



RAISA FOSTER

The Pedagogy of Recognition

Dancing Identity and Mutuality



ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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Abstract

This dissertation describes an educational space in which questions of identity as well as mutuality are brought to the fore. It concerns a dance animateuring project called *Katiska*, which started in summer 2007 in Finland. *Dance animateuring* refers to the practice of artistic creation, where the steps of the dancers originate not from a choreographer, but from collaborative improvisatory work by the performers under the guidance of an animateur. Dance animateuring means dance activity which aims to celebrate every person's own natural mode of expression through movement. Therefore the purpose of dance animateuring is not to achieve mastery of any particular dance technique or style, but rather to discover everyone's own expressing, moving, living body. On the other hand, through body and movement, a specific theme can also be investigated. By increasing body awareness, dance animateuring aims to dig deeper into the means of identity and self and by doing so, support the growth of humanity. Dance animateuring intertwines the body and the mind; therefore it is an attempt to return to the understanding of humans as holistic beings.

The artistic exploration was built on a marked interest in the emancipation of the suppressed voices of young men. It was guided by the question: What would these young men tell about themselves? The answer to this question was presented through movement and music in *Katiska*, which premiered on 8 May 2008 in Tampere, Finland. The practice-led research journeyed through various phases of improvisation, performance, discussion, analyses, reading and writing, on its way to answering to this question: *How does dance animateuring create a space for recognition*; understood broadly as identification, self-recognition and mutual recognition?

First the book presents the theoretical background for the bodily-practice-based inquiry. The whole practice is built on a phenomenological understanding of the body as *lived*. The ontological and epistemological position is mostly derived from Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. Then the book moves on to the methodological discussion and proposes a new practice based method, *eragraphy*, which was inspired by the North American new paradigm qualitative research methodologies such as a/r/tography and crystallization. I coined the term *eragraphy* by combining the words *education*, *research* and *animateuring*. The name *eragraphy* also refers to a description of an era. In other words it is, borrowing from ethnography, a "thick" description of a chosen aspect of human existence – in this case of recognition – in the context of postmodern era. The *eragraphical* practice requires the mind of

a nomad, the willingness to wander about – especially on the pathways of the previously *unknown*.

Second, the book presents a new pedagogical theory, *the pedagogy of recognition*. It mainly follows Paul Ricoeur's *The Course of Recognition* which offers a template to organize more analytically what is practised intuitively; the experienced, the artistically initiated and the empirically collected material of this research. The section proposes a change in pedagogical thought on three levels. First, it proposes an attitude of improvising instead of producing. In other words, it claims that new understanding can occur when we shift our action from knowing to recognizing. The second section of this chapter describes the concepts of identity as narrative and performative. It also presents self-recognition as a way of recognizing personal capacities and responsibility. In the third section the course of recognition ends with mutual recognition, where the questions of love, justice and esteem are brought to the fore as well as the conceptions of alterity, ambiguity and dialogue. The section also proposes a new concept, *I-lessness*, the disappearance of the object self, which can be experienced in dancing with others.

This dissertation does not aim to promote dance as its main goal; dance is not the object of the examination, but rather an example of various possible venues, in which individuals can meet in the spirit of recognition. In this research, dance has served as one of the methods of collecting research data (the dance animateuring project) as well as a way of reporting findings (the *Katiska* performance); but most of all, it has been, for its part, a *space* for people to come together and to understand a little more of life, the world and human existence.

Tiivistelmä – Finnish abstract

Tutkimus muotoilee uudenlaisen pedagogisen ajattelun mallin, *tunnustuksen pedagogian* (pedagogy of recognition) *tanssi-innostamisen* (dance animateuring) käytännönprojektin ja Paul Ricoeurin *recognition*-käsitteen analyysin pohjalta. Se esittelee myös uudenlaisen kvalitatiivisen tutkimusmentelmän, *eragrafian* (eragraphy), joka on kehitelty pohjoisamerikkalaisista *a/r/tography*- ja *crystallization*-menetelmistä.

Tanssi-innostamisella ei ole vain taiteellisia vaan myös sosiaalisia, poliittisia ja eettisiä tavoitteita. Tanssi-innostaja (eng. dance animateur) on yhteisötaiteilija, joka innostaa ja kannustaa ihmisiä paitsi vastaanottamaan myös tekemään itse tanssitaidetta. Tanssi-innostamisessa ei ole kyse minkään tietyn tanssitekniikan opettelusta tai tanssilajin hallinnasta, vaan kehotietoisuuden laajentamisesta ja oman ilmaisun löytämisestä tanssi-improvisaatioharjoitusten avulla. Tanssi-innostaminen on sellaista tanssillista toimintaa, jonka pyrkimyksenä on löytää kunkin oma luonteva tapa liikkua ja ilmaista liikkeen avulla, mutta myös tutkia omaa minuutta sekä minän suhdetta toiseen ja ympäröivään maailmaan. Tanssi-innostamisen lähtökohtana on holistinen ihmiskäsitys: se on paluuta kokonaiseen ihmisyyteen, mielen ja kehon yhteyteen. Siihen kuuluu olennaisesti jokaisen ihmisen oman kehon ja oman liikkeen kunnioittaminen – sellaisena kuin se on. Innostamisella pyritään keskeisesti myös kulttuurisen demokratian saavuttamiseen, kun ihminen, myös lapsi ja nuori, tunnustetaan aktiiviseksi toimijaksi ja oman kulttuurinsa tuottajaksi. Tanssi-innostaminen ei ole vain *tanssiin* innostamista vaan myös *tanssilla* innostamista.

Tutkimuksen tanssi-innostamisen prosessissa syntyi monitaiteellinen *Katiska*-teos, joka kutsuu yleisön kuuntelemaan ja katselemaan nuorten miesten omaa tarinaa – liikkeen ja laulun keinoin kerrottuna. *Katiskaa* on esitetty vuosina 2008–2011 yhteensä 32 kertaa: kuudessa Suomen kaupungissa ja lisäksi neljässä muussa Euroopan maassa. Tutkimuksen taiteellista prosessia ohjasi emansipatorinen intressi: mitä nuoret miehet kertoisivat *itse* itsestään? Tutkimusprosessi kulki läpi improvisaatioiden, esitysten, keskustelujen ja analyysien, jotka lomittuivat lukemiseen ja kirjoittamiseen päätyen lopulta vastaamaan kysymykseen: *Miten tanssi-innostaminen luo pedagogisen tunnustuksen tilan?*

Tutkimus esittelee uudenlaisen taideperustaisen tutkimusmenetelmän, *eragrafian* (eng. eragraphy). *Eragrafinen* menetelmä ei ole vain taiteellista tutkimusta, vaan siihen kuuluu myös perinteisempien kvalitatiivisten tutkimusmenetelmien käyttö. *Eragrafinen* menetelmä on

muotoiltu pohjoisamerikkalaisista a/r/tography- ja crystallization-menetelmistä. Kanadassa 2000-luvun alkupuolella kehitetty a/r/tography muodostuu sanoista art 'taide', research 'tutkimus' ja teaching 'opettaminen'. Eragrafia-käsite on muodostettu saman mallin mukaisesti, mutta siten, että sana opettaminen korvautuu sanalla *kasvatus* (education) ja taide sanalla *innostaminen* (animateuring). Kun etnografia ymmärretään tietyn kansan, yhteisön tai kulttuurin kuvauksena, niin eragrafia-käsitteellä viitataan postmodenissa ajassa esiin nousevien ilmiöiden "tiheään" kuvaamiseen. Käsitteessä a/r/tography isotkirjaimet muodostavat sanan *art* 'taide'; omassa menetelmässäni esille nostetaan sana *era* 'aikakausi'.

Englanninkielinen sana *recognition* täytyy suomentaa aina asiayhteydestä riippuen joko 'tunnistamiseksi', 'tuntemiseksi' tai 'tunnustamiseksi'. Tunnustuksen pedagogia ehdottaakin kasvatusajattelun muutosta kolmella eri tasolla: ensinnäkin tietämistä tuottavasta opetustekniikasta kohti *tunnistavaa* (recognition as identification), improvisoivaa ja kokemuksellista kasvatuskohtaamista; toiseksi egoistisen itsevarmuuden korostamisesta kohti reflektioivaa *itsetuntemusta* (self-recognition), jossa oleellista on identiteetin ymmärtäminen narratiivisena ja performatiivisena; ja kolmanneksi suvaitsevaisuudesta erilaisuuden sietämisenä kohti *tunnustuksen* (mutual recognition) antamista ja vastaanottamista, eli minän ja toisen aitoa vastavuoroisuutta, jossa ilmiöiden ja identiteettien avoin, epämääräinen ja moninainen luonne ymmärretään rikkautena.

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Introduction: Dancing recognition

*Is it dance
Is it theatre
or is it just
life
love
freedom
struggle
longing
joy
despair
reunion
beauty
strength*

“Dance, dance... otherwise we are lost.” Pina Bausch¹

¹ From *Pina - a film for Pina Baush by Wim Wenders* (<http://www.pina-film.de/en/trailer.html>, accessed in 20th of October 2011.)

Pedagogy of recognition

This dissertation describes an educational space in which questions of identity as well as mutuality are brought to the fore. It concerns a dance animateuring project called *Katiska*, which started in summer 2007 in Finland. By *dance animateuring* I refer to the practice of artistic creation, where the steps of the dancers originate not from a choreographer, but from collaborative improvisatory work by the performers under the guidance of an animateur. At first, the *Katiska* project was conducted purely as performance development, but soon it turned into a research project as well. As the animateur, I conducted the work in collaboration with a music composer–instructor Maija Koskenalusta and, five young men, Jere, Mikael, Lauri, Rasmus and Valteri. In 2009 Aimo joined the project as a substitute performer.

The artistic exploration was built on a marked interest in the emancipation of the suppressed voices of young men. It was guided by the question: What would these young men tell about themselves? The answer to this question was presented through movement and music in *Katiska*, which premiered on 8 May 2008 in Tampere, Finland. The practice-led research has journeyed through various phases of improvisation, performance, discussion, analyses, reading and writing, on its way to answering to this question: *How does dance animateuring create a space for recognition*; understood broadly as identification, self-recognition and mutual recognition?

Over the past two decades the question of recognition has become one of the central themes in the theory of politics. In his book *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1977, originally as *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, 1907) Georg W. F. Hegel formulates his concept of the spirit as the product of mutual recognition. Hegel's theory of recognition exposes – something that all of us can also experience on an intuitive level – that respect from others as well as self-esteem are the principal demands which we must always understand both personally and politically. His conception of recognition is therefore closely tied to the claim of justice, as everyone has an equal right to have rights (Hegel 2001). The struggle for recognition is a reality in today's societies, and this is the reason why Hegel's model of mutual recognition is still relevant. Therefore it is not a surprise that after Hegel various philosophical accounts of recognition have been proposed, and the current theorists have developed theories, especially of political, recognition (see for example Honneth 1995, 2006; Taylor 1992, Habermas 2003, Fraser 2008, Butler 2004), also in Finland (see for example Ikäheimo 2003, Huttunen & Heikkinen 2006). The questions of rights, when it comes to gender, sexual and ethnic minorities, are also closely tied to the concept of recognition (see also Fraser 1996). The significance of particular demands for recognition, as well as the role of recognition in understanding human life more

generally, seems to stand as a major theme of contemporary philosophical discussion (see also Recognition Forum 2009).

Despite the growing attention towards recognition from various scholars, the concept and the term itself were not clarified before Paul Ricoeur's *The Course of Recognition* (2005). His lexical and philosophical analysis of recognition illuminates "a sense of perplexity having to do with the semantic status of the very term of recognition on the plane of philosophical discourse" (Ricoeur 2005, ix). This dissertation takes part in the wider discussion of recognition, but it mainly follows the steps of Paul Ricoeur's. Ricoeur's *The Course of Recognition* offers a kind of sketchy template to organize more analytically what is practised intuitively; the experienced, the artistically initiated and the empirically collected material of this research. Therefore my purpose is not to critically evaluate the previous theories of recognition, not even Ricoeur's, but to contribute to the current dialogue in its grass roots level of practice. My dissertation describes an animateuring process, which guided a way to the understanding of pedagogical recognition.

Recognition is intertwined with the concepts of identity and self-consciousness, and thus, the need for recognition is central to the whole human existence. Surprisingly there has been only a little research on recognition in pedagogical contexts (see Manen 2008, Ayala 2010). This dissertation aims to capture not just the cognitive and conceptual level of recognition, but also the pragmatic meanings, the expressive and the ethical importance of recognition. It understands pedagogy as a process of creating spaces, where the questions of identity and mutuality can exist side by side. It is not research on dance or dance education. My main intent is not to develop methods on how to teach dance or how to create or analyse dance as an art work – even though those too can be informed by this research – but rather to understand what happens in the successful animateuring process in a pedagogical manner. I argue that it is *recognition* which makes for success in education. The subtitle of this dissertation, *dancing identity and mutuality*, reveals that it presents an example in the context of dance, even though I claim that the attitude of pedagogical recognition can and should exist in any educational situation – or even in every human encounters and relations.

Even though my motivation for the research project does not stem from dance or dance education or theories of these, but rather from more general level of understanding human existence, I can locate my practice in the dance research field in Finland. The history of university dance programmes, as well as the research practice of dance, is relatively recent in Finland, but it must be said that it is after all vital. The majority of dance research is conducted in the Theatre Academy, which has a doctoral programme in dance, but also in other universities. (See also Anttila 2006b, 581; Pakkanen & Sarje 2006.)

Much of the research, internationally and nationally, follows Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1945/2008, 1968) philosophy of corporeal phenomenology (see for example Sheets-Johnstone 1980, Fraleigh 1987, Parviainen 1998, Välipakka 2003, Rouhiainen 2003). In her art-based doctoral dissertation Kirsi Monni (2005) examines the skills of a dancer and also the ontology of dance based on Martin Heidegger's theories. Eeva Anttila (2003) relies on Martin Buber's philosophy and Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy in her research on the possibilities and meaning of dialogue in dance education. Critical pedagogy is also the basis of Tone Pernille Østern's (2009) work, which supports dance education aiming at dialogue and change. She uses dance improvisation as one of her methods, as did Kirsi Heimonen (2010) in her doctoral dissertation.

A Finnish scholar, Kai Lehtikoinen, who completed his PhD in 2004 at the University of Surrey, has researched the dance education of boys in the context of hetero-normative culture (see Lehtikoinen 2006). He examined the identities of dancing boys, and claims that the pedagogy often takes place in the power structure of gender and sexuality. His book provides an excellent overview of dance education for boys in Finland as well as revealing its hetero-normative discourse in that country. Lehtikoinen (2010) has also conducted an art-based research which included a solo work for the dancer Satu Tuittila as well as a written research report, where he proposes that "choreography as practice is a dialogical process that can provide opportunities for informal learning and personal transformation", in which I can also relate to my own practice.

This dissertation has much in common with dance and its pedagogical research by other scholars and practitioners, such as following the tradition of phenomenology, critical pedagogy and the use of improvisation as one of the methods. However, it does not aim to promote dance as its main goal; dance is not the object of the examination, but rather an example of various possible venues, in which individuals can meet in the spirit of recognition. In this research, dance has served as one of the methods of collecting research data (the dance animateuring project) as well as a way of reporting findings (the *Katiska* performance); but most of all, it has been, for its part, a *space* for people to come together and to understand a little more of life, the world and human existence. This "space" is formed by various activities: improvising, performing, receiving, interpreting, discussing, reflecting, writing, analysing, reading.

This dissertation criticizes the traditional practice of education as teaching knowledge and technique given from above, and in which the actions of effective performance and production are emphasized. It addresses questions about the relationship between educator and learner, and offers an alternative pedagogical attitude, where the educator and the learner

step into the shared space, and where learning starts from mutual trust and curiosity. I claim that the success of recognition is collective, not just a matter for individuals. Therefore the concept of identity, which is closely linked to the notions of recognition and misrecognition, cannot be examined separately from the question of alterity.

Identity is probably one of the most investigated topics in both science and art. At first it was the main theme of this research, and it retains its place as one of the key concepts of my study. My understanding of both the concepts of identity and self come from various, even contradictory, sources. The theoretical understanding of my improvisatory body and movement practice stems from phenomenology. First of all, the concept of *self* is understood according to Merleau-Ponty's (2008) suggestion of phenomenological body as a *lived body*; the body not as an object but as a subject of experience. From this phenomenological foundation the concept of *identity* is formulated by following Ricoeur's (2005) idea of identity as *narrative* construction and further developed drawing on post-structural feminist Judith Butler's (1990) claim of identity as *performative*. This dissertation claims that by practising body and movement based improvisations we can get into touch with our lived body experiences, and furthermore by bringing these authentic, living bodies of the *Katiska* boys on stage we both reveal and renegotiate the *performed* identities of men.

Phenomenology is a method which attempts to view any experience from inside rather than from a distance. Phenomenological description is a tool which seeks to penetrate the core of things. Following Hans-Georg Gadamer (as cited in Lavery 2003) I understand hermeneutic phenomenology as a process of co-creation between the researcher and participants. In my practice the production of meaning occurs through a circle of bodily exercises as movement improvisations, but also through discussions, readings, reflective writing and interpretations. This dissertation illustrates a research project, where researcher and participants work together to bring life to the experience being explored, through the use of imagination initiated by and expressed through art, reflective discussion and writing.

My description of pedagogical recognition depends in part upon my own practice and experience, but also experiences in common with others. Along with Ricoeur's work my research owes a great deal to Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* (2008, originally *Phénoménologie de la perception* 1945). He links phenomenology as a philosophical system to art practice by investigating the works of Balzac, Proust, Valéry and Cézanne; philosophy and art share "the same kind of attentiveness and wonder, the same demand for awareness, the same will to seize the meaning of the world or of history as that meaning comes into being" (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xxiv). I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2008, xxiii) that the purpose and the aim of true philosophy, as well as of art, is "relearning to look

at the world”. In my improvisational practice I attempt to re-achieve “a direct and primitive contact with the world”, in that way the dance can be understood as “an account of space, time and the world as we ‘live’ them”. The bodily practice aims to access into the word which is “‘already there’ before reflection begins”. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, vii.)

Ricoeur follows in the footsteps of Merleau-Ponty and claims that the self can never be directly transparent to itself or fully capable of mastering itself. He argues that self-knowledge is gained only in relation to the world and our life with and among others in that world. Ricoeur made a methodological shift in the 1960s when he acknowledged that in order to properly study human reality he had to combine phenomenological description with hermeneutic interpretation. This hermeneutic, or linguistic, understanding also guides his formulation of identity as *narrative*. The narrative of self combines multiple actions over a span of time performed by individual and other persons. It also links the multiple viewpoints on and the reflection of those actions. In his last book, *The Course of Recognition*, Ricoeur further develops his concept of narrative identity. Here his focus is more on the capabilities of the self and not simply in their potentiality. When exercised, these capabilities always connect at least two persons; speaking and narrating presupposes a receiver. It must be noted that we also affect someone else by the actions which we either perform or do not perform. Every action we construct always involves the intersection of at least two human lives. (Dauenhauer & Pellauer 2011.) Therefore the exploration of narrative identity can never be completed without also taking alterity into account.

The term ‘narrative’ seems to highlight language and a human as a speaking and narrating being, and by so doing I claim that it ignores the corporeal side of human in action. Therefore along with Ricoeur’s concept of identity I choose to refer to Judith Butler’s (1990) famous articulation of identity as *performance*. Butler claims that personal, sexed and gendered identity is merely a “corporeal style”, or the imitation of norms. Butler criticizes the belief that one has an interior identity that is derived from one’s biological nature and manifested in one’s genitalia. She therefore questions the categories of gender but also biological sex and sexuality that seem to serve as clearcut definers of personal identity. She sees the construction of identity as a site of politics, and wants to celebrate the revolutionary potential of unconventional identity performances. (See Meyers 2010, Heyes 2009.)

This dissertation describes an educational space in which the stereotypical identity categories are questioned. In the dance animateuring process, the participants were encouraged to look more deeply into their lives through bodily practice as movement improvisations, through their own life narratives, through various textual materials and countless discussions. The dance performance leads us to understand how the narrative and

performative characters of our identities are formed, but movement practice can also initiate a reflective process, where the self is reunited with its living experiences. The *Katiska* performance was the end product of the artistic research process and presented the multifaceted narratives and performatives of identities. It opens up a new conversational space about identities and selves as well as our relations to each other, also for a wider audience.

In addition this dissertation proposes an alternative practice-led research methodology – *eragraphy* – which was inspired by the North American new paradigm qualitative research methodologies such as a/r/tography (see for example, Irwin 2004, Irwin & Springgay 2008, Springgay 2004, 2008) and crystallization (see for example Richardson 1994, 2000, Ellingson 2009). The work of Stephanie Springgay, *Body Knowledge and Curriculum: Pedagogies of Touch in Youth and Visual Culture* (2008), has greatly informed this research, and encouraged me to combine education, research and art in my own practice. Both a/r/tography and crystallization combine traditional qualitative research methods with creative methods and representations of data. A/r/t is an acronym for artist–researcher–teacher; similarly I coined the term *eragraphy* for my own practice by combining the words *education*, *research* and *animateuring*. The name *eragraphy* also refers to a description of an era. In other words it is, borrowing from ethnography (Geertz 1973), a “thick” description of a chosen aspect of human existence – in this case of recognition – in the context of postmodern era. *Eragraphy* is inchoative; it follows the unfinished nature of phenomenological attitude. As Husserl says, being is a dialogue or infinite meditation; it never knows where it is going (as cited in Merleau-Ponty 2008, xxiii). Therefore *eragraphical* practice requires the mind of a nomad, the willingness to wander about – especially on the pathways of the previously *unknown*.

Dance animateuring

The Pedagogy of Recognition is a description of a practice led research project; but what is this *practice* which drives this study?

Animation means, literally, to breathe life into some thing. A transformation is involved, what was still now moves. (Smith 2009.)

In the English language *animation* is linked to the work of film-makers. An animator creates action from a sequence of still images creating an illusion of something living.

Borrowing from French, the word “animateur” refers to informal educators, community workers, arts workers and others working in this special form of social pedagogy called “animateuring”. (Smith 2009.) Both animateuring and animation come originally from the Latin word *anima* which means “life”, “a living being”, “having a spirit” or “breathe of air”. On the other hand the term may also be derived from the word *animus*, which links to motivation and movement. The concept thus has a double meaning: to “give life” and to “be in-relation”. (Kurki 2006, 19.)

Animateuring can be located in the field of social pedagogy, which combines educational inquiry with sociological questions. Social pedagogy is a relatively new academic subject in Finland, and thus only a few studies have been completed in it. The first introductory book on social pedagogy was written by Juha Hämäläinen and Leena Kurki (1997). Two doctoral dissertations have been completed at the University of Tampere; those by Miguel Marrengula in 2010 and Sanna Ryyänen in 2011. Both these studies were conducted in the context of *socio-cultural animation*. Both dissertations focus on the promotion of the active participation of children for social change; Marrengula’s in Maputo, Mozambique and Ryyänen’s in Salvador, Brazil. I consider both these projects to be “typical” in the field of socio-cultural animation, due to their contexts in marginalized and oppressed communities.

Marrengula (2010) served as an animateur and a social worker–researcher on his project. The main argument in his study was that regarding the use of socio-cultural animation with street children, “its philosophy and ethical concerns, enables democratic participation, where street children develop awareness and consciousness in order to reveal their competence in directing observations about their social settings, and in promoting their active engagement with other team members in decision making for social change” (Marrengula 2010, English abstract).

By contrast, Ryyänen (2011) did not work as an animateur on her project, but rather as a critical ethnographer. Her work is empirical and not practice-based in this sense. Ryyänen asks in her doctoral dissertation *Young People on the Edge* “how it is possible to support young people living in the context of multidimensional inequality, crime, and violence toward a full, balanced life and true citizenship”. Her socio-pedagogical research was motivated by her own experiences of working in a local non-governmental organisation that works with street children. Her research shows that “the dialogicality of the educational processes combined with creative activities that produce experiences of accomplishment is an approach well suited to tackle the educational aims”. She also claims that “[a] society marked by inequality and oppression needs educational actors that want and dare to challenge the

mainstream and work towards real change. ... In a highly segregated society we also need pedagogy that enables and promotes the bringing together of people and bridge-building: educational processes that make it possible for different people to meet and educational actors opening up to co-operation". (Ryynänen 2011, English abstract.)

I concur with the ideology with Marrengula and Ryynänen and other researchers and practitioners working in the field of social pedagogy, especially those who are engaged with the activities of socio-cultural animation, but the context of my own project differs radically from the "traditional" studies conducted in this field. The participants on my project can be defined as members of the "ruling group"; after all, they are all male, white, well-schooled and living in the First World. But at the same time, I do not believe that this makes my project less important. I believe that the practice of animateuring helps *anyone* to become more aware of themselves and also to position themselves better in relation to others in a more respectful way.

Trying to avoid the risk of confusing the terms *animating* and *animateuring* as well as *animator* and *animateur*, I have chosen to use the word "animateuring" instead of "animation" even though both of them are used in English when referring to this special form of social pedagogy. In 2005 I graduated as an animateur from The Victorian College of the Arts, which is a part of the University of Melbourne in Australia. I attended a one-year graduate course called *dance animateuring*. Animateuring is still an alien concept in many fields: often more specific terms such as "community dance worker" or "arts education facilitator" are used. In the United Kingdom the "use of the animateur word is more prevalent in music than in any other art form – in the visual arts it is rarely used" (Animarts 2003, 9). Animateuring, like any other community education, social pedagogy or informal education, can be used in a variety of ways. Smith (2009) presents three main models of animateuring: creative-expressive animation, socio-cultural animation and leisure-time animation. Smith (2009) uses the word *animation*, therefore I have chosen to use his original terminology, when I refer to his concepts.

In the *creative-expressive animation* model animateurs encourage people to connect with music, theatre, dance and other art forms, for the sake of the pleasure that such participation brings, and because of self-expression and learning it aims at participants' involvement. This kind of work is usually accomplished in community and youth groups, schools and care centres. (Smith 2009.) Animarts' (2003, 9) definition of an animateur is based on the model of the creative-expressive animation: "a practising artist, in any art form, who uses her/his skills, talents and personality to enable others to compose, design, devise, create, perform or engage with works of art of any kind."

According to Smith (2009) “[w]ithin *socio-cultural animation* animateurs work with people and groups so that they participate in and manage the communities in which they live”. As a concept as well as practice, the socio-cultural animation (*animation socioculturelle*) was created in France after the Second World War (Kurki 2000, 11). In Finland Leena Kurki (2000) researched this form of social pedagogy in which the main goal is to help people find their own voice. Kurki defines animation as including pedagogical, social, as well as cultural aspects. Its purpose is to encourage people to take a more active role in their lives – it is about searching and finding in a lifelong process.

The third form of animation, *leisure-time animation*, “involves developing opportunities for pre-school and school-children such as adventure playgrounds, toy libraries, outdoor activity centers and organized sports activities” (Smith 2009). All these three forms of animation emphasize the participant’s own activity through recognition and action in dialogue. Their main goal is to create spaces for participation, for individuals in communities. I agree with Animarts (2003, 13) that “[e]ducation has to do two things. The first is to make the most of each child’s unique, personal capacities – to bring out what they have within them. The second is to facilitate their understanding of the complex world of which they are part – its diversity of achievements, cultures, histories and possibilities.”

I used to see myself in different roles as a teacher, a student, a performer, or a choreographer. But I have learned to understand the strength of bringing these elements together in my animateuring practice. I see myself as an animateur whose task is to guide people to find “knowledge” and “truth” by themselves – but always in relation to others. From this point of view learning can be understood as researching. Kurki (2009, 9) highlights the importance of the research aspect in animateuring. It has always to be seen as a reflective activity and in terms of the relationship to practice as well as to theory. Animateuring has strong philosophical and ideological roots, which form the base for its methodological and strategic framework, and further on, which sets the form for its practical activities. (Kurki 2006, 15.) Animateuring happens in the continuous circle of practising, reflecting, selecting, philosophizing, and presenting. I agree with Tony Fegan (Animarts 2003, 27) that:

...the most significant thing that can happen when an artist works as an animateur is the creation of an environment where people can enter into a creative dialogue or framework of arts-making. It requires research, practical application and some sort of outcome. The aim is to create as many entry points as possible which let in as many participants as possible, each bringing their own skills, life

experience, curiosity, passion – and also a readiness to put themselves at risk by saying something unexpected, or simply being, in their own way, different. To get a group of people together like this, daring to be self-reflective, challenging, willing to share, makes a fundamental impact.

Researching and learning are not the only ways to gain knowledge. I believe that the reason why we identify ourselves with artworks is that they help us to make sense of our own life and identity. For me, education, research and art practice are all about the same thing; trying to understand a little better – myself, you, us, and the world. I argue that the purpose of animateuring is to become aware of things that we did not know before. As Animarts (2002, 41) says “the animateur has the imagination to link and draw together the most unlikely of ingredients, acting as a stepping-stone from one experience to the next”. I claim that this is the way to generate recognition and new understanding, instead of repeating, recreating or reproducing *the knowledge of Truth*.

Animarts (2003, 38–39) reminds us “how multi-faceted the role of the animateur is, requiring a wide variety of inter-connected teaching and learning strategies and skills”. As Animarts says, animateuring is a holistic practice that draws on different components of knowledge and intelligences simultaneously, but Animarts also admit that “the implicit or tacit understandings and qualities, i.e. those which depend on intuition, values, ethos and motivation” are difficult to define. I agree with Animarts (2003, 26) that “[t]he artists and teachers who are best at this work are those whose motivation runs deeper. They strive, through their own creativity, to reach the imaginative inner worlds of participants by engaging with them in arts practice which explores the world we live in and our place within it.”

Animarts (2003, 40, 43–44) have constructed a list of types of positive interaction which apply to successful practice of an animateur:

- Recognition: acknowledging the participants as individuals, everyone as unique.
- Negotiation: consulting the participants about their preferences, rather than making assumptions.
- Collaboration: working together to achieve a definite aim.
- Abstention: abstaining from using power over other people, by creating a space for the participant to contribute as fully as possible.

- Play: engaging in an experience which involves exercising spontaneity and self-expression which has value in itself.
- Celebration: opening opportunities for celebration of self and life.
- Relaxation: identifying the need for and allowing moments of respite for body and mind within the process.
- Validation: accepting the reality and power of participants' experience and hence its 'subjective truth'.
- Empathy: going beyond one's own frame of reference to have empathy with others.
- Holding: providing a safe psychological space, remaining fully present, steady, assured and responsive, by tolerating and dealing safely with disturbing emotions and knowing when to seek assistance from a more experienced professional.
- Facilitation: responding to participants' contributions and not force meaning onto them, but finding a place for them within the structure of the work.
- Creation: finding a place for one's own artistic intentions and language whilst acknowledging participants' abilities, ideas and skills, and responding to them without taking control.
- Receiving: accepting and including participants' contributions within the frame of the work.
- Giving: offering one's skills and experience honestly and openly.

I recognize these as the key elements in my own practice as well. Many, if not all, of them are also the main subjects of this research. Even when, intuitively, we know these things in practice, while doing research, we are facing a set of difficult question: "How can we measure what seems to be unmeasurable?" (Animarts 2003, 57). If we think about measuring as we have learnt to know it from natural science, assessing animateuring is not possible. The theoretical dance researcher Jaana Parviainen (2006, 66) – as well as many dance practitioners and practice-based dance researchers – have found the solution in phenomenology, because it has the potential to bring to the fore the intuitive experiences. According to Parviainen (2006, 53), in phenomenology the body cannot be objectified but it has to be perceived as something constantly shifting, like a "stream". To put it differently, the phenomenology of body, or the self, is never complete, therefore it is not possible to measure and define it in totality.

By *dance animateuring* I mean dance activity which aims to celebrate every person's own natural way of expression through movement. Therefore the purpose of dance animateuring is not to achieve a mastery of any particular dance technique or style, but rather to discover everyone's own expressing, moving, living body. On the other hand, through body and movement, a specific theme can also be investigated. By increasing body awareness, dance animateuring aims to dig deeper into the means of identity and self and by doing so, support the growth of humanity. Dance animateuring intertwines the body and the mind; therefore it is an attempt to return to the understanding of humans as holistic beings.

Dance animateuring is a form of community art. Teemu Mäki (2007, 232) defines community art as an activity that an amateur group performs in collaboration with a professional artist. He also notes that in community art, the artist cannot be a teacher, teaching something for others from above, but rather she/he must be a member of the group. A dance animateur is a professional artist and an educator who uses her skills and talents to encourage other people to action by constantly reflecting her/himself and asking for the reflective attitude from others. Through the moving body, the understanding of self and relationship to others and the world is constantly shifting. Bardy (2007, 21) says that art is a way of describing and conceptualizing the world. Art creates forms and meanings, and by so doing, mirrors, interprets and changes the way how we perceive experience and feelings. She also thinks that the sublime and the practical in arts is its capability to touch the senses and feelings in a way that is not easy, or even possible, in any other way.

At its best, dance animateuring is not just communication, but also truly dialogical; it takes place between two living bodies. It must be noted that not every activity that is called art has the capacity to act in dialogue. There is a risk that by practising a particular dance style and technique the true spirit of dance disappears. At its worst, the formalistic demand of technical dance is like a straitjacket that squeezes the life and expression out of dance. Concentrating solely on form and rules may obliterate the very essence which was originally working as a motive for the movement. The requirement of formalism can be a burden that stifles authenticity, the living quality of body. I agree with Parviainen (1998, 98) that "when a dance vocabulary becomes increasingly stable, it comes to be treated as an end in itself, the frame and its body politics are no longer questioned". In contrast, dance animateuring is a process of continuous questioning. Dance animateuring uses different dance improvisation techniques which help movers to find safely their own way of moving. Dance improvisation is discovery of something new, not achieving goals set beforehand. Dance is expression which rises from, and which also generates, experiences. The principle of dance animateuring

is that it belongs to everyone. Moving is a natural way of being. Dance is already in everyone; therefore dance is returning not leaving.

The Western dance tradition, especially classical ballet, requires a certain body type. An aesthetically pleasing ballet body features long limbs and an extremely thin figure. A good ballerina can also be recognized from her feet with high arches, a flexible back and maximum turn-out in the hips. Not everyone can become a professional ballet dancer. Contemporary dance is more tolerant of different body types, but in most cases the dancing body belongs to a young and athletic – female (see also Lehtikoinen 2006). If dance is practised by elderly or disabled people, it is treated as something secondary – not as good or serious as “real art”. Mäki (2007, 234–235) argues that community art has to have high standards, but he is referring to the ontological challenge it offers participants. He notes that this is not necessarily the commonly accepted conception of art, but comes from his understanding of the significance of art. I concur with Mäki’s requirements for art; it has to aim at honesty as well as an awareness and critical evaluation of one’s own life and values. According to Mäki this kind of critical ethos of art is not usually present in leisure activities, which often seek only escapism and pleasure. I think it is critical to understand that what Mäki asks of arts is *ethical* and *political* challenge.

Animateuring is about both *cultural democratization* and *cultural democracy*. The cultural democratization aims to include as many people as possible to enjoy arts as receivers. In this case, the animateur serves as a link between the art and the public. Art is seen as everyone’s right. Cultural democracy digs deeper. It aims at the public’s own participation. An animateur tries to increase people’s activity so that they become true actors and creators of their own culture. The basic principle is that culture is not just a special right for a small group of people or something to be linked only to fine arts, but is primarily a crucial part of human behaviour. Because animateuring pursues the cultural democracy, it is therefore an educational activity attempting to make society better. (Kurki 2006, 14.)

Theatre and dance are fundamentally dialogical in nature. In dance or theatre performances there are always at least two bodies present: the performer and the spectator. The identities and their social structures are always concretely present in the performance situation. Furthermore, dance and theatre potentially impact the audience, because they present identities as constantly shifting. (See also Suutela 2005, 198.) In Finland in the 1970’s the various political agendas understood the potential of theatre as a ritual space where the opinions and identities of public could be manipulated. In other words, the theatre was seen as a political tool and a builder of collective identity. Later there was a shift from collectivism to individualism. The question of identity has been understood as being constantly in motion and

as complex phenomena that carry the personality and the world view of an individual. (Suutela 2005, 203.)

While the democratic atmosphere has gained ground, the traditional position of a director's autonomy has been questioned. The idea of "ensemble" has become popular in many theatre and dance companies; creating a work in collaboration has become a special target in an attempt to deliver a message through art. (Suutela 2005, 210.) *Devised theatre* is a form of collaborative theatre making where the performance is created together in a group without a prewritten script. Framing, structure, ideas, images, concepts and themes are tested and selected together. As a starting point, music, texts, objects, images or movement can be used. (Oddey 1994, 1.)

Dance animateuring and devised theatre practice have something in common. Both enable the performers' own creativity by letting everyone be part of collecting, editing and organizing the experiences of individuals. The principle of "finding together" and learning in relation acknowledges every person as an individual. Intuition, spontaneity and openness are supported. Animateuring, like devising process, celebrates the fragmented experiences of identity, culture and the world where we live in. The creative process reflects multiple voices arising from individual perceptions and then interpreted and developed together. The participants' understanding of themselves in this cultural and social context strengthens when they investigate, integrate and build up their personal experiences and dreams by improvising. Animateuring and devising is thinking, creating, and imagining as well as developing ideas and organizing them in collaboration. Like devised theatre, animateuring seeks to respond to socio-political and cultural changes and reflect them through the theme, content and form of the performance. (On devised theatre see Oddey 1994.)

I agree with Bardy (2007, 25) that collaborative community art is suitable to handle any human activity. She believes that it is important to give space for all of that is important and meaningful for the participants. Bardy (2007, 26) argues that the strength of the process is the balance between chaos and order. I agree that the mixture of facts and fiction liberates the participants to investigate their own experiences and feelings. Bardy formulates the idea that playfulness dispels fears and, by overcoming the fears, inspires joy, which in turn, increases courage and criticality.

In sports and dance education the body is traditionally trained as an object. The achievements are evaluated by measuring. The acts of measuring physicality and learning to master a certain technique create a sense of control over the body. Kinesthetic experiences are subjective and impossible to force into objective categories. Dance animateuring requires an tolerance of 'messiness'. Dance animateuring is an invitation to enter the unknown (see also

Anttila 2003). An animateur acts as an organizer and manager, but even for her/him the process is always a mystery. The outcomes cannot be predicted.

Reverting to the etymology of the word *animation*, *animateuring* and its double meaning “to give life” and “to be in relation”, the two key elements of dance animateuring come to mind. Firstly, “giving life” in dance animateuring does not mean repeating existing forms, movements and sequences, but truly searching for authenticity from the lived body. Life is a dynamic and complex entity. Therefore “giving life” in dance animateuring emphasizes the animated aspects of body over frozen forms. Secondly, “being in relation” highlights the collaborative characteristic in dance animateuring. Learning, like all knowing, is possible only in relation. We create meaning when we relate ourselves to others – things, people and the whole world. Dance animateuring is not a monologue – a choreography created with the superiority of a choreographer – but rather a montage created in dialogue. This dialogue is not merely a collaboration between the animateur and the dancers, but with the audience as well.

The dance animateuring process is the start and the soul of this research study. The dissertation can be understood as the written manifesto of this research project. The process of animateuring, the *Katiska* performance and this dissertation, all have a value of their own. Separately, they offer a slightly different glimpse of the reality and a unique way to generate new understanding. The animateuring process brings participants together at the corporeal level. The performance sets the dancers and the audience in a dialogue where the identities can be negotiated. The dissertation aims to bring the various elements of the process and the performance together and place them in discussion with selected texts by other theorists and practitioners. The dance animateuring project of *Katiska* was not originally planned to be part of my doctoral dissertation, but because of the rich material from the process of developing and performing the work as well as the success of its artistic activity and outcome, it “demanded” to be presented in written form. I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2008, 455), who says:

There is no fundamental difference between the various modes of expression, and no privileged position can be accorded to any of them on the alleged ground that it expresses a truth in itself. Speech is as dumb as music, music is eloquent as speech. Expression is everywhere creative, and what is expressed is always inseparable from it. There is no analysis capable of making language crystal clear and arraying it before us as if it were an object.

This dissertation aims to describe a collaborative process, where the focus is on individuals' experiences; to be more specific, the individuals' remembering and the reconstructions of these experiences. However, it is important to understand that the whole animateuring process with all the experiences of its participants cannot be fully described. This dissertation constructs themes and patterns derived from the rich research data and offers deeper insights into the topic by recalling evocative moments in the animateuring process. The final form of analysis or representation of this research could not be discussed separately from the other elements of the research methodology. The whole methodology was created and shaped as the study progressed.

The written part of the research, *The Pedagogy of Recognition*, is based on the data collected throughout the animateuring project, including creating the work and performing it. The material includes my own diary notes, interviews with the boys and other members of the *Katiska* team, photographs and videos as well as audience feedback, reviews and other media texts. The material was collected throughout this research process, starting from the beginning of the creative process in 2007 and continuing to the publication of this dissertation. Most of the data is inherently descriptive, interpretative, analytical and evaluative. I try to let the authentic voices of myself and my co-participants as well as the audience come through in my writing. I have aimed to write the narratives of the participants' sensations and thoughts according to their own descriptions, even though I was compelled to translate them from the original Finnish into English. Some of the finer nuances of describing the experiences may have been lost in this process, but the boys themselves approved my translations for use in this report.

The animateuring process described here did not start from the pedagogy of recognition. It was not a testing process for a hypothesis; quite the reverse the theory was created in this process. My model of pedagogical recognition is a theory derived from an educational practice which was already intuitively applied before any analysis or intellectual performance was implemented. The main purpose of this research is not to set down guiding principles or a pedagogical policy, but rather to open up further questions of identity, alterity, mutuality, knowledge, truth, research, arts, education – and most of all, of recognition.

The *Katiska* project

Katiska (Finnish)

A fish-trap made of wires and fishing-net, with a narrow mouth: fish swim in but are unable to find the way out

The heart, the practical, educational and artistic insight of my research, is the creative process and also its artistic outcome: *Katiska*. This is a multi-disciplinary performing arts work for young men. In the artistic process – originally with boys called Jere, Lauri, Mikael, Rasmus and Valtteri, and then later, with Aimo – these young men researched their own identity and self through movement and voice exercises. The artistic outcome is a visual, oral and bodily response to personal narratives from a group of young men. *Katiska* had its premier on 8 May 2008 on the Hällä stage in Tampere, Finland. Since then it has been performed over thirty times in six different Finnish cities (Tampere, Helsinki, Espoo, Kuopio, Salo and Joensuu) in Finland and also in four other countries (Austria, Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands). My role in the process was that of the animateur, the researcher and the producer of the work.

As an animateur I want to encourage young people to take a more active role in their lives through self-awareness. I seek to highlight the importance of participants' subjective knowledge of the learning process. In this research, the art practice is understood as research practice itself. Art practice guides you to rethink the perception of the nature of knowledge. Where is it located? How is it created? And what is knowledge? This practice focuses on body and movement and how the identity is posited and mediated through performing arts. In addition to collecting material from the performers, I also collected responses from the audience. I have realized how the spectators reflect their lives and themselves while they are watching the performance. In other words, they construct their own identity by identifying themselves with the life of the work. The artistic practice was guided by the questions of *identity*; later the practice of performing and the reflection of that practice brought to the fore notions of *recognition*.

