamanashi countryside where students lived and worked as art practice. The *Body Weather Farm*, as it was called, ran from 1986-2010. Here, students convened, drawn to an immersive training that differed from the more codified dance and theater offerings in the 1980s, both within and outside the academy. At the farm, students engaged agricultural labor in the mornings and workshops in the afternoon, but it was all considered art practice and the environment was the teacher. Tanaka’s second company, a multinational troupe called *Tokason*, grew out of the cooperative in the Yamanashi countryside.

Ironically, Tanaka’s legacy is in part defined by his linguistic rejection of the label “*butoh*,” raising questions of lineage and citation that as Chen’s workshop progressed became further points of our research. We next read our new language score to a partner who moved to the words in order for us to learn something about our own score. Here, certain points were clarified by seeing the image of another embodying our language. For instance, my score had a moment where I crouched at a low level and tilted my head abruptly to the side. My partner, not knowing my form as she heard my words, stood in a deep knee bend and threw her head and chest back instead. I incorporated her expressive torso movement with my own lower body form to create a new shape that

captured the feeling of violence and ecstasy I felt and sought to capture. Based on this collaborative sharing with our partner, we were then asked to “master” our dance. This role was uncomfortable, empowering, and necessary overall, otherwise the dance would be lost. I grappled with the weight of this responsibility for preserving this dance. I had not made it alone, yet how would others recognize all the voices that collided to bring it into existence? How could I embody the archive of this rich culture? Chen provided that this step questioned the authority of a singular genius, which again draws a parallel to critiques of Hijikata as butoh’s singular founder. Chen notes this of Tanaka as well, naming women such as manager and writer Kobata Kazue who tend to become invisible in male genius narratives.

Mastering “our” dance based on the score was not the end of the process, however. We then were to teach our dance to yet another dancer in the workshop referred to as our “apprentice,” using several distinct methods in rapid succession. We were to “sculpt” our apprentice, tailoring the dance to this specific body. The goal was to appreciate their ownership of the movement material rather than simply have them mimic the forms by copying the master. This type of pedagogic transmission through watching and moving with a teacher is common in many Asian movement forms, yet less common in Western ones.¹⁶ Like putting on a piece of clothing and fitting it to the body, the process required that as a newly appointed Western master, I had to discover *how* to transmit the dance to the apprentice. First, we used talking as a way to coach the apprentice on certain aspects. The apprentice would also ask questions for clarification. This was a telling exchange. I could see where the apprentice’s mind was and tried to move it toward certain aspects I found important, while also attending to their knowledge. It was pedagogy at work. The process also recalled what I have read of Zen koan practice with a teacher, whereby a question is posed to the student as a riddle of sorts, not to be directly answered but rather as a way to address the student’s state of mind. From here, we as masters were to guide by not speaking, instead using touch to escort the dance into its somatic realization. We used our hands and fingers to adjust shapes or accompany the moving bodies in directional flow. Finally, the master is gone and the apprentice is left to preserve the dance and bring it forward into the world.

Revealed to me in this transmission process from master to apprentice was that my concern was less with the movement material itself than in how the apprentice and I worked with it. Embodied archives of knowledge, as I have already noted, are unstable, continually changing and shifting not only in form but also in their significant attributes. This is why one can return to an earlier dance document and gain new insights from it. Here, I worked to expose how this particular body made connections between elements when learning in order to know which aspects of my dance to highlight, and how—for how my dance would be archived in this body relied on my understanding of their embodied archiving process. I had not chosen my apprentice and had spent an afternoon in a somewhat difficult extended exercise with them, yet this was the body available to entrust with the teacher's dance and its future performance. We also switched roles, and being an apprentice for another's dance invoked similar archiving questions as I sought to discard my habits and certain earlier movement references. I also experienced an unexpected sense of honor and responsibility. I did not know this new dance perfectly; the progressions in form had been rapid, yet I would be performing the result at week's end for others. How was I to fill in the gaps for the next generation through this performance? How would I respect the transmission I had received and preserve the original in some way while also bringing my own life into the moment? How could I be a passenger yet also bring my history to this dance, and then let it go in the present moment of performance?