My practice as a teacher and a freelance artist has constantly reshaped my research focus and strategies. Originally my interest in this research arose from my practice as a drama teacher at secondary school in Finland, where I worked as a Finnish language and literature teacher in 2001. I started to create works with the students which were more collaborative and movement-based. I also used personal narratives to create material for the works. It felt

natural to incorporate self-reflective attitude and elements into the artistic practice. The participants of my school productions as well as those outside school setting have always evaluated their learning experiences through conversations or texts.

In 2005 I spent a year in Australia studying dance animating at the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne, where my interest was directed towards collaborative art practice and community art. My own positive learning experiences about self-awareness through body and movement, as well as in the visual arts, convinced me of the importance of this topic. As a performer I have also investigated the learning process of self and awareness in the role of an animator. At the Victorian College of the Arts I created a dance theatre work together with a versatile group of artists. This process included performance (*Liisa – a devised dance theatre performance*) and research (*The Presence – for performers and viewers in the collaborative process of making a dance theatre performance*) outcome.

Katiska is the heart of this research, but the artistic insight into my research topic also comes from my own other creative activities of my own as well as numerous, multi-disciplinary art works which I have encountered. *Kristallikorot* (2006) – a solo installation and performance work – is a visual and bodily response to personal narratives from a group of different women. I have performed this work at various venues and collected responses from the spectators. In “*Tää on mun elämä!*” (2007) with my drama course, the upper secondary school students researched their own identity and selves through basic voice and movement exercises. The students reflected their observations in their diary notes and the artistic outcome of the practice was performed in the local library. I used some of the same movement tasks in the creative process of *Katiska*. My artistic practices of the physical theatre work *Monopeli* (2010) as well the butoh work *Nymphaea Noir* (2011) have greatly informed my practical, but also analytical, understanding. (See www.raisafoster.com.)

In Australia in 2006 I was involved in Bagryana Popov’s *Studies in Being Human* as a performer. The socio-political attitude and the sense of aesthetics of *Studies in Being Human* as well as other works by Popov have had a great impact on my own practice. The basis of the work is beautifully and intellectually presented human emotions and behaviour. Even if the clear story is missing, the multiple narratives emerge from texts, movements and contacts. The opposites of violence and caring are presented as intertwined, complex and cacophonous as they seem to happen in real life. Popov’s methods searching “real action” and performer’s presence have taught me to use numerous practical tools to find authentic physicality.

By reading and listening to examples of other practitioners, I have realized that art practice can be understood as research practice itself. I have started to rethink my conception

of the nature of knowledge. I use the making of art as a research activity, and the artistic outcomes are one way of presenting the research findings. My research is qualitative and art-based. It is a participatory action research where the art making has an equal role with more theoretical work. At first I was aiming to understand and describe how the self and identity of young men are produced, perceived and interpreted through body and movement. My own interest focuses on the question of identity as a “messy” phenomenon. I see art-based work as a way of disturbing or interrupting the traditional theory formations of identity and self. The sense of self changes continuously. The dichotomy of mind and body is artificial and prevents us from understanding the richness, as well as the complexity of the concept of “self”. Art-based inquiry can also reveal something about the relation of individual and world. Identity has numerous representations and is always narrative and performative in nature. Through the practice of body and movement the connection between the self and the context of history, culture and politics can be exposed.

The aim of the *Katiska* project was to create a high level piece of dance theatre and music, but almost immediately I realized that I could not separate the research aspect from my artistic practice. My interest was to understand more about the identity of young men and the best access to the phenomenon was to truly collaborate with them. Hence the work was created in collaboration with a composer, young men – who had not danced before – and myself as an animateur. Later in the process, a 14-year-old boy animated the video visuals of the work and lighting and sound technicians joined the team. The purpose was not only to research young men’s identity and to support the young men to perform their life stories to audience, but also to encourage young people to watch a performance of this kind.

In spring 2007 I created a musical for ninth grade (from 15 to 16 years old) students together with a music teacher, Maija. The enthusiasm and energy of the young boys in the production surprised us positively. We wanted to keep working with some of the boys and also invite some others to join us. Finally we asked five boys from three different age groups, if they were interested in doing a “theatre” or “music” workshop with us. I avoided the word “dance” deliberately, because of the strong negative undertone that it usually evokes, especially among boys and men. At the beginning of the process, in summer 2007, Rasmus was 15 years of age and Valtteri 16. Both of them had just finished their compulsory education in Finnish comprehensive school. Mikael and Lauri were 17 years old and moving on to the second year of upper secondary school. Jere was 18 and starting his final year at the same school.

Maija had taught music to all of these boys at school. This was the reason why these particular boys were asked to take part of the project: all of them “can sing”. From the

beginning, Maija and I were interested in using both movement and voice in the work. Maija was interested in composing songs for the boys and therefore she was looking for performers with a good musical ear and sense of rhythm. I had taught drama and theatre to Jere at upper secondary school and I knew Valtteri and Rasmus from the musical project even though I had not “officially” been their teacher. I did not really know Mikael and Lauri before the *Katiska* project. The way that I approach art is more from a research and enthusiasm point of view than from technicality; therefore for me it did not really matter who the participants were and what they had done before.

Impulse for the project was the need to bring to the fore the true voices of young men. As a teacher, I had noticed that boys had a similar need to be recognized and to be heard than girls, but they often struggled to find a suitable way to express their emotions and attitudes. A very sad and extreme example to prove how important and topical *Katiska* was, and still is, came five months after we had started the project with the young men with the Jokela school shooting on 7 November 2007, and then following less than a year after, the shooting at a school in Kauhajoki. Both these school shootings were perpetrated by angry and isolated young men.

When I was working as a teacher, the students who wanted to stay and talk with me after class or on-line were boys, not girls. The boys wanted to share their worries, happiness or thoughts about anything; girls, hobbies, music or anything that was on their minds at the time. They wanted to be heard and recognized. In face-to-face conversations the boys seemed to be sympathetic and caring, in total contrast to those troublemakers, drunken drivers and school shooters seen in the media. But what kind of person is this young man in today’s world? Who is he? What is his identity? What would the young man tell us about himself?

Katiska is a multi-disciplinary artistic piece of research about the place of a young man in today’s world. The work was created by a process of practice-based research of movement and voice. Conversations between the animateur, the composer and the performers played a major role in this process. The method of animateuring is extremely important and fruitful in a project of this kind but it also requires a great deal of time. It is important – and also challenging – for an art-based research to be open to all suggestions that the collaboration produces. The shift from a “traditional” choreographic process to animateuring rises from the true interest to understand “the other”.

It is important to me that the research questions emerge from practice, as they do for other participatory action researchers as Denzin and Lincoln describe (2005, 34): “These problems originate in the lives of the research coparticipants – they do not come down from on high, by way of grand theory. Together stakeholders and action researchers co-create

knowledge that is pragmatically useful and is grounded in local knowledge. – [pragmatically grounded action research] reconceptualizes science as a collaborative, communicative, communitarian, context-centered, moral-project.”

The challenge of representation is to write the group’s understandings without “othering” them. The world is full of examples of studies where the research subjects have been left voiceless in the telling of their own stories. The roles of researcher and researched must become blurred; the researched are no longer research objects but collaborators or even co-researchers in the study. The new approach has brought new challenges. The amateur-researcher has to have multiple abilities, such as “interpersonal, political, emotional, moral, and ethical competence; intellectual openness; and creativity; and spiritual qualities related to empathy and understanding when confronted with human experience” (Finley 2005, 683).

Through personal stories and arts practice the participants of *Katiska* constructed their identities. Art practice is a way of doing research as well as an outcome of “findings”. Through the use of drama, dance and music, the project gives a voice to adolescents who are usually treated as “others”, “objects” which have been researched from outside. In this research the young men as well as the spectators are active participants, “subjects”, even co-researchers. This gives important inside view of the self and identity formation. Additionally the whole collaborative practice has created the pedagogy of recognition. The focus has also been in the alternative ways of knowing and presenting research material. Accordingly, the project targets non-verbal ways of constructing awareness and knowledge.

The art-based research of self and identity uses participants’ personal narratives as well as direct memories in their body through senses as source material. Different drama and dance exercises and techniques were used according to the participants’ level of skills and maturity. Besides voice, body and movement explorations, the self and identity was studied through visual arts and music. The technique of a specific art form is not the focus of this research. Art has been used as an instrument to explore and express. Suitable forms of investigation and presentation developed collectively in the process. In the creative process, every participant’s own intuitions were joined to the researcher’s observations to better understand what the phenomenon called “identity” could be about. The final performance is a collection of material produced through improvisation tasks but also bits and pieces that occurred in the informal situations, such as during the breaks in the practice but also in numerous Facebook and Messenger conversations. The national and international touring; the performer’s graduations parties and music gigs; theatre, dance and music shows and visual art exhibitions that we went to see together, all created shared memories that have influenced this research.

The story of young men that the media is constantly telling us is almost always negative, depressing – and hopeless. I felt that there was another kind of story to tell: the story of the boys told through their words and movements. Collaborative and performative projects make possible true reflection on values. *Katiska* is based on the boys’ own life stories, feelings and experiences; but the scenes were originally provided by me, through the improvisational tasks I devised. I asked myself, ‘how much has the view of a woman in her thirties shaped the content of the work?’ Together with the composer and the performers, I collected the material for the final work, but as the director, I am responsible for the overall work. I always advise my performers to “be real” and not to “act” nor to “present” anything; who and what they are is enough and nothing more is needed. The performers express themselves and, therefore, in principle, they do not play any roles. After all, what is the most important is that the boys themselves have stated that they *are* themselves on stage.

After the first performance season Mikael summarized his thoughts of the whole project:

Well, what a journey this project was! [Laughing] If we had known from the first day, that we would have four sold-out shows, and if I had known what this would become [laughing], I would have gone straight out through that door. In the beginning even you didn’t know what this would be. Then I was kind of uncertain about things, and I just kept going. During that six months when we were just fooling around, I didn’t really understand what was coming. Then when I realized that now we were starting to make the show, it didn’t feel so scary any more. Then it was pretty cool to have all these shows on the Hällä stage.

At the same time, Mikael did not know what else was still coming – about thirty more shows and thousands of spectators in Finland and abroad. The five young performers of *Katiska* had hardly done any dance before this project. They did not know what to expect from this journey – and neither did I. The idea of performing – singing and dancing – for a big audience would have certainly caused all the boys second thoughts, if they had known from the beginning of the process what they had signed up for. The audience certainly thought that a considerable amount of courage was demanded from *Katiska* performers. But the boys themselves hardly ever talked about being nervous or having a special need for courage. The reason for that may be that the boys were “lured” into the project when the plans for the

whole project and performance were still uncertain – also for us directors. We did not even know what the process would bring us – if the improvisation experiments would initiate an actual performance. Perhaps this was the reason why, when it was time to perform, dancing felt so natural for the boys and the eventual presence of the public did not feel frightening at all.

Originally *Katiska* was only the working title of the project and it came from the boys' slang term for an unattractive girl. I decided to keep the working title *Katiska* because I realized the symbolic value that the word *Katiska* as 'fish trap' carried: "fish swim in but are unable to find the way out". Rather than having a negative association of fish trap, we mostly found positive significance from our *journey to unknown*. What is most important is that all the boys have said to be very happy to be involved in the project. We organized the first improvisation session on our summer holiday in 2007 and slowly when the project progressed we all realized that we were hooked – and we still are, five years after the beginning of the process.

The body of the book

Writing about practice-led research is not easy, especially when the research combines educational, artistic and more traditional scientific practices. The linear format of a book forces a researcher to select and simplify that which was originally complex and evocative. I wanted to respect the complex nature of the research practice, and therefore decided to carry the different elements of theory and practice concurrently, instead of separating them into their own sections. The voices of the *Katiska* dancers, the audience and my own as well as the theories of others are brought into the discussion; no one particular voice is given priority over others.

First, I present the theoretical background for my bodily-practice-based inquiry. The whole practice is built on the phenomenological understanding of the body as *lived*. The ontological and epistemological position is mostly derived from Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology. Then I move on to the methodological discussion and propose my own practice based method, *eragraphy*, as a way of describing postmodern phenomena through by combining education, research and animateuring.

Second, I present my own pedagogical theory, *the pedagogy of recognition*, based on Paul Ricoeur's lexical and philosophical analysis of the concept recognition in his last book

The Course of Recognition (2005). The section suggests a change of pedagogical thought on three levels. First, it proposes an attitude of improvising instead of producing. In other words, I claim that new understanding can occur when we shift our action from knowing to recognizing. The second section of this chapter describes the concepts of identity as narrative and performative. It also presents self-recognition as a way of recognizing personal capacities and responsibility. In the third section the course of recognition ends with mutual recognition, where the questions of love, justice and esteem are brought to the fore as well as the conceptions of alterity, ambiguity and dialogue. The section also proposes a new concept, *I-lessness*, the disappearance of the object self, which can be experienced in dancing with others.

I conclude my writing by drawing together the outcomes of my study, its theoretical and methodological contributions, and propose new openings for further pedagogical research projects.



Still image of a still ongoing course

My background in dance and theatre is decidedly pedagogical. I worked as a comprehensive school teacher of Finnish language and literature, theatre and drama and creative writing in Finland in 2001–2004 and again in 2006–2008, in both comprehensive school and upper secondary school. I have also worked as a part-time ballet and creative dance teacher. I have always been very interested in different art forms as well, and I have practised dancing and theatre making as well as drawing, painting and sculpting throughout my life. Several times in my life I have been in a situation where I had to choose between arts and science. At the age of 16 I was accepted for the Swedish Royal Ballet School, and when I was 20 years old for the School of Art and Media in Tampere, Finland, but I gave up both the artistic careers of a ballet dancer and media artist to pursue my academic career. After five years of studying Finnish language and three years of teaching, I wanted to combine my knowledge and skills from the variety of arts fields and develop my artistic abilities and capacities. I applied to the School of Dance at the Victorian College of the Arts and was accepted for the one-year-long graduate course in dance animateuring in 2005.

When I started to teach drama at secondary school in 2001, I had relatively little knowledge in the theatre-making field. At that time, I saw dance and theatre as separate. For me, drama was very text-orientated, and dance I understood just as a purely choreographed set of particular movements. Although I remember wanting to add more movement-based material to my drama performances, I was afraid to do so. I felt that as a teacher of Finnish language I had a responsibility to direct traditional written drama and spoken theatre for my students. I had a similar experience as a ballet teacher; when I created performances for my ballet students, I had to be careful that I did not step into the contemporary dance field, in which I had not trained.

Seeing a Lithuanian theatre company, Oskaras Korsunovas Teater (see OKT 2011), in my hometown Tampere, in summer 2002, was an important eye-opening experience for me. Mihail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, directed by Oskaras Kursunovas, captured my heart with its amazing physicality and visual impact as well as some incredible soundscapes that the actors created on stage. All this was done in a very simple way, with just a few clever props and a moving body on stage. At that moment I knew that this was the form of theatre that interested me.

After the Lithuanian theatre in Tampere Theatre Festival 2002, the following year I saw *Plasticine* by Vassily Sigarev performed by a theatre company from Moscow. This

performance played more with images and emotions than a linear storyline. In August 2004 the Ukraine Kharkiv State Academic Drama Theatre (see Svoboda Zholdak Theatre 2011) came to the festival to perform two very different physical theatre performances, *Love's month* and *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitjs*. The first work kept surprising me for three hours with beautiful changing images on stage. The second created a very strong threatening atmosphere of a prison immediately upon entering the front door of the theatre; the audience was taken to their seats through a dark stairway and a long corridor where live dogs were barking at us. It seems as though theatre makers from the former Soviet Union are much more daring than those in Finland.

From the field of dance the strongest influence for my own practice was undoubtedly the Bangarra Dance Theatre's (see Bangarra 2011) performance of *Walkabout* in Sydney 2002. It included *Rations* by Frances Rings and *Rush* by Stephen Page. The quality of the performance was very focused and was supported with amazing sets and costumes as well as sound and lighting. The performance brought dance closer to theatre practice by using spoken text and presenting clearly delivered content. The whole performance was a breathtaking experience.

Through all these inspiring works along with many others which I have seen, I acquired my inclination towards certain dramatic aesthetic and goals as a performance maker. I always want my work to have content – a theme that speaks to me. The art medium, the way to present the content to my audience, is secondary. When working at school, the themes naturally emerged from the problems associated with adolescence. I have addressed such themes as drugs, eating disorders, domestic violence and bullying. I have mostly gathered my ideas from newspapers and books. When I read something that attracts my attention, I cut out the article and store it for future reference. Usually the theme that I am working on holds my attention and I see and hear things that are related to it.

Music also has a great impact on me. I tend to use instrumental music because I do not want the lyrics to direct a spectator's interpretation. When I was choreographing ballets, I usually got my ideas from inspiring music. Music gave me the theme as well as the structure for the piece. I analysed the music very carefully, marked down all the changes in atmosphere, rhythm, dynamics and different instruments. Then I designed the choreography to follow the structure of the music very precisely. This is possibly the easiest way to use music to support dance. During my studies in Australia I was fortunate to be introduced to creating movement in silence. It taught me new approaches to creating performances. It liberated me to set my own structures instead of following the existing forms of music. I was

also surprised at how I started to see beauty in silent moments. I have collaborated with composers and musicians in four of my performance works.

My sense of the aesthetic is very visual. I would rather to express things symbolically than realistically. I want to leave room for audience's interpretation. My goal is to raise questions and emotions, and leave answers for someone else's hands and heart to solve. I want to make people stop and look around. I want them to see something new in themselves. The saying "an image tells thousand words", is true for me. I think the most powerful way to capture attention is through visual experience; so I want to create montages, like painted expressive images, on the stage. Even though I have created works outside the traditional theatre space as well, I think there is something magical in a "black box". It is amazing how the neutral space can come alive by just having something in it. I also use visual ways to plan the composition. I draw sketches on the scenes and pathways on stage. Because I do a lot of the work "in my head", writing and drawing a storyboard feels the best way to organize my ideas.

I have realized that for me the process of creating a performance is as valuable as the final product. I have always enjoyed working collaboratively with my performers, other artists and my students. In the future, too, I am planning to use animateuring methods when creating new works. I enjoy the rich moments of questioning and finding solutions with my performers. I also believe that the presence of the performers as well as the overall quality of the performance is better when the performers have taken part in the creative process themselves; they are somehow more committed to the work.

I see myself as an animateur, a facilitator of art and culture, who encourages and inspires others to make their own art (see also Animarts 2003). An animateur is a professional artist, who works with amateurs, but does not set her/himself above others. The broad spectrum of participants in an animateuring project is a welcome fortune, because different people inherently carry diverse and even contrasting substance in their living bodies and thus generate space for true encounter and action to occur. The animateur assigns different tasks to the group of participants; she/he asks questions and generates discussion. She/he is not satisfied with stereotypical answers, but pushes others to dig deeper – finding and facing surprises. She/he aims to guide others on the paths to the *unknown*, but she/he has no map of correct tracks. She/he does not judge others of their choices or their interpretations of the tasks, because she/he sees interesting possibilities in the occasions of surprise. After the process of collaborative, artistic play and improvisation practice, the animateur, together with the others, selects and shapes the material to form the final art work. But it must be stated that

as a leader the amateur carries the greatest responsibility for the whole process as well as the outcome of the collaborative project.

The amateur works like a *bricoleur* – a ‘bricklayer’ – a qualitative researcher, who uses all her/his skills and knowledge in her investigations (see Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 4–6). She/he is interested in researching her/his topic with diverse methods. She/he wants to understand the phenomenon broadly, holistically, and to search it from multiple perspectives and with the variety of tools. She constructs the truth as a bricklayer builds a house. Brick by brick the construction takes its shape. But it is a construction, which is never complete, because there is no absolute truth which it could be accomplished. The truth which has been built is only one of countless possible truths. The selected materials and methods form the outcome. Ellingson (2009, 94) also encourages for methodological pluralism and says: “Put down a hammer and pick up a tool box, and you can do a lot of good.” She continues: “if you have a hammer as your only tool, you tend to search for opportunities to hammer things, rather than looking for interesting opportunities and then choosing an appropriate tool” (Ellingson (2009, 95).

In my study I combine *practice* and *theory*. The theory serves as a framework, and in contrast, my practice of arts and pedagogy guides my inquiry in the right direction to find new meanings and theories. Practice and theory intertwine in a way that is impossible to describe. We never know which one was first, and where the whole process ends. Together they provide new understanding in a continuous loop. Similarly my practice knits together *art* and *science*. I find them both equally important ways of exploring human existence. The artist and the scientist have always searched for the secrets of the human and the world. The meaning and the purpose of human life, the questions of individual liberty as well as ethical decisions are inquiries that have always been in central and also demanded from philosophy.

My research is practice led and starts from experience. Lived experience is always the starting point and end point of phenomenological research; even though it can never be captured in totality – neither with the tools of art nor science. Lived experience has its temporal structure, and therefore it can never been grasped in its immediate appearance but always reflected as past presence, which is why it can never been grasped in its full richness and depth (Manen 1998, 36). I agree with Sederholm (2007, 143), who points out that a work of art is never a copy of its target phenomenon but rather a deliberation and interpretation of it. She claims that art is an attempt to set different things in relation with each other. The task for an artist is to sketch and test different possibilities; art is investigating and experimenting. I am attempting to have the same kind of attitude in my “scientific” activity, which Merleau-Ponty (2006, 14–15) also describes:

Scientific thinking, a thinking which looks on from above, and thinks of the object in general, must return to the “there is” which precedes it; to the site, the soil of the sensible and humanly modified world such as it is in our lives and for our bodies – not that possible body which we may legitimately think of as an information machine but this actual body I call mine, this sentinel standing quietly at the command of my words and my acts. ... In this primordial historicity, science’s agile and improvisatory thought will learn to ground itself upon things themselves and upon itself, and will once more become philosophy...

Merleau-Ponty (2008) follows Husserl and argues that we do not have any other information about the world than that which can be accessed through human consciousness. But it is important to note that Merleau-Ponty claims that the connection between thought and the world does not happen through Cartesian deductive reasoning but rather through perception. Instead of the *mind*, Merleau-Ponty highlights the importance of the *body* in perception. But it is not the body as an object amongst other objects in the world but it is *my* body. I *am* my body. Through that I exist and I experience the world; *in* and *through* my body I live my life. This kind of connection based on perception is also the foundation for natural science, but it cannot be explained or described through the categories of natural science. Especially if we are trying to understand our belongingness to the world; the existence cannot be explained through dualisms.

Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy relies heavily on the criticism of Cartesian tradition. Idealism based on Cartesianism conceptualizes the world and reduces it to the thinking mind. On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty stresses our connection to the world, highlighting its temporal and spatial connections as well as its non-conceptual and dialogical nature – everything that was excluded from Descartes’ system. The ideological perspective of research, conducted in the phenomenological tradition is hard – even impossible – to describe objectively. It is often considered that the researcher’s own ideology may distort the analysis, especially when the researcher examines her own work of art. Since I am personally involved in the whole process of creating, analysing and reporting of this study, I am also able to work with information not transmitted directly, for example, to the spectators of the artistic work. If *Katiska* was analysed with someone outside the working group, the analysis would certainly be very different; not better or worse, but different. Thus I claim that the important thing is to recognize my own ideology, the theories and the practices that I am committed to,

and to make them all visible. *Katiska* is filled with ideological presentations. Through these, it speaks to the audience. In fact, I see dance performance at its best as an ideological and ethical project (see also Parviainen, 1998).

“Art is not construction, artifice, the meticulous relationship to a space and a world existing outside. It is truly the ‘inarticulate cry’, as Hermes Trismegistus said,” (Merleau-Ponty 2006, 56.) Merleau-Ponty (2006, 63) borrows from Rodin: “‘It is the artist who is truthful, while the photograph lies; for, in reality, time never stops.’ The photograph keeps open the instants which the onrush of time closes up forthwith; it destroys the overtaking, the overlapping, the ‘metamorphosis’ of time.” I feel that the linear way of presenting a research has the same limits than a photograph. It seems to freeze something that was living. A written research report is like *a still image of still ongoing course*.

The adverb “still” can mean various things when describing temporal aspects. For example, in the sentence “are you still dancing?” it means ‘at this or that time; as previously’, and in the sentence “dancing will still continue” it denotes ‘in the future as in the past’. In my opinion, a photograph raises a question about what happens outside the frame. The image does not just fix a clear entity, but rather suggests something else. Such photographs encourage the beholder to look and imagine wider pictures. What has happened before the photo was taken and what happens after that?

The *Katiska* project started in summer 2007, but its substance originates from somewhere much earlier. The life stories of the boys were a background for the improvisational practice. My own personal, artistic and pedagogical experiences served to initiate the whole project. The project is not complete – *Katiska* is still performed. The whole project cannot be captured in a clear timeframe. The various research stages cannot be explicitly separated from each other, because collecting data and analysing, reading and writing, expressing and interpreting, making art and writing theory, all intersect so as to generate and enlighten each other.

The metaphor of “still image” is useful, as it highlights the fact that the research report is only a limited representation of the whole process. “Still image” refers to a ‘fixed image’; thus it makes a clear distinction from an image that is moving. Thus “still image” can be defined as ‘non-moving visual information’. A photograph is “the image of a fractal world, with no equation or summons. It is therefore different from art and cinema, which in idea, vision and movement, always try to represent a totality.” (Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 149.)

The metaphor of “still image” is also problematic because we so easily tend to believe that it captures a piece of “reality”. Instead, we should understand that “[e]ach photographed

object is only the trace left by the disappearance of the rest” (Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 147). How often have we felt disappointed when our holiday photographs have flattened the spectacular landscapes we experienced or when the pictures from a party where we felt fabulous reveal us looking old and fat? Photographs are only the outer images of moments in reality; they can never capture the *real* reality with all the experienced substance. I agree with Guillaume (Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 20) that “[r]esearchers are like sinners, and truth is their God”. Our pretension to express reality faithfully is only an illusion: “[t]he world is only objectively real when there is no one there to see it” (Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 160). Perhaps we should acknowledge that “illusion is not opposed to reality” (Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 147).

If the camera is a technological extension of the eye, the photographic image is an extension of the gaze: not only an objective perception, but a vision. Sometimes, but only sometimes, there is a picture that materializes this of things – not things as they are in themselves, but such as photography changes them into themselves: what they look like ‘photographed’. (Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 165.)

In an effort to clarify the still image attitude and the pluralistic methodology of my research practice, this chapter describes the philosophy as well as the art-based inquiries which have shaped my own understanding of doing research. To begin, I discuss the theories of body by contrasting two concepts of it, as *object body* and *lived body*. I will also reflect on the concepts of the *self* and the *other* in the light of phenomenology. I then move on to present two influential *dance theatre* practitioners; Pina Bausch and Lloyd Newson. I conclude this chapter by proposing my own qualitative methodology, *eragraphy*, which is a combination of education, research and animateuring practice.

Philosophical frame

My body, my self

Phenomenologists, following in the footsteps of Husserl, have made a conceptual distinction between the *object body* (*Körper*) and the *lived body* (*Leib*). The object body is a

physiological and biological entity, while the lived body is how we experience and know our bodies, and through our bodies, the things and the world around and part of us. According to phenomenology, *kinesthesia* is the interface which connects the body's internal and external world. (Parviainen 2007, 46.) I claim that if the understanding of lived body and kinesthesia are forgotten, and we only focus on the examination of the object body, we exclude the *real* reality, the aspects of humanity outside of our knowledge and truth, and therefore, there is also a great risk that we have a harmful effect on the welfare of people's lives. Our body and kinesthesia allow us to obtain information about ourselves and the world, about ourselves in the world and the world within ourselves.

I agree with Wang (2011, 2) that “our mistake is in our thinking that we can control and conquer without suffering from the side effects of such a mechanism of controlling and conquering. Such a thinking self in his dualistic separation from the other and from the world, ... The systemic nature of life determines that our relentless control over others and over the cosmic system is also violence against ourselves as we are part of the system rather than the master of the system.” Anttila (2006a, 69) also claims that the body-mind dichotomy is an inaccurate description of the human essence, and this deep-rooted dichotomy has held up the investigations of the essence of the human, especially the understanding the structure and development of awareness and therefore also the development of Western education practices. In practices at school the body is almost completely comprehended and treated as an object that we investigate anatomically in biology classes and that we practice as a physiological entity in physical education. Phenomenology can be regarded as the movement in Western philosophy which has sought to overcome the misunderstandings, which Cartesian dualistic thinking has caused to human sciences and philosophy. Through the influence of the Cartesian tradition, we habitually detach ourselves from the object and also treat the mind and the body as separate “things”. As Merleau-Ponty (2008, 230) says “the reflective attitude simultaneously purifies the common notions of body and soul by defining the body as the sum of its parts with no interior, and the soul as a being wholly present to itself without distance”.

As Parviainen (1998, 22) says, “a potential wisdom in our bodily awareness is excluded and ignored, because the sciences have no tools of access to an experiential body”. Therefore the conception of the body is merely organic matter constructed by the natural sciences, in particular medicine and biology. In contrast, for phenomenologist the body is not an object and the awareness of it is not a thought, therefore it cannot be cut into pieces and transformed to form a clear idea, instead “its unity is always implicit and vague” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 231). To have a phenomenological attitude towards the conception of body and its research, is

to accept that “the body always remains to some extent a secret to us; hence a phenomenologist can only illuminate certain aspects of its complexity” (Parviainen 1998, 33).

Object body – lived body

By separating the two concepts of the body – the Cartesian body as an object and the phenomenological body as lived – we are also at the centre of two different types of knowledge construction, one for the body as a somatic experience and the second, the living body and its relationship to the environment (Parvainen 2006, 11). A phantom limb is a commonly cited example of evidence that the body as a somatic entity does not always coincide with the lived experience of our body. A phantom limb is the sensation in which a missing limb still feels as if it were attached to the body and like moving appropriately with other body parts. Phenomenology acknowledges that there is a nature, which is not that of the science, but that which *perception* presents to me and is given to itself (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 502).

The concepts of gender and sex are often linked and both understood as forming two separate and opposite polarities: man/woman, male/female. For Freud “the sexual is not the genital” (as quoted in Merleau-Ponty 2008, 183); biological sex is anatomical, whereas social gender is embodied in gestures, movements and manners, which are all learned. Thus I claim that when a person’s lived experience is denied and his sex and sexuality reduced to the psychological and medical understanding of the concept of a man, as an object with certain sexual characteristics and gendered behaviour; the plurality and complexity of human sexuality and the whole being is treated as pathology, which has its cure for its “abnormality” only in gender reassignment surgery. In dualism there is little room for multifaceted, subjective experiences.

The Cartesian conception of body is based on body-mind dualism. I agree with Parviainen (1998, 22) that “[i]n trying to verbalize about the body, we constantly face the distinction between ‘physical’, ‘organic’ and ‘the self’, ‘consciousness’, ‘mental’, ‘psyche’, ‘mind’, ‘ego’”. The body is treated as an object, which can be investigated as a separate “thing”. It is an anatomical, biological and physiological entity that can be measured and described exhaustively in the parlance of natural science. The body is like a vehicle that carries my mind and soul, the “real”, “inner” me. I possess my body and therefore I am capable of mastering it. The attitude towards the body is *instrumentalistic*. By following Parviainen (1998, 22), “the body as a vehicle is trained and disciplined as if it were a well-

organized machine”, and as she continues, it “can be modified as it suits us”. This attitude is well implemented in Western sports and dance education. We compete against our own body and against those of others. We are constantly trying to achieve certain goals to meet the criterion imposed on us. The ideal physical appearance of the body has changed throughout history, and approval and admiration of one’s body is based on the visual standards of the time. Parviainen (1998, 23) argues that “the body as a product represents diverse models, symbols and images”. She continues that “in the position of the absolute spectator, the Cartesian subject detaches objects and other human beings, even the body, from himself, scrutinizing them as exterior things. ... The body is reduced to an object which mechanically receives, transmits and reproduces qualities of the external world.” (Parviainen 1998, 24–25.)

The phenomenological concept of body is based on a more holistic understanding, where mind and body are intertwined. The conception of the body is formed not only as the experience of my body but my body-in-the-world (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 163–164). The phenomenological conception of lived body is the body which we perceive subjectively. Through kinesthesia and its sensuous ability the body recognizes itself and the world. The lived body inhabits experiences, emotions and memories in its temporal and spatial structure, and therefore it is in its habits and intentions also the core of our social, conceptual and ethical being in the world.

Experience and perception

When we come back to phenomena we find, as basic layer of experience, a whole already pregnant with an irreducible meaning: not sensations with gaps between them, into which memories may be supposed to slip, but the features, the layout of a landscape or a world, in spontaneous accord with the intentions of the moment, as with earlier experience. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 25.)

Empiricists and intellectualists share a common ignorance of phenomena; they both construct things and events instead of living them (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 392). For phenomenologists, what is given is not the thing “on its own”, but the *experience* of the thing; therefore in order to perceive things, we need to live them. I do not actually constitute things; they are the outcomes of a flow of subjective appearances. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 379–380.) I am not the spectator of an experience, but I am involved in it, and it is my point of view

which makes possible “both the finiteness of my perception and its opening out upon the complete world as a horizon of every perception” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 354). For phenomenologists, the experience of phenomena is not an ‘act of introspection’ which seeks the ‘inner world’, because phenomenon is not a ‘state of consciousness’ or a ‘mental fact’. Therefore what we discover is not an occult inner world behind the objective world. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 66–67.)

With the concept of *perception* Merleau-Ponty (2008) refers to both active and passive activities of the sensuous body. The complex phenomenon of perception is full of long, short, intensive or passive sensations passing by. They are intertwined but do not become entangled with emerging fantasies, dreams and memories. Merleau-Ponty’s theory of perception is based on Husserl’s concept of *Lebenswelt*, the world as it is given to us in our experience, and in which “perception is, not presumed true, but defined as access to truth” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xviii). The phenomenological description of the body does not seek the definitive answers, because the body is constantly in motion and interwoven to the world – “is not what I think, but what I live through” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xviii).

To perceive is not to experience a host of impressions accompanied by memories capable of clinching them; it is to see, standing forth from a cluster of data, an immanent significance without which no appeal to memory is possible. To remember is not to bring into the focus of consciousness a self-subsistent picture of past; it is to thrust deeply, into the horizon of the past and take apart step by step the interlocked perspectives until the experiences which it epitomizes are as if relived in their temporal setting. To perceive is not to remember. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 26.)

Both empiricism and intellectualism, “keep their distance in relation to perception, instead of sticking closely to it” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 30). Phenomenology, in contrast, is not looking for an idea but rather “what it is as a fact for us” before thematization (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xvii). Objective thought is unaware of the subject of perception, because “it presents itself with the world ready made, as the setting of every possible event, and treats perception as one of these events” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 240). But objective thought and all knowledge takes its place within the sphere opened up by perception (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 241). Primary perception is a non-positing, pre-objective and pre-conscious experience that takes place in an atmosphere of generality and is presented to us anonymously (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 250,

281). It must be noted that words can never express my true experience; they can only provide me with an interpretation of that experience – the word detaches itself from its original subject (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 247). The analysis and the description is never the experience in itself.

Sensation

It is through our sensuous body that we perceive the world. A passive perception awakens our attention, and then it becomes active when it develops and enriches the perception (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 31). What we call *sensation* is, according to Merleau-Ponty (2008, 281), the most elementary of perceptions. Pure sensation is the experience of an undifferentiated and immediate impact. But the perceptual “something” is always in the middle of something else, it always forms part of a “field”, and therefore we should avoid treating sensations as pure impressions (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 3–5). The “real objects” are no more than “permanent possibilities of sensations”, and that is why Merleau-Ponty (2008, 29) suggests that we should “abandon the empiricist postulate of the priority of contents” and rather explore the pre-objective realm if we wish to understand sense experience (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 14).

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 252) argues that “[t]he distinction between the different senses finds its justification along with that between the senses and intellection”, and thus it is possible to have something to taste as something else smells. Each organ of sense explores the object in its own way, being the agent of a certain type of synthesis; but the unity of space can be discovered only in the interplay of the different sensory realms (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 258–259). We must understand that the meaning of an object, at the level of quality, is never fully developed and determined, but this indeterminate can be recognized as a positive phenomenon, because “[i]t is in this atmosphere that quality arises. Its meaning is an equivocal meaning; we are concerned with an expressive value rather than with logical signification.” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 7.)

The senses are distinct from each other and distinct from intellection in so far as each one of them brings with it a structure of being which can never be exactly transposed. We can recognize this because we have rejected any formalism of consciousness, and made the body the subject of perception. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 261.)

According to Merleau-Ponty (2008, 248) “[t]he sensor and the sensible do not stand in relation to each other as two mutually external terms, and sensation is not an invasion of the sensor by the sensible”. Sometimes the noise of the street can be experienced as unbearable if I am stressed and tired. Or the load of my backpack starts to feel heavier when I climb the steps to my apartment. We experience sensations as a modality of a general existence in a physical world and which we live through without our being the cause of it (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 251). When I am sitting in a café I do not pay attention to what kind of music they are playing on the background as my friend does. Sensation can be intentional, because I find that “in the sensible a certain rhythm of existence is put forward” then the sensible quality is “the peculiar product of an attitude of curiosity or observation” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 248).

Sensation appears when “I turn towards this gaze itself”, when “I ask myself *what precisely it is that I see*” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 263). Our vision is such a dominant sense that often it feels easier to focus to the bodily sensations keeping my eyes closed, when doing dance improvisation. By concentrating to the tactile and kinesthetic sensations we can experience a new perceptual world opening up for us.

In short, my body is not only an object among all other objects, a nexus of sensible qualities among others, but an object which is sensitive to all the rest, which reverberates to all sounds, vibrates to all colours, ... (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 275).

Space, time and movement

In phenomenology, the conception of *space* is “not the setting (real or logical) in which things are arranged, but the means whereby the position of things becomes possible” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 284). The *body schema* is a way of stating that my body is in-the-world, and there would be no space at all for me if I had no body (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 115–117). To be a body, means to be united to a certain world: our body is not *in* space, but it is *of* it (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 171).

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 309) borrows from Husserl the idea of perception as a “field of presence” which extends in two dimensions: the *spatial*, here-there, dimension and the *temporal*, past-present-future, dimension. We have to “avoid saying that our body is *in* space, or *in* time. It *inhabits* space and time” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 161). The spatial synthesis is based on the unfolding of time:

In every focusing movement my body unites present, past and future, it secretes time, or rather it becomes that location in nature where, for the first time, events, instead of pushing each other into the realm of being, project round the present a double horizon of past and future and acquires historical orientation (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 278–279).

As Merleau-Ponty (2008, 484) argues, we should not treat *time* as a linear concept, where the future is posterior to the past, but as “a network of intentionalities”. A past and a future are hidden in the present moment, but they “spring forth when I reach out towards them” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 489). The relations between objects should be comprehended as *existential* dimensions: they “cannot be understood as belonging to the thought of an acosmic subject, but as a possibility of a subject involved in the world” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 311). Spatial perception is a structural phenomenon and is comprehensible only within a certain perceptual field (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 327). Merleau-Ponty (2008, 343) talks about *natural* or *primordial* space instead of *geometrical* space: instead of the physical distance between myself and all things, “a ‘lived’ distance binds me to things which count and exist for me, and links them to each other” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 333).

This kind of experiential space “has a nonthematic or implicit meaning” but it “is not a *lesser meaning*” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 337). According to Merleau-Ponty (2008, 164) “[e]ven if subsequently, thought and the perception of space are freed from motility and spatial being, for us to be able to conceive space, it is in the first place necessary that we should have been thrust into it by our body”. It is this experiential space that also makes being somewhere else while staying here possible (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 333). We live at the same time in the common property world and in a private world (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 335). The two worlds are often separated as an *external*, which is geometrically and objectively received and explained, and as an *internal*, which is mental and individual and accessible only subjectively.

Parviainen (2006) separates the concept of space into three different categories; *objective*, *experiential* and *virtual* space. The objective space has no centre point. It is constituted by physically measurable entities and described through geometry. In contrast the virtual space is only an illusion of a space, not an actual space (Parviainen 2006, 135). The experience of space is always bounded in its cultural and historical context. But as Parviainen (2006, 136–137) argues, the global cyberspace neutralizes the geometrical distances and

homogenizes the social and cultural differences between different spaces. She also points out that in virtual space we are never bodily present but only accessible through texts and images.

Just as bodily space is not space thought of or represented, movement is not thought about movement either (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 159). A moving object is not passing through a series of positions, but it is given only as beginning, pursuing or completing its movements. The moving object emerges only as caught up in movement. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 314.) Every movement has a *background*, but it is “not a representation associated externally with the movement itself, but it is immanent in the movement inspiring and sustaining it at every moment. The plunge into action is, from the subject’s point of view, an original way of relating himself to the object, and is on the same footing as perception. Light is thus thrown upon the distinction between abstract and concrete movement; the background to concrete movement is the world as given, whereas the background to abstract movement is built up.” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 127.)

In everyday life we perceive movements and respond to them, the movements of others, on a concrete level. We reply our friend’s waving on the street with our own arm gesture. We shake hands with our business partner and kiss our lover goodbye. All these actions we do without objectifying and analysing others’ gestures in an abstract space. In the first place we do not perceive the movement of the others’ hands as flexions and extensions of skeletal and muscular systems, but rather as meaningful gestures in their setting. Concrete and abstract movements can be understood “as two ways of relating to the object and two types of being in the world”, but again this cannot be understood, if we reduce the living body to the condition of an object (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 141).

Merleau-Ponty is not talking about the objective body that moves, but the phenomenal body which surges towards objects to be perceived: “every event related to movement or sense of touch causes consciousness to put up a host of intentions which run from the body as centre of potential action either towards the body itself or towards the object” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 121, 125). Habits can be seen as our body’s expression of being-in-the-world, and “to understand is to experience the harmony between what we aim at and what is given, between the intention and the performance – and the body is our anchorage in a world” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 166–167).

The body is our general medium for having a world. Sometimes it is restricted to the actions necessary for the conservation of life, and accordingly it posits around us a biological world; at other times, elaborating upon these primary actions and moving from their literal

to a figurative meaning, it manifests through them a core of new significance: this is true of motor habits such as dancing. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 169.)

Parviainen refers by the term *kinesthesia* to the movement experience of living creatures, especially to the activity of humans. She points out that etymologically, kinesthesia refers to the Greek words *kinēma*, which means ‘movement’, and *aisthētikos*, which can be translated as ‘receptive’ or ‘perceptual’. Kinesthesia can be understood as sensing, perceiving, experiencing or becoming aware of movement. Parviainen quotes Husserl and says that kinesthesia is a special hyletic experience; it is “given” in our perception and thus we receive it passively. (Parviainen, 2006, 27–28.)

Parviainen also borrows Husserl’s insight that kinesthesia is the crossing point that connects the internal and external, and is therefore more than sensory category. Kinesthesia operates independently as well as “under” the visual and tactile senses and in a way enabling the visual and tactile sensory functions. Husserl speaks about *kinaesthetic fields* instead of sensations. The concept of the field breaks the traditional division of the body’s internal and external movements, because it examines the body’s interaction with the world as unified but still as distinct kinaesthetic fields. (Parviainen, 2006, 30-31). Parviainen (2006, 9) believes that kinesthesia, the experience of bodies’ movements, opens up an important cognitive, social, and emotional channel for us to the world.

I agree with Parviainen that when we move, our experience, both of the body and the world, starts to change. The conceptual characterization of movements and postures, which appear to us through our body’s topography as different tactile-kinaesthetic feelings, is often difficult. However the mapping of our bodily experiences opens up a new complex and rich world by intensifying our own self-awareness. The danger is that the phenomenology of the body and movement can easily lead only to the observation of one’s own ego. However, kinaesthetic intelligence is not only knowledge of one’s own body and its internal feelings, but rather requires interaction with the world. (Parviainen 2006, 75–76.)