Stepping into our final showing, I recognized that these questions were not singular to this particular workshop. Rather, they are ones to ask and refine within any research process. The task of a performer always concerns navigating a piece of choreography and one's embodiment of it, putting technique into practice,¹⁷ yet here I was most struck by the fact that this material had already lived through other bodies and histories throughout the week, and that my own body would further add to this archive. In this short intensive the objective and the subjective, the historical and the cultural, the creative and the codified—these aspects of a research process had unfolded in all their poignancy and messiness. Bodies, language, and memory—no one was more true or correct. Rather, their relation worked to clarify their roles, at times altering the dance's overall course. However, without a method and care for the materials involved, nuances

would have been lost and the translation might have been merely literal—an empty appropriation lacking life. When I speak of pedagogy, then, I speak to the way that this research unfolded at each step, and the attention given to each progression. As a secondary researcher within this process, I had the opportunity to look more deeply at the embodied archive I assembled during the week, including how and why I made certain choices, and how I might return them to language as I do here. Is it the movement that is fundamental, or the quality and atmosphere of the image? What memories are contained in which objects, and how are they carried forward? What knowledge do I hold but not convey, and why?

Research—the systematic study of materials and sources in order to make new observations and draw conclusions—is in its embodied form a relation between theory and practice where body archives are formulated, tested, refined, and continually revised. What I find compelling about this process, and how PaR and PiR are positioned within the academy, is that like butoh’s role in the dance and theater worlds, these educational models work within systems while also resisting their structures and codifications of knowledge—and they employ language in relation to bodies to do so. While PaR and PiR produce different scholarly products—one kinesthetic and the other written—what they share, in my understanding, is a sensorial attention to the relation between bodies and language that normally goes unremarked in more traditional educational settings. I particularly like Hannah Kosstrin’s articulation within PiR of “kinesthetic seeing,” where a researcher’s movement practice allows them to notice and thus analyze details in primary-source materials.¹⁸ Kosstrin refers to more traditional archival documents, yet I find a similar empathetic process when these documents are movement practices such as the ones Chen posed via Tanaka. Kinesthetic seeing in this case might be understood as attending to sensations—specifically the sensations produced when participant-researchers such as myself make choices in assembling movement sequences. How we select and organize them comes to alter embodied archives of knowledge as we work. Therefore the sensations that run through a dance’s elements, linking them in a body, also hold the DNA of a process.

Presently, a number of dance artists are asking similar questions about historical dance and its lineages. By example, Netta Yerushalmy’s *Paramodernities* (2019)

approaches iconic modern dance techniques and choreographic works from earlier eras with specificity as to certain—but not all—aspects, since she and her performer-collaborators have not spent a lifetime studying them. By adhering to these earlier works' integrity yet also altering them (i.e., these are not intended as reconstructions), her reenvisioning of the pieces and their histories serves as a means of critique as well as an activation of the archive. Racial and gender politics are key aspects of these dance inquiries as well.¹⁹ Chen in our interview cited a related project by French choreographer Anne Collod called *Moving Alternatives* (2019). The project reinterprets the work of early modern dance artists Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, known for their cultural borrowings and appropriation. As an artist in the project but not trained in these particular early modern techniques or holding the identities or perspectives of the initial makers, Chen noted that he needed to reconcile his own multiple identities, both within the original artists' complex relations to race and culture, and to those of the director of the project. What are the various routes and choices of this indirect transmission? How does one take their space within pathways created, carved out, stolen, or otherwise claimed by others? What is required to work seriously with the historical materials as given while also commenting on them through one's own history and lived experience?