Parviainen claims that the concept of movement is often understood through classical mechanics which was necessary for the new technology to develop from the 18th century onwards. But the conceptualization of movement from this perspective has been affected more widely than just technology. The idea of movement is often combined with a general idea of its governability. Modern competitive sport would not exist without the idea of this controllability and measurability of movement. Moreover the present health programmes and their effects are justified by physiological measurements. (Parviainen 2006, 8.) When

movement became first and foremost a measurable thing, it was no longer considered to be a subjective experience (Parviainen 2006, 15). The problem is that when reality has been conceptualized as mathematically rational and measurable by the standards of natural science, it excludes much of what is experientially meaningful for an individual.

Consciousness, knowledge and truth

The spontaneous method of perception, the living system of meanings, makes the essence of the object immediately recognizable and allows its sensible properties to appear only through that essence. The object “speaks” and is significant – it straight away “means” something. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 151.) We do not start “by knowing the perspective aspects of the thing”; instead we “go straight to it, and it is only in a secondary way that we become aware of the limits of our knowledge and of ourselves as knowing” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 378).

In this research study I understand the body as a method, but also as a subject, the means of making meaning, representing and performing (Perry & Medina 2011, 63). “My body is the fabric into which all objects are woven, and it is, at least in relation to the perceived world, the general instrument of my ‘comprehension’” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 273). What makes *reality* is therefore precisely what comes into our grasp (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 271). Appearance is already reality: if I think I see or feel, I indubitably see or feel, no matter what may be true of the external object. Real being and appearance are one; there is no reality other than the appearance. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 343.) For the same reason we should remember that the consciousness of others “can never be brought down in their existence to what I know of them. But neither can my own consciousness” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 393).

In order to be able to claim a truth, the actual subject must in the first place be in the world. Systems of meanings do not require to be made explicit to be exploited. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 149.) In consciousness, appearance is not being in an object world, but rather a phenomenon. Because this new understanding of *cogito* is anterior to revealed truth and error, it makes them both possible. The lived is certainly lived by me, and therefore there is no unconscious. But we should also remember that my being is not reducible to what appears to me, because I can experience more things than I represent to myself. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 345–346.)

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 342) points out that the link between subjectivity and objectivity exists in mythical or childlike consciousness, and also in sleep or insanity. Objective thought discards the phenomena of dreams, myths, and existence generally, because it cannot think

clearly about them – they mean nothing that can be thematized. The essence of the myth exists in its appearance; therefore the mythical phenomenon is not a representation, but a true presence. I agree with Merleau-Ponty that we should not level all experience down to a single world or all states of existence down to one consciousness. Quite the reverse, we should accept the existence of dreams, insanity and perception. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 337–338.) When we experience *participation in the world*, “being-in-truth” is impossible to differentiate from “being-in-the-world”: “there are truths just as there are perceptions” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 459). The reality of a child or a disabled person is no less true than that of a “normal” adult. The philosophy of “being-in-the-world” is therefore most profoundly an ethical philosophy which recognizes the polyphonic voice of multiple subjectivities.

The life of consciousness is subtended by an “intentional arc” which projects our past, our future and our whole humanity with its physicality and ethics, or rather, which results in our being situated in all these respects. It is this intentional arc which unifies intelligence, sensibility and motility. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 157.) I can place my confidence in the world because there is the absolute certainty of the world in general – but not of any one thing in particular. My devotion to the world allows the variations in the *cogito*, to use one *cogito* at the expense of another and to catch up with the truth of my thinking beyond its appearances. This is what makes the possibility of correction. I know that there are errors only because I possess truth. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 344–347.)

In so far as, when I reflect on the essence of subjectivity, I find it bound up with that of the body and that of the world, this is because my existence as subjectivity is merely one with my existence as a body and with the existence of the world, and because the subject that I am, when taken concretely, is inseparable from this body and this world. The ontological world and body which we find at the core of the subject are not the world or body as idea, but on the one hand the world itself contracted into a comprehensive grasp, and on the other the body itself as a knowing-body. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 475.)

Our bodily knowledge does not stand outside the body and that is why it cannot be expressed in propositional sentences (Parviainen, 2006, 73). *Propositional knowing* (knowing that), which means knowing the truth of a sentence, requires conceptualization; *non-propositional knowing* (knowing something, knowing how) cannot be explained; it must be experienced.

I am interested in examining “how the body in pedagogy works as a site of cultural inscription where norms, practices, and symbols are inscribed by the body and for the body” (Perry & Medina 2011, 63). When we are trying to understand the concepts of *knowledge* and *truth* we should also consider Ricoeur’s (1988) suggestion that *sense* does not emanate from nude facts and separate events, but is something that emerges within the temporality of the narrative – or the performativity of our bodies, as I would add. Knowledge, viewed as a transitive process, has no foundation – only a structure in time (Bhaskar 1975, 189).

Borrowing from Heidegger, Parviainen (1998, 60) says that we are essentially historical beings; we can always find ourselves “already thrown, already cast, into an historical world which is not of its own making. As soon as we become aware of history, we find that we have already been shaped by its forces.” But as well as being the products of history, we also shape history. The perceiving subject, the self, constitutes the world in time–space-relation. Or to be more precise, we are, the self and the world, the constant flow of the whole *being-in-the-world*, the inseparable past–present–future. But as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 489) points out: “I am myself time, a time which ‘abides’ and does not ‘flow’ or ‘change’”. The bodily self can be described through the metaphor of the river; “not in so far as the river flows, but in so far as it is one with itself” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 490).

Before any conceptualization, there is always first an experience of the lived body which inhabits the world; “I am a field, an experience”, as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 473) says. But as he points out that subjectivity requires opening itself to an other; “to go forth from itself” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 495). In other words, in order to become conscious the subject has to separate itself from the constant stream of perceiving and experiencing, to take the position of other. The first moment of alterity, self–other-relationship, can be found there.

As my living present opens upon a past which I nevertheless am no longer living through, and on a future which I do not yet live, and perhaps never shall, it can also open on to temporalities outside my living experience and acquire a social horizon, with the result that my world is expanded to the dimensions of that collective history which my private existence takes up and carries forward. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 503.)

My self – the other

...we must ask why there are two views of me and of my body: my body for me and my body for others, and how these two systems can exist together. It is indeed not enough to say that the objective body belongs to the real of 'for others', and my phenomenal body to that of 'for me', and we cannot refuse to pose the problem of their relations, since the 'for me' and the 'for others' co-exist in one and the same world, as is proved by my perception of an other who immediately brings me back to the condition of an object for him. (Goldstein as quoted in Merleau-Ponty 2008, 122.)

I remember the time when I felt that I did not exist if I did not see myself in the mirror image in the ballet studio. I was used to observe myself and evaluate my body's performance as a separate object, a manageable instrument. I could not grasp and trust my existence based merely on my experience as bodily and kinesthetically sensing being. I had become to myself as an object that could be controlled and trained. My body was like an "other" for my "self", something that I could possess and present – but also something that I could obviously lose. The moment of alterity can be seen in this example. I did not only exclude the other people and the things around me but I also lost a 'touch' for myself when the visual connection with my mirror image was removed. This experience of 'losing myself' serves for me as an example of the complex concepts of *self* and *other* as well as *body* and *being*.

For Merleau-Ponty (1968), the question of meaning does not come from a dualism of *appearance* and *being*; the visible is not the opposite of the invisible but rather its doubling. Meanings are therefore not subordinated to signs. My own experience in ballet class shows that the true threat of the Cartesian world view is not just in its limitations to scientifically explain the totality of the world, but more importantly, how it has affected our modes of being and experiencing ourselves, others and the whole world. Therefore, I claim that phenomenology can also, be not just a philosophical model of theoretically explaining phenomena, but more like an attitude that influences my practice as an artist and an educator – and also my whole existence and experience of the world. Phenomenology has managed to unite extreme subjectivism and objectivism, because it does not try to express explicitly a pre-existing world, but rather to articulate "being" (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xxii). And the centre of that being is our lived body. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 174–175) advises against comparing the body to a physical object, but rather to "a work of art", in the sense that art works are

individuals in which the expression is impossible to differentiate from the thing expressed. The meaning is available only through direct contact in their temporal and spatial situation. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 409) therefore suggests that we conceive of consciousness as a perceptual consciousness, not as a constituting consciousness. Consciousness has to be understood as “the subject of a pattern of behavior, as being-in-the-world or existence”.

Merleau-Ponty points out that we do not observe the relations between our body parts and the link between the different senses as outsiders; “we are ourselves the unifier of these arms and legs, the person who both sees and touches them” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 173). As the different facets of a cube are related to the idea of a cube, the arm seen and the arm touched together perform one and the same action. Just as every habit is both motor and perceptual because it exists between explicit perception and actual movement. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 175.) It is crucial to understand that “[t]he phenomenological world is not pure being, but the sense which is revealed where the paths of my various experiences intersect, and also where my own and other people’s intersect and engage each other like gears. It is thus inseparable from subjectivity and intersubjectivity, which find their unity when I either take up my past experiences in those of the present or other people’s in my own.” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xxii.) Phenomenological inquiry targets the existence *in* and *between* the body and the self as well the self and the other. To be clear, phenomenology stresses *human belongingness the world*: “subjectivity, body and the world are therefore mutually implicated; they form a single comprehensive system” (Parviainen 1998, 62).

I agree with Parviainen (1998, 69) that “[t]he self is a place of rest, but not a place of escape from the world enclosing it from the outside. Rather it is an intermediated area of experiencing, to which the body-self’s experiences and others’ action both contribute, keeping the self and outer reality separate yet interrelated.” The body is interwoven with other perceivable objects, but they do not merge into “sameness”. There is a gap which separates the self and otherness. In addition, even the body-self to some extent is other to itself, since the body-self is never totally known and perceived by itself. (Parviainen 1998, 64.) Merleau-Ponty (1968) introduced the concepts of *flesh* and *chiasm* to overcome the deeply rooted categories such as subject–world or body–consciousness and as a way of naming the complex relations between these terms. The term *flesh* (*la chair*) expresses the concept that the human body and the world begin from the same source. The flesh designates “a dimension of us as embodied beings in which all individuals lives are inseparably intertwined” (Parviainen 1998, 62).

To be clear, here *flesh* is a phenomenological, not a biological concept. The flesh is a state of being. It is a substance that intertwines *perceiving* and *being perceived*. Merleau-

Ponty (1968) calls the reversibility of these passive and active dimensions of perception *chiasm*. This reversibility is a matter of flesh, not a feature of a particular perception – it is like two sides of the same coin. In *écart*, chiasm takes place in at least three different manners: to see – to be seen, seeing–touching and perception–language. Merleau-Ponty (1968, 214–215) describes:

The chiasm is not only a me other exchange (the messages he receives reach me, the messages I receive reach him), it is also an exchange between me and the world, between the phenomenal body and the 'objective' body, between the perceiving and the perceived: what begins as a thing ends as consciousness of the thing, what begins as a 'state of consciousness' ends as a thing.

Parviainen gives an example of reversibility in dance: “[t]he dancing is danced, the dancing body can be simultaneously seen by the other” (Parviainen 1998, 65). The chiasm exists in dance therefore in at least two different manners: “(1) in the dancing body itself and (2) between the moving body and the one who perceives it” (Parviainen 1998, 66).

In order to understand and to be understood, I have to be in contact with another: “[s]o there is reversibility between consciousness of one’s own body and perception of the other” (Parviainen 1998, 72). Baudrillard (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 126) also claims that “[i]n order for there to be alterity, there must be some reversibility”. Because the self cannot identify itself without the other, and the other cannot be conceptualized without the comprehension of the self, the question cannot be “how we become free of the other, but how we actively engage and make ourselves known in relationship to the other, since this is a channel to have knowledge of both the self and the other” (Parviainen 1998, 71). I agree with Parviainen (1998, 73) that because performing is “a place in which the difference between the self and the other is obvious”, it can provide “an opportunity to learn to understand the other and construct one’s own identity”.

We should remember that we can only understand others because we share the same social and cultural world, but at the same time, the other is a perceiving subject of its own, which always remains fundamentally a mystery to me (Parviainen 1998, 70–71).

*The Cartesian subject has forced 'the other' into a position of object.
The new critical paradigm after colonialism has strengthened the
ethical importance of recognizing and respecting the difference that*

makes the other. Sameness and sharing identity with a gender or/and with an ethnic or religious community play a role a determining our moral comportment toward the other, but respect for differences is no less important. (Parviainen 1998, 71.)

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 503) argues that “each one knows itself only by projecting itself into the present where they can interweave”. As Merleau-Ponty (2008, xxiii) says “we witness every minute the miracle of related experience; and yet nobody knows better than we do how this miracle is worked, for we are ourselves this network of relationships”. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 145) suggests that the phenomenologist’s task is “to conceive, between the linguistic, perceptual and motor contents and the form given to them or the symbolic function which breathes life into them, a relationship which shall be neither the reduction of form to content, nor the subsuming of content under an autonomous form.”

Phenomenology is interested in “the real”, but the real is not as it is in natural sciences. For the phenomenologist “the real is a closely woven fabric” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, xi), which means that reality is inseparable from a person perceiving it. In other words, its articulations are intertwined to our existence, and therefore it can never be *in itself*. Reality is not something we discover, but rather something which we constantly create and which creates us. I agree with Max van Manen that phenomenological research always asks what the nature of the phenomenon is as meaningfully experienced. It is not concerned with the effect of the psychological, sociological or cultural peculiarities or differences of the meaningful structures of human experience. But on the other hand, to orient oneself to a phenomenon always implies a particular interest and a way of approaching the experience. (Manen 1998, 40.) The essence of the phenomenological question is the opening up and keeping open of possibilities. “To truly question something is to interrogate something from the heart of our existence, from the center of our being”, Manen (1998, 43) describes.

Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1980, 7–8) claims that we have to go back to the immediate encounter with dance, in studios where it is created and theatres where it is presented, to be able to understand it better. She continues that if we only look at dance from our conception, based on our experience of dance on an increasingly informed level, we will end up making rootless speculations of it and forget its uniqueness and vitality. I agree with Sheets-Johnstone (1980, 8) that “[t]o approach dance as a phenomenal presence is to presuppose nothing in advance of the immediate experience of dance”. The phenomenologist asks for the heart of the experience – your immediate perception – therefore the experience must occur before any reflection takes place. Sheet-Johnstone (1980, 11) clarifies that “the trick is to develop a

method of description which takes nothing for granted, and which does not falsify or reduce the effect of the experience itself”. Consequently the attitude toward the phenomenon is neither objective nor subjective but to be in attendance on it without any prior interpretations or beliefs. Manen (1998, 46) warns that the problem in phenomenological inquiry is that we usually know too much about the phenomenon. We have our pre-understandings and assumptions before we have even come to grips with the significance of the phenomenological question. He suggests that it is better to make our beliefs explicit and not to forget or ignore them, because that way they might persistently get back into our reflections (Manen 1998, 47).

I believe that all the art forms and philosophical movements which celebrate the partial understanding of the “real” empower human experience and acknowledge the potential impact of an existentialist attitude on every field of human life, its personal, cultural, social and political aspects. I do not believe that there is a clear-cut distinction between some particular art forms in their attempt to express reality, because in every art form there are always different sub-forms that are based on diverse ideological standpoints.

Movement, dance, voice and music formed the creative process of *Katiska* in its attempt to find “the real”. Performance is the artistic outcome of the *Katiska* project, but I claim that what is more important is that the art *form* itself is the attitude of existential phenomenology. The ontological questions are the ones that guide the inquiry. The questions of subjectivity and objectivity as well as identity and alterity are brought to the fore. The questions of human existence; the relations of the self, the other and the world are in central position.

We create a story of ourselves through others. The answer to the question who am I is often formed according to feedback from others. Who am I in relation to the other? My experiences take shape in the context and in relation to another. Another is like a mirror where I see myself as a reflection. I am also a mirror to another. I am created through countless expressions and multiple overlapping reflections. At the same time, I am for myself another. Just when I am about to grasp the self, it escapes me. I position myself as another to be able to observe myself. My self is in constant motion, and therefore I am not able to form a clear picture of it. When I am trying to grasp the flow that it just was has already slipped through my fingers, and I can no longer reach it. I can describe my experiences and myself only as a glimpse – if at all. Another person cannot reach me as my self because I cannot get a hold on it even myself. We can only hope that in our reflection we do justice to human beauty, the self and the other, which float as a stream – or better expressed, which form the flow themselves.

The practice of education always happens in the relation of the self and the other. The ontological questions about education can neither be posed in separation from inquiries of

identity and alterity. In this study I arrived at a most fundamental sense of education, not just through its intellectual thematization, but most of all, through practising education and then only later returning to the very experience of it. The phenomenological description is thus the thematization of that, which was originally intuitively practised. So what then is this “most fundamental sense of education”, which happens somewhere in-between the self and the other and which seems to bind together the notions of identity and alterity? It is indeed the polymorphic sense of *recognition* and its reversible aspects of the active form of its verb *to recognize* and of the passive form *to be recognized*. Before going deeper into my suggestion of recognition as the very base of every ethical educational encounter, I will first explain my methodological choices, which were built up on a phenomenological position, in more detail in the following chapter.

Methodological frame

When I started to work with Jere, Lauri, Mikael, Rasmus and Valtteri in summer 2007 I did not think of the project as part of my doctoral research. I started from the idea of “creating something with teenage boys”. In spring 2007 Maija and I had just put on a musical production with ninth grade students, and in that project I had a chance to work with a bunch of enthusiastic, energetic, brave and talented boys. In that year I had only girls in my drama class, but because we also needed boys to play parts in our musical, some of Maija’s students from her band playing classes, were selected for those roles. Valtteri and Rasmus were two of those boys. Jere took also part in the project; even though he was already studying in the higher level of secondary school, he was asked to join the project and to perform a song in the musical as an older male character.

The project was a great success. I was especially happy that the boys had a chance to present themselves in a new light. Some of the boys had had behaviour problems at school, mainly troubles with communicating with some teachers. I was particularly pleased when the musical project seemed to offer the boys a platform to bring out their incredible artistic talents and so also to present them in a positive light. Maija and I got the greatest satisfaction from the project when we saw the change in these boys. Even though we must have somehow known what the boys were capable of doing, they still surprised us. We therefore decided to focus on young men in our next – outside school – project as well, which ended up as *Katiska*. I wanted to learn more about young men and their lives; I truly wanted to get to know what

the young men would tell us about themselves, if only they had an opportunity. Accordingly, my goal was initially to offer these boys that opportunity.

Jere, Lauri, Mikael, Rasmus and Valtteri were selected to join our new project because Maija knew that all of them “could sing” and also because she thought that they would be interested in expressing themselves in dancing. Maija had taught music to all these boys, so she knew them already. I had taught drama to Jere in secondary school and had worked with Rasmus and Valtteri on the musical project. I think that in principle everyone is capable of dancing, so I trusted Maija with the choices of participants for our project. I have to admit that some of the boys that were part of the school musical project were excluded from our outside school project. For some reason, we had assumed that those boys would not be interested in dancing, so we did not even ask them to come and try. I sometimes regret this decision – not because I would be disappointed for our performers, but because I clearly had preconceptions which prevented me from seeing otherwise.

Despite the natural differences between our adolescent participants, I have to admit that the performers of *Katiska* present a relatively homogeneous group of people; they are all Finnish, white, Christian and from middle class families. They were all doing reasonably well at school, and they all had friends and hobbies. Some of them were more focused on studying than others; some of them were more interested in sports or music. They were all asked to take part in the project with slightly different arguments; some were told that it was a music project and some others that it was theatre. The word dance was not used, because we thought that it would scare the boys away.

The whole project started from an idea to create an artistic work with young men. At the beginning, we discussed with the boys that at first we would just improvise and later we would possibly end up having a performance of some kind. Originally we intended to work with both singing and dancing, but because Maija was pregnant and I was in charge of the rehearsals, the process ended up originating from movement exercises. Maija joined in later, when we had already created some material. For me it was never about “teaching dance” to the boys. The first six months it was just “fooling around” as the boys have described it, or as I would call it “researching through body and movement”, but also through voice, singing, discussions and texts.

In this research the art practice is understood as research practice itself. The practice of art guides you to rethink the nature of *knowledge*. Where is it located? How is it created? And what is knowledge? The conception of knowledge has traditionally been based on the Platonic view of the “truth” that lies somewhere beyond any activities of knowing. Later it has been generally recognized that meanings are always constructed – knowing requires a knower.

Steedman (1991, 55) has suggested that the construction of meaning has two accounts; one is the individual's context of interpretations, and the other is the social context that creates the individual. Steedman (1991, 58) claims that “[m]ost of what we know, most of the knowing we do, is concerned with trying to make sense of what it is to be human and to be situated as we are”. Therefore he is also calling for the “commitment to understand learners as active rather than passive, acting in and on their worlds rather than ‘receiving’ knowledge” (Steedman 1991, 61).

The main interest in the artistic practice of this project focuses on the body and movement. The art-making was consequently driven by the question: how is identity posited and mediated through body and its performance? My own interest targets the question of identity as a “messy” phenomenon. I see art-based work as a way of disturbing or interrupting the traditional theory formations of identity and self. Sense of self is continuously on the move and changing. The dichotomy of mind and body is artificial and it prevents us from understanding the richness as well as the complexity of the concept of the self. Art-based inquiry can also reveal something about the intertwined unity of an individual and the world. Identity is narrative and performative and it can have numerous representations. Through body and movement work the connection between the identity and the context of history, culture and politics can be exposed.

I am interested in research that has a pragmatic purpose. Making art for other artists or doing research purely for the purpose of research does not interest me. I see the activities of art making, educating and researching as performing towards a change. Barone has talked about the same issue; arts-based enquiry supports elements that are aesthetic in character and that are “selected for their usefulness in recasting the contents of experience into a form with the potential for challenging (sometimes deeply held) beliefs and values” (as quoted in Finley 2005, 687). This research is consequently based on a presupposition that research is always political. I agree with Denzin and Lincoln (2005, 6) that “[t]he political *bricoleur* knows that science is power, for all research findings have political implications. There is no value-free science.” I also accept that “all research is interpretive; it is guided by the researcher’s set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied” (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 22).

I see myself, as Denzin and Lincoln (2005, 4) calls it, as a *bricoleur*, a qualitative researcher who uses her craft, drawing on whatever strategies, methods, and empirical materials are at hand. I used to see myself in different roles as a teacher, a student, a performer, a choreographer, and so on. But now I understand the strength of bringing these parts of me together in my practice. As a researcher and a participant in the artistic and

educational process in this study, I am hoping that this research will also help me to find the right methods for creative inquiries in the future and facilitate my own growth as an animateur. I have already noticed that to have a theoretical or philosophical view of education also helps me at a practical level. As an educator I see myself as an animateur, a facilitator, whose task is to guide people to find knowledge by themselves. So understood, learning can be recognized as researching. I also believe that the reason why we identify ourselves with artwork is that it helps to reconstruct our own lives and identities as well as to connect with others. For me, education, research and art practice are all about the same thing; trying to understand a little better – myself, you, and us, the whole world. It guides you to become aware of things that you did not know before.

Patricia Leavy (2009, 7) claims that “the social justice movements of the 1960s and 1970s – the civil rights movement, the women’s movement (second-wave feminism), the gay rights movement – culminated in major changes in the academic landscape, including the asking of new research questions as the reframing of many previously asked research questions and corresponding approaches to research, both theoretical and methodological”. Qualitative research is generally characterized by an inductive approach to knowledge-building. The praxis of research, the meaning-making process, occurs as a non-linear process. Form and content are inextricably linked and enmeshed within shifting relations of power. Meanings appear through identifying and labelling emerging concepts; relating perception and finding patterns; and finally forming theory. Revealing the concept of power within the knowledge-building process, and acknowledging partial and situated truths especially, has been the key issue for new paradigm researchers. The new critical focus has raised questions about representation forms as well. (Leavy 2009, 7–8.)

This research is located in a field of social, cultural and education studies. It could be said that this research is a *phenomenological* and *hermeneutic* study of human existence; phenomenology because it is a descriptive study of lived experience (the self and identity) in the challenge to understand lived experience as moved and perceived; hermeneutic because it is the interpretative study of the expressions and objectifications (narratives and performances) of the lived experience in an attempt to find out the essence embodied in them.

This study could also be “defined as action-based inquiry that takes its form through interpersonal, political, emotional, moral, and ethical relational skills that develop and are shared between researchers and research participants” (see Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 682). By allowing the boys to investigate their own lives and identities in movement practice and then to articulate their experiences, data is derived through the voices of bodily lived experience, which is then organized under dominant themes. I inductively developed my own theory of

pedagogical recognition that emerged from a process of patterns and themes within the data, or within the practice, which better describes this research.

As part of this research I also propose my own research methodology, *eragraphy*, which investigates aspects of human existence in the context of postmodern time by combining practices of education, research and animateuring. Enfolded within eragraphy are other methodological theories and practices including action research, narrative inquiry and performance ethnography, activist social science, revolutionary pedagogy and the practice of dance theatre, as well as countless other art and practice based inquiries. However they are not treated as separate methodologies here, but rather as different perspectives entangled with eragraphy.

Both in my artistic and my research practice I see myself as “a person who assembles images into montages” (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 4). *Katiska* as the outcome of the artistic exploration presents a montage of the polyphonic voices of the boys but also of “the other”. This written outcome of my research study aims to be a description of an educational space where the relations of the self and the other are placed at the centre – portraying the experiences of the performers but also of the audience and myself. The description is at the same time a proposal for a new pedagogical attitude, the pedagogy of recognition.

Dance theatre

Ideal acting is the expression of the metaphysical through physical acts: ideal theatre is the creation of an invisible world through visual presentation. (Yoshi Oida as quoted in Callery 2001).

Dance is traditionally taught on the basis of skill and form, and less attention is paid to the performer’s own movement motives and qualities of presence. The role of the body is usually objectified, as is typical in ballet and most other dance forms in Western culture. My own perception of dance was for a long time based almost entirely on classical ballet, which I pursued seriously for almost 20 years. When in 2004 in the course of teaching drama and theatre at the Theatre Academy my short adaptation and direction of Chekhov’s *Three Sisters* was compared to the style of Pina Bausch’s dance theatre, I did not even know what dance theatre was or even who Pina Bausch was. After I had been teaching drama and theatre to upper secondary school students since 2001 and studying at the Theatre Academy as well as

studying dance animateuring at the Victorian College of the Arts at the University of Melbourne in Australia in 2005, I started to understand other ways of expression with movement. I turned away from purely abstract and technical forms of dance and opened up myself to explore the dancer's subjectivity in free improvisation as well as in the performance making process. I now agree with the German choreographer Pina Bausch (1940–2009) that each dancer's body tells its own story based on what it has experienced.

Bausch's concern with the role of dance is inextricably linked with her apprehension regarding understanding human beings; she is not just concerned with the relations between people, but is in the same way worried about whether dance has cut itself off from its own source of meaning through becoming empty or mechanical (Kozel 1993, 55). A famous quote from Bausch is that she is not concerned with *how* dancers move, but *what* moves them. Most of all she is interested in what lies under the surface – the absurdity of human social behaviour. (Kozel 1993, 49.) These are the main things that connect my own practice to hers. Bausch's established concept of *dance theatre* has had a powerful influence on Western choreographic practice, but it has also produced forms of physical theatre conducted by directors and dramaturges outside of dance-trained contexts (Heathfield 2006, 188).

In 2005 during my dance animateuring studies in Australia I heard about Lloyd Newson. His work since 1986 as the director of DV8 Physical Theatre has also had a dynamic impact on contemporary dance and theatre. His stage and film work with DV8 has received major awards. The Australian born Newson's interest in dance arose while he was studying psychology and social work at Melbourne University. Later he studied at London Contemporary Dance School. (DV8 2010.) Newson, like Bausch, is concerned with the role of the dance in our society. Newson has said that dance, like other art forms, needs some solid foundations. There should be more thoughtfulness in dance and less obsession with making beautiful patterns for their own sake, or with movement that does not relate to anything other than movement construction, which Newson calls "mathematical phrase manipulation"; "I could make hours of movement for you just using mathematical formula. It isn't going to do anything", Newson says. (Boden 2003.)

Pina Bausch's dance theatre was a response to the empty formalism of dance, it emancipated dance from its own modes. Its goal was to release dance "from the constraints of literature, relieving it of its fairytale illusions and leading it towards reality" (Servos 1999, 37). Looking for answers to the question *why* the body moves, dance theatre went in search of the emotional force of physical expression. In the context of the personal and sexual politics of the 1980s and 90s, dance theatre found its focus in "an embodied language of desire". (Heathfield 2006, 188.) Newson's focus is also "on reinvesting dance with meaning,

particularly where this has been lost through formalised techniques”. DV8’s practice questions the traditional aesthetics of both modern and classical dance, by pushing beyond the values they represent and enabling dialogue on more complex issues. The company is constantly re-examining the roles and relationships of men and women in our society. DV8 also highlights “the importance of challenging our preconceptions of what dance can, and should, address”. Newson is constantly taking risks, aesthetically and physically – but also with the choice of content, for example with his latest work *Can we talk about this?* which deals with freedom of speech, censorship and Islam. (DV8 2010.) Both Bausch’s and Newson’s work clearly shows their interest in breaking down the barriers between dance, theatre and other art forms, and, what is the main thing, communicating real issues, ideas and feelings unpretentiously.

Following in the footsteps of Bausch, Newson and other dance and physical theatre practitioners, I am also not just interested in pure movement for its own sake but also in exploring all the other elements that form the final work – like Bausch, whose “commitment to exploring the human condition spreads through and shapes all aspects of her work, from the technique (or, some would say, lack of technique) to the music, costumes and set design” (Kozel 1993, 50). In dance theatre practice physical expression also works in relation to the verbal, in the way that the whole human body becomes the primary instrument as well as the site of cultural critique (Heathfield 2006, 188). Newson realised long ago that dance alone was not enough to explore the issues that obsessed him. That is why most of his work also contains a lot of spoken text. He has said: “Words can’t say everything, but neither can movement say everything.” (Levene 2005.)

The driving forces for Bausch’s creation were the questions: How does the self know itself, and how does it know the other? The anonymity and indeterminacy of the characters in Bausch’s works creates for the audience a need to name and know the characters, to ascertain their identity and so stabilize the whole work with clear identification. But Bausch wanted to present sociality as an incomplete play, conducted by absenting agents, in the space between self-knowledge and self-loss, remembrance and oblivion. Bausch’s use of simple gestural phrases, power and tension in partnering, and her meticulous attention to the scenic elements, together form a set of relations where the psychological, emotional and phenomenological qualities of relationships serve as the content of the piece. Broken gestures and experiments of their relations as well as the irregular order of movement sequences also affect on our experience of time. The use of repetition, cyclical events, and the variations of tempo problematizes our habit to rationalize time. (Heathfield 2006, 190–192.)

Dance theatre's aesthetics emphasize the performer's personal history and identity as an indispensable *content* of the work (Heathfield 2006, 188). Even Newson, like Bausch, uses trained dancers in his productions, he often chooses people who are individually suitable for the particular theme that is being explored. People have to bring an openness of attitude and pensiveness to the process, he has said. "In order for really interesting, deep material to come up, like in analysis, the performer has to let go of his subconscious. That sometimes poses a problem for dancers. If somebody truly lets go in improvisation it is impossible for him to remember exactly what he did, as that is a conscious process", Newson reveals. (Buttersworth 1998.)

Both Newson's and Bausch's works are developed collaboratively, together with the performers – but under strong leadership. "I'm only as good as the ingredients and the performers I've got, but everything, every gesture, every word, is touched by me. Nothing comes out without me interfering. But in the same breath I spend a long time looking for hugely individual performers and I am nothing without them", Newson has said (Levene 2005). One of Bausch's dancers, Cristiana Morganti, described the process of creation as one of "mutual discovery", open and wide-ranging. For Morganti, developing a new piece with Bausch was an adventure, one in which "we trust her, and she trusts us". In her earlier works Bausch developed the gesture-derived choreographies herself, but later she let her dancers to develop their own material, but of course even then she always had the last word. (Felciano 2004.)

I would like to think like Bausch that "the performance is not a polished or finished product – but, like life, it is a process" (Kozel 1993, 54). The work is never done. The more you work on it, the more aspects and details come up. Newson prefers long research and development periods to ensure the high quality of his work; his most recent work to date had its premier in August 2011 and the previous one in December 2007 (DV8). In their artistic policy DV8 (2010) states that the "great emphasis is placed on the process by which new work is created". Newson never stops watching his own work. He follows the company on tours and that way he can constantly develop the material. He may, for example, re-arrange some scenes if it feels that they do not work rhythmically. "The great thing about a live piece is that it's a living thing", Newson has said. (Levene 2005.)

The bodies of Bausch's dancers are telling their stories with raw energy and honesty, "freed from any superimposed connotations" (Servos 1999, 37). Kozel (1993, 51) writes that Bausch's dancers are like "exposed human nerves" and that they are always presented to the audience in their vulnerability. "The viewer is assailed by the authenticity of the emotions and by their strength", she continues. Bausch's work is cruel because it is so real. "Her work is not

removed from life, it is a part of life. It does not pretend, it is”, Kozel summarizes. “Dance theatre developed into something one could define as ‘theatre of experience’, a theatre that by means of direct confrontation made reality, communicated in an aesthetic form, tangible as a physical reality” (Servos 1999, 37). This is the quality that I am trying to achieve in my work as well. I am not interested in abstraction, creating a dramatic illusion or telling a story. I want to take the audience through the (e)motions with dancers. I want people to see the exhaustion of the dancers, hear them breathing, and experience the highly emotional content of the piece, as Bausch does.

Content, rather than style, also drives DV8’s work – sometimes I claim, cannot be said about a lot of other contemporary dance. Newson is interested in exploring the individual’s actions, and he is looking at how these in turn reflect political and social issues. “I seek movement with intention and purpose. *Why* is at the heart of DV8’s work. My concern is for dance to connect with and talk about the real world”, Newson summarizes (Butterworth 1998). “Humorous, powerful, yet disturbingly real. – This is dance drawn direct from real life”, wrote Keith Watson (1997, 13) about Newson’s work. His works are indeed very “real”, because Newson often uses interviews of different people to illuminate the issues that he is handling. In his verbatim, documentary theatre, work every word spoken on stage comes directly from the interviewees, and he feels very grateful to the interviewees for letting him use their stories. Even then, when Newson is using words, in his work it still has a strong physical theatre underpinning. (Newson 2007.)

The audience can recognize real life in Newson’s work and therefore it always speaks to them. The material comes from real people and it is for real people. Newson seldom gives movements for his dancers, but he edits and shapes the improvised material for the final piece. (Jackson 1995, 65–66.) I see myself in a similar role in a creative process; I am the facilitator and the editor, but the material is always created together with the dancers in the first place. As Newson’s works I would also like to see my own works as “radical yet accessible”; and so reach “as wide an audience as possible” (DV8 2010).

In movement based works meanings arise, not from rational knowledge, but as sensory, emotional and embodied knowledge (Heathfield 2006, 191). I agree with Servos (1999, 39) that “[t]he dissemination of knowledge is secondary to the experience”. Also the immediate effect of the movements and scenes is more important than rational explanation of them (Servos 1999, 42). Starting with the daily, social experiences of the body, Bausch translates and alienates them into sequences of images and movements, which only make sense once the spectator relates them to his personal experiences (Kozel 1993, 52). I believe that this kind of approach also shows respect for an audience. The spectators are capable of making their own

interpretations and therefore there is no need to serve answers ready from the plate, rather the purpose of a work of art is to ask questions. For Bausch, the point of departure of the creative process is the authentic, subjective experience of an individual, which is also demanded of the audience; passive reception of Bausch's work is impossible (Servos 1999, 39).

Heathfield (2006, 189) argues that especially in Bausch's later work, "the wounded body, and the wound at the heart of sexual and social relation, attests to a profound instability in the structures of belonging that anchor bodies and identities to place". In Bausch's work "movement is formulated as the locus of both the conservation of social and cultural orders of power, and their disassembly through subversive reiteration. As most dancers will tell you, the body is a house of habituation: one holds oneself, acts and moves, according to learned customs laden with often unknown and undisclosed values. Power relations are thus inherited in habitual practice." (Heathfield 2006, 190.) In Bausch's work ecstasy and agony are often intertwined to resonate the interdependence of presence-absence, masculinity-femininity, sex-death, attainment-loss and other entities that are often understood as polarities:

Positioning the performing body as the vital means through which to access and articulate this wound, they also offered it up as a promising means of cure, or at least resistance, through the exertion of movement itself. Perhaps this is why the repetition of falling became such a dominant figuration in the choreography of dance theatre: trusting in relation, in the will and flesh of others, dance theatre's emblematic, sacrificial body fell again and again, subject to the violent disregard of the other. The other couldn't catch that fall. But the fall contained an imperative, like all sacrifices, for the social body (the audience): the imperative to recognize, remember and repair. (Heathfield 2006, 189.)

Bausch has always been interested in childhood: "her perspective on it as a complex mix of innocence and misery wends its way through her work like an underground stream. Childhood interests her primarily for the residue it leaves in the adult. Her dancers often move, act and talk as if unaware of consequences, much the way children do." Bausch has also said that "children are a symbol of hope; they are our origin, and their fragility is ours". (Felciano 2004.) The condition of adult life can thus be investigated by relating it to childhood but it can also be revealed insightfully through comedy. "The humour does not denounce the real needs, but reveals something that has been buried by the deformation. The

humorous moments always have an undertone of sadness... As he laughs, the onlooker recognizes on the stage the reality of his own behavior.” (Servos 1999, 43.)

The organization of scenes in dance theatre works is usually followed by the principle of montage. The scenes are linked to each other in free association; there is no continuity of plot, psychology of characters or causality. The main features of Bausch’s works are their multidimensionality and complex simultaneity of actions that offer a broad panorama of phenomena. The associated images form chains of analogies where the logic of emotions does not depend on reason. The theatre making is like a laboratory in which the choreographer, the performers and the audience work together to contradict and to complement each other to achieve new insights. (Servos 1999, 38, 40–41, see also Tashiro 1999.)

“I only create when I have something to say, and the work is generally about issues that concern or affect my life at a given time. I’m interested in provoking myself, questioning my own and the performers’ thoughts, motivations and assumptions”, Lloyd Newson has said (Butterworth 1998). Newson (2007) hopes that through his work the audience becomes “more aware of the lives of people hidden under the veneer of a liberal and supposedly tolerant society”. Newson’s as well as Bausch’s works are critical and so highly political, because they press hard “against psychic and physical limits, finding insights and new means for articulating the dynamics of gender, sex and sexuality in human relations” (Heathfield 2006, 188–189).

Bausch brought theatre “back to life as an ongoing process of comprehending reality” (Servos 1999, 44). Following in the footsteps of Bausch and Newson *dance performance* practitioners are also trying to achieve the authenticity in their art. They are doing that by emphasizing action in real time and place. Dance-performance focuses its extensions towards traditions of performance art within a visual arts frame, and it draws on the aesthetics of conceptual and minimalist art. “The previous generations of experimental choreographers from the dance theatre of Pina Bausch through to the physical theatre of Lloyd Newson and DV8 took the structures and forms of theatrical practice as vital source of an interdisciplinary leap. In the hyper-connective context of contemporary culture, cross-art-form practice, including the work of movement artists, is now much more promiscuous, ambitious, intensive and eclectic in its affiliations and borrowings.” (Heathfield 2006, 194.)

Pina is a 3D film tribute to Pina Bausch directed by Wim Wenders. Bausch died suddenly in 2009 in the middle of the film’s pre-production, but the director and the dancers decided to continue with the project. The result ends up combining scenes created for the camera in various outside locations, filmed theatre performances of Bausch’s works and brief interviews of her dancers with fragments of archival footage of Bausch herself.

When *Pina* was screened in Tampere in September 2011, I encouraged the *Katiska* boys to see it. I told them that Pina Bausch was probably the biggest idol in the dance field for me. The link to the film's trailer, which I sent the boys in Facebook convinced Mikael, Lauri and Aimo, with high expectations, to book tickets for its screening. In his Facebook message Lauri's first comments after seeing the film was that he could not help of expressing his amusement of the fact that some of the elements in Bausch's works reminded him forcibly of works of mine. He was also impressed at how well the 3D technique worked in this film and also how "absolutely astonishing" some of the scenes were. Next day Aimo replied: "A really great film, I liked. Yes, I must accompany Lauri, pretty Raisa-like stuff in many parts. But it's only a great thing. Gosh, dance can be beautiful." I became really curious about Lauri's and Aimo's thoughts of perceiving similarities between Bausch's and my works, therefore I asked them to write down in just a short stream of consciousness some of their remarks. Lauri described:

It is pretty difficult to write anything on a broad scale, because my experiences are only based on Katiska and some random YouTube clips and shows and now on this Pina film. Some of the similarities are probably caused by the cinematography and the film director's choice, but here are in brief some of the associations which I experienced:

Taking the responsibility/weight of another person and guiding her/his directions. There was something similar. Not necessarily the physical performance/action, but rather the feeling it created in a perceiver, in me. The purpose may have been somehow the same...

The next ones felt somehow similar to each other but also with some of your things as well. Again, mostly it was the feeling, not necessarily the physical activity itself. In Pina, the scene where men are touching an older female dancer (also shown in the trailer) and the scene (in Café Müller) where a man is placing a couple to kiss each other and whenever he lets go they return to a cuddling position. There is a resemblance to your practice, but again I cannot connect it with a particular scene or a task, in which something like that has happened.

Pretty many things felt rather emotionally than physically similar, but hey, after all, there is always that immaterial and tacit side in everything that defines, at least, half of the thing in question.

Confusing...

Then Aimo added a description of his respond:

I share pretty much the same opinions with Lauri. It's quite difficult, based on this "sample", to make complete interpretations, but it is precisely the feeling and the aesthetic which are similar. The props are kept simple, and also the open-mindedness is also comparable. In some of the works there were similar types of spotlights or light beams used as well, and that they arose parallel emotions. On the other hand, in some scenes there were movements similar to Katiska's victim scene, expressions of suffering.

The gender theme seemed to be pretty strongly presented, even though I have a feeling that Bausch made more of the topics that were related to women, women's longing and crisis. And also that what Lauri was talking about; holding weight/leaning was very congenial, at least for me it symbolizes trust and love between people, in both your and Pina's works.

*Still one more scene, the one where a woman jumps into the arms of a man, and then a man in a suit comes and separates them and the cycle continues with escalating speed. That gave me the "Foster vibes". They are "programmed" to repeat the same actions by themselves even though the man in suit does not touch them anymore; they were brainwashed to do that. It brought into my mind many similarities to *Monopeli* [which is created after Katiska in 2010].*

I have not always consciously located my own practice as part of the tradition of dance theatre; as I previously stated, my own works were compared to the works of Pina Bausch already before I came to know who she was. Later, by following the footsteps of other dance

theatre practitioners, I have gained more self-confidence to carry on with dance and theatre aesthetics, which often combine words, visual art and physical expression. Similar to the tradition of dance theatre, I create new works derived from content rather than from form. I take the art practice to be most of all a research process.