Like many dancers, Chen makes his own scores within other choreographers' pieces.²⁰ While not explicitly shared with an audience, or even necessarily with the choreographer, these scores do comprise part of the archive of a particular dance, beyond that individual performer. What I call "microscores" affect the dance as a whole, and how and what it transmits to audiences at each performance. Chrysa Parkinson refers to this kind of expertise of dancers within works of which they are not the primary choreographer as "dance authorship."²¹ Workshops I have taken with Parkinson name the skills a dancer calls forth when creating within another's work, which are often assumed or unacknowledged. As a dancer myself within another's work, I have certainly created and performed these microscores, yet I never had language or even acknowledged this operation until more recently. One's research within another's research is also my experience as an artist-scholar within Chen's workshop—a research structure devised by another.

The workshop raised larger questions for me as well: to what degree are pedagogies within movement lineages such as butoh also methods for understanding cultural heritage or ancestral lineage? Hijikata's practice was in and of Japan, even as he borrowed from European sources, particularly early in his career. The protean pedagogy of Hijikata's work was first to bring in the European underworld of Jean Genet, Oskar Schlemmer, and Aubrey Beardsley, then to use these surreal influences to alter language—in this case a rural Japanese dialect—in order to refashion his Japanese identity. Chen seems to pose a similar perplexity regarding belonging in his relation to Tanaka's lineage and Tanaka's to butoh—and by extension to anyone whose background does not fit neatly into a linear official narrative. Mixing archival material with questions of process as we did with language and movement throughout the week allowed me as an embodied researcher to reconsider relations between elements rather than reabsorb them as additive knowledge into more common narratives. For instance, it is convenient to assume the across-the-floor movement within Body Weather is a technique similar to many Western dance pedagogies, yet in our interview I learned that Chen sees Body Weather's movement forms as disposable or mutable, and only 20% of the movements he provides are directly from Body Weather as learned in Tanaka's company and from other teachers like Oguri. Likewise, it is also convenient to understand the Manipulations within Body Weather as somatic bodywork, yet Chen resists this interpretation. Unlike Western somatics, the approach is not geared toward individualism or self-healing per se, and even in relation to Asian healing arts like qi gong or some yoga, these manipulations are not necessarily therapeutic. If Body Weather is approached as a pedagogy, then what it seeks to impart instead are its values: to “develop an ideal non-hierarchic body through exposure to a wide variety of physical stimulations and an egalitarian mimesis that inverts traditional pedagogical models.”²²

Chen's research pedagogy imparted certain key questions for each of us to answer: What are the necessary corruptions that happen as elements change shape and form in order to live on? What role do movement researchers play in the process of their transmission? What is our responsibility in accompanying them in their continued life? What stays with me now, two years later, is that throughout the workshop process we were always striving to do our best in the midst of forces beyond our control. As a dance

student this is often the case, but here I had a different sense of embodying that effort. Serious and humble, commanding and questioning, we listened, tried, wrote, watched, moved, and tried again, identifying conditions and finding our way with the knowledge that certain aspects would fall away as others continued. My participation in Chen's workshop called attention to multiple small fissures in my knowledge about practices I have studied for years, both as an artist and scholar. These small corruptions might be exploited not for personal gain but toward a rigorous research and performance process that keeps an embodied archive aware of its own habits and transformations. Denise Riley writes: "It is less that humans do things with language than that language does things with us, exerting torsion on its users, surprisingly without immobilizing them."²³ Language may not be trusted, but movement likewise shifts and transforms, and thus Martha Graham's adage "movement never lies" is equally suspect. Both language and movement are elements in the environment that stimulate a dance body, and their ongoing relation is an important site of learning within any embodied research practice.

¹ Bill Bissell and Linda Haviland, ed., *The Sentient Archive: Bodies, Performance, and Memory* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2018).

² André Lepecki, "The Body as Archive: Will to Re-Enact and the Afterlives of Dances," in *TDR: The Drama Review*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (2010), 28-48.

³ Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 2003).

⁴ While I have attended Body Weather workshops offered by different practitioners, I am not a scholar of Body Weather or Tanaka Min's work, and the background I provide here should not be understood as comprehensive. Chen noted that those I list here (ones who frequently teach internationally and who I have encountered) are first generation practitioners; he considers himself part of a younger generation (Sherwood Chen, correspondence with author, October 21, 2020). I thank Chen for this and other details provided.

⁵ John (Zack) Fuller, "On Endless Dance: Tanaka Min's Experimental Practice," PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2016.

⁶ Zack Fuller, “Seeds of an Anti-Hierarchic Ideal: Summer Training at Body Weather Farm,” in *Theatre, Dance, and Performance Training*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2014), 197.

⁷ In my interview with Chen he noted that MB stands alternately for mind/body, muscle/bone, movement/balance, and mud/bullshit, referring to Tanaka’s farm. Fuller also notes these and several other interpretations; see John (Zack) Fuller, “On Endless Dance: Tanaka Min’s Experimental Practice,” PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2016, 275.

⁸ For more on Body Weather’s components, and Manipulations in particular, see Joa Hug, “Writing *with* Practice: Body weather Performance Training becomes a Medium of Artistic Research,” in *Theatre, Dance, and Performance Training*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (2016), 168-189.

⁹ I draw this term from Henri Bergson’s notion of duration, as discussed by Erin Manning in relation to movement and elasticity: Erin Manning, *Always More Than One: Individuation’s Dance* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2013).

¹⁰ Nanako Kurihara, “The Most Remote Thing in the Universe: Critical Analysis of Hijikata Tatsumi’s Butoh Dance,” PhD diss., New York University, 1996, 17.

¹⁰ Bruce Baird, *Hijikata Tatsumi and Butoh: Dancing in a Pool of Gray Grits* (New York: Palgrave, 2012).

¹¹ Bruce Baird, *Hijikata Tatsumi and Butoh: Dancing in a Pool of Gray Grits* (New York: Palgrave, 2012).

¹² Kazuo Ohno and Yoshito Ohno, *Kazuo Ohno’s World: from Without and Within* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1999).

¹³ Megan Nicely, “Growing New Life: Kasai Akira’s Butoh,” in *The Routledge Companion to Butoh Performance* (London and New York: Routledge, 2018), 192-202.

¹⁴ John (Zack) Fuller, “On Endless Dance: Tanaka Min’s Experimental Practice,” PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2016, 116-17.

¹⁵ Mariko Kato, “In Step with Nature, If Not with Celebrity,” in *The Japan Times*, 14 June 2007, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/culture/2007/06/14/stage/in-step-with-nature-if-not-with-celebrity/> (accessed 18 October 2020).

¹⁶ Tomi Hahn, *Sensational Knowledge: Embodying Culture through Japanese Dance* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007).

¹⁷ For an in-depth discussion of how embodied practice is structured by knowledge as technique, see Ben Spatz, *What A Body Can Do: Technique as Knowledge: Practice as Research* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015).

¹⁸ Hannah Kosstrin, “Kinesthetic Seeing: A Model for Practice-in-Research,” in *Futures of Dance Studies*, eds. Susan Manning, Janice Ross, and Rebecca Schneider (Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2020), 19-35.

¹⁹ See for instance Gerald Casel’s *Dancing around Race* conversation and “Peiling Kao on per[mut]ing” in response to Hope Mohr’s 2016 Bridge Project “10 Artists Respond to *Locus*” and postmodern dance more generally: Peiling Kao, “Peiling Kao on

per[mute]ing,” 27 October 2016, <https://www.hopemohr.org/blog/2016/10/27/peiling-kao-on-permuteing> (accessed 19 October 2020).

²⁰ Sherwood Chen in discussion with the author, San Francisco, CA, 9 January 2020.

²¹ Chrysa Parkinson and Romain Bigé, “Real-Time Authorship,” in *Contact Quarterly*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (2018), 19-23.

²² John (Zack) Fuller, “On Endless Dance: Tanaka Min’s Experimental Practice.” PhD diss., The City University of New York, 2016, 14.

²³ Denise Riley, *Impersonal Passion: Language as Affect* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 3.