Eragraphy

I will now propose my own framework of qualitative research practice in the context of art making and education. I have named my practice as *eragraphy*. I came to eragraphy out of necessity (see also Ellingson 2009, xi). I felt that the traditional research tools that I had come to know only partially helped me to grasp, conceptualize and reveal the uncountable experienced truths that I face in daily life. I was looking for a different way to do my research. In various art-based inquiries, especially in crystallization and a/r/tography, I found a holistic approach for my research process, because they connect together epistemology, theory and method.

Ellingson (2009) builds her crystallization methodology on Richardson's (1994, 2000) concept of qualitative crystallization which, similarly to other art-based inquiries, is a "postmodern reimagining" of traditional, postpositivist methodological triangulation as a multigenre approach of refusing to accept the art/science dichotomy. I have noticed that the questions that I address in my activities in three different fields – arts, education and research – are not separate from each other; even it previously felt that I should separate them. But crystallization, along with other art-based inquiries, made me realize that the holistic approach and the multiple perspectives that I had were not an obstacle but rather an opportunity to understand more by seeing things differently, from different angles.

A/r/tographical practice, developed at the University of British Columbia in Canada, is a particular type of arts-based research within education. A/r/t is an acronym for artist–researcher–teacher. The usage of the acronym tells that none of these positions is privileged over another, but that they are rather integrated creating a "third space". This space "is situated in the in-between, where theory-as-practice-as-process-as-compilation intentionally unsettles perception and knowing through living inquiry" (Irwin & Springgay, 2008, xxi). The slash in a/r/t does not separate the roles and activities; rather it is "the place of negotiation; a place to move and position from which to create a rupture" (Springgay 2008, 37).

So eragraphy leans heavily on the North American art-based inquiries, especially crystallization methodology and a/r/tography, but it also has its own special emphasis.

Crystallization blends artistic and more traditional qualitative methods, but it is not a methodology designed to the unique needs of education. A/r/tography combines similarly qualitative methods and artistic practices, but it is specially created for research projects implemented in the school environment. In turn eragraphy stresses its educational and animateuring practices.

The Canadian new paradigm qualitative research methodology, a/r/tography, has been formed from the words *art*, *research* and *teaching*. I have created eragraphy by borrowing the Canadian example, but in such a way that teaching is replaced by the word *education* and art by *animateuring*. The concept of “teaching” highlights the importance of a teacher in the education act, and not, for example of learner’s “learning”. The word “teacher” also commonly refers to an educator who works in a school institution. I see myself as an animateur who can work in various educational fields; and therefore I also prefer the term *animateuring*, which merges art-making, researching and pedagogical practices into one.

Ethnography can be understood as a description of a particular *ethnic* group, nation, community or culture; *eragraphy* is likewise a “thick description” (Geertz 1973) of human existence – in the postmodern *era*. In a/r/tography the word *art* is brought to the fore; in eragraphy the key word is *era*. In English “era” refers to ‘a period of time considered as being of a distinctive character’. Eragraphy stems from a need which is typical to the postmodern era; to problematize the truths and structures which are taken for granted. Like any other qualitative research eragraphy, too, “is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 3). Jean-Francois Lyotard (as cited in Suoranta 1994) characterizes postmodern as a distrust for singular “metanarratives”, or those stories that we tell ourselves in order to justify choosing one theory or religion over another.

As a concept “postmodern” cannot be defined as a coherent ideology or style. In a dictionary “postmodern” is described as ‘a late 20th century style and concept in the arts, architecture, and criticism, which represents a departure from modernism and is characterized by the self-conscious use of earlier styles and conventions, a mixing of different artistic styles and media, and a general distrust of theories’. In the arts postmodern can be seen ‘in reaction to modernism by ironic self-reference and absurdity’, and in science it refers to ‘a theory that involves a radical reappraisal of modern assumptions about culture, identity, history, or language’. The conceptualization of identities is crucial to postmodern research as well as to the arts, but what eragraphy can offer for this already well covered field is, borrowing from Springgay (2008, 40), a practice that happens “at the between, where the *never yet known* is interrogated and ruptured”.

It is impossible to say when the “postmodern” started or if it has started at all. Many of our social practices are still based on modern ideals. It is often said that postmodernism was born in the changes of industrialism after the Second World War. The meaning of popular culture, mass media and globalization have all affected the shift from modernism to *postmodernism*. Perhaps the epistemological crisis of postmodernism has brought to the fore the urgency to give up the “metanarratives”. These have been replaced by multiple different interpretative possibilities. Postmodern philosophy is also often particularly skeptical regarding binary oppositions. Accordingly critical postmodern research is not interested in revealing the Truth, but rather in discovering how these “Truths” are produced (see also Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 13). With my own research inquiry I attempt to define a new methodological and interpretational space rather than investigate truths and objective knowledge (see also Suoranta 1996, 455).

Eragraphy aims to present, with the help of multiple different takes on the topic, a deep description of a particular phenomenon emerging from the research process. Similarly to a/r/tography, eragraphical engagement “means being open to a continual process of questioning” (Springgay 2008, 38), in such a way that it moves “beyond static dualisms which pit theory against practice, self against other, and mind against body towards a living, breathing, becoming – inquiry” (Springgay 2008, 39). Understood this way, eragraphy cannot be taken primarily as mere methodology, but rather as making philosophy.

Following Merleau-Ponty (2008, 72), I claim that “[t]he core of philosophy is at the point where an individual life begins to reflect on itself.” Eragraphy, with its education–research–animateuring practices, is a philosophical approach which focuses on the questions of human existence, ethics and the nature of knowledge. The ontological questions revolve around the concepts of identity and alterity and their relations. The subject is not understood as separate from the world, but rather as part of it. We do not observe the world from outside and take action in a separate and stable background, but we essentially *live* the world. Consequently our knowledge of the world can never be “pure” or “neutral”, but is always coloured by our gaze; by the attitudes and actions which we perform towards and in relation to the world. At the same time the world acts on us. In other words, our habits, actions and the whole existence affect, but at the same time also depend on, our conception of the world. Therefore questions of knowledge cannot be separated from existential inquiries. Ontology and epistemology are intertwined.

Eragraphy is guided by a phenomenological attitude. As an artist I am an existentialist and my educational practice can be located in the context of experience-based learning. In consequence, I claim that education, research and art, as indeed all human activities, stem

from the uniqueness of individual experiences. Phenomenologist posits her/himself, on one hand, against the extreme subjectivism of rationalism, and on the other hand, against the extreme objectivism of empiricism. People are thrown into the world, which did exist before us, but which is never “ready”, because we all take part in the constant constructing and reproducing of the world. Eragrapher follows the steps of phenomenologists and critical theorists and stands in opposition to the claim of the objective truth of modernism. It can thus be located in relativism, because it stresses the chaotic, complex and constructed nature of truth. It emphasizes the role of narratives and performances of identities as well as the power relations defining them, in our contemporary culture. It problematizes the clear-cut dichotomies such as object–subject, male–female, self–other, and rather it celebrates plural and blurred realities.

I claim that the plurality and relativity of ontology occurs in relational existence, in *encounters*. Thus eragraphy is not interested in the static essence of separate objects or subjects, but it rather examines the dynamic spaces, where at least two sides always meet. In other words, eragraphy acknowledges that meanings are always created in the meetings of a subject and an “other”. Eragraphy focuses on encounters and on the meanings which occur in them. To be clear, encounter should not be understood here only as a meeting of two individuals. It is thus not merely about communication; it should rather be comprehend through Merleau-Ponty’s concepts of flesh and chiasm, because instead of separation eragraphy highlights the belongingness and reversibility of things among things, beings among beings, phenomena among phenomena.

Eragraphy is philosophy born of practice. The practices of educating, researching and animateuring intersect in a way that making, learning, writing, improvising, performing, interpreting and analyzing sometimes take place through analytical choices and often in intuitive motion. Intuition often contains something we are not consciously able to understand, and phenomenology aims to describe these intuitions, the direct perceptions before thematization. Parviainen (2006, 45–47) highlights that the phenomenological approach cannot be applied just by reading the phenomenological theories of others, but rather entails practicing the phenomenological attitude. This necessitates not just focusing on the investigation of phenomena, but also on self-reflection. Parviainen (2006, 49–50) talks about a transcendental ego, which refers to this self-reflective task. Where have I acquired my attitudes, conceptions and prejudices? Can I ever set them aside? According to Parviainen, through this self-reflection we can return to the experiential, collective understanding of the world – to bring a phenomenon to our shared conception of the world. The eragrapher works as a phenomenologist or as an existentialist artist; she/he may first have some kind of idea of

the phenomenon, but the outcome of the research process is always a surprise – even to her/him. The eragrapher does not just observe the phenomenon from outside, but rather she/he takes part in it, in its complex and ever-evolving substance (see also Parviainen 2006, 50).

I agree with Springgay (2008, 40) “that the very things we seek to understand are produced in the moment of inquiry and hence slip from our ever knowing them fully. From an ethical point of view, a living inquiry that is contiguous cannot be a matter of policy and procedure, rather it demands a relational intercorporeal understanding of self and other.” Similarly to a/r/tography, eragraphy does not aim to know or consume the other, rather it is “a way of living in the world as being with, of touching the other” (Springgay 2008, 39). Springgay (2008, 42) stresses that “being-with is not qualifying something against something else – the setting of criteria or an established norm”. The voices and movements of the *Katiska* boys slip into the gap of our prior understandings thereby shaping our understanding of each other. The performance offers us the truly living bodies of the boys in and of the world.

Probably the most important and also very selfish reason why I create art and do research is in fact that I want to understand *myself* better (see also Bergholm 2005, 21). Eragraphy brings to the fore experiences which are meaningful, but not necessarily “true” in a traditional, objective sense. Here questions of ethics steps in. My truth is no truer than yours. My reality is no more real than yours. Nor can the knowledge of an adult be more correct than a child’s either. In short, eragraphy rejects static meanings and “Truths” presented from above. In its animateuring practice it even aims to purposely provoke different and multiple meanings. In eragraphy education comes about almost automatically. It exists in its attitude. Eragraphy does not start from pedagogy as procedure and does not end in it, but I claim that education is always very much present when people are genuinely willing to live with each other.

On the *Katiska* project I was not working as a teacher in order to teach the boys dance; but I worked as an animateur and the director of the dance theatre work. Usually “teaching” carries a specific idea of *who* is teaching and *what* the teacher is teaching. I claim that when we talk about “education”, we cover a broader field in human life and a wider network of communications incorporated in it. At its best, education aims to expand our understanding of phenomena, the self and the other as well the whole world; the awareness of all of those who take part in the particular education act.

Etymologically the English word *education* comes from the Latin word *educare* meaning ‘to bring up’. Thus education does not mean one way, top-down activity, where a teacher teaches the Truth to her/his students, rather it means, fundamentally, a situation where

phenomena are brought to the fore in communicative space. The educator's world cannot be taken as the "better" or "correct one" into which the one educated is forced. Although the *Katiska* project, the example of this study, was not conducted in the school environment I claim that action research in schools could also be framed with eragraphy. Then the focus will shift from teaching to education. Stephen Kemmis (2006, 462) also suggests that practice in schools should move from schooling to be more educational. He claims that especially with action research we can investigate the practices and experiences of "educational schooling", and so also critically approach the schooling practices which have been taken for granted.

I understand the *body* as "a site of learning, of experiencing, of becoming" (Perry & Medina, 2011, 73). The artistic process of my research project focused to the lived body and its movement explorations. I was especially interested in researching the body as a place for emotions, memories and narratives as well as the site of our performative identity. Embodiment in performative pedagogical practices acknowledges "our bodies as whole experiential beings in motion, both inscribed and inscribing subjectivities" (Perry & Medina 2001, 63). In the creative process we tackled the questions of *identity*, on the one hand through the conscious process of discussing and writing and on the other hand we explored the lived body, the *self*, through the unconscious process of movement and voice exercises.

At first the whole project was guided by a strong emancipatory interest; I wanted to give a "voice", or better described, to give "space" for the boys to tell their own stories. I was genuinely interested in what the boys would tell about themselves. Through the methods of dance animateuring I wanted to get closer to the lives of these young men. I wanted to see beyond the stereotype image of young Finnish men, and also in the final work, to present, and most of all to problematize, the performative identities of the young men. The creative process of movement and voice explorations lasted one year. In the open practice movement investigations we aimed to increase the bodily awareness of the boys. An exercise of touch and other tasks involving physical contact with others gradually created a trustful atmosphere and closer relations between the participants. The movement practice in general generated emotions, memories and stories, which formed the content of *Katiska*.

We created movements from the impulses of space, time and sensations as well as from the images offered by music and texts. We also generated dances from everyday movements. The final work also includes material which came into being outside the "official" exercises. Because I wanted the work to present an honest portrait of these young men, I realized that I also had to pick up the material from those moments when we had breaks, when the actual improvisation practice was not ongoing. The boys seemed to process the main themes outside our practice sessions as well and thus they delivered their own ideas into the piece actively

and spontaneously. The phenomenology of dance animateuring requires openness to different opportunities that the corporeal connection with others can offer, and that is also the most profound principal in eragraphy.

The *Katiska* project was a creative artistic process, but in eragraphy the stress is not so much on *art* in itself, but rather on *animateuring*, which mostly means “moving people into action” (see also Finlay 2005, 686). The main goal of animateuring is to create spaces for participation. The animateur tries to increase people’s engagement so that they become true actors and creators of their own lives. As an animateur I want to encourage young people to take a more active role in their lives through self-awareness, thereby highlighting the importance of participants’ subjective knowledge in such learning process, and therefore also challenging the conservative way of understanding knowledge and also the school curriculum. From a critical point of view research is always a metaphor of knowledge, truth and power. Thus through animateuring practice eragraphical research also aims to problematize the deeply rooted concepts of “God-view” truths, objective knowledge and hegemonic power. In eragraphy, ethnographical, autobiographical, critical narratives as well as fictional texts and performances used in animateuring practice are new ways of combining theoretical practices into political and moral acts.

Animateuring, by means of arts and action, engages people in creative and active processes, where uncertainty and plurality of meanings are exposed. Knowledge and truths are not arbitrary; meanings are always initiated by and negotiated in relations. In other words, meanings are not pure contents of things; they do not stem from a void. Reality is a construction of a particular perspective, and thus new meanings can only occur when different perspectives run into each other. In eragraphy the practice of animateuring creates spaces where different perspectives are brought into the discussion. In these spaces of encounters education is inevitable. Hence, in eragraphy, the practice of education is not educating towards anything particular. Educational space rather invites somewhere and initiates something we did not previously know.

The eragraphical practice is driven by the communicative concept of knowledge; in other words, knowledge is formed and informed inside communities (Burawoy 2006, 272). *Katiska* was created collaboratively in communicative space with the young men. The communication took place in spoken discussions and written narratives as well as on the level of individual bodies and bodies in contact with each other. I agree with Springgay (2008, 48), who claims that if we continue to “encourage students to create art based only on personal self-expression we fail to consider how meaning is interconnected between things”

(Springgay 2004, 48). In animateuring the making of art is never mere self-expression but always intersubjective activity.

I have found in my own practice the effectiveness of working collaboratively; sharing and changing the ideas together can offer a more profound understanding of the topic. I have also realized the true beauty of collaborative projects; in what a privileged position I am as an artist-educator when people are willing to share their stories and emotions with me. In eragraphy the researcher is required to be together with the others, to be truly open to new and different things, to be in dialogical communication with the world. Eragraphy can be seen as a moral way of being in the world, which means sensing the world and myself in it and part of it and also becoming aware of things that I did not know before.

The practice of eragraphy is also guided by the consensual understanding of truth. Truth is not given from on high, but rather created together in consensus (Burawoy 2006, 272). Therefore the practice can be justified if it is relevant to the participants. The artist is responsible to her/his target audience. I feel that I am mostly responsible for the *Katiska* performers, but also for our young audience and for all our spectators. The political potentiality of art lies in its democratic dialogue. The most important thing for me has been the fact that the *Katiska* boys themselves feel that they are telling their own true story on the stage. At the same time, it is important that the audience can connect with the work. The most intimate and personal becomes general. The work provides an opportunity for individual interpretation.

An art work as the end product of an animateuring process is not necessary, but when an animateuring project aims to have an artistic outcome, the work of art must also reflect the multiple voices of its participants. In a theatrical work, the material should be organized as a montage, instead of as a coherent storyline. “Montage uses brief images to create a clearly defined sense of urgency and complexity. It invites spectators to construct interpretations that build on one another as a scene unfolds. These interpretations are based on associations among the constructing images that blend into one another.” (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 5.)

Through public presentations eragraphical research reaches beyond academia. The form of montage respectfully invites a wider audience into discussion. The montage structure and the polyphonic nature of the work offer our spectators a chance to reflect on the self and the phenomena of the world. Through the creative process as well by evaluating the audience feedback I have been able to reflect my own conceptions of knowledge and truth; how they are connected my personal background and cultural context and how they transform over time. Art-based inquiry is “expressive research” which aims to portray the multidimensionality of human life (Finlay 2005, 682). In addition, art-based projects do not

aim to produce just reports for academic forums, but to provide useful venues, activities and valuable new meanings for local communities (Finley 2005, 683). As an artist my focus is “to frame performance as *a critical reflective and refractive lens* to view the human condition and a form of *reflexive agency* that initiates action” (Alexander 2005, 412).

Through the performance practice the performers of *Katiska* re-wrote and re-performed their own personal narratives and performatives, but they also had an opportunity to *re-act* the culture of young men in more general level. The *Katiska* boys tell their stories and the spectators receive them. In improvisational practice the *Katiska* boys were handling their own autobiographies; they told their stories and connected with each others’ narratives. On stage they retell these stories yet again. The original voice of a story may be difficult or even impossible to detect. Who is telling whose story? Is it mine, or is it yours, perhaps it is theirs? By presenting autobiographical material the author is already engaged in a narrative activity. She/he is telling someone her/his story. “Autobiographical social research rejects the public–private dichotomy, exposing it as false dualism, and suggests that the private is indeed public, and vice versa” (Leavy 2009, 37). In *Katiska* project, too, we could see that what started from the very private and personal in the creative process, became public and more general in the performance and in the audiences’ interpretations.

The narrative of *Katiska* moves in the continuum of fact–fiction. In the improvisation practice the boys’ life stories were intertwined with more abstract or co-created material. On the other hand sometimes purely abstract, improvisational movement tasks caused personal memories to come to the surface, and from there, new autobiographical layers were added to the scenes. Often purely aesthetically or conceptually created scenes caused spectators to link the presented material with their personal experiences and life narratives. The interpretational character of fictive presentations allows the makers and the receivers to co-construct new narratives and performatives that become personal through the general.

“Qualitative research, as a set of interpretative activities, privileges no single methodological practice over another” (Denzin & Lincoln 2005, 6). Art-based research is one of the new methodological genres within the ever-evolving qualitative paradigm. Eragraphy also stems from numerous different artistic practices and qualitative research methods. “Qualitative inquiry cannot be just one thing ..., and this characteristic is, perhaps, its strength” (St. Pierre & Roulston 2006, 674). Deciding that work is of a particular genre may be helpful in constructing and applying it, but we have to remember that there are no neutral choices as how to report qualitative findings; therefore also Ellingson (2009, 6) asks researchers not to “constrain themselves with the traditional limits of genres in qualitative research”, when multi-method art-based practices can provide “a path toward pushing or even

breaking the generic boundaries.” I agree with Ellingson that by doing so, a new passageway for creating knowledge can be found as well as raising critical consciousness and empathetic understanding among people. The process and the outcome of eragraphical project cannot be put in a neatly organized and labelled box, rather the whole project derives broadly around, behind and under the box and similarly it also spreads its new understanding outside of its academic box.

Art is usually treated as separate from, and often even opposite to, science. “In the arts based research what is profoundly different and starkly political is the effort to claim that art is equal to – indeed sometimes even profoundly appropriate than – science as a way of understanding.” (Finley 2005, 685–686.) In my own practice art and science co-exist, or rather they knotted together to form an inseparable set of activity. Art-based research criticizes the privilege of language-based ways of knowing. Art and science both core central similarities in their challenge to investigate aspects of the human condition. I agree with Leavy (2009, 2) that “[g]rounded in exploration, revelation, and representation, art and science work toward advancing human understanding”. I believe that the range of perspectives available for constructing and also sharing knowledge increases the overall value of research; therefore I combine artistic and scientific activities in my research.

“Interdisciplinary art-based practices have developed to service all phases of the research endeavor: data collection, analysis, interpretation, and representation” (Leavy 2009, 12). Often these different sections of research practices cannot be kept separate from each other. Theory and practice go hand in hand (see also Finley 2005, 682). For example “using theory explicitly during data analysis is one way to generate new interpretations and alternative meanings” (Leavy 2009, 19). Theory may help us to see things that might otherwise not stand out from our empirical data, but it is crucial to stay open to the constant dialogue between the data and theory as well as the social, political and cultural context of the research, researcher and participants.

The *Katiska* project started with an artistic exploration and the presentation of its findings as a performance. From there it moved towards the more traditional qualitative methods of collecting research data and analyzing and reporting it. I constructed themes and patterns and searched for evocative moments to capture (see also Ellingson 2009, 10). The performance, as well as the written report of the *Katiska* project, serves as a montage of performative acts or as a collage of descriptive and theorized writings. I agree with Ellingson (2009, 10) that by thematising experiences the researcher is not trying to objectify and purify a lived phenomenon but rather to capture the essence of it.

Eragraphy, similarly to other art-based inquiries, is a mode of work that can liberate and excite the researcher personally, but it also makes demands. It requires a wide range of skills and knowledge of multiple genres and forms of analysis. It also involves “a trade-off between breadth and depth” (Ellingson 2009, 17); it requires strategic choices about focus. Eragrapher must “be willing to set aside or change their beliefs about the rightness or correctness of any given method or genre” (Ellingson 2009, 17). I agree with Ellingson (2009, 18) that practitioners of art-based inquiries “must have the cognitive and emotional capacity to both suspend belief in the rules of a given practice and implement a range of practices simultaneously”. As Ellingson adds, “such an exercise can be mentally invigorating but also wearying and frustrating”. She also points out that there is no recipe for design: “Instead, opportunities and constraints abound, and researchers should expect, even embrace, an organic evolution of their projects.” (Ellingson 2009, 73.)

The Pedagogy of Recognition, the written part of my eragraphical research study, is based on the “data” collected in the performance project of *Katiska* as well as the other material, which include my own diary notes, the interviews of the boys, the photograph and video documentations, media texts and audience feedback. Perhaps my “data” should not be understood as it usually is in empirical studies, because the various research strategies, including most profoundly the body awareness and movement improvisation methods, but also the discussions with the boys and the audience, continuously shaped my analysis and theory formation. It must also be acknowledged that the texts, written, spoken and illustrative, are often descriptive, interpretative, analytical and evaluative in nature. In other words, they are not “pure” data as unadulterated samples of experiences. Nevertheless I aim to write narratives of the participants’ sensations and thoughts according to their own descriptions, in an effort to let the authentic voice of myself and my co-participants as well as the audience come through in my writing. In this way I am hoping to reveal something about the phenomenon called *recognition* with its multiple meanings.

Avoiding an objectifying and authorial voice ethnographical “thick descriptions” of social life (Geertz 1973) are built in collaboration with the research participants. Similarly eragraphers are trying to understand others without “othering” them by recognizing the research participants as the collaborators or even as co-researchers of the research project (Finley 2005, 682). As the researcher of the project I am the only one who knows the whole project thoroughly, and therefore I alone am responsible for my final research report. Yet I would not call the boys or the audience of *Katiska* my informants and their interviews and feedbacks the data of my research. I see it as my task as a researcher to discuss with my practically derived material alongside with my reference books. The words of the boys or the

audience are equal to the words of Ricoeur or the other theorists. The material of my practice and the philosophical premises are thus carried forward side by side. It can be said that the different methods of art making, analyzing, reading and writing speak to each other.

Dance has long been a subject of inquiry. For example, anthropologists have studied dance as a source of cultural information. But it is only in the past couple of decades that researchers have begun to integrate dance into their research as a “methodological device”, as practice. Dance as method is “*discovery* – a way of adding depth to our understanding of a particular subject”. (Leavy 2009, 185.) In my own research dance has served as a source of “data” and also as a “data” collection method and as a representational form in my practice. Even if I mainly focus to the dance and performance aspects of my practice, I do acknowledge that especially the music of *Katiska* but also its lighting design, video projections, clothing and props affect the work as it was experienced as a whole.

“Dance cannot be understood without attention to the fact that it is necessarily an embodied art form” (Leavy 2009, 183). Thus the body is the only necessity of this research: it is the subject and the object of this research; it is both the instrument and the outcome of its action. The concept of body can be described in multiple ways, but the two meanings that Leavy (2009, 183) suggests are also the foundations for my approach; the *inscribed body* refers to a body as “a site where social meanings are created and resisted”, and the *lived body* refers to people’s experiential knowledge. The performance acts like a mirror to the culturally inscribed body. Gestures and movements communicate in the cultural and social context, but in such a habitual way that we do not normally pay attention to them. The performing body can reveal the socially constructed aspects of our bodies (see also Leavy 2009, 138). The performance can also evoke both the performers and the audience to directly respond to the work through the sensitive, emotional lived body, before the intellectual analysis takes place.

The representation of eragraphical research should not be taken as a translation of experience; it rather is, borrowing from Springgay (2008, 37), “an exposure of meaning, pointing towards possibilities that are yet unnamed”. It is indeed the sense-making process, through writing, educating and art making, which itself forms the research “object”. Eragraphy can include multiple different qualitative methods, but on the *Katiska* project the *performance methodology* is central. “Performance methodology can be described as a collectivized ensemble of percepts used by those committed to the communicative and pedagogical potential knowledge – the process of attaining, sharing, and projecting knowing – can be accomplished through doing.” (Alexander 2005, 415.)

Dance improvisation has invited the multiplicity of the individual performers to come to the fore, but also all the multiple aspects of identities and the dimensions of self that one has,

into discussion. I agree with Leavy (2009, 138) that “performance serves as a method for exposing what is otherwise impossible to reveal”. Eragraphy does not purport to find definite answers, rather it searches for “difficult knowing” through continuous interrogations (Springgay 2004, 44). With the form of montage we can question the relation between the familiar and the novel, the known and the unknown (see also Springgay 2004, 46). “Meaning becomes an exposure to something, not a judgment. Meaning is formed in the instant that things come together in contiguity and in the instant of letting go, a movement that continuously displaces meaning. Thus meaning is a constant process of becoming, a stretching out and a folding.” (Springgay 2004, 43–44.)

Performance is often seen as a form of representation, but it can also serve as investigation, data collection or analysis. Performance methodology is difficult to understand with traditional academic tools because of its momentary nature. Live performance always includes an immediate exchange between performer and audience. This relationship is marked by complex negotiations that are influenced by the current environment and mood of the situation. Especially, as Leavy points out “dance and creative movement cannot be transcribed textually. In research projects these artistic formats either exist in the moment only, or are partially retained via videotaping”. She suggests that “researchers interested working with these methods can, however, consider using the Internet as a site for storing and sharing sound files or streaming video.” (Leavy 2009, 21.) It is true that new technologies allow researchers to use the arts in ways that were not previously possible (Leavy 2009, 12), but we have to remember that even if video recording can be used in documenting theatrical events, it is not the event itself, because the performance exists as it is only in the instant.

When we throw ourselves into dance improvisation thereby realizing our bodies as places for discovery rather than bodies as instruments or management, we enter to the space of holistic understanding where body and mind are intertwined. Dance has a powerful potential to problematize binary categories. It blurs the object–subject division; the dancer is the dance. Dance also merges the public and private aspects, or inner and outer worlds (Leavy 2009, 185). The subjective and the most inner aspects of the self are presented on the stage through the living body of the performer. The “object”, the dance, is received of the other, the spectator of the dance, who interprets it from her/his own subjective perspective.

Performance practice allows the researcher, the performers and audience to re-examine their assumptions and beliefs. By using performance methodology I commit to a research project which is “for” and “with” rather than “on” the people (see also Leavy 2009, 166). Therefore *Katiska* is also a participatory, performative inquiry into the experiences of the young men, both regarding their own personal and social development and for the purpose of

the whole research. *Katiska*'s improvisational exploration was a process that drew on their experiences to examine issues that seemed relevant to them and to me. The process of animating the scenes allowed an in-depth, embodied discourse of the young men's perspectives regarding issues that affected their lives. Neither the *Katiska* performance nor this whole eragraphical study can be understood as an objective description, because no text, written or performed, can claim to be free from the author's subjectivity.

At first, for those who have not practised movement improvisation, one's own body and moving may feel strange and the whole activity bizarre, but then later when it is time to reflect the process, the movement practice has become so natural that analyzing it seems impossible. The *Katiska* boys felt that they had not done anything, just played and fooled around. The creation of the work felt so easy that everything seemed to happen as of its own accord, without any effort. All the possible moments of struggle were forgotten, when the process hit the moment in which everything fell into place. Then the whole process felt, when described retrospectively, like an organic, blissful course. Accurate description of the process is always impossible, because in our experience we are living it in our bodies; in analysis we are forced to leave our body and to take an analytic position by placing the reflective self outside of our lived body, the experiencing self.

I interviewed the boys twice during the project; the first time after the first performance season and at second time a year later, when we were performing in the Netherlands. I have also collected our Facebook and MS Messenger discussions. The interviews conducted and the texts written by the boys helped me to understand what was meaningful for them in the whole process. I would describe the interview sessions as conversations. I did not have specific questions for the boys, and thus each one of them talked about slightly different things. Something that was very important for one of the boys was not necessarily so for the others. I did not aim to get something explicit out of them, but I was mainly interested in how the boys had experienced the whole creative process of *Katiska* and also how they had felt about performing the work.

The audience feedback, the statements and the newspaper critiques of *Katiska* reveal hardly any negative attitude towards the work, but this does not necessarily imply that these did not exist. They are only missing from my "data". However, I think the material offers interesting perspectives on the public's experience. I am not concerned what the audience feedback does not tell, but I am more enthusiastic about what it does. Likewise I do not claim that I can present everything that the boys have experienced during the project which has lasted five years so far.

My writing aims to capture the moments where new meanings occurred, found in shared experiences and individual emotions. It brings to the fore evocative moments, patterns and themes, which stand out from the documentation of the animateuring practice. The examples can present personal or collective experiences. They are already naturally interwoven in such way that it is sometimes difficult to separate the most intimate from the most general. However, I aim to present the collective thematization, but at the same time, also to maintain the sense of personality of the experiences. Consequently this research is a celebration of collective subjectivities occurring in dialogical encounters (see also Värri 2004, 158).

Often the critical approach in the tradition of qualitative research has been linked to the oppression of minority groups. The white and male participants of my research cannot be classified as belonging to a marginal group, even though at the same time it must be noted that young men are not the most commonly seen participants in the dance field. Perhaps it is this contradiction that raises questions; the group of young men is seen in an activity which is not typical for them. The starting position, the dancing boys, already raises a doubt; perhaps we do not know the other as we think we do. We claim to *know* something, but then we *recognize* that we were originally wrong. From stereotyping the other we are forced to face the others on the most profound level, in our lived bodies in relation.

In the “border-crossing dynamic” art-based research “is located in the spaces formed by emotionality, intellect, and identity” (Finley 2005, 684). Leavy (2009, 12–13) suggests that art-based practice is ideal for those who aim “to *describe, explore and discover*”, especially of identities. The work of Erving Goffman (1959) has greatly influenced researchers interested in understanding human behaviour and issues of identity. His words “all the world is a stage” refer to everyday dramaturgy; the way people operate as actors on life’s stage. He showed how social life can be conceptualized as a series of ongoing performances. In art-based research “part of the goal is to communicate the data in such a way as to challenge stereotypes, build empathy, promote awareness, and stimulate dialogue” (Leavy 2009, 13). In my own research the purpose of creating as well as performing was most of all to give voice to the subjugated perspectives and also to evoke multiple meanings.

In the artistic part of my research process I was interested in what the boys would tell about themselves; what is their identity? I wanted to get a grasp on something more “real” than the stereotypical image which the media is constantly (re)producing. On the contrary, the other half of my research projects focuses purely on questions of pedagogical attitude. I am not interested in presenting written accounts of the boys’ identities. I believe that it would be impossible to force something so complex and changeable like identity into the linear form of

text. Therefore this dissertation concentrates on the questions: How do I do research? And how do I educate? Both descriptions, of the methodology and of the theory, are in fact attempts to understand something that I have already intuitively practised through animateuring as art making and educating. In my writing I want to share my living practice as an artist, researcher and educator. I do acknowledge that all these roles also form the important instruments of my research (see also Eskola & Suoranta 1998). Furthermore, I do not aim to present facts but rather meanings initiated through my own practice of educating, researching and art making.

How can eragraphical or other art-based researches be evaluated? The value of an art project is often unclear and difficult to verbalize (see also Kantonen 2005, 264). A single art project or an art work may not transform individuals, but it may, for its part, help them to grow a little (see also Siikala, K. 2005, 165–167.) According to Leavy (2009, 11) writing qualitative research means “(re)presenting a set of meanings to an audience”, and that is why Leavy (2009, 18) highlights the importance of audience respond as a validity check in art-based research projects. “The important assessment questions are: How does the work make one feel? What does the work evoke or provoke? What does the work reveal?” (Leavy 2009, 17.) Thus, acknowledging *emotions* as validity checkpoints is crucial (Leavy 2009, 19).

I claim that the reason why we perform an art work is in our attempt to create “a space for dialogue with the audience” where “the negotiation of meanings and incorporation of multiple perspectives” can take place (Leavy 2009, 18). Art work can be seen as a “performative curriculum because it opens a liminal space, within which a community can engage a critical discourse” (Garoian as cited in Finley 2005, 687). By borrowing from Denzin (2006) we can ask: Does the performance heal or empower? Does the performance represent a “pedagogy of hope”? Does the performance subvert and critique official ideology? Riina Hannuksela wrote in the *Savon Sanomat* newspaper on 18 June 2009:

Katiska boys deserve praise

Dance

Raisa Foster

Katiska

Sotku Theatre 16.6.

Katiska is a work with young men. It is a piece that leaves you speechless. It affects, and touches the bottom of your heart. The

starting point has been the performers' autobiographical material, and the work was born in collaboration between choreographer, composer, and performers with improvisation exercises.

Katiska recounts the young man's experience of the world and its expectations. It gives you a peek into the lives of young men through hobbies, friendships, difficulties in love affairs as well as through male idols. The various dimensions open up both hideous straightforwardness and delicate, lyrical expression.

The work could be at risk of collapsing into stereotyping, and what is already said, but the movement at the same time dark and light, its seriousness and irony prevent crashing into this trap. First, they may declare the Truth, but in the next instant they laugh for all of that.

At the end you can look at these five young people. They do not represent any type, but are all unique personalities. The image is optimistic. Although there are countless expectations on us, we can choose.

"The work changed my world."

The artists are so strong on stage that their flesh and energy rush into the spectator's lap. The performers' movement is the most beautiful dance all the way to until the end, and it is difficult to believe that they have not previously danced.

The whole piece works even if the construction method can be red. The various scenes are created through different exercises and techniques.

Raisa Foster and composer Maija Koskenalusta have done a great job. The music supported the work from the beginning to the end. The

biggest thanks, however, are due to the five young men: Mikael Hautala, Rasmus Järvenpää, Valtteri Lahti, Lauri Mäkinen and Jere Riihinen. Their presence on stage is absolutely fantastic!

The work changed my world. I can only guess how much it has changed the lives of these five young men.



Practising recognition

While developing new suitable tools to create art in a collaborative way I must have had an intuitive sense of the need for *recognition* in educational situations. We all seem to demand recognition from others, and on the other hand we may experience a constant struggle for recognition in various situations of our everyday life. My practical, pre-theoretical understanding, arises from my own life world and thus also shapes my sense of what is socially and politically important, and moreover guides my research interests.

The research of *recognition* has focused intensively on the questions of social justice, as the *politics of recognition*, but mainly following the two major theorists, Charles Taylor (1994) and Axel Honneth (1995, 2006), they understand recognition as a matter of self-realization. It is now generally agreed that the politics of recognition is a significant feature of modern social life, with its main goal of tolerating difference. The assimilation to dominant cultural norms is no longer pursued, but rather researchers call for the recognition of the minorities, especially from the perspectives of ethnic, sexual and gender differences (Fraser 1996). (See also Recognition Forum 2009).

Over the past two decades various philosophical accounts of recognition have been proposed, but Paul Ricoeur's (2005) *The Course of Recognition* (originally *Parcours de la Reconnaissance*) is the first book to track recognition through its various philosophical meanings. Ricoeur (2005, ix) writes in the preface: "My investigation arose from a sense of perplexity having to do with the semantic status of the very term *recognition* on the plane of philosophical discourse. It is a fact that no theory of recognition worthy of the name exists in the way that one or more theories of knowledge exist. This surprising lacuna stands in contrast to the kind of coherence that allows the word *recognition* to appear in a dictionary as a single lexical unit, despite the multiple senses that this lexical unite embraces ..."

Ricoeur (2005, xi) argues that there can be "a philosophical discourse *about* recognition that is, in fact, that *of* recognition". With Littré, Ricoeur (2005, 4) stresses that the meanings, also metaphorical, of words are never arbitrary or disorganized, which is why he is interested in the polysemic usage of the word *recognition*, and especially the gaps, "what is not said", between the different meanings and usages of the word. His work is derived from the level of grammar, of the verb to recognize from its use in the active voice to its use in the passive voice: "I actively recognize things, persons, myself; I ask, even demand, to be recognized by others" (Ricoeur 2005: x).

The aim of my research is not to critically review the existing theories of recognition, not even Ricoeur's, but to understand the demand and the struggle for recognition in an educational space. However, the focus of this research is not on recognition as a question of *justice* at the *institutional* level, as a social promise, nor it is a question of recognition on a purely *individual* level, as a psychological claim. Additionally, this study of recognition demands critical inquiry into the existing practices of teaching and learning, the concepts of self and identity as well as the complex relations between the self and the other on the social level, but also as an ethical and ontological question.

Educational space is constituted, and constitutes, in complex interactions between various participants and different stakeholders. Art education, of which this study offers an example, is also always loaded with the historical and cultural legacy of different art fields and their educational aims. Educational practice, teaching and learning, never happen on neutral ground. Therefore I argue that new models of inquiry need to be proposed that question education as both a personal and mutual project in its profoundly ethical aim. In this chapter I define the pedagogy of recognition through the foundation of Ricoeur's (2005) *The Course of Recognition*. Before presenting a brief summary of Ricoeur's work, I will answer to the questions "why recognition?" and "why Ricoeur?"

After the first performance season of *Katiska* in 2008, I started to look at the audience feedback and interviews that I had conducted with the boys. Six distinctive themes emerged from the data: *strangeness* of art and *preconceptions* regarding art, especially youth art, *praising* the other and *respecting* difference, as well as notions of *change* and *learning*. I noticed that art can be a way of questioning our preconceptions. I think I know something before I recognize my errors. *Katiska* seemed to help us, the participants, as well the audience, to appreciate difference and to see the beauty of the multifaceted world. On the other hand *Katiska* brought us closer together, boys and girls as well as adolescents and adults. We could recognize thoughts, emotions and events of our own life world in the acts of the boys. Art helps us to perceive similarities, the way how we are connected to each other, when usually the self–other dichotomy is highlighted in a negative sense. Could art therefore be the answer to our cry for empathy, to help to see us in relation? Could art be the solution from egoistic individualism towards communal respect, mutual recognition? The word *recognition* with its different usages started to crop up in my data and this is how I ended up connecting my practice with Ricoeur's work. Ricoeur's lexical and etymological approach is also familiar to me, since Finnish language was my major subject in my Master's degree.

Ricoeur (2005, 3) starts his analysis by turning towards two "great works of lexicography of the French language": the *Dictionnaire de la langue française* by Littré, from

1859 and 1972, and the *Grand Robert de la langue française*, from 1985. From the numerous classifications of meanings that the noun *recognition* and the verb *to recognize* present, Ricoeur (2005, 12) ends up with three major dictionary definitions of the term: First, “to grasp (an object) with the mind, through thought, in joining together images, perceptions having to do with it; to distinguish or identify the judgment or action, know it by memory”; second, “to accept, take to be true (or take as such)”, and the third, “to bear witness through gratitude that one is indebted to someone for (something, an act)”. From these Ricoeur (2005, 248) forms his philosophical analysis, the *course* of recognition; “the passage from recognition-identification, where the thinking subject claims to master meaning, to mutual recognition, where the subject places him- or herself under the tutelage of a relationship of reciprocity, in passing through self-recognition in the variety of capacities that modulate one’s ability to act one’s ‘agency’”.

I realized after reading *The Course of Recognition* that with the one single word “recognition” I was able to thematise everything I had intuitively practised. Therefore much inspired by this work of Ricoeur’s (2005) I now write my own *course* of recognition, from the pedagogical point of view. First, I will discuss the purpose of education from the model of *identifying and producing* towards the pedagogical attitude of *experiencing and expressing lived being*. Second, I move from recognition as identification to self-recognition and questions of identity as narrative and performative. The third level in the process of pedagogical recognition is the means of mutuality; the celebration of difference and ambiguity in its most profound aim. However, before I begin the description of my three level model of pedagogy of recognition, I would like, briefly, to return to my thoughts after the first performance season in 2008, when I was reflecting the work, how I experienced it as a spectator, but also as a director with a certain prior thoughts and aims:

Katiska begins in darkness. The boys walk on stage and the base sound begins to play in the audio monitors. The boys join in with their voices, and one of the boys starts to whistle. A voice can be heard alone in the darkness. It is somehow soothing, somnolent. It takes you somewhere else. Although the working title of the scene is ‘Lapland’, it never brings Lapland to my mind, even though the lighting has a cold bluish tone. The uneven base sound and the improvised singing of the boys’ carry me rather to the yard of a mosque or a temple. The mystical atmosphere of the soundscape, its power and roughness, makes my own body tense.

The boys are all wearing their own clothes: one is in a black jacket, a heavy metal music band image and a text on the back. The long hair reveals the young man perhaps as a fan of heavy metal music. Another boy has a plain, neat look: light-coloured shirt with a collar, and below it a long-sleeved t-shirt, and he wears jeans. The third one is in an orange shirt and the fourth in blue. The last one shines in his pink Marimekko's Jokapoika shirt. What the boys are wearing reveals that the performance presents the life of five Finnish young men.

The boys are facing away from the audience, standing against the rear wall. They have white masks on the backs of their heads. I got the idea for the starting image of the piece on my Easter holiday in Copenhagen. There, I saw a photo exhibition in which the photographer had asked ordinary people to pose for him. The photographer had placed a big lump of dough on the head of the model, and it had covered her/his face, so that the faces of photographed people could not be seen in the pictures at all. The only thing you could see of them was their clothes. Below the image was written the name and the age of the person. Some of them were surprisingly young or old in relation to what I had assumed, on the basis of the clothes they were wearing.

I realized that we draw conclusions about people on the basis of their clothing and appearance – but what do we actually know of them? Knowledge is often based on only the prejudices and expectations, and how often, do we not even bother to review the assumptions and our views. I wanted to work on this idea and to present it in the same concrete way in the final piece, after all it had been an important driving force for the entire work.

I wanted to give the boys a voice. At school all kinds of negative things are said about boys, not to mention the image that the media has created. I wanted to somehow point out that as a starting position the boys are faceless, but then they are exposed as themselves and they tell us something that we did not know before, and that spectators would be face to face with the revelation: I do not know, although I think I know. The spectators have to correct their thinking, to place

themselves in a real dialogue. Then dialogism is not only interaction with another, but means that an individual, in relation to another and the world, has to evaluate his/her own thinking and prejudices and rethinking them.

When the boys walk slowly towards the audience, they are faceless. The spectator can already draw all kinds of conclusions about the boys on the basis of their clothing, but the faces are not seen, they are like any young men. The light changes and only their legs can be seen. They take off their masks, but the audience still does not see their faces. In the darkness the boys change their individual clothing to matching outfits: black Capri pants and sleeveless black shirts. They dance the entire piece in a coherent uniform, until at the end of the piece when they change back into their own clothes. Right at the end they stand facing the audience – the white masks resting at their feet. Every boy alone in his own spotlight, but still together connected with the traces of movements we just witnessed. Changing the clothes at the beginning and at the end of the piece creates a circular structure. When the boys change back to their own clothes the audience know that the performance is over. Changing clothes serves as a frame story: wearing their own clothes, the boys present a prologue and an epilogue. In black clothes a play is acted, narrated within a bigger play.

From producing knowledge to improvising new understanding

Mikael:

First, because I hadn't done any theatre or dance before, I was like, what am I doing here, but then when we had fooled around for six months, I started to find the movement – hey, this is a cool thing, too. Maybe it's just the first shock, when you have a new thing that you haven't done before, it just doesn't work first. But then when you start to do something, you get into it, and it starts to open up to you better and you begin to like it more – you kind of get to know the field. All

these improvisations have been interesting to do. I didn't realize that it could be like this, because I have been very close-minded, I haven't been looking openly, or haven't tried to understand – like a curtain has fallen front of my eyes. But then it kind of opened up in a new way, when I got to do it myself.

Traditionally art education wants the learner to identify the characteristics of the particular art form and then produce her/his own work of art according to those rules – this has usually been the case in dance education, too. In contrast dance animateuring is educational and artistic practice with its heart in *experiencing, interpreting, improvising and expressing new understanding*. I claim that to experience the expression of art and to interpret the subjective meaning of it in the spirit of improvisation we create new understanding, through recognizing rather than knowing.

René Descartes' statement "Cogito ergo sum", "I think, therefore I am", is a basic tenet of Western philosophy and the foundation for all possible knowledge. Cartesianism, the philosophical and scientific tradition derived from Descartes' thoughts, separates the mind from the corporeal body. The bodily sensations are thought to be unreliable, and the only reliable truths are those accessed through rational thought. Varto (2003, 115) suggests that if Descartes' insight had been "I sense, therefore the world exists", the whole history of the Western world would probably be very different. Similarly Eckhart Tolle (2011) argues that Descartes' error was "to equate thinking with Being and identity with thinking". Let us now reflect on the traditional practices of art and education happening in the frame of Cartesianism and also consider possible interruptions – improvisations – into this tradition.

Identification

How do we know if we are right or wrong? I would say that it is easy, because in *knowing* we are always right. It is in the act of *recognizing* that we come to know if we were originally wrong. Ricoeur (2005, 63) claims that recognition does not only detach itself from knowledge but opens up the way to it, and it is indeed *hesitation* which gives recognition its dramatic character. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 463) also says that "our errors become truths only once they are recognized, and there remains a difference between their revealed and their latent content of truth, between their alleged and their actual significance". I agree with Uspenski (1991, 189) that in fact, it is an artist's goal from the beginning that at first the recipient of art faces

the conventional image of reality but then is suddenly confronted with an opposite truth, which forces the spectator to change her/his point of view. Hence it can be said that art makes us to approach the concept of knowledge critically, and it also teaches us to accept misrecognition.

Following Ricoeur (2005), I claim that the philosophy of recognition cannot be unfolded on Cartesian ground. Ricoeur (2005, 36) argues that the Cartesian theory of judgment seems to bring together the two definitions of the word recognition, as “to grasp (an object) with the mind, through thought” and “to accept, take to be true (or take as such)”, even though these two different usages of the term recognition are kept separate in everyday use and in the lexicon. Ricoeur (2005, 25) points out that the two lexical definitions of recognition, “to grasp (an object) with the mind, through thought” and “to identify” (something), presupposes *an object*, something which is the “objective” that invites us to distinguish and to identify. Thus, following Ricoeur, we can say that to distinguish an idea, a thing or a person is to identify it, and therefore we can also perceive that to identify and to distinguish forms an inseparable pair. In order for something to be the *same* and not the *other* it has to be defined both “relative to itself” and “relative to something other than itself” (Ricoeur 2005, 26–27). Ricoeur (2005, 37) claims that for both Descartes and Kant *to recognize* means to identify, *to grasp a unified meaning through thought*, even for Descartes identifying “means putting an end to obscurity” and by contrast for Kant, “to identify is *to join together*”. After all we can say that according to the Cartesian tradition “being able to distinguish goes hand in hand with judging”; this is in fact the capacity to distinguish between the true and the false (Ricoeur 2005, 24).

Cartesian tradition has led us to a situation in which “we are imprisoned in our psycho-physiological make-up” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 462). I claim that the Cartesians taught us that there is an objective world around us, the Truth which is the same for everyone, and through our rational thought we are able to perceive knowledge about it. Ricoeur (2005, 61) suggests that the gap between *recognizing* and *knowing* cannot thus be sought with Cartesian or Kantian theory of judgment, but rather in the “things themselves”. Thus we may come to the conclusion that it is phenomenology that can shake the ground under the feet of Cartesians. The phenomenologist questions the idea of objective thought and self-evident truth – both from the extreme subjective and objective points of view – by suggesting that *thought* is rather “a *value-fact* which envelops and conditions every other possible one” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 463). I claim that truth is not the same for everyone; it “is not necessarily an object present before me as a piece of knowledge to be acquired, it may be a ‘unity of value’ which is present to me only practically” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 374). Therefore we should

understand that “the denomination of objects does not follow upon recognition, it is itself recognition” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 206).

For Descartes, the only thing that counts is that representative value which confers a kind of being on the idea, the objective being of the idea. ... For Kant, only mathematical and physical entities satisfy the criteria of objectivity. ... For a philosophy of being-in-the-world, on the contrary, it is the variety of modes of being of the things in the world that is important. (Ricoeur 2005, 62.)

I argue that the practice of art, which shares the same kind of phenomenological attitude with “the philosophy of being-in-the-world”, has the ability to challenge the mechanistic world view, the idea of objective truth, and also the linear understanding of time and the geometrical understanding of space, which we are all still taken for granted. In a Cartesian sense the acts of identification and distinction assume a static object, and thus the question of recognition is focused on the identification of *what*. Conversely, in art *what* is done is often less important than *how* or *why* it is done. Art making is therefore always qualitative (Fraleigh 1987, 34) and critical action, and hence it has a powerful potential to challenge the dominant quantitative world view. In this point it is important to highlight that it is not all the arts and art education that teach us to shake the Cartesian grounds, but only those that accept the existentialist view that “man is a being without given essence, a being-in-the-making”, as Fraleigh (1987, xxxvii) frames it. Our existential being is the life and the world happening spontaneously; it is an open process, not closed and decided totality.

Art institution

How do we determine if dance is good or bad? How do we know if something is art at all? What is dance? What is theatre? It is true as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 177) says that “for the child to be able to perceive blue under the category of colour, the category must be rooted in the data, otherwise no subsumption could recognize them”. Therefore, following Merleau-Ponty, we can say that to learn to see colours it is to gain a certain style of seeing. As Redfern (1999, 129–130) points out, to see something as a work of art is not to recognize a *fact*, but that it depends on “what can be known or taken for granted about the context of the object in question; and that context is of an *institutional* kind”. In other words, Redfern reminds us that

artworks are always part of a complex social system that includes practices of creating and producing, performing and presenting, criticizing and reviewing, marketing and financing of arts. She thus argues that when we question if something is a new form of art or is not art at all, we have to position it in our existing concept of art. The education practice of different art forms has also a great impact on defining the present but also the future arts. The education process means socializing the values of the art field and also the politics of aesthetics (Parviainen 1998, 107). Therefore it is crucial that as art educators we critically pose the questions: Whose values and aesthetics are we delivering? And at the same time, whose politics are we promoting?

Perhaps we should recognize that truth is not something that is constituted *a priori* but something that we constantly constitute through our actions. By repeating the existing techniques of art we hold on to the structures but also to the values of the current world view. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 208) also notes that “every language conveys its own teaching and carries its meaning into the listener’s mind. A school of music or painting which is at first not understood, eventually, by its own action, creates its own public”. We should understand the power as well as the responsibility that we have when we are engaged in the process of education. We can betray ourselves and claim that our teaching takes place on neutral ground, when we are following the conservative models of teaching arts, but we can also choose to critically evaluate these existing practices of arts, and perhaps also to introduce fresh forms of expression that stem from alternative set of values.

The linear perspective, where the object is painted from one fixed point of view, was established in the Renaissance and became the norm for European painting – even until the Medieval time the multi-perspective had been used. The linear perspective or what Martin Jay (as cited in Broglio 2001) calls *Cartesian perspectivalism* is still the dominant way of seeing; it is a method of perception that represents space and the subjects and objects in that space according to the rules of Euclidean geometry. The linear perspective homogenizes the sight; it makes the sight universal, common to us all. Any misrecognition is the fault of the spectator who does not sense or understand the ideal, the truth. Such thinking leads us to believe that “in order for our perceptions of the world around us to move from confused forms to clear and distinct ideas which have the clarity of mathematical objects, corporeal bodies must be interpreted by the mind with its innate geometry” (Broglio 2001). Cartesian thought maintains a mechanistic world view in which corporeal bodies are just geometric entities that fit the geometry of the rational mind. As Broglio (2001) says, we are so used to the linear perspective that there is no freedom to see objects any other way than as three dimensional representations.

The choice of the linear perspective always places the observer in an external position: a drawing or a painting is created according to the rules of geometrical calculations and in an attempt to create a realistic representation of the visual field as it is perceived by the eye of a fixed spectator. In reverse perspective the vanishing points are positioned outside the painting; in earlier art works objects were positioned and sized hierarchically according to their thematic significance. Contemporary visual art, as well as the performing arts, can purposely play with the rules of interior and exterior perspectives and also with the whole complex weavings of different point of views. Moreover, installation and performance art shake the traditional separation of an object and a subject or a sender and a receiver by placing the work of art or a performer in a new relation with an audience. The installation can surround the receiver with multi-sensible ways; performance art invites the spectator to join in the instant experience of a shared moment.

In literature the choice of having internal or external perspective can be made through the narrator. The first-person narrator always presents the internal perspective from a singular point of view; a third-person narrator is an option that does not require the author to reveal all that which a first-person character would know. The third narrator type, a third-person omniscient narrator, presents a broad view of the lives of different characters and the world of the whole story and possibly also the conditions of a story. A third-person omniscient narrator can express thoughts and feelings of every character. Postmodern literature has also produced works of literature which present multiple subjective perspectives equally by devoting each chapter of a book to the voice of a single character after whom it is titled.

Films are almost always structured as *montages* in which the story is told through multiple different perspectives instead of a singular fixed one. This may also have influenced theatre practice, and it may be the reason why contemporary theatre extensively seeks new ways of expression. Uspenski (1991, 15) talks about the internal and external perspectives of the world of art works, and believes that the forms of contemporary theatre have better options to present the internal perspective of characters than the traditional theatre, whose clear, linear storyline almost always presents just the external perspective and therefore, according to him, has only a limited ability to investigate different perspectives. The establishment of theatrical space as a black box forms the strict conventions of the actors' positioning – which in its own way, highlights the object–subject relationship of the actors and the spectators. Contemporary theatre aims to recognize the complex nature of different characters and observe the social world through multiple points of view. This montage-like approach is exquisitely exemplified in Pina Bausch's dance theatre productions and also, for example, in the works of *Smeds Ensemble* (2011) in Finland. Not just contemporary theatre

but also other different forms of contemporary arts often play with the change of perspectives to be able to better investigate the complex structures of society and individual life in the postmodern era.

Uspenski (1991, 13) argues that, although in theatre the points of view can change, thus is less significant than in other art forms. In his opinion, when characters talk and act it appears for the spectator as an objective behaviour, and their subjectivity can only be guessed from their behaviour, this leads him to the conclusion that in theatre the subject and the object are therefore always integrated into one, as opposed to painting or literature. It is true that a painting is always concretely separated from the painter, but, for example, following Fraleigh (1987, xvi) it must be stated that I cannot be separated from my dance, therefore *I am my dance*. Therefore I have come to the conclusion that theatre and dance especially can be very effective tools to question the subjective–objective division in trying to define the concepts of truth and knowledge in a new way. In the actions of dance or theatrical events there are always present at least two perspectives, that of the dancer or actor and the other of the spectator. The act of dancing is evidently an inseparable unity of the subjectivity of a dancer and the objectivity of the dance. Unfortunately when a dance piece is analysed, it is often treated as an objectified “thing” and the attention is largely focused only on individual movements and their phrasing.

In English the word *phrase* can refer to the syntactic unit of a natural language but also to a musical or choreographic section of a dance. A semantically abstract contemporary dance piece often draws the attention to the movement phraseology. The execution of precise movements and the formation and modification of movement phrases are at the centre of reflection. In the choreographic process of a formal contemporary dance work as well as in a spectator’s experience of such a piece, the main focus seems to be on the structural and phraseological level of the work and not so much on the level of movements’ semantic or pragmatic dimension. The phrases are easier to measure objectively, in the true spirit of quantitative and atomistic science.

Rudolf Laban (see Bradley 2009) tried to raise the status of dance among other art forms by developing *Laban notation*, a specific marking system in which dance could be written down. The movements of different body parts and their dynamics in space and time can be expressed with different symbols. However, the various dance notation systems, including Laban’s, have not been able to establish their position in the same way as, for example, the standard Western musical notation where music is expressed in written notes on a stave. Therefore transferring choreography for new dancers is still mostly done through the bodies of choreographers and teachers. Of course, video technique can nowadays be used to

document dance works and also to pass on the works to new generations. Laban's choreology can also be used to analyse dance works, wherein dance can be described in specific terms of time, space, and effort, but as Fraleigh (1987, 89) points out dance stands out as meaningful only in its entire unfolding. I therefore argue that dance education has great potential to teach a more holistic attitude towards the world – and I venture to claim that we certainly need more than just atomistic, scientific and objective analysis of the world. This is why I also do not use Laban's method in my own research, for example to analyse in detail the classification of effort and spatial form of movements which are performed in *Katiska*. I believe that if an artistic symbol is effective enough, the attention will not be paid to the symbol itself, but instead, it will lead the mind to something expressed in it; it is in the nature of the symbolic system itself that it vanishes for the sake of something beyond it (see for example Veivo & Huttunen 1999, 24). Or, to be more precise, the form and the content, especially in the dancing body, are perceived as an inseparable entity.

Traditionally dance has been understood as rhythmic movements to music. Generally, every dance genre has its own movement vocabulary, which can be learned by repeating movements over and over again. A dance sequence and choreography are formed by combining dance movements within this particular style of dance. The popular television formats as *Dancing with the Stars* and *So you think you can dance* are based on the formalist – and competitive – concept of dance. In order to be able to execute the movements well, knowledge and skill of the particular dance style are required. Even the smallest nuances in performance execution become visible, at least to experienced spectators. Also, particularly in classical ballet, a certain body type is required so that the dance technique can be perfectly controlled, and visually acceptable. Therefore it could be said that traditionally the dancer is formed by the dance; but on the *Katiska* project, or in any other improvisation based dance practice, it is the dance that is formed by the dancers. This is one of the notions that give *Katiska* its emancipatory character. What are the characteristics of dance practice that I so strongly believe that people have to be freed from?

The recognition of an ideal dance performance – and an ideal body type – is mainly based on visualization. Western thought has always privileged vision as the dominant sense, equating it with consciousness and rationalization (see also Vasseleu 1998), and thus the sight is kept separate from the “lower”, the non-intellectual senses: tactile, smelling, tasting and hearing (Parviainen 1998, 20–21). Ballet students follow the teacher's model and seek to execute the movement as closely as possible in the same way. The dance student learns to identify the various movements and their ideal performance standard. As Parviainen (1998, 110) points out it is not just the advertisement and the fashion industry, but also dance

aesthetics that presents us with “the image of the perfect body”. The walls of dance studios are lined with mirrors from floor to ceiling. Dancers monitor their performance and correct their mistakes. Sometimes mental images may be used for teaching a specific technique. Experienced dancers may also rely more and more to their bodily sensations, and after numerous repetitions the dancer learns to produce the correct body posture, line and movement as second nature. In any case, a ballet dancer polishes her/his movements constantly based on the visual, aesthetic ideal of perfect execution.

Shobana Jeyasingh’s (1999, 49) comment illustrates and at the same time summarizes the values of ballet: “The advantages of a classical dance language are its strength and its power to communicate with sureness and confidence – and its objective technique that you can fit your body into”. There is the ideal that dancers trust profoundly and then shape their bodies and polish their movements accordingly. Ballet is based on *knowing* what the ideal is. The guide books of ballet methods are full of pictures and written explanations of this dance of objective perfectionism and its various movements of established execution (see for example Vaganova 1969, Grant 1982). Parviainen (1998, 103) has observed that “the style of illustrations in these books is almost typically identical”. She continues:

A striking feature is that the body is depicted in a geometrical space, sometimes with no floor or ground underneath. The movements are not gestures, they do not take place in relation with the environment, they do not communicate with anybody, they exist in pure space and time. In fact the most interesting feature in technique books is what is missing: relationships to other dancers, the moving body’s relationship to the environment, the content of dancing, the purpose of dance, since these matters are not included in the dance technique. The body is located in geometrical space showing the correct movements as a purified and objectified thing.

It is necessary for the dance field, in the conservative sense, that ballet dancers also know the famous ballet choreographies and traditional music composed specifically for ballet. When the music starts to play, the dancer remembers the relevant steps. Marius Petipa’s classic choreographies from the 1800s are still parts of ballet companies’ repertoires, either in their original or adapted versions. Classical ballet as a Western theatrical dance form has largely focused on maintaining the tradition. The basic steps of ballet are from the 1600s, and in the 1800s ballet workout technique was further developed and the two hundred year history

has produced various schools of methods for training this art form. For example, the Danish Bournonville method, the Italian Cecchetti method and the Russian Vaganova method, as well as the French, British and American schools, all produce slightly different styles of dancers; for example, Bournonville's masterful leg work and Vaganova's flexible upper body and soft hands, are identifiable. Nevertheless, all these different methods share the same objectified and visually recognizable style of dance accepted as classical ballet. Of course, we can claim that in the history of ballet as an art form has also been, at least to some extent revised. For example, the Russian Mikhail Fokine reformed the ballet in the early 1900s; in America in the late 1900s George Balanchine created a new kind of sporty and highly technical ballerinas. "Balanchine ballerinas" presented a new ideal body type which has survived to the present day. Today's ballet companies perform the old classics and new contemporary works side by side. The borders of ballet and other theatrical dance forms have become more blurred, but dancing on point or using the traditional ballet vocabulary usually leads us to know and to define the dance as ballet even if the traditional ballet *tutu* and classical music may be missing. (See also Homans 2010.)

Dance education which focuses on establishing a certain body image and a technique "has not been able to develop without cultural Cartesianism, the Cartesian pervasive gaze, the observer detached from the body, a disembodied subject without time and place" (Parviainen 1998, 90). The Cartesian subject observes the world from outside; he sees exterior objects and controls outer reality by his ego: "he *has*, he *possesses*, he *owns* objects, thoughts, ideas, other people, even *the body*" (Parviainen 1998, 21). To recognize a good dancer is to see the visual, the established aesthetics, the perfect appearance and the immaculate technique. Those features are evaluated "objectively" from the outside – the subjective feelings that the dance rises cannot be measured, and that is what is troubling us in the world of the Cartesian approach.

In 2007 the major arts and dance organizations in Tampere region (Pirkanmaa) in Finland introduced a dance passport (Tanssipassi) for local dance schools to encourage and help their students to watch dance performances. When students go to see a performance they write down the details of the work (the name, the choreographer, and the performers of the work as well as the time and the place of the show) into the passport. Then they are asked to describe the performance and its choreography in their own words in the first blank space; the other blank space is for answering to the question: what kind of dancing *skills* (for example speed, contact, expression, musicality, strength, use of space, flexibility, variety of skills, acrobatic skills,...) were highlighted in the performance? Even the first blank space allows the students to express openly their thoughts about the performance, the second questions guides

the attention to “objectively perceived attributes”. Students are not encouraged to reflect their own feelings, intuitions, memories and analogies that the work may suggest. Therefore I claim that the dance passport supports the concept of objectified dance which focuses on the techniques and skills and which is purged of emotions. It also gives a message that the students’ subjective experience and its reflection and description of the work are not important. The dance is treated as an object that manifests itself as a permanent entity, and which is received from a singular perspective and which appears the same for everyone. It is something that can be mastered and known.

The traditional concept of dance, as skillful body movements to the rhythm of music is so ingrained to our system that we rarely question it. Here I must stress that I am not talking about contemporary dancers, choreographers, dance scholars or dance educators, who use improvisational techniques in their teaching; but I am talking about the general public, who do not attend to contemporary dance events. The performers of *Katiska* likewise did not identify the activity which they were doing as *dance*. They actually thought that it was amusing that they were called “dancers”. They labelled only some of the scenes of *Katiska* as dance. The “most dance” in the boys’ view was the scene where they danced in unison, which I had choreographed based on their own improvised movements. The boys enjoyed the challenge of rehearsing the sequence, and certainly the hard training and the simultaneous execution of movements increased their acceptance of the scene as “dance”. The spinning and flowing movements of the sequence are executed to beautiful, melodic music, which undoubtedly also creates more “dance feel”. For me this particular scene with its unison movements could not be created without careful reflection and consideration: How much is the boys’ own voice lost through unison movements? How much should I correct the movements without destroying the personal movement quality which each of the performer has? The scene seemed to be somehow out of place in the rest of the material, and to present a different style and ideology of the dance that I had in mind. Even though I had not choreographed other scenes as “heavily” as this one, I cannot neglect my own influence on other scenes as well – I am the facilitator of the project and the director of the performance after all. Therefore after numerous moments of hesitation I decided to retain the “dance scene” simply because the performers expressed that they enjoyed doing it.

Neither modern nor contemporary dance has only one “correct” technique, yet many choreographers are often known for their signature movements. Dance may be formal, strictly based on the quality of the movements, so that the dance is technique oriented; on the other hand, it may be driven from the content and borrow its expressions from many different art forms. As Fraleigh (1987, 102) notes “[t]he formalist pole grew out of a concern for the act of

dancing, or the formative object of dance, while the expressionist pole emphasizes expressive content, or the expressive subject of dance.” These two directions can also be seen in the development of postmodern dance. Rebecca Hilton (1999, 77–78) argues that the postmodern with its new expressions changed dance in Europe, while in America the choreographers have been working under the same aesthetics established in the 1960s. She claims that a lot of work in New York is coming from an intellectual place, from thinking about the body, while in Europe the work is much more emotionally based and in her opinion also more dramatic. “A lot of European work seems to be about the constraints society sets up”, she adds, which is also the case in *Katiska*. In *Katiska* both abstract movements and concrete, clearly identifiable pedestrian movements are used, but the focus in the creative process as well as in performing was never in the question of *how* the movements were made but *why* do we move.

The founders of modern dance were mostly women. Fraleigh records that these emerging independent women of the twentieth century created “natural”, “aesthetic”, “creative”, “expressive” dance, which could speak to their deeper meaning and to the freedom they wanted. She also suggests that perhaps it is not coincidence that in modern dance technical and abstract dance was often created by men. (Fraleigh 1987, 144.) I agree with Fraleigh (1999, 142) that even if the existential phenomenology cannot be directly identified with feminism, they have both worked against the logical, essential and idealistic traditions of Western philosophy: Existentialists “admit concerns into philosophy which are also important to feminists: the importance of individual consciousness, freedom and choice” – as well as questioning the body–mind dichotomy. “Feminist studies made a major contribution to the debate on how knowledge is formed and controlled, exploring the construction and hegemonic functions of gender” (Carter 1999, 10).

Fraleigh (1987, 13) also notes that body, self and agency are inseparable entities and thus “movement cannot be considered as medium apart from an understanding that movement *is* body, not just something that the body accomplishes instrumentally as it is moved by some distinct, inner, and separable agency”. If the body is not treated as the instrument of dance, but rather as the subject of dance, dance allows us to experience our being as a holistic, and not just an intellectual, state. By conceptualizing the nature of self and knowledge in a new way we also expand our understanding of dance and dance education. Conversely, by practising dance – but only from an existential point of view – we can understand the concept of knowledge and truth and the constitution of the whole world in a new way.

Skills

Athletic performance skills are often required of professional dancers. Well-rehearsed performance is expected to appear skilful but effortless. A ballet school showing, which presents little ballerinas trembling through a dreadfully difficult dance on point, can be an unpleasant experience, for dancer and for spectator alike. The presentations are undoubtedly much rehearsed, but when the dancer's whole energy goes into managing the technicalities, the core of dance is lacking its powerful potentiality to express the lived body presence.

“Skill is action done purposefully and well. That is, skillful action involves fulfillment of known goals, it is not merely done habitually; and it must be done well” (Fraleigh 1987, 163). I agree with Ricoeur (1966, 328–330) that *will* is not incompatible with *nature*: a movement that originally requires effort can through training and repetition become second nature to us. Therefore, following Ricoeur, it could be said that in skill our freedom is realized. The body in dance is both objectively known and subjectively lived: “when the dance has become so thoroughly me that I no longer think about it, it becomes my consciousness. I become centered in my action. I do not look back on it or anticipate it. I am spontaneously present in it.” (Fraleigh 1987, 40.) In other words, when the dance is completely assimilated by the dancer the dance is lived as the self. The problem, from an educational point of view, as my own experience tells, is that such a state requires so much technical skills through training that, at least in classical ballet, it is only possible at a professional level. This has led me to search for alternative ways to connect with the pre-reflective lived-body experience and to find “freedom” in dance practice, and again to develop new methods for dance education (see also Anttila 2003).

The performers of *Katiska* were originally selected for the project on the basis of background information that “they could sing”. Maija, the composer and musical director of *Katiska*, had taught music to all the boys and she knew that they were interested in music, singing and playing different instruments, but she was still often faced with the reality that the boys were not experienced singers. When composing and rehearsing the music she had to take into account the level of the boys' skills. Initially I was hoping that we would not use pre-recorded music in the final performance at all, but rather that the performers would have created all the music and sound by themselves in the live performance situation. However, the musical director felt that the idea was too challenging in the artistic sense and that it would constrain her aesthetic goals.

I argue that the rejection of the “accepted” technique does not automatically make art “bad”. The field of fine art has also canonized artists whose works are based on the value of

their ingenious concept, in other words, the expressive content is appreciated over the demonstration of technique. In music and dance the practice and performance of skills are still commonly regarded as the key values. Of all the different fields of arts it seems that the visual art has tried all the different forms of expressions in probably the most unprejudiced way, while dance, theatre and music seem to continue to rely on the more traditional concept of Western art. Music and dance seem to mostly highlight the performance of technique by respecting the existing principles. It must be said that in visual art, too, the general public may become irritated, if they do not see the art piece exhibiting any skill – brush strokes on canvas can be felt as a hoax and just laziness on the part of an artist. It can be said that technical virtuosity in arts is still generally appreciated and the public's attention also adheres to it, as we can also see in one of the comments received from our audience:

The scenes where the boys were singing without any background accompaniment were musically the best in my opinion. There were as many number of parts than there were boys, and together they sounded really good. It requires skill to be able to sing one's own line, while others sing theirs. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

If a dance performance does not appear to be of a technically high standard, but the presentation still has a lot of expressive power, we may think that the performers are just naturally talented. However, I claim that it is possible to develop a performer's presence through the right kind of exercises. For example, while rejecting established techniques postmodern dance has extended its focus to the movement medium of dance by making conscious use of pedestrian movements and functional everyday actions (Fraleigh 1987, 120). In *Katiska*, too, I created clear and concrete task for the boys to focus on, as to simply keep them away from doing anything pretentious. I claim that the recipients of an art work may often be aware of the performer's technique, but most of all they are fascinated by the performer's *presence*. Then the whole performance, its content and the artist are experienced as one. Only then can the performance really speak to the spectator:

Of course you could see that they had not spent their whole lives training dance, but the passion and the fact that they put their whole souls into the dance replaced the missing skills. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

When I was visiting for the Moderne Dans Skolen University in Copenhagen and describing the *Katiska* project one of the students asked me if I ever wished that the *Katiska* performers had been “technically better”. The question surprised me, because I can honestly say such a thought had not entered my head at any stage. From the beginning, I had rather been surprised at all which the boys were willing and able to do. Although my own background is decidedly in classical ballet, the technical side of dance does not currently interest me so much. I often talk about *movement* rather than dance, because the word *dance* is commonly accompanied, as already stated, by the stereotypical, and very narrow impression that it is something highly technically executed and only accessible to a limited group of people – both as makers and receivers. Unfortunately this concept of dance is persistently maintained, often by the practitioners of the dance field itself. For dance conservatives *Katiska* is probably not dance at all. We have often encountered the question; is *Katiska* dance, or what is it? In one of the audience discussions on the Hällä stage in 2009 we were once again talking about this same issue, when one of the spectators opposed the idea of categorizing *Katiska* into any existing artistic genre, and where one of the performers of *Katiska*, Lauri, and I responded again with the questions of defining dance and movement:

A spectator, middle-aged woman: *Do you have to put it into a box? It is a kind of holistic expression, done with total commitment. Then there is everything present. Do we always have to put everything into a box?*

Lauri: *If you say that we are dancing contemporary dance, at least I have never thought of it that way. It was only movement in the beginning. Then we were kind of tricked into dancing. We have not started to do contemporary dance as a hobby, rather we have just moved.*

Raisa: *I think everyone can dance. You just have to find everyone's own movement. Everyone is different, and we have to respect their own way of moving. I don't use the word 'dance', because it leads to assumptions and pressures that we are doing something that is determined beforehand. That is why I would rather speak about 'moving'.*

Fraleigh (1987, 156–157) is afraid that the concept of “anyone can dance,” threatens the virtuoso qualities we cherish in dance. In contrast, I argue that in trying to avoid feeling and highlight the movement for its own sake, there is a great risk of creating skilful but uninteresting dancers and blank objectivity in dance without the true presence of the living body. But most of all by practising dance only according to the existing rules and techniques we are excluding many people and thus also seriously limiting the potential of dance to guide our understanding to new paths. I agree with Parviainen (2006, 13) that when we are speaking about “kinaesthetic intelligence”, it requires that the movements are not only reduced to planned choreography, and the selection of movements based only on the learned and automaticised bodily skills. Following Parviainen we can claim that skill or technique cannot alone explain kinesthetically intelligent solutions.

Improvisation

Fraleigh (1987, 39) claims that “at first, the dance is necessarily an it”. The dancer knows the dance as “an it”, the accepted ideal which also means immediately technical challenge for her/him. But does it have to be this way and is this also the case in improvisation practice? I would suggest that in improvisation practice we are attempting to get rid of “an it”. All movement practitioners sometimes become frustrated, if they feel that they are repeating themselves when improvising. We may feel that we are doing something that we already know even if our main task is to surprise ourselves with movement that we did yet know existed at all. We trust our body and our dance to be the open ended world – and that is where we find freedom. Therefore I claim that at its best there is not “an it” in improvisation. We can notice that the traditional, technique oriented dance starts from the idea of achieving the ideal performance, “an it”, the truth given *a priori*, and by training it finds freedom in skill; when in contrast improvisation implies freedom from the start and truths are thus found *a posteriori* from the experience of moving body. We can never know when, or if at all, we have found the truth, and this is probably one of the most important things that improvisation practice can teach us, as we can also see in one of the boys, Jere’s, description:

What I have noticed by learning dance and theatre expression is that I have grown and I can’t see the end. That is the best thing in it. It is the same thing in everything which you know that you can grow all the

time. It never stops the growth and it kind of carries you forward. I have noticed how important learning is, in anything when it happens the way that it takes you forward – the learning.

Katiska was built on a foundation of improvisation exercises. With the help of different tasks the boys generated movements, some of which were then selected and edited for inclusion in the final work. My task as a dance animateur and as the director of the work was to provide tasks that would encourage the boys to improvise and experiment with the expression of their body and its movement. Instead of trying to achieve something that someone else has determined beforehand, in dance improvisation we found ourselves on an endless journey of discovery. The dance practitioner Rebecca Hilton (1999, 80) tells a similar story about her experiences in improvisation:

I'm really into it because there's no one telling me what to do. ... It's a different body experience. ... I learnt a lot about my movement patterns, the kinds of things I like to do, what my body will do naturally if left alone and a lot about my rhythms. Discovering patterns that I have that I wasn't aware of has been very interesting. It's all about rediscovery and you never get there, that's what keeps you going. If you ever got there you may as well just lie down and die. I'll never know my body utterly, it's changing daily, each day it's a new body. ... I spent a lot of time when I was young trying to be someone, trying to be something very particular. Once I got over the hump of accepting that'll never happen, I got this incredible feeling of freedom and release.

Katiska is a collection of very different types of scenes that were selected to form the final work. Of course the structure of the scenes was built together with the boys, but still the transition from free improvisation to structured presentation initially seemed to be difficult for the boys. They reported that improvising felt free but also more real and movement more authentic than later when they had to follow a certain structure or a sequence of movements. It seemed difficult for them at the start to begin to practise the choreographic episodes constructed on the basis of improvisation, because at first their minds were forced to focus their whole attention on memorizing the scene. The quality of the focus on the movement flow itself no longer satisfied the boys themselves. The movements lost their spontaneity, and

hence also their interest. But eventually, through practice and performances, the boys got back into *their dance* and into its creative spirit. They regained the quality that was lost for a while. When they no longer had to think about the execution of the sequence and the individual steps, they were again able to focus on their living body present in motion, to feel the authenticity of their acts and to enjoy the flow of the movements.

As a dance animateur I am not interested in transferring my own movements to my dancers, but I want the dancers to find their own way of moving. In *Katiska* most of the action, at least to some extent, is still improvisation on stage. Obviously numerous performances have established some parts of the improvisation to follow a certain pattern, movements or the order of arrangement, even if they were not consciously structured. The work is a weaving of different or even contrasting acts and styles with constant potential to evolve. The work is living its own life. Usually the canonized choreographers' style is recognizable; the movements in *Katiska* vary. Each performer has his own personal way of moving. Fundamentally dance animateuring means to encourage each individual to respect their own body and movement, respect it as it is. Shaping and training of the object body does not belong to the spirit of dance animateuring, neither for the sake of the choreography in a particular dance context nor the choreographer's personal preferences.

The most important thing in dance animateuring is the experience of shared creative process. In *Katiska* as a choreographer I did not give the dancers ready-made steps; I introduced different tasks to help the boys to produce a variety of movement improvisations. Through that process a wide range of material was generated. Then the final piece was formed in collaboration through the numerous stages of selecting and editing existing material. From a spectator's point of view Maija Saari wrote in *Aamulehti* newspaper (4.2.2008) that *Katiska* is an "Improvisation miracle" (title):

These 16–18 year old youngsters dazzle you with their free and easy expression. You too will understand the performance as an improvisation miracle when you hear that none of them has been expressing themselves in this way before last summer. ... The chemistry of the group seems immediate.

I claim that since the movements of *Katiska* dancers are created by themselves, they seem natural and well executed to the audience. In contrast, I believe that if movement patterns are given from above and especially, if they are too difficult for the dancers to execute well, it not only upset the dancers, but there is also a great risk of a performance,

which the audience cannot empathize with, and therefore it does not create an affective experience for and an effective response from the spectators. Many of those who saw *Katiska* reported that they were positively surprised at the high quality of the work. For example, one spectator commented that at first she was expecting the amateur dancers of *Katiska* to be very uneven in their skills, like the competitors in the television format *Dancing with the Stars*, but then she noticed that all the performers were equally talented:

Overall the performance was charming in its integrity and skills. Of course, it tells about the teacher-director's skills to adapt the choreography and the music to the level of the group. What they presented imported a sense of coherence act, the performers acting as a group, their willingness to take contact, to frolic and to play, and through all that to arrive at artistic expression. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

Dancing men

We do not usually imagine young men singing – other than in a rock band. Even stranger is a dancing young man (see also Lehtikoinen 2006). The audience of *Katiska* was surprised when they heard that the performers had no previous experience of dance. They could not assume that young men could have such singing and dancing skills. On the other hand young men were not believed to be interested or willing to do anything like this. I believe that what surprised many of the spectators most was the fact that the work truly touched them. We tend to draw attention to that which appears unusual, and since the performers of *Katiska* are *young men*, it clearly attracted the public's interest:

*Young men have that "something". Could you imagine five upper secondary school age girls improvising themes from their own lives and filling up the seats of the Hällä stage for four times and then have a line of boys on the edge of the stage asking for autographs? (Merja Koskiniemi 11 May 2008, *Aamulehti* newspaper review.)*

How much of *Katiska*'s attraction is based on the fact that the performers are young men dancing and singing on stage? As a director I was acutely aware right from the beginning

that working with young men would particularly arouse public interest. I believe that even the financiers and the media became interested in the project because of its participants. In the marketing of *Katiska*, too, the subheading “a piece for five young men” was intentionally and systematically used. But still it was an equally big surprise for the audience, the performers as well as us the directors that the singing and dancing boys began to create “a fan culture” around them, which we are more familiar with in the rock music scene. When we opened the doors to the theatre for school groups, screaming girls burst into the front seats. After the performance the boys had to sign their autographs for the girls. The girls seemed to transfer the culture which they have learned from rock concerts to the dance performance. There are also many spectators who have seen *Katiska* more than once.

Although *Katiska*'s unique concept aroused ample interest in advance, people were also clearly suspicious about “dancing young men”. Many people have experienced poorly executed youth theatre, where the spectator's topmost feeling is a shared sense of embarrassment. The spectators were eagerly waiting to see the performance but often with mixed feelings. They wanted to see what the boys were able to do, but on the other hand, they were also afraid that what they would see was “some average school play”. Furthermore, it seems that performances created together with young people are expected to have a “youth like” approach – this was also the case in *Katiska*. I also believe that young spectators are also often forced to watch something that they are presumed to like. Generally boys are not offered a chance to see any dance at all, or mostly they are only offered the street dance styles, and for music, something that young people listen to already anyway. The audiences of *Katiska* were surprised but pleased that the work does not confirm their expectations, either in terms of its content nor quality:

I was very impressed by Katiska. Its sensitivity, artistry, movement, music, staging, and the focus and the tremendous diversity of expression of the boys surprised me. I expected for some reason something more typical of the time, like “young people’s music and stuff”. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

I do not believe that the popularization of the arts increases the achievements of young people, or anyone's, artistic experiences. I agree with Venkula (2003, 73) that popularization is only an attempt to simplify the profound message, so that the “simple” young people can understand it in its simple form. A spectator always compares the work of art to other works she/he has seen before. At first she/he values the work specifically within the genre it

represents, but it is also possible to stretch the lines of different genres, in a way that the spectator eventually accepts and appreciates it:

Katiska is not comparable with any art form that I have seen before, rather it is a start of a whole new chapter. It is not obviously a theatrical, musical or a dance performance, but something almost just between them. (spectator, upper secondary school student, male)

It is difficult to classify *Katiska* to any specific existing art form. As a producer of the work I have spoken about it as a dance, theatre, dance theatre, multidiscipline, a combination of dance and music, or a physical theatre performance. For a formalist dancer the work may appear more like theatre than dance piece; for a practitioner of narrative theatre the work seems more dance. After all *Katiska* is categorized, predominantly, as a *dance* piece. The reason for this may be found in the fact that the funding came from the dance field. On the other hand, *Katiska* has been performed at many theatre festivals. My sources of inspiration come both from dance and theatre but also the field of film and visual arts. The actual form of artistic expression is not important for me: I may express my interests and concerns in dance, theatre, cinema or visual arts.

I also like to combine different forms of art in a single piece. *Katiska* was, too, from the outset created by combining singing and dancing. Not just the singing of the boys but also the pre-recorded instrumental music of *Katiska* was specifically composed for the work. The whole musical score has an important role in creating a strong atmosphere for the piece. It also serves to structure and carry forward the changing events of the work. The dark cello sound and the liveliness of the accordion highlight the wide range of emotions, as one of the spectators described. The music plays an important role of *supporting* the movement but also as the element *generating* the movement. The changing colours of the music strongly affect the overall atmosphere of the whole piece, but the silence of the work's soundscape also impressed the audience. In today's image and sound flood darkness and silence, which are consciously used especially at the beginning of the *Katiska* performance, may indeed provide an opportunity for people to slow down:

I liked the performance and I was particularly impressed by the power of the silence at the beginning and at the end, and a few breaks in the middle of the work. The music tied various elements of the dance together and intertwined the whole piece as one by guiding the

audience's attention to the very specific sections of the dance. The music went through various shades of human emotions and made the audience empathize with it. My favourite part of the music was the violin playing a cheerful melody that made me smile. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

The boys had not done any contemporary dance before the *Katiska* project, and during the process they were not taught dance technique either. Thus we must conclude that the importance of the whole process and the quality of final work is not based on training movement skills and managing dance technique, but rather on something else. *Katiska* does not arise from the general and the abstract idealism of dance, but rather from the celebration of the authentic bodies of the boys, and thus it also touches each spectator very personally. Of course the whole content of *Katiska*, the movement and music are largely born of the artists' own interests and strengths, both directors' and performers'. If the performers had been break dancers, for example, the movement would most obviously have been different from what it is now, as Lauri once pointed out.

The attitude of adults may be careless when doing arts projects with children and young people, but the *Katiska* project, like many other youth projects, has proved that with young people, too, we can do ambitious and artistically high-quality art. When a youth project is planned ambitiously, the whole experience of it becomes meaningful for its participants, and then also the end product can truly touch the audience as well. The essence of art can be found in its personal and social significance, which must also be found in the process of creating art. First of all, art making means expansion – it is always a journey into the unknown (see also Anttila 2003). *Katiska* clearly presented a new side of the young men, their abilities, thoughts, dreams and hopes. All were present in their personal way. Perhaps this is the very reason why the work has continued to invigorate more and more new audiences:

The dancing boys captured my heart with their dance. It was a pleasure to watch them in their diversity. Each personality was brought out in an equal and interesting way. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

Expression

It is often said that art is expressive without defining this term. Etymologically *expression* came into English in the middle of the 15th century from French, and it was defined as “action of manifesting a feeling”. Its meaning “an action or creation that expresses feelings” is from the 1620s. Expressive, which means “full of expression”, is from the late 17th century. *Katiska* was also appreciated for its highly “expressive” quality, but as Fraleigh (1987, 103) states “without expression there is no dance”. Fraleigh (1987, 101–102) perceives a twofold meaning for expression in dance. First, expression is the phenomenal element of its structure, as in all arts, as Fraleigh stresses. To *express* is an action verb, as *dance*, too, is an action verb; therefore dance is at once expression being done and expression being transferred, Fraleigh notes. Second, according to Fraleigh, expression in dance is its content. Dance as an aesthetic activity thus always has an affective content. Form and feeling, or form and expressive content, are necessarily a part of each other, thus form and feeling separated from each other, are only partial ways of looking and describing dance (Fraleigh 1987, 116). I agree with Fraleigh that this is only a shift in our attention, since the content of dance is always created in action and therefore expression works as action and content as one.

Experiencing expression happens in “the spontaneous method of perception”. Following Merleau-Ponty we can state that the spontaneous method of perception, “the living system of meanings”, makes the essence of the object immediately recognizable for us and allows the sensible properties of an art work to appear through that essence. Therefore the art work, the object “speaks” to us and is significant because it immediately “means” something. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 151.) Expression in dance does not exist on top of movement, and style is not imposed on movement, but they are both founded on it (Fraleigh 1987, 91). When experiencing art “we do not begin by knowing the perspective aspects of the thing; it is not mediated by our senses, our sensations or our perspectives; we go straight to it, and it is only in a secondary way that we become aware of the limits of our knowledge and of ourselves as knowing.” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 378.) Fraleigh (1987, 168) also notes that it is through *intuition* that the unique features of the world arise, but through analysis objects are reduced to their common elements: “Intuition is the light that floods an idea and lights our understanding, moving it from murkiness to clarity.” Dances are created and understood at first through intuition, in immediate perception, and only secondarily through analysis:

I start from unified experience and from there acquire, in a secondary way, consciousness of a unifying activity when, taking up an analytical attitude, I break up perception into qualities and sensations, and when, in order to recapture on the basis of these the object into which I was in the first place blindly thrown, I am obliged to suppose an act of synthesis which is merely the counterpart of my analysis. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 276–277.)

As a practice based researcher and as an existentialist choreographer I follow Merleau-Ponty's (2008, 384) proposal: "when I perceive, I belong, through my point of view, to the world as a whole". This is also the attitude which is needed from amateurs, when we plan projects. We do not start with a certain aim and a definite goal in our minds, but from a state where hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, tasting are central. We do not build on the bases of existing structures but surrender ourselves to senses and trust pathways that guide us to new places. Such an attitude makes us slowly to accept the fact that we do not understand "only a certain definite environment, but an infinite number of possible environments", as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 381) suggests. With Merleau-Ponty (2008, 388) we can state that "the thing and the world are mysterious. They are indeed, when we do not limit ourselves to their objective aspect, but put them back into the setting of subjectivity":

The thing and the world exist only in so far as they are experienced by me or by subjects like me, since they are both the concatenation of our perspectives, yet they transcend all perspectives because this chain is temporal and incomplete. I have the impression that the world itself lives outside me, just as absent landscapes live on beyond my visual field, and as my past was formerly lived on the earlier side of my present. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 389.)

Similarly to Merleau-Ponty, Ricoeur claims that the act of identification rests upon perceptual constants having to do not only with the form and size of an object, but with all the sensorial registers – it is our orientation towards the world. "Being-in-the-world" means that the body exists as a whole caught up in an active-passive exploration of the world. Even if we acknowledge the necessity of subjectivity, we understand that the world does also exist without our perceptions. Then we can speak of a "perceptual faith" or "confidence in the stability of things" in regards to our experiences. Thus identification takes place as long as

distortion does not make it problematic. In perception and recognition change goes hand in hand with time that passes. The perceptual faith is caught up in the dialectic of the appearing, disappearing, and reappearing of the same presumed object. (Ricoeur 2005, 63–64.)

Something appears, disappears, reappears. After some hesitation – because its appearance has changed or because a long time has elapsed – one recognizes it. It is indeed the same thing and not another. The risk here is that of making a mistake, of taking one thing for another. At this stage, what is true of things is also true of persons. The mistake is just more dramatic in the later case, identification being confronted with the threat of misrecognition. (Ricoeur 2005, 150.)

Perceptual faith works as a support for our being in the world, but in knowing we are caught up in an illusion that we are in total control of the world. Similarly in animateuring projects we have to have a faith that “something” will be born in our exploration process, even we do not know what that something will be. Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 100) argues that “thinking without understanding may be the strength of human thought, which gains its particular power from its imperfections”. Guillaume seems to relate *thinking* and *understanding* as Ricoeur does for *knowing* and *recognizing*. For Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 106) “understanding means access to the signified, which implies something different: a mental image, a sum of concrete, corporal experience, and more” which we can also identify with recognition.

The *Katiska* boys reported enjoying the expression of movement, because it was something totally new for them. The bodily expression and moving without thinking felt great. Dance is something that is *recognized* but not *known*. This is the very reason why contemporary dance is still in a marginal role in our society. This can also be easily seen in school subjects: Western tradition privileges cognitive over corporeal. Dance is something murky, it seems to live its own life, it cannot be controlled and thus it must be dangerous. The low social status of dance, its sensual nature and the difficulties of studying such a momentary event are all the reasons why dance still struggles to gain acceptance of its value and therefore also a place within formal institutional structures (Carter 1999, 2), such as in the school curriculum.

But what could be the value of this kind of vague subject as dance in the school curriculum anyway? One of the values could be found in this very *expressiveness* of dance.

Kirsi Monni (1991, 91–92) talks about *emotional vitality* in dance and suggests that *aesthetic education* means “educating for alternative emotions”. But she stresses that the importance of the arts in awakening emotions is not so much in evoking specific emotions, but rather in initiating an observant attitude towards the variety of emotions that arts as whole suggest. Fraleigh (1987, 118) also highlights the affective side of arts and claims that “we live art through the affective, through moving out toward the art work and being moved by it”. Experiencing art is a complex act of simultaneous affective moves between the work of art and its recipient, as one of *Katiska* spectator captivantly described:

The performance was also interesting as an experience. My friend and I were moved into tears by some of the scenes, not because of the scene itself but by the thoughts and the memories that it evoked. It was pretty fascinating. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

All too often art is valued on the basis of what we *understand* of it. To be more specific, if we are unable to comprehend and control the work of art in our thinking mind and to explain it in words, it must be bad. This is certainly due to our concept of knowledge: knowledge and truth are created in mental processes and expressed in words. Art often happens in such a space which we are unable to verbalize; therefore, a work of art may be difficult to explain. But at its best art may be seen as an alternative media to create a new kind of understanding. Through art practice we live and recognize the world through its endless passing moments, in its inconstancies. As Fraleigh (1987, 169) says, dance is “always ready to mold itself on the fluid imagination, the fleeting moment, and our immediate grasp of the world in our consonance with it”. This is probably the reason why the *Katiska* boys also had trouble expressing their experience of dancing in words, as also the audience often explained that they had no words to describe what they had just experienced, at least not right after the performance.

Interpretation

Even if we admit that the experience of art is always initially a direct, affective, embodied occurrence that can never be captured in its entirety with words, we can still try to understand it in a more analytical way as on an intellectual plane. We could say that because an artistic symbol is always an *expression*, an art work has always some *meaning* that can be

interpreted. We can always perform interpretation when what is expressed is not immediately comprehensible. One meaning of interpretation is “an explanation of the meaning of another’s artistic or creative work”. As well being an experience, interpretation is necessarily also subjective, yet, the significance of the phenomenon is always found in its broader cultural and historical context. We can claim that art becomes more meaningful if we relate it to our other experiences of the world.

The dance practitioner Rebecca Hilton (1999, 77), with whom I trained in Australia, believes that from “making steps” to “being a choreographer” it is about having a *context*: “I see work that is just steps; they’re pretty but they’re out of context. People try to contextualize steps by putting everyone in the same costume, or having a long piece of music turned on or doing it with lighting but it’s still not a piece, it’s just steps that are dressed up.” Borrowing also from Mika Hannula, we can say that art is always connected to a broader context which forms a background for an art work. Art is never a lonely island, according to Hannula. Without a context there are no meanings in art. Art should say something about our lives, about who we are and where we are: only if the art is able to combine a personal level to the general, only if it is simultaneously local and global, can it be something very special and significant. (Hannula, 1998, 82–83.)

Maaretta Jaukkuri also claims that the identification of an artistic symbol, be it strokes on canvas, rhythms and melodies, series of steps or organization of words, always requires a simultaneous recognition of the background, at least some understanding of the given art genre of which it is part of as well as the broader cultural, historical and social background. To be more precise, this does not mean that an art work carries one fixed meaning, but on the contrary recognition as identification is a complex process of simultaneous perceptions and interpretations. This leads to the conclusion that interpretation is an act of building bridges between individual and general distances. (Jaukkuri 1998, 11.)

Uspenski argues that a work of art, whether it is a book, a painting or another artistic creation, will always be presented in a somehow isolated world, which has its own space and time, its own ideological system and its own standards. The recipient’s relationship to the work of art is necessarily at least first as an outside spectator. Gradually we enter to its world: when we become more familiar with its principles, we begin to realize that the world of the art rather from the inside than from the outside. Then, as readers and spectators, we have reached an internal perspective on art. (Uspenski 1991, 202–203.) Sometimes the spectators of *Katiska* also expressed their struggle at first to relate to what they were seeing, but in the end, the first scenes also became more meaningful after they had seen the whole work:

At the beginning of the show the performance seemed quite strange. However, as the show progressed, I realized that the performance is a kind of the boys' life story, and without the beginning, it would not have made any sense. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

Most of the *Katiska*'s audience came perhaps for the first time to see a contemporary dance performance. The absence of verbal communication, the abstract expression through movements seemed strange to many, sometimes almost embarrassing. Even though a lot of very clearly identifiable "everyday" actions and gestures are used in *Katiska*, movements still do not necessarily manifest to all of the spectators the same way. Usually when we enjoy the expression of art we do not think about the boundaries of its conditionality. Veivo and Huttunen have come to suggest that the understanding of art is linked to the amount of understanding that we have about its conditionality. "Chances for misrecognition are twofold. First, the conditional can be received as non-contingent that is when we identify the work of art to real life. ... Similarly, the artwork can be considered 'strange' when the rules of conditionality are not understood." (Veivo & Huttunen 1999, 146–147.)

If the expressive element of art teaches us, how to handle different and even contrasting emotions, the demand for interpretation in art forces us to face the fact that the life is full of occurrences, which are not directly comprehensible and furthermore, full of uncertainties beyond our control. Sometimes people refuse to receive arts because they are not ready to give up on the control of knowing for sure, to turn into the liberty that art presents. For them the work of art is only seen as strange and unpleasant. Freire (2005, 38) argues that it is the fear of freedom which a person is not necessarily conscious of that allows him to see non-existent. He adds that such individuals are searching for security rather than exposing themselves to the dangers of liberty.

I agree with Kuusela (2005, 109) that even dance is usually seen to be more abstract than realistic; dance has different possibilities to communicate than theatre. According to Kuusela dance is easier language for use in strong statements. Dance can express emotionally while theatre has to explain its solutions verbally. There is nothing secure in dance. It was already the driving force of early modern dance to emphasize discovery value of dance through a questioning attitude rather than assuming the already established models. As Fraleigh points out, behind the inventiveness of dance is the assumption that the uniqueness of each person is valuable and thus individual creativity is also important. This is also how she explains the difference between "the classical outlook" and "the existential point of view"

through the principle of creative agency: the first draws upon qualities already given in form while the other creates “through an active struggle with freedom and responsibility stemming from an individually responsive human agency”. (Fraleigh 1987, xxxiii, xxxvi.) If a spectator was trying to find a clear storyline in *Katiska* or to interpret the abstractions of everyday actions in a concrete way, she/he struggled to “understand the intention” of a particular movement or the whole performance. She/he was trying to find a “given thing”, or in other words, to get definitive answers instead of allowing questions.

Jaukkuri points out that art is often joked about when spectators do not want to communicate with an art work or a particular work does not have anything to “say” to them right here and now. Instead of the authoritarianism of modernism, contemporary art aims to propose the practice of “living with art”. It is particularly interested in building a dialogical relation to the world of spectators. This requires of us a creative approach to art, courage to expose ourselves to the issues and experiences that it expresses. (Jaukkuri 1998, 25.) I suggest that contemporary art, in making and receiving, should never be *containment* but always *creativity*. Creativity requires originality and imagination. It means the “ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations”, as the dictionary definition describes it. It is significant to note that it is not just *the creativity of the makers* but also *the creativity of receivers of arts* as well, which is important.

Jaukkuri believes that the lack of *trust* may be one reason why the arts are perceived as “difficult”. The spectator who does not have keys to the particular form of art is hanging on the edge of recognition with a constant fear of misrecognition. On the other hand when the receiver of an art work has to reach behind the conceptual world to the experience and knowledge of the world, she/he also extends, with help of the artistic symbols, his/her concept of the whole world. The complexity of artistic experience requires trust, but Jaukkuri claims that those who dare to plunge into the world of art, receive more keys to open the symbols of arts and their ability to perceive the world also expands. The world will be a more interesting place when one can see more things. (Jaukkuri 1998, 22–23.)

The existentialist attitude to art and also to education requires not just trust from an adolescent spectator but also from the adults who take young people to see contemporary art and discuss it with them. I believe that young people themselves may be more open to try new things than adults think. Too often children and young people do not get to see art exhibitions and performances of dance or theatre because of the adults’ fear of boring them. Although adolescents do not necessarily have previous experience of seeing new forms of arts, they can still enjoy the experience and even “understand” the works. Each of us has been a novice. We

can grow into viewing, seeing, hearing, accepting and valuing art, but this again does not mean that children's or young people's response to the work of art is "wrong" or "worse" than the adults'. I therefore suggest that the world of an adult should not be the normative model which the life of a child is forced into. The practice of art can create a "playful third place", where different people can gather around to explore the diversities of the world (Pääjoki 2007, 294).

I know myself what kind of emotions the different scenes of *Katiska* arouse in me, what kind of associations they produce, but on the other hand the same scenes may invite other spectators to experience completely different things. Interpretation is born in an entanglement of many different things. Therefore, we can say that there is not only one work of art which could be fully explained, but countless and equally correct interpretations of the same work. This is probably why Hannula (1998, 85) believes that the content of art is not something that should be understood or found: "It's more like a case of an event." First, you have to provide an opportunity for art, listen to it, watch it and try to get a connection with it; after this criticality comes in: questions about what that piece of art tells you and what values it carries, according to Hannula.

When we analyse an art work our attention may be directed at many different aspects, and the art can be interpreted, or its reception, in a variety of contexts. The justification for interpretation can be taken from scientific ways to perceive the world where experience is shaped in a particular logic or framework, thus in art, we can talk, for example, about psychological, historical, sociological or feminist interpretation (Jaukkuri 1998, 8). But most of all, especially when educating new art audiences, we must remember that every person is in direct relation to a work of art through her/his lived body and then she/he interprets the art work from her/his own perspective. The gender, age, religious or ethical background of a spectator provides a foundation on which the interpretation of the work rests. Even motherhood can be a significant base for a spectator to relate to the work, as one of the *Katiska*'s spectators indicated:

Although the performers are young boys, I can recommend it for older spectators as well. As a mother of two young boys the content of the performance and the performers' expression touched me particularly deeply. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

Even if a work is presented inside a specific genre of art and has an artist-generated content, the experience of art is unique for everyone. Therefore art can be an effective tool to

broaden our conception of knowledge and truth; it helps us to understand and accept the complexity of phenomena and the whole world. Ambiguity is richness in art interpretation. Because of the unique background of each individual, the interpretations of one and same art work can be endless, and a single “correct” interpretation is neither necessary, nor even possible. An artistic experience is characterized by a kind of polarization. An experience may lead to several distinctly different emotions – which are not mutually exclusive:

The first scene where the boys are standing with their backs to the public and having the frightening masks on backs of their heads, aroused uneasiness in me. I did not know what to think. It was confusing, wonderful and strange, and in its own way, even scary.
(spectator, ninth-grader girl)

While the old forms of art risk boring us with repetition, there is always an equal risk of the new forms and inventions boring us with novelty (see also Fraleigh 1987, 105.) New forms of arts have always tried to bring us into new relations with the concept of stability in life. For example, in its time modern dance required that we should revise the stereotypical visions of grace inherited from ballet: it showed us, for instance, that grace and gravity are not antagonists (Fraleigh 1987, 100). Yet the essential aim of dance practice is in the invention of movement. Postmodern dance is not aiming to establish a specific vocabulary but rather to prepare a responsive body and to draw upon imagination and experience (Fraleigh 1987, 104–105). The security of rules that grounds the forms of classical dance is absent: new forms of dance do not create “out of nothing but *as thought there were nothing* to depend on – and everything to discover” (Fraleigh 1987, xxxiv).

Mikael also believes that it is important to find a balance between the materials, which are clear enough for the spectators but which are at the same time not too simple. He thinks that there should not be a clear storyline, but that there cannot be just abstract movements either, because then it is not possible for a spectator to get a grip on anything. When we create a new work of art we have to remember that there has to be some likeness between old works and a new work – but I also suggest that we have to strain the framework of art to its breaking point in order for something truly new to emerge. I argue that this is something that we should always remember when planning a project with and for young people. It should always offer enough familiar elements to attach to, but at the same time, we should not be afraid of offering new challenges for the participants of the project or the audience. The melodic music of *Katiska* is a familiar and safe context, which other elements can attach to. The soundscapes

that are often used in contemporary dance pieces may feel distressing for an inexperienced spectator. The monotonous mass of sound behind the abstract movement may also cause an unwanted reaction in the spectator, the whole performance may feel strange and it does not truly manage to capture the spectator's interest. *Katiska*'s melodious music, although not typical popular music for youth, offers our young audience a sense of familiarity and safety. The diversity of the overall soundscape, with its rich nuances and varying rhythms and tones, carries forward and guides the spectator through the performance, as many of the spectators reported.

As noted, it is important, especially for an artist with an educative interest, to create works of art in balance between familiarity and novelty. Sometimes, or at least on some scale, this can be achieved by pure intuition. *Katiska*'s youth audience has grown accustomed to visual expression, especially to the "computer game like" animation, which is used as part of *Katiska*'s visual image integrated with the other lighting elements. The animated projections ended up being part of the final production because at the time I happened to be teaching drama to a 15-year-old boy who was coding his own computer games. I saw some of his works on the internet and asked him to create something for *Katiska* as well. Performing arts have begun to extensively exploit the visual potential that video projections can offer. It is no longer uncommon for a contemporary dance or theatre work to run video projections as an important part of the scenery. But sometimes it feels that the projections do not serve any other purpose than embellishment. *Katiska*'s audience felt that it was important that projections operated as a meaningful and creative part of the artistic whole while "they are also the familiar element that the young audience can relate to", as one of our spectators described. Another spectator, a male upper secondary school student, pointed out that despite the impressive projections and lighting "*Katiska* does not fall into excessive use of technicality; rather the healthy spirit of vital culture was reflected strongly through all the techniques". An alert, living body on stage, together with the lighting and music which emphasize the changing moods of different scenes, make up the whole work of *Katiska*, where every little detail is important and where the new audience finds enough familiar elements to relate to but also plenty of novel suggestions to respond to.

New understanding

It is true that at the time modern dance changed the concept of dance radically. Dance was no longer movement bounded in ready-made steps and poses, but something that could be

created individually. But as Parviainen (1998, 99) points out, the modern dance techniques were also soon established as methods which were used to train new dancers; modern dance therefore lost its questioning attitude and congealed itself. Furthermore the bodies were molded to achieve the aesthetics of a choreographer's personal choreographic view. I claim that if dance only attempts to maintain its status by preserving the conventional solutions, it is in danger of losing its significance as an art form and it may easily slip into being just highly skillful entertainment. The conservative attitude and the strict rules guiding dance also reveal the ignorance towards new perspectives concerning the nature of truth.

I share the same ideology with the expressionist choreographer Anna Sokolow (as quoted in Fraleigh 1987, 110), who is not interested in creating movement for movement's sake, or art for art's sake. Contemporary dance often studies the movement potential: the focus is not therefore on *what* but rather in *how*. But the focus in my own movement practice is more on the question of *why*. I can easily use Sokolow's words to describe my own practice: "I don't want to teach Nothing – I want to open the door for Something" (Fraleigh 1987, 111). I also agree with Venkula that the effectiveness of art is not in its technical perfection (in *how* we dance), but in artists' sincerity, in which they communicate their views on truth (in *why* we dance). She suggests that the notion of quality is not *technical*, but rather *ethical* in nature. It is the loyalty to the truth which you have experienced yourself that is reflected in the quality of art work, and therefore it seems to reach the profound experience of recipients of art as well. (Venkula 2003, 64.) The audience of *Katiska* was also the most impressed by the honesty, the focus and the commitment that the boys clearly had towards the piece and the whole project.

The repetition of *falling* stands out in *Katiska*. In the process of making I was not conscious of this, but it was only later when I was studying, what was written about Pina Bausch that I started to see that perhaps the action of falling also carries a deeper, more symbolic meaning in *Katiska* as well. Heathfield (2006, 189) suggests that perhaps the repetition of falling became such a dominant figuration in the choreography of dance theatre, because of its attempt to demonstrate an individual in relation to the violent disregard of others. The dance theatre's symbolic, sacrificial body fell again and again and the others could not catch the fall, as Heathfield describes it. But the fall contained an imperative, for the social body (the audience) to recognize, remember and repair, as Heathfield further suggests. I am not so interested in the notions of *remembering* and *repairing*, since they seem to look back, but the suggestion of *recognition* interests me. I agree with Daniel Nagrin (as quoted in Fraleigh 1987, 106, 108) that "the creative person lives on the edge of the abyss, ready to fall". Therefore, as Nagrin says, being a dancer and an existentialist means "not knowing"

and “living with uncertainty, accepting the paradoxical truth that it is impossible to know”. But he soon adds that “becoming uncertain is not a negation. If people will become hesitant and less certain, they will become more compassionate and loving. Existentialists understand that they see the world from where they are; who they are makes a difference, and what they look at colors their vision. We can’t see everything. Human beings all too typically see what supports only their own identity. Being an existentialist means allowing for differences.”

The greatest challenge of art, education and art education is that we are trying to educate people into the world that we do not know yet. As Tero Autio (2007, 47; 2010, 122; see also 2002, 2006) says, we live in the middle of pluralism, difference and threats, but also in the overflow of potentials, and this is why new challenges are constantly presented to teachers and educators. If there is no longer any point in education to transfer the old forms and contents to a new generation and to keep teaching children, how to master the particular skills, to know the Truths, and produce them again according to the specific rules, what would be then the whole point of education? Maybe the shift to a new way of seeing education could be the acceptance that the world is not just something that is constituted before us, but something that we all constitute; to truly allow all the different modes of being to form the Being. In theatre and dance the learning happens in action; where fiction and fact intersect (Salmi 2001, 70–71). How do we know if something is a fact? In knowing we master the Truth, but in recognizing we acknowledge the uncertainty of things. Improvisation starts from empty expectations; it does not aim to produce ideals given beforehand. That is why I claim that with improvisation practice in educational situations, we can truly find a way to new understanding.

When I started to look back at the entire *Katiska* process and especially when I analysed the interviews which I had conducted with the boys, two things stood out. First, the boys told me how they had enjoyed being able to present themselves on stage as they really were. Secondly, the audience feedback we received was clearly important for the boys: the admiration and respect that they received was flattering, but also the fact that they could, by their singing and dancing, truly touch deeply their audience. This led me – with the great help of Ricoeur, to search for the meaning of education, not just from the question of recognition as *identification*, but even more from the concepts of *identity* and *mutuality*. In the following section, I turn to the issue of the self and to the different notions of identity, as narrative and performative, as well as to the questions of authenticity and self-recognition.

From egoistic self-esteem to reflective self-recognition

Lauri:

Somehow in the show I didn't see myself as myself. There [at the end] I returned as my public, general, self, that put on a Jokapoika-shirt, the belt buckle on the side and the collar up. There I came back to myself, even though I had been myself somehow, but like entirely, like my own clothes and... I don't know. I don't know if there was any role, but the fact that everyone was wearing the same clothes, came in as faceless soldiers wearing masks. There [at the end] everyone separated from the group, where all the five guys were wearing black, everyone wearing S-size shirts. And so, from the uniforms, everyone came back from the group to their individual state.

Lauri's description shows the constant struggle experienced when trying to define who we are, and if and when, we truly are ourselves. In everyday use *to identify* refers both 'to belong to a group' or 'to distinguish, to separate one from others'. Ricoeur (2005, 65–66) claims that "For things, to recognize them is in large part to identify them through their generic or specific features"; "people on the other hand recognize one another principally by their individual features". Lauri expresses the act of identifying, as on the one hand of *belonging* and another of *separating*, by contrasting his own everyday clothes to the black "uniform" worn by all of the *Katiska* dancers. Ricoeur also argues that in this sense "recognizing oneself" is still based on procedures of identification, but in such a way that the *self* takes the place of the *thing*. When trying to understand the concepts of sameness and individual identity we have to see the similar opposition in both of them between the same and the other, as Ricoeur adds. Ricoeur also points out that Locke gave this "relation of exclusion" its canonical form: the self is the same as itself and not another, thus in his parlance, "identity" is opposed to "diversity". (Ricoeur 2005, 151.) Lauri's words indicate that it is important for him to separate himself from the group as an individual, but at the same time he experiences difficulties in grasping the accuracy of whether he is truly himself on stage or perhaps he is playing, maybe not another character, but possibly a truth of someone else. His description also brings to the fore questions of private and public aspects of the self.

Perhaps the dancer's uniform allows the boys to step into their private selves without the fear of losing the image that they wish to sustain in their public lives.

Recognition-identification, the ability to “grasp things”, comes with the fear of “mistaking” them. The Cartesian equating of the acts of identifying and distinguishing, expressed as distinguishing the true from the false, leads us to think that mistakes are something to be avoided, to discover and to condemn. But, as Ricoeur proposes, mistakes are a relevant part of the search for the truth. Misunderstanding also shakes confidence in the capacity of things and persons to make themselves recognized. Ricoeur suggests that “an acceptance of a kind of companionship with misunderstanding, which goes with the ambiguities of an incomplete, open-ended life world, has to replace the fear of error”. (Ricoeur 2005, 256–259.) Perhaps this is the suggestion that we should keep in view when conducting identity projects, especially in practice based research. I claim that by accepting the mysterious pathways of our lives, by falling into the ambiguous space of bodily perceptions and by reflecting the flowing self in its constantly shifting surroundings we are able to halt the project of rigorous *cultivation* in the spirit of *egoistic individualism* and return to *authenticity* with *reflective self-recognition*.

This section draws on various, even contradictory, sources in order to investigate the complex concepts of both *self* and *identity*, and also how these concepts are linked to the concept of body. The *identity* refers to the *inscribed body* where social meanings are performed. I claim that the inscribed body can be investigated through performing arts and theorised with the help of critical social theorists. By contrast the *self* refers to *lived body*, to people's experiences (see Leavy 2009) and thus it cannot be understood without practising phenomenology.

Individualism

Psychology has traditionally conceptualized human identity as a stable state, which we can call “personal identity” that can be reached in its totality in adulthood, but that the identities of children and adolescents are still in their developmental phase (see Erikson 1968). What is crucial for the concept of personal identity is that it forms a more or less coherent image of what makes a person unique as an individual and different from others. Personal identity is traditionally defined as an answer to the question “who am I?” That question can be answered in numerous ways, for example with a list of personal characteristics and habits, physical or

psychological features, information about family ties and living environment. Personal identity can be understood as a *property* or set of properties (Olson 2010), where the identity is conventionally constructed based on Western dichotomies, such as male–female, adult–child, heterosexual–homosexual, good–evil and many more.

One of the scenes of *Katiska*, which was only later added to the work, is constituted by a simple action by Rasmus placing post-it notes on various parts of his body. The notes say “boy”, “tall”, “cute”, “lazy”, “Riina’s brother”, “chef”, “Noora’s boyfriend”, and so on; all together about twenty descriptions. His identity seems to be constructed by these clear definitions, but this act of labelling becomes confusing when some attributes which are relative to the previous ones, for example “small”, are added, or even normally considered to be opposite to each other, such as “straight” and “gay”, are put into the list of identifications. These qualifications highlight the fact that the attributes of people are mainly conventional, socially constructed from the outside and not “facts”. The scene suggests that even though the characterizations may sometimes be useful; since they are only agreements in a social level they are not stable and perhaps they may even be sometimes harmful. Ricoeur (1992, 21–23) suggests that what is more important on defining identity is that of what a person himself can experience and confirm as meaningful from her/his own point of view.

I claim that to accept the approach of Western dichotomies is a dangerous and oppressive way of constructing identities, looking at the other and comprehending the whole world. The atomistic but at the same time excessively generalizing trend, especially in the natural sciences, tends to ignore the unique experiences of an individual, and if someone shows some kind of incoherence in her/his identity, it is she/he who is “faulty”. Difference and incapability are treated as psychological problems of the individual. If a person does not fit into the traditional identity categories, she/he still experiences the struggle of gaining recognition on a very personal level. She/he is not worthy as such. This was also one of the reasons why one the boys, Aimo, was very impressed by the critical approach of *Katiska*, when he first saw it:

I was personally very touched by the themes of Katiska, because I have received disparaging comments about my similar interests for years.

Individualism is ideology that highlights “the moral worth of the individual”. It places the independence and self-reliance of an individual at its core. An individualist believes that she/he has the right to act in society according to her/his own interests, goals and desires

without taking the interests of society into consideration. According to individualism, in the total autonomy of a person, individual liberty is achieved, but it also comes with a burden of personal responsibility. It is the problem of an individual to take care of her/himself, to be able to perform inside society according to its norms, which are nowadays increasingly built on the structures of economy, consumption and competition. Barry Schwartz (2005) criticizes “the official dogma of all Western industrial societies”, as follows:

If we are interested in maximizing the welfare of our citizens, the way to do that is to maximize individual freedom. The reason for this is both that freedom is in and of itself good, valuable, worthwhile, essential to being human. And because if people have freedom, then each of us can act on our own to do the things that will maximize our welfare, and no one has to decide on our behalf. The way to maximize freedom is to maximize choice. ... The more choice people have, the more freedom they have, and the more freedom they have, the more welfare they have.

Usually we believe that the need for extreme individualism arises from the strict regulations that others impose on us. But interestingly Foucault (1984, 41) claims that individualism which looks “to the ‘private’ aspects of existence, to the values of personal conduct, and to the interest that people focused on themselves”, is not followed by the strengthening of public authority, “but rather a weakening of the political and social framework within which the lives of individuals used to unfold”. Perhaps the weakening of family ties also sends a tacit message of individualism to children. Children are allowed and expected to act independently earlier than before. They are no longer living under the stable guidance of their parents. At school they may also have to choose the subjects that they would like to study and so form their own learning plan independently. They are no longer growing in an integral group, but rather as individuals with all the liberty, but also all the responsibility for their survival. If a pupil is not doing well or does not like the subjects chosen, it is her/his fault alone. The pupil is the only one who is responsible for the bad choices. In extreme individualism people are left alone with all the freedom and responsibility that they have and this has led to serious suffering of many, which also Schwartz (2005) describes:

Clinical depression has exploded in the industrial world in the last generation. I believe a significant – not the only, but a significant

contributor to this explosion of depression, and also suicide, is that people have experiences that are disappointing because their standards are so high. And then when they have to explain these experiences to themselves, they think they're at fault. And so the net result is that we do better in general, objectively, and we feel worse. So let me remind you. This is the official dogma, the one that we all take to be true, and it's all false. It is not true. There's no question that some choice is better than none, but it doesn't follow from that that more choice is better than some choice. There's some magical amount. I don't know what it is. I'm pretty confident that we have long since passed the point where options improve our welfare.

Foucault (1984, 42) presents three attitudes typical of individualism that are interconnected, but according to him, neither constant nor necessary. First, there is the individualistic attitude, characterized by the value ascribed to the individual in his *singularity* and her/his *independence from the group* to which she/he belongs and the institutions to which she/he is answerable. Second, there is the positive valuation of *private life*, and third, the *intensity of the relations to self*, in which one is required to take oneself as an absolute object of knowledge and a field of action, Foucault claims. One of our young spectator's descriptions shows how important it seems to be for an adolescent to separate himself from others and to achieve independence on growing old. Childhood is considered as the time of non-personal and perhaps youth as the time of becoming "somebody":

I thought it was like childhood when they were wearing the matching clothing. Everyone was like from the same mold. But then you become an individual. Some people do not necessarily ever change their clothes. (spectator, upper secondary school student, male)

I assume that these people "who never change their clothes" are those who have not managed to find their independence, perhaps they do not know who they really are. Usually we think that people who do know who they are have high *self-esteem*. Self-esteem tells how we think of and feel about ourselves. Dictionaries define self-esteem as "a realistic respect for", or "favorable impression of oneself" but on the other hand also as "an inordinately or exaggeratedly favorable impression of oneself", and even the word "vanity" is used. Usually building learners' self-confidence and self-esteem are among the main goals in educational

practice. Ricoeur (2005, 217) also mentions these as being associated with successive models of recognition. However problems may arise when an individual is not able to evaluate her/his own abilities according to realistic relation to others, and perhaps she/he then even places her/himself in a superior position, above others.

The term *narcissism* was invented by Freud after the Greek myth about Narcissus, who was a pathologically self-centred young man who fell in love with his own reflection in a pond. In everyday usage the term narcissism refers to the personality feature of egoism, vanity, or simply selfishness. When applied to a social group we can relate it to *elitism*, a lack of concern for others. Lacan (as cited in Levin 1991, 69) draws attention to these pathologies of self-development. He claims that in the dialectic of mirroring in a child's development there is a form of social violence: the child gains an ego but loses the life of the "self". According to him, the mirroring forms on the child an egocentric identity and the "self" so formed is thus more like a pattern of socially imposed roles: an ego, rather than a growing, authentic self.

In animateuring projects we seek to make the participants become the *authors* of their lives and to have *authority* over their own actions, in other words, to be ultimately the original creators of their own narrative and also to have power to command their own lives. However the concept of authority, which is closely linked to the concepts of self-esteem as well as to individualism, all carry a great risk of turning into egotism. I find the concept of authority problematic, both if we leave the totality of authority on a person's own shoulders, but also if we give up completely on our own rights and hand over the authority to someone else. In the usage of the verb *recognize*, such as "to recognize god" and "to recognize someone as king" we can see that they contain a confirmation of 'having greater worth'. "The whole enigma of the idea of authority in this way finds itself at the heart of the lexical analysis of the term *recognition* by means of this 'having greater worth'" (Ricoeur 2005, 211).

The rise of celebrity culture provides an important challenge to the concept of recognition, if we think of its meaning as 'having greater worth'. Rock stars as well as celebrated sportsmen are the objects of intense emotional attachment and adulation among fans. The celebrities of music or sports culture are adopted as role models by young people and their lives are followed as successful, normative examples. If we become like those who are celebrated, we will also gain recognition. Gelsey Kirkland (1986) in her autobiography *Dancing on my grave* describes in detail her struggle to become a better and better ballerina. Kirkland describes not only the extreme diets that she was constantly on to match the criteria of "Balanchine ballerina" but also the attempt to become like those ballerinas who gained the respect from the field – for example Susanne Farrell, Natalia Makarova and Carla Fracci – by

emulating their appearance, make-up and even costume materials. Thus seeking recognition can also mean becoming like those admired. The same tendency can be seen in teenagers imitating their idols in the music, television or film industry. The entertainment business is even consciously using this idea to produce suitable identities for markets (see also Donze 2010). Different music genres attract specific audiences and the industry has to produce new artists to fit into the existing markets. The identities of celebrity personalities that the public media is selling to us are not accidental (Donze 2010, 48).

In one of the scenes Jere performs three characters which are familiar to all of us from popular music culture. The scene begins with an imitation of a hip-hop singer. The body posture and hand movements are easily recognizable. Next, we see movements borrowed from Michael Jackson. The famous “moon walk” and spinning are the trademarks by which the king of pop is identified. Finally we are amused by the pelvic movements of Elvis. The words and singing are recognizable, but only in combination with the movements and the overall expression is the irony of its object revealed. The music idols who are well known and admired are presented in front of us as very recognizable but at the same time as somehow comical. Through the admired characters the stereotypical image of a man is also questioned when they sing while dancing “Men do, men do, men do not sing and dance like this”. How is it possible that even if singing and dancing are not considered as “manly” activities, the most popular entertainment celebrities are still known by these very qualities? With this parody we can come to know that the identities may well be open to renegotiation. The hegemonic identities, the myth of original gender performances constituted by the dominant discourses, can be revealed and reconsidered.

Traditionally, man is presented as the principle, the subject from which the world is constructed. He is the voice with which the history of human beings is told. The man is a permanent point of reference, to which everything else, women and children, are positioned. A middle-aged female spectator was asking after seeing *Katiska*, if the man was not the absolute subject after all. She interpreted from the work that even if a man does not do something, it still can happen to him. *Katiska* proposes not only the strong and confident but also the struggling and uncertain image of a man. Varto (2003a, 170–177) argues that young men are also subordinated to adult men. Sons are fathers’ properties. They are obligated to continue the tasks of their fathers. The daughters are sent away, but the sons stay and continue the work of their fathers, as Varto describes. *Katiska* suggests that perhaps it can also be women who are demanding perfection from young men. Young female spectators of *Katiska* described an empowering experience while watching the work when they realized that young men can also experience growing pressures from society, similar to their own, as a ninth

grader girl describes: “In my opinion, the play was a story of how young men have many sides and how they are trying their best to understand and also to please the opposite sex.” Young women can see a young man seeking approval from them, from women. It is no longer just a question of women and their struggle with all the exterior expectations, but that the young men also experience these parallel feelings.

The scene, where a pre-recorded discussion of young girls is played in the background reveals the description of their “ideal man”. The idea for this scene came from the boys. They collected lists of ideal characteristics from girls they knew. The boys later mentioned that, if they were asked to write a similar list about their ideal girl, it would barely be half as long as the girls’. At the beginning of the scene the light increases and the boys are standing in their own beams of light. They have their hands covering their fronts, like football players, in the defence position. The boys bounce up and down on their toes. Their facial expressions are neutral. They are just waiting for something. The girls begin to list the properties at a fast pace with each in turn. The boys begin to make their own everyday movements: physical exercises, playing the guitar, doing their hair, driving a car. The boys with their everyday movements are easy to identify. The movements tell about their hobbies and interests. Suddenly, they begin to change places and push each other off the road. Competition among them starts to grow, and their activity is very much oriented towards the audience.

The modification of the movements, the size and the speed of their performance, their standing, sitting or lying down transforms the nature of the whole scene. The meaning and the importance of the girls’ speech is first to be found in their words, but then the overlapping of words and phrases becomes tangled. The stylized musical cacophony together with the boys’ movements accentuates the symbolic importance of the whole scene: the increasing demands of the girls create a pressuring and daunting atmosphere. The boys’ movements begin to become strange. They are making the movements at various levels and changing the tempo and the size of their moves. The girls’ voices are superimposed on each other and the pace is accelerating. The atmosphere is fraught and oppressive. The boys become robotic performers trying to implement the tasks more quickly. The cacophony of sound is supported by the action. Every movement becomes loaded with meanings – those that pass by in everyday life without notice. The scene goes on and on – but all of a sudden it stops. The boys take their shirts off and throw them on the ground, and then they throw themselves down in their own spots of light.

After the first performance season I got an idea to add a break to the scene, in which the boys stop their tasks and walk confidently to the front row of the audience, and then suddenly they start to act like puppies with barking and whining and shaking their tails and tilting their

heads. As quickly as the puppies appeared into the scene they also disappear: when the voices of the girls resume the boys return to perform their tasks. I added this little moment for the scene first purely intuitively, but now it makes me wonder if it actually adds another layer to the question of social interaction or lack of it and the complexity of the exterior demands that we face in everyday life. Girls are perhaps taught that they can claim anything and everything, and thus the list of the girls' demands is extremely long and detailed. Even if these boys are considered to be the "lucky ones" on a global scale – they are white, they are male, they live in an affluent part of the world and they are well educated – they still struggle to fulfill all the expectations that the girls impose on them. First they are trying to fulfill all the requirements; they follow in the footsteps of their heroes and they seek to find respect similar to that enjoyed by the adored ones. At least they are trying to beat the others and be the best in the eyes of their judges. But when they suddenly stop their performance and throw themselves on the floor, is it a sign of surrender or perhaps more like an indication of empowerment?

Cultivation

The "cultivation of the self", as taking care of the self, was already an ancient theme in Greek culture and took various forms. For example, the citizens of Sparta wanted to take care of themselves through physical and military training. In contrast, Socrates placed the care of oneself at the centre of the "art of existence", but he meant not seeking for riches or honour, but wanted people to focus on themselves and their souls. Throughout the history of individualism there have been different projects for this "cultivation of the self", for example in order "to make oneself vacant for oneself", "to develop oneself", "to transform oneself" or "to return to oneself". Cultivation of the self has transformed human existence into a kind of "permanent exercise", which the aphorism, "[s]pend your whole life learning how to live", which Seneca cites, aptly describes. (Foucault 1984, 43–49.)

We are also today well aware of the different exercises and various activities that we are encouraged to engage in order to take care of our bodies, as well as meditations, readings, notes and talks that are offered for us in our intellectual cultivation project. We are constantly stressed about the lack of time we have and feeling unable to control the portion of our day or our life that we should devote to this constant project of making ourselves "better", to fit into the ideal (see also Varto 2003, 138). The business of self-cultivation has developed an entire activity of speaking and writing in which the work of oneself on oneself and communication with others are linked together. Foucault (1984, 51) suggests that originally the care of the self

devoted to itself constituted, “not an exercise in solitude, but a true social practice. And it did so in several ways. It often took form within more or less institutionalized structures.” According to Foucault (1984, 53) “[t]he care of the self – or the attention one devotes to the care that others should take of themselves – appears then as an intensification of social relations.”

Foucault (1984, 54) links the care of the self also to a “soul service”, which includes the practice of exchange with the other as well as the system of reciprocal obligations. Foucault (1984, 55) also sees “educating oneself” and taking care of oneself as interconnected activities. I could also see the cultivation project living strongly within, at least in some of the *Katiska* boys; one devoting himself for praising God, and another for schooling himself as well as possible, including military service at the highest level in an involuntary draft. Foucault also mentions the care of the self’s correlation with medical thought and practice. “The increased medical involvement in the cultivation of the self appears to have been expressed through a particular and intense form of attention to the body” (Foucault 1984, 56), as we can extensively see in today’s world with the growing medical and fitness business (see also Varto 2003, 132–133). This *focus on the body* can also be seen in *Katiska*: In the scene where the boys are doing their everyday task, you can see them mimicking physical exercises as well as grooming their hair and fixing their clothing. The audience also appreciates the looks of the boys; young women especially may sigh in admiration, or even whistle, when the boys undress themselves on stage.

Foucault (1984, 64) argues that there is a clear change in our approach to the care of self, when *self-examination* is to be sought within oneself, in the relation of oneself to oneself. There is a strong belief that by escaping all the dependences and enslavements, one can ultimately respond to oneself, to find the “true self”. Foucault (1984, 67) argues that the change had much to do with the manner in which the individual needed to form himself as an ethical subject. The whole art of *self-knowledge* has developed “with precise recipes, specific forms of examination, and codified exercises” and it also has “testing procedures”, ways of measuring and confirming “the independence one is capable of with regard to everything that is not indispensable and essential” (Foucault 1984, 58). But how easy or difficult is it “to dispense with everything to which habit, opinion, education, attention to reputation, and the taste for ostentation have attached us” (Foucault 1984, 59)?

Foucault (1984, 62, 68) points out that often the purpose of self-examination, which means monitoring oneself with clearly defined tasks, is not to discover one’s own guilt, but in order to strengthen oneself, thus I would argue that it does not aim to connect with others but rather to find independence, where the rules are always ultimately defined by the individual

over her/himself. The aphorism “An unexamined life is not worth living” reveals the attitude of the labour of thought with itself as object. Self-examination is “a test of power and a guarantee of freedom. A way of always making sure that one will not become attached to that which does not come under our control. ...; it is to assess the relationship between oneself and that which is represented, so as to accept in the relation to the self only that which can depend on the subject’s free and rational choice”, according to Foucault (1984, 63–64). I would say, it is the attitude of extreme individualism.

Ricoeur (2005, 89–90) claims that the Cartesian cogito constitutes the major reason why we find the concept of self elevated to this extraordinary thematic status. This is also his explanation for the effacement of *ipseity*, the individual identity, in the dealing with its ethical autonomy. The rule of norms has replaced the thematization of actions in the practical field. Ricoeur finds a reason for this conception in Kant’s examination of the categorical imperative: “As is well known, the criterion of its categorical character lies in its universality, and this in turn lies in the capacity of the maxims of our action to pass the test of universality. But we are not told where these maxims come from.” In everyday life, also in educational institutions, the tendency seems to follow the Kantian example: I agree with Schwartz (2010) that “[i]f things aren’t going right, the first response is: let’s make more rules, let’s set up a set of detailed procedures to make sure that people will do the right thing. Give teachers scripts to follow in the classroom, so even if they don’t know what they’re doing and don’t care about the welfare of our kids, as long as they follow the scripts, our kids will get educated.”

According to Schwartz (2010) when we do our work, we often find ourselves “having to choose between doing what we think is the right thing and doing the expected thing, or the required thing, or the profitable thing.” In everyday life we may constantly experience the rules and norms coming from the outside clashing against the values and the practical insight of our own – at least I have certainly experienced this myself, and this also the reason why I have come to understand that also children and adolescents are also constantly forced under the power of adults and institutions and asked to follow the rules which are beyond their understanding and perhaps also against their values. The life world of children is not in accordance with the reality constructed by adults’ rules (see also Varto 2003, 146). This was also one of the facts that motivated me to start working with young men in the first place; to create a shared space to negotiate the reality and identities of adolescent boys in a new way.

Narrative identity

Ricoeur (1992, 2005) divides the concept of the self, or of identity, into two aspects: *ipse* and *idem*. *Ipse* identifies “who” the self is, when *idem* consists of “what” the self is. *Idem* is identity understood as sameness, as identifying the self as self despite the possible changes of the attributes of the self over time. In contrast to *idem* identity, *ipse* identity does not depend on the permanence of its existence. Even if we sense having a self over time it does not demand having something stable, the same. *Ipse* is also referred to as selfhood, something that we really are.

Following Ricoeur we can therefore state that *idem* identity alone cannot explain the whole concept of identity. Ricoeur (1992, 309) borrows Heidegger’s concept of *Dasein* and compares it to the self-reflexive self. *Dasein* is Being that is aware of, and interested in, its own Being. The being of human beings differs from the being of things. Things are situated in the world, but self-reflective *Dasein*, Being, makes its own world, it is not *in* the world but it rather *is* the world itself. The self has a structure of *Dasein*, and thus it is a constitution of interpretations of its own reflections. *Idem* identity as a stable, objective construction of self, falls to the sameness, and thus it loses the self-reflective aspect of the whole ambiguous self. *Ipse* identity is totally free from the sameness of *idem* identity. Thus I believe that a somehow coherent sense of one’s identity is only possible in the construction of *idem* and *ipse* identities together. *Ipse* brings the opportunity for change in the picture, while *idem* makes the sense of permanence possible.

Ricoeur (2005, 101) proposes the term *narrative identity* to characterize both the problem and the solution of personal identity: “It is this way that personal identity, considered as enduring over time, can be defined as a narrative identity, at the intersection of the coherence conferred by emplotment and the discordance arising from the *peripeteia* within the narrated action. In turn, the idea of narrative identity gives access to a new approach to the concept of ipseity, which, without the reference to narrative identity, is incapable of unfolding its specific dialectic, that of the relation between two sorts of identity, the immutable identity of *idem*, the same, and the changing identity of the *ipse*, the self, with its historical condition.” Ropo (2009, 141) also sees identity as a narrative construction. According to him, identity is a person’s own interpretation formed from the life history of her/himself; it is the sense of self which a person has in relation to her/his experiences in the present moment, but also in the temporal perspective of the self as projected in the future.

In a theatrical play a character is the one who carries out the action in the narrative: “The category of character is therefore also a narrative category, and its role in the story stems from the same narrative understanding as does the plot itself. The character, we can say, is him- or herself emplotted.” (Ricoeur 2005, 100.) Ricoeur claims that in *character ipse* is brought together with *idem*; recognition as identification makes possible the sense of continuity and stability in time. According to Ricoeur “character is truly the ‘what’ of the ‘who’”. He also claims that character is built through habits. A habit is formed when a set of actions is rooted into the layers of personality. Through habits I understand my *self*, the *ipse*, as *someone*, the *idem*. Therefore in habit the self and the sameness are as one. Routines, customs and habits make innovative actions become second nature to us. Ricoeur claims that actions as they appear straight away are not part of one’s identity but when they become habits, it is then that they become parts of our identity. (Ricoeur 1992, 122–123.)

Idem identity can be understood through the concept of identification, where the identity is treated as a thing and to be taken as the same even in the diversity of its occurrences. Ricoeur points out that *narrative* identity does not eliminate this kind of identity, but it must be placed in dialectical relation with *ipse* identity. *Iipseity* is the reflexive self, and Ricoeur claims that it can only totally disappear, if the person escapes any problematic of ethical identity and holds her/himself unaccountable for her/him actions. Ricoeur comes to a conclusion that the difference between *ipseity* and the identity of sameness can be found in the capacity to make *promises*. The phrase “I will do it” expresses the uncertain position of *ipseity*, as self-constancy that goes beyond the safety of sameness. (Ricoeur 2005, 89, 102–103.) The world that honour control and constancy encourages developing a sense of self that stays in the safety of sameness. If we are not able to accept the uncertainty of our self, we are not able to trust our lives in relation to others, either.

Narrative identity can be understood as a product of a process where the self is formed by the interpretation of different narratives. Narrative, emplotted identity is able to tie all the heterogeneous elements of self together into one coherent sense of self, but still the narrative sense of self is the unstable combination of lived experiences of the self and narratives also told by others. Ricoeur claims that because the nature of real life experiences is vague – it seems to elude all definition – we need narratives in order to organise our lives retrospectively. (Ricoeur 1992, 162.) It is not only by looking back that we can create narratives, but also by looking ahead, forming our lives prospectively. This is exactly the reason why we should understand that the danger and potentiality of self-recognition as narrative construction is in its ability to take the self as something or someone which she/he is not. If we do not understand the concept of identity just as a correct or incorrect description of

the self, but rather as a productive recognition of the self, it makes “becoming someone that I believe I am” possible.

This is also the reason why it is crucial to separate narratives from lived experiences. Narrative is never the same as lived experience. Ricoeur (1987, 193–206) notes that we can also tell about our experiences something that was not obvious in the experience itself. Constructing narratives is an endless task. Moreover narratives do not have to be “truthful” regarding the experience itself. Ricoeur is also skeptical about the direct interpretation of actions. Because the knowledge of ourselves, others and society is built and delivered through symbols and discourses, it is these narratives which construct our understanding of actions and not the actions themselves. Ricoeur claims that the meanings of actions do not have an absolute source to which all the narratives can be tracked. On the other hand, Ricoeur claims, that the productivity of imaginative narrative has no limits: experiences and actions can be recounted over and over again. The action cannot be reduced to one single narrative; there is no single narrative that could explain the whole truth.

Since the concept of narrative identity never eliminates the logical identity of something in general, Ricoeur (2005) talks about a *course* of identity. Ricoeur (2005, 139–140) thus suggests that the idea of recognition has a special connection to that of identity, whether it is a question of the recognition-identification of something in general or of recognition-attestation in terms of individual capacities. However Ricoeur (2005, 151) argues that the recognition of the self by the self implies more than just a replacement of the self with something in general. A human being is a speaking, acting and narrating subject: I can, I attest to it and I recognize it. Ricoeur (2005, 249–250) places narrative identity at a strategic point in the discussion of *capacities*: from the transition between “something” and “someone”, the shift can be constructed from “someone” to “oneself”, where oneself recognizes him/herself in his/her capacities. Self-recognition can therefore be found in the unfolding of the phrase “I can”, which suggests the portrait of the capable human being with its own space of meaning (Ricoeur 2005, 151).

Performative identity

The author of a work of literature usually has the choice of two options when composing narrative: she/he can build events or descriptions of characters using a subjective perspective, or she/he can describe the events as objectively as possible. Both of these two techniques and combinations of them are possible. In cases where the

author's approach is based on the individual's consciousness or her/his perception of the world, Uspenski is talking about a psychological perspective. (Uspenski 1991, 125.) He argues that the psychological perspective is important in all other literary genres, except drama. As a text, a play includes dialogue, direct speech and some of the author's comments. When directed on stage the play is formed only by the activities of characters and their speech, in other words their objective behaviour. The characters' internal state can be imagined only through how they behave. The subjective elements which form the characters' inside point of view can be expressed only by staging them as something which is objectively achievable, seen from outside. Therefore we can say that the subjective and objective levels of the performance therefore merge together. (Uspenski 1991, 149.)

Aristotle (Aristoteles 1994, 23–24) also argues that tragedy mimics life through the *action* of its characters rather than telling. Tragedy is no imitation of people, but the action and the imitation of life itself. As Aristotle points out, *life is action*: the aim of tragedy is thus to *do* something, and not *be* something. The purpose of action in tragedy is not to imitate the characters; the characters are rather born of action. Therefore I claim that neither real life people nor their identities can only be understood and constructed solely through narratives. Ricoeur (2005, 96, 99) also concedes that the phrase *I can* also has to do with action itself, not just speaking of it: the capacity of the acting subject makes events happen in the physical and social environment. He adds that “making something happen”, the subject can recognize her/himself as the “cause”, in the statement: “I did it”. This is why I would suggest that we should also speak of the *performative* aspect of identity and not just the narrative. I agree with Merleau-Ponty that I can accomplish the cogito and have guarantee of genuinely willing, loving or believing, provided that in the first place I actually do will, love or believe, and thus accomplish my own existence. Action is the violent transition from what I have to what I aim to have, from what I am to what I intend to be. ”I make my reality and find myself only in the act”, or in other words, I am sure about the thought of love or will “because I *perform* them”. (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 445.)

In his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* Erving Goffman (1959) explores the realm of human behaviour in social situations and the way they appear to others. He uses the metaphor of theatrical performance as a framework and discusses the social techniques that people apply in order to guide and control the impression they give and to sustain their performance. For Goffman our performance always happens publicly. He claims that there is also a private place, usually our home, where we do not have to sustain our public performance. The philosopher and feminist theorist Judith Butler uses the idea of performativity in a slightly different way.

In her book *Gender Trouble* (1990) Butler states that gender is not something that we *have*, but rather something that we *perform*. According to Butler (1990, 25), who again refers to Nietzsche, “there is no ‘being’ behind doing, effecting, becoming; ‘doer’ is merely a fiction added to the deed – the deed is everything”. Her idea of identity is that it is a complex, free floating thing and thus not reducible to a pure “core”, but instead to a performance. Seen in this way, identity is a “repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts ... to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being” (Butler 1990, 33). According to Butler, but also to Ricoeur and many others, our identities are always produced in social practices, discourses and institutions by our repeating generalized rules and norms. Butler states that performativity of our identity is only possible because there are culturally established sets of gestures that are imitable and repeatable. There is a set of norms that are adoptable and usually attached to a particular gender. What makes Butler’s theory especially radical is that she does not expect a specific sex behind a gender, but claims that both gender and sex are always performed.

Ricoeur (2005, 137) also notes that representations are not just abstract ideas floating in autonomous space, but symbolic negotiations causal to the instituting of the social bond: “What they symbolize is identities that confer a particular configuration on these social bonds as they are formed.” Ricoeur quotes Lepetit, who has said that “social identities or social ties have uses, not a nature”. Habits and social rules supply bodies with culturally accepted practices of social life and the norms of femininity and masculinity: “through the organization and regulation of the time, space and movements of our daily lives, our bodies are trained, shaped and impressed with the stamp of prevailing historical forms of selfhood, desire, masculinity, femininity” (Jaggar and Bordo 1989, 14.)

We can link Butler’s feminist and queer theoretic approach with the phenomenological idea of the body, because, for example, Merleau-Ponty (2008, 197–198) abandons the idea of identity as a stable “essence” and claims that “Everything in man is a necessity. ... On the other hand everything in man is contingency in the sense that this human manner of existence is not guaranteed to every human child through some essence acquired at birth, and in the sense that it must be constantly reforged in him through the hazards encountered by objective body. Man is a historical idea and not a natural species.”

In her other book *Bodies that Matter* (1993) Butler went back to the concept of sex and especially to the problem of its materiality. She wanted to work out how a norm actually materializes a body; how we might understand the materiality of the body to be not only invested with a norm, but in some sense outlined by a norm. Butler does not deny certain kinds of biological differences, but she rather critically poses a question: under what

conditions do certain biological differences become the relevant characteristics of sex. As one example of performativity Butler gives drag. When Butler (1990, 137) says gender is like a drag, she means that drag “reveals the imitative structure of gender”. I agree with Butler that there are restrictions in drag. In my understanding drag still takes the given sex as normative even though it plays with the gender performances by turning the conservative roles the other way around.

Butler (1993) links questions of gender and sex to the norm of heterosexuality: she criticizes the view that there is a certain kind of “coherent gender” which requires compulsory heterosexuality. Sexual liberty is one of the growing issues considering the question of liberty. In discussing sexual liberty, I agree with Butler that it is important to remember that all norms of sexual activity have been negotiated in certain places at certain times. I follow Merleau-Ponty (2008, 196) and claim that sexuality should not, any more than the body in general, be regarded as arbitrary. “All that we are, we are on the basis of a *de facto* situation which we appropriate to ourselves and which we ceaselessly transform by a sort of *escape* which is never an unconditioned freedom. There is no explanation of sexuality which reduces it to anything other than itself, for it is already something other than itself, and indeed, if we like, our whole being.” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 198.)

Katiska spectators were surprised but also pleased that we had the “courage” to handle sexuality in our work. This was seen especially in the war scene and its progression where the invisible weaponry converted from normal to strange. In the scene the boys shoot with their elbows, knees, fingers and mouths, and from there the weapons alter again almost unnoticeably into unconventional, or are commonly interpreted as sexual. Someone is using his anus as a cannon; the other is making gestures of masturbation and at the same time imitating the sound of a machine gun. The boys contact each other, but the male genitals, or the weapons, are also targeted at the audience. The interesting thing is that the boys do not only perform gestures that are related to male sexuality, but the performance of female acts is also discernible. The boys shoot with their imaginary female breasts and lift the weight of the breasts over their shoulders. Someone is also clearly referring to the gesture of clitoris stimulation. This suggests that the movements are clearly not intended to reflect the boy behaviour in normative reality, but the imaginary is rather borrowed from pornographic media, and thus the whole scene sees also to question the whole performative side of our sexuality.

Sexuality is dramatic because we commit our whole personal life to it (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 198). Merleau-Ponty (2008, 182–183) argues that sexuality is not an autonomous cycle, but that it is connected to our whole active and cognitive being. Merleau-Ponty also suggests

that “a man’s sexual history provides a key to his life, it is because in his sexuality is projected his manner of being towards the world, that is, towards time and other men”. That is why it is also impossible to ascertain if the given act is ‘sexual’ or ‘not-sexual’ and what the proportion of sexual is to other motivations. It can be said that there is interfusion between *sexuality* and *existence*. I therefore also believe that we cannot investigate the question of identity without also considering its connections to notions of sexuality.

Foucault also argues that all the historical modifications of sexual ethics can be seen as the matter of existence that circles around the question of the self, “of its dependence and independence, of its universal form and of the connection it can and should establish with others, of the procedures by which it exerts its control over itself, and of the way in which it can be establish a complete supremacy over itself”. Problematization and fear often go hand in hand. A certain style of sexual behaviour is thus suggested by this whole movement of moral, medical, and philosophical reflection. (Foucault 1984, 238–239.) Sexual ethics requires, still and always, that the individual obey the rules of a certain way of living which defines the whole ethical field of existence (Foucault 1984, 67).

The boys’ gestures of masturbation surprised and even horrified the audience of *Katiska*. Sexual acts, masturbation even more so, are considered, if not totally forbidden, at least a decidedly private matter. Foucault (1984, 140) notes that in antiquity the Greeks and Romans considered masturbation to be a positive act, a “natural elimination, which has the value both of a philosophical lesson and a necessary remedy”; but in contrast “in the Western literature – beginning with Christian monasticism – masturbation remains associated with the chimera of the imagination and its dangers.” Masturbation has since then been more or less regarded as unnatural pleasure. Foucault (1984, 143) sees analogies between Christian ethics and medical history: the need for a rigorous mastery of desires and a disallowance of pleasure as the goal of sexual intercourse.

The sexual act appears to have been long regarded as dangerous and as difficult to master, and thus a precise codification of its acceptable practice has been required for quite some time (Foucault 1984, 237). It is heterosexual marriage that seems to hold “a monopoly of pleasure” (Foucault 1984, 176). Homosexuality troubles the normative form of love and the whole modality of relation to one self, to others, and to truth, when we see it as a taste, a practice or a preference, which may have its tradition, but which is incapable of defining a style of living and conforming to the accepted behaviour (Foucault 1984, 192).

Homosexuality is experienced for many as probably the most disconnecting matter of one’s identity compared to the majority, to the “norm”. Adolescence is typically considered a time for self discovery. The self is mirrored in others: it is important to belong to a group, to

fit in, but also to find one's own uniqueness. Even small details in appearance signal membership of a particular group. The *Katiska* boys also often talked about, how, and if at all, they would fit into the norm and into the ideal image of a man. Some of them described being bullied by other children when they were younger, for various reasons; hairstyle, weight, unusual interests. Not only sexuality, but also the whole idea of gender has historically and culturally defined forms of acceptable behaviour. Traditionally gender has been understood as a fixed feature of identity, attached to the biological concept of sex. Finnish language does not even make a difference between 'sex' and 'gender', they are both called "sukupuoli". The critical attitude of conservatism towards feminism and queer movement tells about the demand for normative gender behaviour and its desire to maintain, or preserve, the existing social order.

I follow Butler (1994) and claim that artistic works that challenge our established practices of seeing ourselves and others and those that make us uncertain about how to interpret gendered gestures, and help us to renegotiate them, are important. I agree with Butler that even if some people say that "we need a ground from which to act", what we really need is "to pursue the moments of degrounding, when we're standing in two different places at once; or we don't know exactly where we're standing; or when we've produced an aesthetic practice that shakes the ground. That's where resistance to recuperation happens. It's like a breaking through to a new set of paradigms."

The spectral self

If a person does not recognize itself, we move from misunderstanding to "self-deception": "the mistake then is to mis-take oneself, to take oneself for what one is not" (Ricoeur 2005, 257). "We do not mistake ourselves without also being mistaken about others and our relations with them", or in other words, "what touches our personal identity also affects the whole fabric of our relations with others" (Ricoeur 2005, 257). I argue that this is why dividing the concept of identity into *personal* and *social*, can be misleading. In contrast, the terms *narrative* and *performative* identity include not just the idea of a human being as speaking, acting and narrating, but also as an interacting being: to *narrate* and to *perform* presuppose reception.

Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 31) argues that "all communication relies on its opposite and on the separation of beings. That is why communication thrives on all forms of distancing, strangeness, and all the risks of miscomprehension and

misunderstanding.” Today’s world is like a giant collage filled with incoherency and contradictory signs where we learn to engage in communication: “we have to manage signs, manage roles and manage relationships with unfamiliar people, strangers with whom we have to share or make exchanges” (Guillaume in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 29–30). Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 28) calls this kind of new form of communicability, the mode of being and exchanging, *spectral*: “Today, we are truly in a world of multiple networks giving rise to a new form of sociality that has nothing to do with the unrest of groups in fusion. This sociality can no longer be represented by traditional media and therefore cannot be disarmed or denounced by it as some elements of the traditional community once were. It is a form of communicability that causes us to break with the nostalgia of community, with the traditional dialectic of the individual and the community.” Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 29) argues that *spectrality* spreads in mass consumption because it allows a disconnection between social reality and social roles.

I argue that this kind of spectrality, that the consumption culture has made possible, has not only radically changed our relations to others but also the relationships that we have with ourselves, with our living bodies. The relations have become more manageable, they can be selected and controlled, and so can my body and my identity. I agree with Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 30) that the network of communications is diverse: “their intensity varies and they are sometimes weak or transitory; they offer the possibility to disconnect, to be alone. Like a city, the network of communications offers a multiplicity of connections, the possibility to plug in or unplug.” The network of urban and technological connections makes the construction of identities take place in a new space. I can detach myself from my lived body experiences by constructing new suitable identities for myself. I can shape my object body to match the image that I believe I should be or I can create online identities that serve my diverse purposes in various venues.

I claim that the phenomenological concept of the self, the ambiguous nature of the lived body, differs from the idea of spectrality. As Merleau-Ponty (2008, 403–404) argues “I am never quite at one with myself”, because what I understand is never exactly the same as my living experience, or to put it in other words “I can never be sure of reaching a fuller understanding of my past than it had of itself at the time I lived through it”. Even if I only have the evidence of my past as present testimony and “I know myself only in my inherence in time and in the world, that is, I know myself only in ambiguity” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 402); thus at the time of living experience I have a sense of self as the one experiencing. But in contrast, the spectral identity is a construction where “a plurality of positions, functions and interferences overtake the identified subject and disperse it” (Guillaume in Baudrillard &

Guillaume 2008, 40). I am my self, my body and thus at home with my embodied self, but I claim that the constructed, consumed, spectral identities are like makeup that covers up the embodied sense of self. I agree with Guillaume (in Baudrillard & Guillaume 2008, 40) who argues that “the excess of individualism or narcissism that people decry today is a compensation or a staging that helps the subject resist its dispersion, through the meditations in which it engages and that traverse it, to help it maintain an appearance of unity.”

Ricoeur (2005, 65) notes that the “lived experience proposes an example of the threatening aspect that attaches both to change and to time that passes”. According to Ricoeur it is this aspect that gives recognition an emotional dimension. *Growing* old has a positive emblematic value for Ricoeur (2005, 66), but in today’s world ageing seems to attract more negative associations, which Varto (2003, 136) links to our fear of death. This had led us to purchase new bodies and identities, which are constructed according to the rule of young and successful, ideal, which is not innate but rather *sold* to us. Varto (2003, 120) describes this kind of identity as a place where you no longer meet anyone, not even your self. It is the space of spectrality. Venkula (2003, 47) talks about *the reality in practice* and *the reality in consuming* which hold opposing views in the way that the first one demands people to play active parts in their own lives; as in the latter people are only spectators and consumers in it. I believe that art can offer an opportunity for people to truly engage with their temporal self by actively participating, practising and reflecting their own lives. In memory and promise the temporality of self unfolds in the directions of past and future (Ricoeur 2005, 250); in contrast the constructed identity holds on to the sameness, it is an armour built against the attacks of time.

Temporality and spatiality

The self is a temporal concept with its dimensions of past, present and future. According to Ricoeur (2005, 109) “[i]n memory and promises, the problematic of self-recognition reaches two high points simultaneously. The one is turned towards the past, the other toward the future. But they need to be considered together within the living present of self-recognition.” Ricoeur (2005, 110) argues that with memory the principal emphasis falls on sameness. By reflection we are able to create a coherent narrative of our selves. Ricoeur (2005, 122–123) argues that the sameness of reflection and of memory finds its opposite in the promise, “the paradigm of an ipseity irreducible to sameness”. But as Levin (1991, 77) points out, it is not only promise, but the whole concept of time, which is intersubjective. He argues that

temporality in the phenomenological sense “refutes the claim that the psyche can only reflect old images. What the phenomenology shows is, on the contrary, how reflection can generate new images. Reflection affects this because of its embodied intersubjectivity; the psyche can always of course conjure up its own images; but it can also form images in response to what it sees reflected in the gaze of the other.”

Both memory and promise are affected by the threat of something negative: forgetting for memory and betrayal for promises, but as Ricoeur (2005, 110) points out, “their opposite is part of their meaning: to remember is to not forget; to keep one’s promise is not to break it”. Trustworthiness is common both to promise and to testimony, but as Ricoeur (2005, 130–131) claims, they are not complete until they are not only received, but also accepted. Ricoeur (2005, 133) warns that “the kind of self-mastery that the glory of ipseity seems to proclaim turns to be a snare, one that risks conferring on promise making the same kind of claim to mastering meaning”. Following both Ricoeur and Levin, the *ipseity*, the reflective self, belonging both to memory and promise, has an intersubjective dimension; it is always also confronted with an external diversity made up of human plurality.

Memory, which turns towards the past, is retrospective and promise turned towards the future is prospective. The opposition and complementary of memory and promise give temporal breadth to self-recognition, founded on both a life history and commitments to long-term future. (Ricoeur 2005, 127.) I would argue that it is not just our memories and promises, but also the whole complex weaving of our dreams, hopes and fantasies that form the temporal, and also spatial, field of the self, as one of the *Katiska* boys, Valtteri, beautifully describes it in the following sample.

According to Valtteri in the *life path* scene he wanted to do something different from what the other boys did. When we were improvising the scene for the first time, I asked the boys to simply express their life paths with movement. It seemed that all of the boys started their pathway from their birth, but Valtteri did it other way around:

I first died and then I started to go forward slowly, and then it gets faster and faster. Then there was middle-age and then finally, kind of, childhood, which was in its way, but I always, after all, stayed in adulthood. I don't know... I had some kind of fantasy play going on there. Well, how could I say it... When I was doing the life path, I was thinking of myself as a warrior, as a warrior who has died, but like going back from death but like kind of forward anyway, in a kind of interesting way [laughing].

I asked Valtteri to describe his transition from the *life path* to the *war* scene. Interestingly he talked about himself here in the third person, as he was actually not him *self* at all in the scene. It appears from Valtteri's descriptions that he is well aware of the others and what they are doing in the scene, and that he wants to be separate from the group by doing something different from what the others are doing:

It bothered me that there was too much of that 'struggling to get up' actions, so I thought that, if the others are doing that, then I will just straight away jump up. And then immediately he jumped into another world. And then with someone, who ever she/he is, he walks holding hands and collecting leaves and appreciating them [makes the gesture]. And then at the end, when he goes to the edge of the stage, he places them on the ground [makes the gesture], and then the war begins.

But fascinatingly he then reflects if he himself actually is this "warrior": "I like all kind of fantasy worlds and those kinds of things, so I guess I would like to be in that kind of world, or I guess *he is then me*." Perhaps stating that this scene is important for him and that he is pleased that it was retained in the final work as well he adds: "From the beginning when we were improvising the life path I already had that scene there."

I asked Valtteri to describe "the other world" more:

I don't know, there were lots of leaves [laughing]! It was kind of, if you think of a warm summer day, a small trail, a thick forest or bushes around you and a very long road and a feeling that you could walk along it forever and collect the leaves.

I asked if it feels good to go to that kind of world and Valtteri replied:

Yes [laughing]. At least I would change the pollution, and all of that, in today's world to something else, to live a better life. Or I don't know better, but different.

Valtteri opened up his horizon to the global issues of climate change and reflected his place and future, or perhaps dreams, in the world.

Then we moved on to the war scene:

Well, it was kind of fun. Mainly it reminded me of my childhood, when I have played [outdoor] war games and then towards the present, when I have played all kinds of [computer] war games and all. So when you mixed them together, you got your whole life there.

I asked Valtteri if he remembered whose idea it was to change the weapons from normal to strange as the scene evolves: “I believe it was mine. I was pointing at Rasse [Rasmus] with my feet and there I guess it started from there.” Valtteri reveals that it was actually his big brother’s friend’s idea and for some reason it just came into his mind, or rather *into his body*, from his childhood when we were improvising the war scene. We did not actively search for material from the boys’ childhood, but rather the body memory was activated by the improvisation practice. This example shows how “the part played by the body in memory is comprehensible only if memory is, not only the constituting consciousness of the past, but an effort to reopen time on the basis of the implications contained in the present, and if the body, ..., is the medium of our communication with time as well as with space” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 210).

Ricoeur (2005, 125) argues that recognition is the effective resolution of this mystery of the presence of something that is absent – thanks to the certitude that accompanies it. He continues: “Something had to remain of the first impression for me to remember it now. If a memory returns, it is because I have not lost it. If, in spite of everything, I rediscover and recognize it, it is because its image has survived.” Therefore to recognize a memory is actually to *rediscover* it, which means believing in it as existing in principle, even if it is not directly accessible (Ricoeur 2005, 126). “Every trace, in effect, is in the present. And the trace will always depend on the thought that interprets it, that takes it as a trace of – ...; in other words, the trace bears the paradoxical character of being the effect of some initial impulse, of which it will be at the same time a sign; an effect that is a sign of its cause – this is the enigma of the trace.” (Ricoeur 2005, 112.)

The war scene in *Katiska* is probably one of the most obvious examples of temporal complexity as already seen in Valtteri’s description, but it also shows the temporal changes in the boys’ identities during the whole *Katiska* project. The war scene was created in improvisation practice. We started with voice improvisation and then added movement to it.

After that the realistic representation of acts and gestures of war started to transform spontaneously. The final scene is performed as structured improvisations. In the war game scene in *Katiska* the boys replicate an incredibly wide variety of sounds. In the first performance season the audience was captivated by the talent of the boys to imitate the soundscapes of computer games and movies, and their ability to create true and brutal imaginary by combining their voices with the highly demanding physicality. In the background a simple war game animation is projected and when the action accelerates it causes the computer to “crash” and all different kinds of texts familiar to us from the computer world appear on screen. The glimpse recognizable from social media, but also pornographic material can be related to the scrolling file names. The content of the video was created by a 14- year-old boy together with the performers, and thus truly reflects the social reality of these young men. The whole scene abounds in information: video, sound and movement. It is impossible for an audience to absorb all of this. The flood of compressed material is disarming; a spectator does not know whether to laugh or to be horrified. But the world presented is recognizable – at least by most of our youthful audience.

During the three years that we have performed *Katiska*, all the boys completed their compulsory military, or one of them civil, service. From the game like imitation, which was often performed in English, the improvisation on stage has shifted, boy after boy, towards real military actions and commands, performed in Finnish. The journey from the outdoor games of childhood, along with the world of computers, travelled in the living bodies of the boys to military service as part of the reality of their adult lives. The bodily practice in the spirit of improvisation invites the open ended investigation of temporal and spatial identity.

In the phenomenological sense the concept of identity is understood as complex and constantly shifting phenomena. Identity never happens in an empty space, but always in close and unsettled interaction with other people as well as in economic, political, historical and social reality. The basic element of the whole of being can be thus found in its temporal existent and revelation in action. We should also remember that the experiences do not originate causally or linearly, but that they are formed by the elements residing in previous, as well as following experiences, as also seen in the examples of *Katiska*'s improvisational practice. The practice, which leads us to understand how the narrative, performative and spectral characters of our identities are formed, also helps us to question the hegemonic norms and to critically evaluate the virtual identities that are constantly sold to us. Most of all such practice initiates a reflective process, where the self is reunited with its living experiences, implying that the self belongs to the world and also *how* it belongs to it.

Authenticity

I often asked myself, if *Katiska* really investigates the selves and identities of the boys or if it in fact reveals and investigates the male stereotypes which seem to be reproduced in our society. Perhaps we cannot investigate “true self” without also bringing to the fore the questions of social structures. Perhaps by doing so in *Katiska* we managed to let something unthinkable, something that someone can call “more authentic”, or “true self”, creep in by shaking the existing structures and by unwrapping the existing social narrative and performative weavings. With the help of the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty and Ricoeur as well as with the feminist thinker Butler, I can now understand that this is exactly what we have done: by bringing the living bodies of the boys on stage we have both revealed and renegotiated the *performed* identities of men.

But what do we mean by the concept of “authentic self”? Mikael believed that the best thing in the whole *Katiska* project was for him the opportunity to appear as his *true self* and not as some character, as in most theatrical performances, where performers must take another role and to be something that they are not. He enjoyed truly being himself on stage, and the fact that his friends also commented that they could recognize him playing the piano and computer games and also showing his other hobbies. Mikael felt that it was great that even if *Katiska* is a performance, he could present his true self, and he did not have to play anything or anyone.

Butoh is a dance form created by Hijikata Tatsumi in Japan during the years following World War II. It aims to experience the self in its true Being. Thus *butoh* is not a syntactical arrangement of movements, but “an exploration and an assertion of – and a reinsertion into – the depths of the body itself” (Leavitt 2004). Hijikata has also said that dance is not a matter of performance, of masque. But is not dancing for an audience not always performing? And on the other hand, when acting, can the actor ever be just as that character on stage? The performing is always present as an embodied being; hence total separation from your self is impossible. But on the other hand, can the actor ever be completely her/him on stage either? What does it mean to be “true self”?

Levin (1991, 69) criticizes Lacan, who seems to perceive dialogue between people as something negative, likewise Dews, who states “identity can never be anything other than the suppression of difference”. In contrast, Levin concurs with Merleau-Ponty, who acknowledges the negative of dialectic but also the positive. Merleau-Ponty (as cited in Levin 1991, 70) argues that “there is fundamental narcissism in all vision”. According to him narcissism is “not to see in the outside, as the others see it, the contour of the body one

inhabits, but especially to be seen by the outside, to exist within it, . . . , so that the seer and the visible reciprocate one another and we no longer know which sees and which is seen.” In other words, in seeing the other I am still seeing myself. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 505) also argues that “I never am completely for myself”. “I am a psychological and historical structure, and have received, with existence, a manner of existing, a style. All my actions and thoughts stand in a relationship to this structure.” (Merleau Ponty 2008, 529.) The self can never be cut off from the others or its surroundings. Accordingly, forming an identity inseparable from others is likewise impossible. For example, Merleau-Ponty (2008, 506) claims that temperament only exists for the second order knowledge gained about the self when seen as others sees her/him. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 530) cites Antoine de Saint-Exupéry:

Your act is you... You give yourself in exchange... Your significance shows itself, effulgent. It is your duty, your hatred, your love, your steadfastness, your ingenuity... Man is but a network of relationships, and these alone matter to him.

Teemu Mäki (2007, 239) also suggests that a person does not have a stable “true being” which should be protected or revealed. He describes a human being beautifully as something that is not a plum with a rock or seed of soul inside it, but rather as onion, of which none of its layers is the “correct one”. Or in Merleau-Ponty’s (2008, 527) words: “to be born is both to be born of the world and to be born into the world”. It means that the self and the world are already constituted, but also never completely constituted, as Husserl says (also quoted in Ricoeur 2005, 60). “In the first case we are acted upon the world, in the second we are open to an infinite number of possibilities”, as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 527) adds.

I tried to find and preserve the authenticity of the boys’ movement by offering them open improvisation exercises, and also obtaining the option for improvisation on stage. The dictionary definition for the word *authentic* is ‘genuine’, ‘conforming to truth or reality’; ‘trustworthy’, ‘reliable’. In existentialist art the question is very much one of authenticity. An honest and genuine man on stage is more interesting than an actor hiding behind mannerisms. I often invite my performers “to be real, and not to perform anything”. Can the action, however, ever be real, or is it always presented; just as Butler claims that we do not have the core of our identity, but we rather perform it? Actions are presented on stage are, if not always, at least in most cases, arranged actions. Those moments, when someone makes a mistake or something else unexpected happens on stage, are delicious – the performer is present at his most genuine. Mistakes and surprises can therefore be seen as challenges and

new opportunities. Some of the most affective and discussed scenes of *Katiska* were born accidentally, either in rehearsal or after several performances. The work must stay alive in order to maintain its authenticity. I argue that the most authentic cannot be found somewhere hidden and protected, as an untouchable core, but rather *right here* before our very eyes seeing and seen, hearing and heard, touching and touched (see also Merleau-Ponty 2006, 18), in the Being.

The spectators' made multiple interpretations of the scene where the performers change their clothes, but what was common to all of them was some kind of idea of *change*. Therefore the act of changing clothes on stage, instead of behind the scenes, underscores the transformation from the faceless mass to separate individuals or from stereotypical image to the broad spectrum of possible representations. The spectators seemed to think of the work precisely as the presentation of the "mind" of young men, and perhaps as a "more real" portrayal than just the stereotypical image of men and masculinity. The essence of the person, perhaps even something about the true self is manifested in action, in the movements of the boys. Spectators interpreted the work to present the emotions of young men, even though they are not verbally articulated. The emotions are mediated through their body and movement – but also strongly through music and other soundscape. The identity is revealed in performative action.

They changed into matching clothes, and there starts the journey into the mind of men. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

Capacity, freedom and responsibility

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 525) argues that "we are always doomed to express something" – "just as silence is still a modality of the world of sound". We cannot escape from our body, because we are our body, but at the same time our body is always a performance, if we follow Butler's insight. It is some kind of imitation of and for someone else. We can never be free from "anything", but still and for some reason we are constantly trying to find our freedom. I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2008, 528) that our freedom is never total, but neither is it non-existent, and thus "there is never freedom without some power". Formalist dance seeks to find freedom in skill while Western dance existentialists are trying to find it in improvisation. A ballet dancer trains the given technique and the style of expression as long as it takes to inculcate them into her body as a habit. The work of an existentialist artist does not rely on existing

techniques and structures, but is rather, which Merleau-Ponty (2008, 517–518) compares to the revolutionary movement, “an intention which itself creates its instruments and its means of expression”.

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 507–508) argues that if our freedom is the same in all our actions, it cannot be held that there is such a thing as free action, freedom being anterior to all actions. In contrast Merleau-Ponty suggests that “there is free choice only if freedom comes into play in its decision, and posits the situation chosen as a situation of freedom”. Merleau-Ponty (2008, 511–512) also stresses that experiences do not have an origin outside me, but they rather reflect my attitude towards the world. Hence I am unable to find a limit to my freedom outside myself or as Merleau-Ponty says: “there are no obstacles in themselves, but the self which qualifies them as such”. Because our freedom rests on our being in a situation, and is in fact itself a situation, as Merleau-Ponty argues (2008, 190), the questions of *freedom*, *commitment* and *choice* are always intertwined both with our bodily, and on the other hand, our institutional data of our lives. There is “never determinism and never absolute choice”, because I am never just a thing, or on the other hand, just bare consciousness, as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 527) clarifies. Freire (2005, 48) also claims that “[f]reedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion.”

The *Katiska* project started from emancipatory interest. It aimed to help young men to free themselves from dominating forces which control their actions and identity construction. The project sought to encourage young people to take more active role in their own lives. The process of *liberation* aimed to hand over the *authority* or *agency* of action to the boys themselves. An “author” is “a maker, creator or originator of something”; the one who holds the power over the action. In linguistics, a grammatical “agent” is the cause or initiator of an event, usually the subject of a sentence. In philosophy the “agent” is the one capable of action; “a person or thing that acts or has the power to act”.

Oedipus is used as the classical example of a character with a *centre of agency*. First Oedipus acts unintentionally, and it is only retrospectively, that he recognizes himself as the agent of, and thus also his *responsibility* for, his own actions (Ricoeur 2005, 76–79). Aristotle (1994, 35–36) in *Poetics* points to the two linked categories of *peripeteia*, first in the sense of a reversal in the action as regards knowing, and second, recognition, defined as a transition from ignorance to knowledge. Consequently Ricoeur suggests that Aristotle can be taken as the creator of the concept of a moral theory, as a discipline distinct from metaphysics, physics, and even on politics. If every action and choice is thought to aim at some good as its end, what is the highest good that can be the last aim of all human action? It is commonly

agreed that it is *happiness*. Ricoeur (2005, 80–81) suggests that when we agree that happiness has its source in us, in our activities and choices, and not in luck or godly favours, we can link it to the concept of *self-recognition*.

Thus *liberty*, according to Merleau-Ponty (2008, 508), and the *recognition of responsibility*, according to Ricoeur (2005, 83), find their guiding concept in *decision*. There is a difference if someone is doing something “willingly” or “in spite of oneself” (see also Ricoeur 2005, 83–84). As Ricoeur (2005, 85) argues, the object of deliberations is the means and not the ends, therefore I argue that dance education which only teaches children to repeat correct movements and existing style, in order to achieve flawless technique at the end does not happen in the space of freedom. In contrast, dance improvisation plays in an open-ended field with constant choices and decisions for participants to make. In formal dance education the aim in movement practice is a skilful movement as a *final product*, as a *habit*, and for the existentialist dancer it is the *process* of making choices and decisions. This is why dance improvisation also has great potential to educate into responsibility.

I had a brief chat with Jere and his girlfriend on the 5 July 2011. We somehow ended up discussing of, what makes *Katiska* so special; what is the most important thing in the whole process. Jere immediately said that for him, it is *responsibility* which the boys must bear for the whole work. Each and every one of the boys has to take the responsibility to make the performance successful, but at the same time they all share the *common* responsibility. This has also led to the fact that the group of boys seems coherent even through their background, personal interests and values do actually differ quite significantly. Jere’s girlfriend suggested that perhaps the boys are forced to put their “childish” opinions and attitudes to the side, when they are involved in the project, which seems to touch something “holy”. She also believed that even the boys are different from each other they do share similar experiences of being a young man; thus the main theme of the work unifies the diverse group of the performers.

Because the work was created in collaboration, the boys are committed to the work from their very personal level. I gave them the task, but what they decided to do with the tasks was up to them. Therefore they know that they are themselves responsible for their own actions. Ricoeur (2005, 91–92) finds a close semantic connection between *attestation* and *self-recognition*, in line with “recognizing responsibility”, because in recognizing that we have done something, we implicitly attest that we were capable of doing it. The modal phrase *I can* “combines the characterization of action in terms of those capacities which constitute its actualization, and the detour by reflection through the object side of the experience considered” (Ricoeur 2005, 93). The acknowledgement of the “I can”, both as *potentiality* and

act, justifies the description of self as the capable human being recognizing himself in his capabilities (Ricoeur 2005, 94).

The boys also recognized themselves as responsible for the reception which they received from the audience. At first, it was very important that the boys could trust Maija's and my feedback. We were their first respondents. When they then performed the work for the audience, they realized what effect their performance had on other people. The people were seemingly impressed by what they saw. It was not only the technical talent of the boys which was recognized, but most of all their openness and courage, which touched the spectators particularly profoundly. People were laughing at the irony of the stereotypical male imaginary, but they were also crying at the beauty of the work and the gentleness of the boys' expression. Ricoeur (2005, 75) suggests that human beings who behave as the centres of agency and recognize themselves as responsible are also recognized as such by others. One of the spectator's comments reveals how she does not just recognize the direct effect which the work provides for its spectators, but also shows remarkable faith in the boys in the future and outside the work itself:

As I walked out of the full theatre auditorium, I thought that if the future is in the hands of these youngsters, we really do not have to worry about tomorrow! (spectator, middle aged woman)

I believe that if we trust other people and have a little faith on them, we can hand over more freedom, but also responsibility, to them. Yet I agree with Schwartz (2005), who claims that not all the choices that we give individuals actually produce more freedom but rather paralysis: "With so many options to choose from, people find it very difficult to choose at all. ... The more options there are, the easier it is to regret anything at all that is disappointing about the option that you chose." In short, Schwartz argues that an unlimited amount of options only serves to "increase paralysis" and "decrease satisfaction", and thus he suggests that we all need "a fishbowl", some kind of limits or a structure with and where to function. In educational situations it is the educator's task to provide a suitable "fishbowl" for those being educated. As an animateur I am the one who takes the main responsibility for the whole project as well as the final product that the animateuring process produces. The participants are allowed to swim freely inside the fishbowl, but the tasks which I give and the selection process which I conduct create the limits of the bowl. What is required of an educator is an ability to find what size of fishbowl is suitable for the particular group of participants.

Generally, art practised with children and young people is characterized by democratic principles: it is common practice to give everyone an equal opportunity to demonstrate their capacities. This was also the case in *Katiska* and, as one of the spectators said, “it was nice that everyone got into the *spotlight* in turn”. The “best” performers cannot alone be selected to perform in a school play or a dance school performance; we have to give everyone an equal opportunity to perform. I argue that this does not imply automatically that the performances need to be poor. The teachers’ job is to help everyone to find their own form of expression and specificity. Teachers are also required to have an eye for talent: they have to see the best in each performer, and bring these features to the fore in the final production. Through this, a young performer can gain important experiences of her/his capabilities. Diversity of performers can be seen as an advantage, not a burden. Traditionally ballet dancers are highly valued if they look as if cast in the same mold. A group of amateur dancers is more diverse when it comes to their body type and skills. Dance amateurism allows each individual to bring to the fore their special characteristics, to express themselves as they are and also to exploit their skills according to their talent, interest and background. Yet ballet performances may also be developed in such a way that students have an opportunity to present their strengths and to really enjoy their own performing – and then generally the audience will also enjoy what they see.

In the negative sense, liberty consists in the absence of hindrances that some individual – or principally the state – can impose on an individual. ... Considered in its positive sense, liberty represents everything that a person, taking everything into account, is capable or incapable of accomplishing. Even if this sense of liberty presupposes the former sense, it adds to it the capacity of a person to lead the life he or she chooses. (Ricoeur 2005, 143.)

Ricoeur (2005, 143–144) borrows the expressions “rights for certain capabilities” and “evaluation of situations” from Amartya Sen and places them at the centre of his definition of social justice. Ricoeur believes that it is within this “evaluative” framework that the actual exercise of the freedom to choose calls on *collective responsibility*. In other words, if individual liberty is understood as a life choice it becomes social responsibility (Ricoeur 2005, 145). Ricoeur (2005, 149) argues that the ideas of plurality, alterity, reciprocal action and mutuality belong to this discussion of “rights to capabilities”. The interactive complexity and fragility of narrative and performative identity brings us to the threshold of the capable

human being: “The series of questions, Who speaks? Who acts? Who tells? finds a continuation in the question, Who is capable of imputation?” (Ricoeur 2005, 104).

Self-recognition

Levin (1991, 75) suggests, quoting Foucault, that “we have to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal of the kind of individuality which has been imposed on us for several centuries.” Levin sees Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology “as a significant contribution to this very project”. I agree with Levin that *self-understanding* which is based on the experience of self as rooted in the intertwining and reversibility of “universal flesh” can help us to deconstruct the traditional, egocentric as extreme subjectivist, sense of individuality. Levin (1991, 80–81) argues that through Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of narcissism we can wake up to “the ethics of reciprocity”; “we can see it taking shape in the character of the body’s primal order”. Levin suggests that we have to understand that “neither the monadic ego (in the discourse of Cartesian metaphysics) nor the unruly body of drives (in the discourse of Freudian psychoanalysis) should continue to represent for us the distinctive social character of the embodied human self”. I agree with Levin that it is the *intersubjectivity* that must ground our new understanding of identity as well as reciprocity, for working towards social justice.

As has been already suggested throughout this chapter, with the great help of Ricoeur and Butler, we must see that the complexity of identity must be described not just in terms of the dialectic of the *idem* and the *ipse* in their temporal character, but also the dialectic of identity confronted by *otherness*. Borrowing Ricoeur (2005, 103) we can state that “the story of a life always includes interactions with others”. Or to say it in Merleau-Ponty’s (2008, 505) words “if I am ugly, I have the choice between being an object of disapproval or disapproving of others. I am left free to be a masochist or a sadist, but not free to ignore others.” We can argue with Ricoeur (2005, 134) that identities or personal capacities are never solely attested by individuals; “they are claimed by collectivities and submitted to public evaluation and approval”. This is also the reason why we cannot leave the concept of identity and its struggle, to be only a personal matter.

To *speak* presupposes an expectation of being heard as narrating also calls for an ear, a power to hear, a reception. The power to narrate designates the “who” of action, but *narrative* always combines different life stories, as in literature, the storyline is the configuration that weaves together different events and characters. (Ricoeur 2005, 253.) The phrase “I can”

implies a tacit correlation between self-assertion and some reference to others. It is the ability to reflect that justifies the expression of self-assertion. Exercising the capacity to *act* makes events happen in the physical and social world, and so, also our acts always take place in a setting of interaction. The other person may assume the role of obstacle, helper or fellow actor, and sometimes it is also impossible to isolate each person's contribution in these meetings. (Ricoeur 2005, 252.)

The concept of identity is culturally produced and thus constantly shifting, which is why the practice of different art forms can be seen as a *natural*, and also especially for children and adolescents a *safe* place for “testing” alternative narratives and performatives of one's identity. Experimental art education can also be seen as an opportunity to reflect the temporal character of one identity, the ipseity that extends both into the past and the future, but also towards the others. Mäki (2007, 239) states that one of his goals in his community art projects is to help the participants and the spectators to acknowledge how counterfeit our visual culture as well as our identities are. He stresses that our identity is always constructed, never innate. But he sees this as a positive thing, because it means that all the façades of the self, our created identities, can be constructed in a new and better way. Hannula (1998, 136) also points out that the shifting identities can be seen as strategies, which give individuals – but only, if they are aware of the contextuality of their identities – the power to shape and produce their own identities. He adds that this happens in constant describing and re-describing of oneself, one's role and the context and one's own place in it. I argue that theatrical performance can be the place where young people can explore their roles in social reality and sketch their new narratives of their identity. In addition, dance, as embodied art, is a natural form to investigate stereotypical social roles and how they are rooted into our bodies and its performances.

Ricoeur (2005, 101) also claims that “[l]earning to narrate oneself is also learning how to narrate oneself in other ways”. But he wisely notes that “[i]t is worth noting that ideologies of power undertake, all too successfully, unfortunately, to manipulate these fragile identities through symbolic mediations of action, and principally thanks to the resources for variation offered by the work of narrative configurations, given that it is always possible, as said above, to narrate differently. These resources of reconfiguration then become resources for manipulation.” (Ricoeur 2005, 104.) Even if art and art based educational projects seem to be a “natural” and “safe” place to play with new narratives and performatives of identities, we still have to consider carefully what the true values are that form the base for our practice; what the values are that guide us to “do the right thing”.

Schwartz (2010) claims that what “we need most of all is the virtue that Aristotle called *practical wisdom*. Practical wisdom is the moral will to do the right thing and the moral skill to figure out what the right thing is.” Schwartz clarifies that “practical wisdom does not require heroic acts of self-sacrifice on the part of practitioners”. He also stresses that it does not mean being brilliant and that brilliance does not even necessarily imply wisdom (Schwartz 2009). He claims that “a wise person is made, not born”:

Wisdom depends on experience, and not just any experience. You need the time to get to know the people that you're serving. You need permission to be allowed to improvise, try new things, occasionally to fail and to learn from your failures. And you need to be mentored by wise teachers.

Schwartz (2009) believes that practical wisdom is “within the grasp of each and every one of us if only we start paying attention. Paying attention to what we do, to how we do it, and, perhaps most importantly, to the structure of the organizations in which we work, so as to make sure that it enables us and other people to develop wisdom rather than having it suppressed.” Ricoeur (2005, 88–89) also follows Aristotle and argues that *phronesis*, practical wisdom, in order to direct our actions, must proceed from universal knowledge to knowledge of the particular. We can also qualify this as “suitable action” which is inseparable from an agent of action, and as Ricoeur quotes Aristotle: “If he happens to be ‘wise,’ this is because, as concerns things that matters to him, he is an expert in evaluating ‘his own interests’, ‘in knowing the good that benefits oneself’.” Borrowing again from Aristotle, Ricoeur argues that the “wise man” can only be “wise” in his own sphere and when he knows how to govern himself, and therefore *rational action* is something that its author acknowledges himself to be responsible.

I claim that if we only work and act according to the general norms and rules coming from outside and above from ourselves, we are not truly responsible from our actions. Following Schwartz (2010) I believe that the problem in relying on rules is that they *demoralize* people’s activity: “The very practice is demoralized, and the practitioners are demoralized. ... It creates people who are addicted to incentives. That is to say, it creates people who only do things for incentives.” The problem is that rules and exterior motivations can never replace wisdom, because there is no substitute for wisdom (Schwartz 2010). Therefore Schwartz (2009) suggests that we should *re-moralize* work. He does not mean that we should teach more ethics courses to our children, but rather engage our children,

but most of all, ourselves, with ethical decisions every day, in every moment in our lives. I agree with Schwartz (2009) “that the single most important thing kids need to learn is character”, and he notes that it is we educators who are the very important models for our students also in this ethical aim, we have to “embody it every minute of every day”.

Because we cannot be wise by only following the generalized rules, I thus claim, again following Schwartz (2009, 2010) that the most important skill that a wise person can have is the ability to *improvise*. As Schwartz (2010) says wise people know “how to bend the rules”, how to improvise: “they are kind of like jazz musicians; the rules are like the notes on the page, and that gets you started, but then you dance around the notes on the page, coming up with just the right combination for this particular moment with this particular set of fellow players”. Too many rules prevent accomplished jazz musicians from improvising, and as a result, they will lose their gifts, or an even worse scenario, they will stop playing altogether (Schwartz 2009). Similarly too many rules, or the norms that are incomprehensible can prevent our children and adolescents from learning. What is the point of doing things which seem not to matter for yourself, or which you do not see yourself responsible? You do not feel as the agent of the action, but rather an instrument for someone else achieving his own goals. Improvising means always action in relation with others:

If you are a rule-bender and an improviser mostly to serve yourself, what you get is ruthless manipulation of other people. So it matters that you do this wise practice in the service of others and not in the service of yourself. And so the will to do the right thing is just as important as the moral skill of improvisation and exception-finding. Together they comprise practical wisdom, which Aristotle thought was the master virtue. (Schwartz 2010.)

We can build *self-esteem* through competition and with the help of exterior motivations, but reflective *self-recognition* is built on exercising our *practical wisdom* in the relation of freedom and responsibility of our choices and capabilities. Anttila (2004) also believes that insecurity about one’s self can lead to dependence on exterior, social acceptance, which is often expressed verbally in our culture and education. But when Anttila researched the meaning of experiencing freedom in dance education, she came to the conclusion that it is the bodily experiences that have great significance on the development of identity and selfhood. Tapio Koski (2005, 146), who has also researched the phenomenology of running, claims, following Heidegger, that to a person who does not run, the deeper meaning of running is not

revealed. The whole world of running can never be understood in the knowledge of running, but always and only understood and experienced *in* running itself; right in the runner's bodily experience, in its Being.

Our body is the medium where all the different sensitive, affective and kinesthetic perceptions are located, and because dance is in essence an embodied art, we, both as dancers and spectators of dance, experience dance through its lived attributes – its kinesthetic and existential character, as Fraleigh (1987, xiii) puts it. This is why I claim that dance, as the art that intentionally isolates and reveals the qualities of the human body of action, has the power to investigate the role of our social body in its narrative and performative character, but in consequence, it also has a great potential to root our identity back in the embodied sense of self.

Leena Rouhiainen (2007, 84, 87, 94) claims that when she improvises she experiences her body, consciousness and space intertwined in her movement – she lives in her motion sphere through her body. As a dancer her everyday experiences are also greatly intertwined with her movements. She illustrates the enjoyment of being aware of her body in motion, she follows the kinesthetic pathways and landscapes which her moving opens up, and when she is dancing she feels more aware of her body in relation to its surroundings, its different parts and their connections. Rouhiainen believes that movements let us bond with the world in various ways and help us to recognize things from different perspectives. Venkula (2003, 42) also stresses the importance of arts in supporting our social life and the relationship that we have with our everyday lives. She suggests that the bridge between an individual and the immediate reality becomes more sensitive when we sense all those little messages that the different senses are sending for us in everyday life.

An art work that does not reveal itself based on the conservative techniques, structures and styles, also requires of its recipients the ability to improvise an interpretation. The meaning of the work is not directly readable, but to understand art work of this kind rather requires a reflective experience of the work of art. The interpretation of one's experience must necessarily be motivated. The content of *Katiska* is available for spectators in a more concrete way than often very abstract, modern or contemporary dance performances, but still it examines the world of young men in its complex way. The ambiguity of their identities is reflected in the montage structure instead of a clear storyline. Through the work the audience saw the lives of young men as a battleground of multiple external expectations, but also their dreams and hopes as well as their emotions and interaction with others:

The work has insightful and delightful scenes. They tell about a young man's life, the challenges and the pain of it. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

The work does not really have a specific plot, but it told, for example, about young boys' feelings and expectations which are required from them. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

Returning now to the concept of identity, we can summarize that an individual is constantly building her/his own, but also others', identities. Identity is contextual: the self in relation to situation, time and space. Traditionally the self has been divided into two categories – mind and body; and the identity into individual and social. Dichotomies, typical of Western thought, are often artificial and only useful for the analysis of atomistic sciences. Dualisms shape our conception of truth and guide our actions, sometimes even in ways harmful to ourselves. But if we rather think of identity as a narrative and performative by nature, we also understand that we constantly shape our conceptions of ourselves through narratives and performances from multiple different positions. Our identity is always in connection with our history, culture and politics. The critical paradigm of art and education can lead us to recognize the reality of the complex relations of individuals and the world, as well as to be aware of the self that is in constant flow, or to be more precise, that *is* the flow itself. Anttila (2006a, 61) points out that in education practice the division of experience and reflection or the body and mind is in conflict with the current philosophical theory of human awareness and its development. She also believes that human growth in a holistic sense presupposes support for body–mind integration and also valuing the importance of culture and community in education practice.

Performing arts practice can offer new perspectives for self-recognition. The sense of self grows stronger when the relations to others and to the world are understood on a deeper level. Hannula (1998, 86) suggests that art is an opportunity to cope with a reality which is full of instabilities. Hannula is talking about art practice as having an *attitude* that guides us to face and handle important questions such as *who* (self) *we are* and *how* (identity) *we are*. According to him, art practice can also be seen as identity work, where the goal is to create, shape and maintain, at least in some means a coherent narrative of one's self. I agree with Sara Heinämaa (1996, 15) that we should not ask *who* or *what* we are (at least it is a very difficult question), but rather *how* we are, because our identities are always produced and performed as a complex interweaving without a definite core (Heinämaa 1996, 174). It is

important to highlight that not every theatre, dance or any other art practice can guarantee the ethical and dialogical attitude to understand the reality. As stated before, every art form has numerous, and often also contrasting, practices. The education processes inside an art form may also show a discrepancy. Some of the art practices stress more of the identity and community work than just establishing new techniques for their own sake. Animateuring practice can have an important effect on, how young people comprehend the surrounding world. This is also the reason why I suggest that every child and adolescent should have an opportunity to practice arts at school, but also outside formal education.

I conclude my thoughts on self-recognition by reverting to the question of the authenticity of actors as an analogue to the performativity of identity. A performer on stage is always both bodily himself and at least on some scale in a created role. The performers can also consciously use their own memories and experiences in constructing a role. In *Katiska*, which was initiated from the boys' own biographical material, the boys' past and present can be sensed, but also traces of their future materialized in their presence. Through body and movement exercises the boys reflected their identities, which are again presented as fragmentary narratives and performatives, in words, sounds and actions, on stage. Their subjectivity becomes an object that is reviewed and presented publicly. On the other hand, on stage the object is born again in chiasmatic relation in the spectator's experience, once again as his/her own subjective experience. I believe that a performance can be a void – or a chiasm – a space to see more, to experience more and also to understand more; to make something visible that did not exist before (see also Siikala, R. 2005, 172). At its best there is an experience of an energy field vibrating between the performers and the spectators (Siikala, R. 2005, 175).

Jere once stated that every scene must answer the question *why*. It is the question that motivates the act. The answer to the question may be different for each of the spectators, but the question must still be asked. The most authentic, subjective experience of the performer is seen as an objective action on stage, but on the other hand, it is at the same time shared collectively and as the subjective experience of the recipient. Therefore I claim that the art work that plays with the relations of fiction and facts, authentic and pretended, general and individual, public and private, can help us to perceive the complexity of these usually separately comprehend concepts in real life.

We should not try to search for liberty and authenticity in an egoistic separation from the other but in fact from the opposite, in acknowledging the connection, how the self belongs to its setting, to culture, to history, to other human beings and to the whole world. The reflective self-recognition, the sense of self, grows stronger, when we understand, how the

narrative and performative of our identity can be unfolded through the threads of stories and scenes from different perspectives. Searching for the authenticity of identity is like peeling layer by layer an *unending* onion. Each layer does not invalidate the proceeding one, but rather, it reveals that it was simply the incomplete truth. Word after word, story after story and act after act the layer upon layer of mystique, with no certain end, is unfolded and the most authentic sense of self is recognized in each and every one of these layers. In other words, it is the *journey* to the mysterious that creates the revelation of our self.

From tolerance to mutuality

In the first season of *Katiska* in 2008 an upper secondary school student, Aimo, came to watch the work with his class. I did not know him before, but in the audience discussion I remember him taking part of the conversation very actively. He was clearly very impressed by *Katiska*, and he was also able to verbalize his feelings and thoughts exceptionally well. Therefore I asked him if he would like to write a letter of reference for us for our future funding and marketing purposes. I invited him to see the work again in our second season on the Hällä stage in Tampere, and then a couple of months later, he joined us in *Katiska* rehearsals as a new performer. Mikael and Lauri started their compulsory military service in July 2009, and we had shows coming up in Finland, Germany and Denmark in autumn. We could not be sure if the boys would be able to perform in all of the coming shows, which is why we had to find new performers to replace them. At the end Mikael was able to get leave from his military service, but we needed Aimo to substitute for Lauri in Espoo, Helsinki, Salo, Odense in Denmark and Tampere. In Joensuu, in April 2011, Lauri, who rejoined to *Katiska* after 18 months away, and Aimo danced next to each other. Because Aimo had first been a spectator and then later also a dancer in *Katiska* he had an extraordinary outside as well as inside view for the work:

The table scene is definitely in top tree in my list of favorite Katiska scenes. I liked the scene a lot when I saw it, and it has also been fun to do. Perhaps it is its delicacy, especially when you watch it. Overall the scene is very surrendering – it showed the performers right from the start of the work as tender and vulnerable creatures. It was very strange to see boys moving like that, because generally the moving of people, especially male, is very plain.

The touch exercise [on which the table scene is based] was interesting. I like the movement of this exercise, it feels good in my body, and it is pretty typical for my own moving. Even if the movement sequence is basically standard it still offers tremendous options for variation. By changing speed, size and intensity you can create numerous different movements. In addition, the changes on levels, which the table makes possible, intensify the scene. I have

unconsciously started to repeat and connect the movement sequence of the table scene in many everyday situations.

I like the fact that the scene is based on team work – it teaches you efficiently how to make room for another person and how to take space for yourself. You cannot rush wherever you want and crash into the others. I can well imagine that the exercise develops your social skills, like acknowledging others and being aware of them. The silhouette lighting at the beginning made the boys as if like they were merged together, which was in my opinion very cool. In the scene you cannot be afraid of physical contact, although it teaches you to handle it, and it can remove your inhibitions about it.

In contrast, at the same time everyone seems to be alone in a closed slumber, or at least I am, and I focus mainly on myself and my movements. It creates an interesting double reality for the scene, which the audience can also see. It is as if everyone was doing their own sequence and ignoring others, but still they sustain the whole thing and they do not bump into each the other. When I was watching the scene I was wondering how it is possible, but then when I was doing it myself, it did not feel so impossible after all. You just have to be aware of the tacit existence and movement of the others and adjust to it.

Aimo's description shows the interesting "double reality" feeling that both the animateuring process and product can create. Practising dance in the spirit of animateuring allows you simultaneously to engage with your very personal self and bodily sensations, but at the same time it creates a feeling that you are interconnected with others as well. The connection happens on a bodily pre-analytical level. Both the audience and the movers may experience the bodies as merging into one being. Such a state can only be achieved if you are totally focused on the present moment, on the existence of your own body and its tacit connection to others. You cannot start from the outcome, from the image that you are aiming to produce with your movements. There are no prior thoughts of the outcome. Instead you have to *trust* that what you do right here and now is enough. You also have to trust the others. There is also no place for *competition* in animateuring. The value of the work is not dependent on how good or bad you or the others are. The work is created by you and the others, or to better describe, the work *is* you and the others together. If you are replaced with someone

else, we cannot judge, if the work is better or worse than before, because it is not the same work anymore. You are not the same than the other, and the other is not you. There must always be space for *diversity* and the acceptance of *alterity* in animateuring.

Love, justice and esteem

Ricoeur (2005, 187) argues that the course of self-recognition ends in mutual recognition. The previous chapter showed the concept of identity could not be defined without taking into account the connection between the self and the other. That is why Ricoeur, borrowing from Honneth, starts to formulate his model for mutual recognition through the concepts of love, law and social esteem, to which I now turn.

Ricoeur (2005, 188–196) places the first model of reciprocal recognition under the heading of *love*, in which he includes erotic relations, friendship and family ties. Love is constituted by strong emotional attachments among people, who mutually confirm each other with regard their concrete needs. In love, there is “confidence in the permanence of a reciprocal relationship between partners”, he adds. Could we also talk about love in pedagogical relations?

According to Manen (1991, 70) “the adult can only have pedagogical influence over a child or young person when the authority is based, not on power, but on love, affection, and internalized sanction on the part of the child”. Manen stresses that the pedagogical authority of a parent or a teacher is always granted by the child, first on the basis of its trust and love, and then later on the basis of critical understanding. In other words, the child authorizes the adult to be ethically responsive to the values that supports the child’s well-being and growth toward self-responsibility. Manen argues that pedagogy is conditioned not only by *love* but also *care*, *hope* and *responsibility* for the child. We can only hope for children we truly love, in the sense of *pedagogical love*. What hope gives us is the simple avowal: “I will not give up on you. I know that you can make a life for yourself.” Hope refers to that which gives belief and trust in the possibilities of our children. Children who experience our trust are therefore also confident to have trust in themselves. (Manen 1991, 68.)

Instead of the concept pedagogical love an American feminist philosopher and educationalist Nel Noddings (1999) talks about *caring* and makes the difference between “caring about” and “caring for” depending on whether to emphasize care as a virtue or as a relation. Following Noddings I can say that I “care about” the poor and illiterate children of developing countries, and that is why I send 15 Euros every month to those children through

UNICEF, and feel somewhat satisfied. I agree with Noddings that, because it is physically impossible to “care for” all of humanity, “caring about” can be the only form of caring available to us in some cases. Even if Noddings sees it “as morally important because it is instrumental in establishing the conditions under which ‘caring for’ can flourish”, she stresses that the danger is that “caring about” does not always enable “caring for”. In Finland we have focused on the “caring about” side of education, but I claim that there is still a lot to do with the attitudes of educators when it comes to the “caring for” relations. Love is not something that can be fully explained and certainly it cannot be measured. Perhaps its very ambiguity is exactly the reason why in our quantitative world it has not established itself as the foundation on which we build on our relations to each others also in pedagogical situations.

If we “care about” other people, we want to create circumstances beneficial for them. We want to believe that every person has equal human rights. But I agree with Ricoeur (2005, 233), who points out that our society may have resolved the problem of an equal attribution of rights, but not that of an equal distribution of goods. The principles in theory do not exist in reality. We can relate Noddings’ concept of “care about” to the second level of recognition, which Ricoeur (2005, 196–201) places on the *juridical* plane, again following Honneth. Juridical recognition connects two things: the other person and the norm. So recognition means “identifying each person as free and equal to every other person”.

I also understand justice as mainly juridical, and then we can see that recognition is closely tied to the question of *liberty*. I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2008, 528), who claims that freedom means “a meeting of the inner and the outer”. He suggests that we can find the basis of our freedom in “the thickness of the pre-objective present, in which we find our bodily being, our social being, and the pre-existence of the world” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 503). The 2011 riots in London and the Arab uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya are all serious implications of *mis*-recognition, even if we can undoubtedly discuss the different motives of these incidents on a more facile level. As Ricoeur (2005, 201) points out, in pride, there is correlation between normativity, when it comes to rules, and capacity, when it comes to persons. It is the pride that people are after when asking for recognition, in the juridical sense, but also in everyday level which touches the very personal, the potential in individual lives as in capacities to act in social life. The key concept for juridical recognition is thus *respect*. A refusal of recognition makes a person to feel the loss of respect. I agree with Ricoeur (2005, 200) that “negative feelings are important impulses in the struggle for recognition”.

In Western countries, too, which are typically considered fine examples of equal human rights, children and young people may indicate some kind of *mis*-recognition with the number

of growing behaviour problems. We care about our children, which is why we want to give them the best possible education, but still through all their negative feelings our children signal some kind of struggle for recognition. The world of adolescents seems not to correlate with the world into which the school system and the other world of adults are trying to educate young people. But we think that we know what is best for our children, and we teach them these Truths. “The power to command” is given for adults, and it is so deeply rooted in our society that we rarely consider any other ways of relations between adults and young people. With Gadamer, Ricoeur calls it the “recognition of superiority” and argues: “The most complete model of a recognition of superiority has to be sought in the relationship between a teacher and a disciple” (Ricoeur 2005, 211–212).

Freire claims (2005, 76) that by students’ ignorance teacher justifies her/his own existence. Education which makes students receive and repeat teacher’s knowledge Freire calls the *banking* concept of education, in which the capacity of the action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. But as Freire claims, apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, men cannot be truly human: “knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry men pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other”. I agree with Freire that education becomes the “practice of freedom” when people, both students and teachers, deal critically with reality and discover, how to participate in the transformation of their world.

Noddings (2005) also argues that the “relational view” in education is difficult because in almost all cultures children is taught to believe that “teacher knows best”. Being a teacher is then, “to know and to use our knowledge to initiate the young into a community of knowing”. I agree with Noddings that to some extent this view is right and to degree necessary, but because the world is so complex, we cannot be sure what everyone needs to know in the future. Perhaps this is the reason why we cannot solve the struggle for recognition solely on the juridical level, by “caring about” our children and erroneously believing that merely providing pre-established curricula, as learning plans and devices, and just focusing to the “Culture of Method” as Autio (2010, 118; see also 2002, 2006) calls it, guarantees the only necessary recognition for all. Furthermore, we cannot analogically assume that our world is the same as the world of our children; and this analogical thinking is something that I shall look into more closely later in this chapter.

Ricoeur (2005, 201) places the third model of mutual recognition in the concept of *social esteem*, in which “‘ethical life’ reveals itself as irreducible to juridical ties”. It means that by the same values and ends everyone measures the importance of their individual qualities for the life of others. Ricoeur (2005, 202) follows Honneth and claims that “these

relations of esteem vary over time”. Every society creates values and ethical ends in its own. The concept of social esteem is dependent on the formation of the socially shared values, and furthermore the social esteem of a person depends on the negotiation what makes the person “estimable” in its own society. (Ricoeur 2005, 202.) An instrumentalist attitude towards people evaluates individuals according to how useful they are for society. They are treated as resources to be used. The more they produce, more worthy they are. Thus the value of people is measured by economic standards. In contrast, the practice that aims at equal social esteem for everyone requires love as its basis, because love means that everyone is worthy just as they are, and just *because* they *are*. Similarly in dance animateuring the main aim is to respect our bodies and our self as we are. I am excited about *Katiska*, the outcome of our artistic exploration, because it is what it is; and it is as it is, *because* of the boys.

As Noddings (2005) points out, the demand for recognition on personal level is always multidimensional, in which individual autonomy and social esteem may even exert opposing pulls. Already after having the experience of seeing *Katiska* in the first season Aimo said that he found the work especially important and liberating for him because he had experienced years of bullying because of his long standing “not so manly” interests and hobbies. I agree with Noddings that we must accept the connections between the individual and the social and thus also recognize our collective responsibility for everyone’s wellbeing. I must become conscious, especially as an educator, that my treatment of another may profoundly affect the way she/he behaves in the world. Even after tens of years most of us can still remember our teachers’ words, either in a positive or a negative sense. Although the individual cannot run away from the responsibility of his own actions, neither can the community escape its part in making us the way we have become. This is often something we forget, when we analyse, for example, the school shootings in Finland or the Oslo massacre. We tend to claim that these horrible incidents are only a matter of a individual’s mental problems, which they undoubtedly are, at least to some extent, but they also inevitably show us, even as very extreme examples, where at misrecognition, the total indifference of the other and the feeling of superiority of the self, can lead some individuals into.

Social life seems to mean living at constant risk of troubles. Ricoeur (2005, 163–164) explains that a “war of all against all”, borrowed from Hobbes, is characterized by *competition*, *distrust* and *glory*. As Ricoeur points out, none of the passions, for gain, safety or reputation, are conceivable without some reference to others – “everyone knows himself to be, in comparison, equal to everyone else on the plane of passions”. One of the young male spectators of *Katiska* experienced that the war scene was a very typical example of the

constant pursuit of power which can be experienced in the everyday lives of adolescent men. Lauri also admits that it is the “showing off to others” that often motivates his school work:

For example, in doing some sport, of course you also do it for your own fun and improving your fitness, but like the Cooper test, it is just pure egoism. You just wanted to beat the others – it has nothing to do with the fact how many metres you run.

From childhood we are taught to succeed by competing. We are taught to celebrate the winners. Lauri’s example shows how it is often through testing that we encourage children and young people into competition. How good or bad I am depends to a significant extent on how the others treat me – and the fastest and the strongest, the best, are always treated well. The extreme individualism which is based on the pursuit of only personal benefit, reinforces competition and may sometimes lead to false recognition of the self, and in some extreme cases even the feeling of superiority over others. Even Lauri admits that the whole of life is often like a competition; he also acknowledges that we should not get into this game. If you try too hard to fit in with some others criteria, you may lose yourself.

Noddings (2005) criticizes the present insistence on more and more testing in education which is, according to her, largely a product of isolation and lack of trust between people. I would argue that they also cause more division and mistrust between teachers and students as well as between any adults and children. Wang (2011, 2) also criticizes the fact that rebellion of the young against the old is even celebrated nowadays. He claims that such a celebration produces “fragmentations that split rather than integrate the system”. In a world where competition and especially financial success is excessively valued, I find it extremely important that all the educators critically evaluate the purpose and benefit of such inclination. I follow Noddings and claim that through testing and competition fear supplants of enthusiastic discussions and collective pleasure in learning. I also agree with Noddings that although through testing we may find out whether children have learned the specified facts and skills, we do not get a full picture of each unique child. Noddings claims that “what we learn in the daily reciprocity of caring goes far deeper than test results”. Perhaps through the grounds of Noddings’ concept of “care for” and Manen’s pedagogical love we could search for the recognition which reaches further than the ego, towards the mutual recognition. But before we carry on with that, I look more closely into the concept of *trust* and the *relation* of participants in educational situation.

Trust and relation

In one of the audience discussions in the second season of *Katiska* at the Hällä stage a spectator asked the boys, if they could truly stand by the work, if they really believed in it or if they ever had a feeling that “I don’t want to do this”. Jere answered first that all of them believed in *Katiska* because they were “doing their own things in it”. He thought that it was interesting that everyone was doing their individual things, but at the same time they were doing something together: “I believe in my own thing and we believe together for the whole thing, and for each other.” I reminded the boys that the process has perhaps not always been so easy. Then Mikael explained that at first, because they did not know that they were going to perform the work on stage, they did not have too much pressure how what they were improvising in the rehearsals. They did not have a certain goal that they knew that they had to achieve in a certain timeframe. Rasmus then added that they did not have the feeling that “this is not going to work”, because “Raisa and Maija have been there all the time with us”. He described that we had been like “the backbone of the project”; directors who always support them by saying “let’s do it this way”, and “this is going to be really cool”, and “that’s really good, guys, do it again, we get cold shivers from what you do”. Rasmus claimed that this was the reason why they did not have a feeling that “this is not going to work” or that “they don’t feel like doing this”.

This fragment of discussion shows how *trust* is the most fundamental thing, on which to build relations between people, and so, also the whole collaborative educational project. At first the boys had to trust us, Maija and me, the adults and the facilitator of the project. They also had to trust the project, which did not, at first, have a clear task or goal in front of it. They had to trust each other even if they were not the best of friends with each other. Then, when it was time to show the work to an audience, they had to trust themselves and the work and each other, but also the audience; to trust that the work and that also they themselves were recognized by the others. In spite of the personal differences of the boys and the whole working group, the mutual interests and intention enabled the success of the potential of the collaboration. I argue that both lack of trust and lack of mutuality would have had negative effects on both the process and the outcome of *Katiska*.

Both love and care are based on *reciprocal trust* on the fundamental level. According to Manen (1991, 76) in the earlier German and Dutch literature on pedagogy, the pedagogical relation was described as an intensely personal relation between an adult and a child. “We may confirm this quality of the relationship in the intimacy of the parent-child relation, where the parent’s love and affection for the child are met by the child’s feeling of trust and need for

closeness, security, direction, and the simultaneous desire for independence and self-responsibility” (Manen 1991, 76). However, as Manen adds, it must be said that this kind of close and personal relation is much more difficult to achieve for teachers who may be dealing with hundreds of students a day.

The pedagogical relation is always a double intentional relation: “I care for this child – for who this child is and for who this child may become” (Manen 1991, 74). Thus, I agree with Noddings (2005) that in a caring relation, first, we should listen to our students and if we then gain their trust, it is more likely that the students will accept what we try to teach for them. In an on-going relation of care and trust the students do not see our teaching as “interference” but, rather, learning as inspiring mutual project between adults and young people. Second, as we engage our students in dialogue – or in “polylogue”, as Juri Ginter (2011) better describes, as the multiple different voices of the world – we learn about their needs, interests, and capacities, as Noddings ads. We also get important ideas from them about how to build our lessons in a more interesting, and also effective, way. Or as Manen (1991, 160) describes it, like the jazz musician who knows how to improvise when playing a musical composition, so the teacher should know how to improvise the curriculum pedagogically for the good of the students. Finally, according to Noddings, as we acknowledge our students’ needs and realize how much more than the standard curriculum is needed, we are also inspired to enhance our own competence. Even if *Katiska* was not a school project and was not based on the standard curriculum, I feel that I can connect Noddings’ ideas with my own practice as an animateur. But I also claim that the main principles of animateuring can be adopted for education in school environment, too.

Noddings (2005) stresses that the caring teacher does her/his best first to establish and maintain caring relations; and these relations are built on honesty that provides a foundation for everything teacher and student do together. Noddings (2005), and also Varto (2003), talk about educators, who “care” for their children, but that their care is so directed by their own vision of what their children should become that they are not capable of doing the work of attentive love required by “caring-as-relation”. “The relational sense of caring forces us to look at the relation. It is not enough to hear the teacher’s claim to care. Does the student recognize that he or she is cared for?” (Noddings 2005.) Manen (1991, 78) also stresses that it is pedagogically essential always to ask, how the child experiences the pedagogical situation. In a caring relation the cared-for recognizes the caring and responds in some perceptible manner. A student may respond to the caring directly, with verbal gratitude, or indirectly, by simply pursuing the project more confidently. Without an affirmative response from the cared-for, we cannot call the relation as a caring relation. (Noddings 2005.)

Rasmus once stated that the best thing in the *Katiska* project was the fact that he was asked to participate in it, that he was accepted to be part of the group. Mikael also has consistently shown great interest in the whole projects, and he has said that he is willing to perform the work as long as it interests the audience. Mikael, along with Valtteri, has performed in every single show which we have had. For me the greatest demonstration of gratitude from the boys has been their willingness to perform the work during all these years. The Facebook conversation in March 2010 on my wall tells me something about the importance of the project for Mikael and Valtteri:

Mikael: *I was listening to the Katiska soundtrack yesterday, missing it*

Raisa: *Oh, nice to hear that... because I miss you all the time, when I am investigating the data, your interviews, audience discussion, etc.*

Valtteri: *I was listening to that too some days ago. I got a huge urge to do some improvisation again together*

Raisa: *Such a shame that the shows in Vantaa and London, for this spring did not work out... But if you are interested, let's have an impro session just for fun!*

Valtteri: *Sure 😊*

Later I could read Valtteri's status update on his Facebook wall:

It was fun to have a proper impro session for a long time! Sore muscles and sweaty clothes as an end result. Awesome!

Raisa: *Yes, it was fun!!! Once more, thanks to you and Miku for inspiring!*

Pedagogical love and caring do not mean that an adult is working for the best of the child in the sense of “pastoral power” (Foucault in Carrette 1999), because the principle of caring and loving is always descriptive and never prescriptive. The activity, which at first is meant to be unselfish, may turn out to be an exercise of pastoral power: the noble intentions

do not automatically guarantee an ethical process (see Toll & Crumpler 2004). It is important to be aware of the potential threats that the project may cause, because usually the ethical question are solved “automatically” (see also Clarkeburn & Mustajoki 2007, 303); “this is how we have always done things”. The therapeutic culture of our times along with the reality TV has taught people to handle their own issues publicly and to talk openly about their personal problems. How can I be sure that dancing their identities on stage is good for the boys?

As Manen (1991, 74) suggests “the respect, love, and affection between adult and child finds its meaning in their own enjoyment and satisfaction with each other in the present”. As caring educators we have to trust people to be open in the relation and to the situation. Freire (2005, 80) argues that the humanist, revolutionary educator “must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. His efforts must be imbued with a profound *trust* in men and their creative power. To achieve this, he must be a partner of the students in his *relations* with them.” Freire adds that the banking concept of education does not permit such partnership. Therefore he suggests that we have to resolve the teacher-student contradiction and to exchange the role of depositor, prescriber, domesticator, for the role of teacher as a student among students.

I agree with Noddings (2005) that the educators who work from the care perspective should be in close contact with their cared-fors. It is true, as Noddings points out, that the practice of the carer follows much the same pattern as that of parents. By watching the young people and listening to them, working but also living with them, the educator has a reasonably clear picture of who these young people truly are. By working with *Katiska* from summer 2007 but also following other parts of the lives of these young men very closely, I have been privileged to get to know them personally. The Facebook and Messenger conversations with the boys, being on tour with *Katiska* nationally and internationally, as well the boys’ graduation parties and music gigs, which I have attended, have all been important events which have shaped our relationship.

Jussi, who was our sound technician on *Katiska*’s visit to the youth theatre festival in Austria, was surprised at the straightforward and close relationship which I seemed to have with the boys. Since Jussi had not been touring with us before, he could observe our group from the outside and therefore saw things that I no longer paid attention to. In Jussi’s opinion the boys seemed to use fairly coarse language and they also appeared to tell me very openly about their personal lives. He thought that this was interesting, but he also wondered how we had ended up with such a relationship. Jussi thought that usually age difference brings a certain reservation into the relations of adults and young people, but that in our case, I seemed

to be “on the same level” with the boys. Jussi therefore believed that perhaps this was the reason why the boys were talking so openly about their social lives – and even sexual concerns – with me. He also thought that perhaps I know more about the boys than their own parents – at least about some things. Jussi also noticed that our lighting technician Jere was like a big brother for the boys or like the “cool guy” to whom everyone looks up. Jere has been the technician since the premier of *Katiska*, and therefore he has also been an important member of the group right from the beginning of our journey together.

A relationship which is built on trust is especially delicate. I have to live up to my promises or the trust will be gone very quickly without any hope of regaining it. The *Katiska* dancers authorized me to consider when, and if at all, the work that we created was fit for presentation. The responsibility was enormous, because the boys were not just presenting “something” on stage, but they put their bodies, thoughts and souls, their whole being onto the stage. Of course, when working with children or adolescents as the director of a performance, I must always carefully consider what I can ask of my performers. I cannot just focus on my own artistic goals, but I have to consider all my actions through the practice of education. For example, in *Katiska* we discussed together for a long time about the scene where the boys undress themselves. As the director I wanted to be sure that the boys themselves were comfortable with wearing just underwear on stage. On the other hand, I was also concerned about the reaction of the boys’ parents and the rest of the audience. Although, for example in advertising and music videos, more skin is shown nowadays, it feels that the attitude towards nudity as a natural thing is turning more negative in Finland, too. This was probably also the reason why I considered this particular scene so carefully.

Of course, the appearance of the boys may first attract the audience’s attention. I was also worried that the boys would become objectified. Nudity, complete or partial, has become widespread practice in the arts. But it seems to be unfortunately quite typical that nudity does not have any relevancy on the content level of the work – but it is only used as a specialty trick. The younger audience of *Katiska* felt respect for the performers because of the boys’ braveness to undress themselves in front of the audience, but as one of the older spectators pointed out, the boys reveal much more on the stage than just their skin – their whole identity.

I always have to consider what is relevant for the work and what is not. *Katiska*’s undressing scene has its background both on a practical and substantive level – but the whole training process was an essential base for the scene. The idea of the undressing scene was born during the year-long process of making the piece. Every rehearsal session began and ended as the boys changed their clothes from their every day clothes to their rehearsal clothes. This was also a brief, shared moment, when we had time to chat casually together about what

was going on in everyone's life. I think the scene is important since it also reflects the rehearsal process. The clothing scene at the beginning and the end of the piece forms a tangible connection between us the directors and the performers, drawing a significant and concrete image of our common journey during the whole process. Of course the audience does not know the whole working process and that is why the scene's subtext is only relevant for us, the creators of the piece.

I do not want to claim that pedagogical love and caring relations, which are based on trust at a fundamental level, do not achieve everything that must be done in education, but they can certainly offer a solid foundation for a more ethical pedagogy. The pedagogical love and the "caring for" are not methods but rather attitudes. As Nodding (2005) states, caring for is not diagnostic, measuring the cared-for against some pre-established ideal; it opens for the carer a new ethical practice: "When I care, my motive energy begins to flow toward the needs and wants of the cared-for. This does not mean that I will always approve of what the other wants, nor does it mean that I will never try to lead him or her to a better set of values, but I must take into account the feelings and desires that are actually there and respond as positively as my values and capacities allow." Instead of training and instruction, education is at its best as loving and caring: being with each other in a trustful relation. Such an attitude is celebrated in animateuring in its attempt to facilitate learning. Animateuring encourages people to face a variety of phenomena in an openminded manner. It also aims to inspire people to express themselves creatively. The task of education is to help people to find their own voices, thus dialogical, caring youth projects can deliver a message that young people's life world and their own ideas are also important for us adults. In trusting each other, in loving and caring relations, we are building a shared cultural and conversational, communicative space.

Communication

In an audience discussion after one of our *Katiska* shows, a middle-aged female spectator wanted to give critical feedback for our young audience – which I have to admit, was one of the loudest crowds we have had. She was very upset about the fact that some of the girls were giggling, eating sweets, and rustling the wrapping papers, and even shouting something at the dancers. She thought that this was especially unfortunate, because "the boys and the whole crew had created an important artwork, which does not only talk about superficial things but

really what happens inside of people”. She had hope that the girls could have been kept silent, because their behaviour felt very unpleasant for her.

I responded to her that we have to understand that some of our young spectators have probably not been in a theatre before; at least they have not seen a performance of this kind. I reminded her that we cannot expect that young people know how to behave in the audience, if we, as adults, do not teach them. I gave an example that we could explain for them why it is not acceptable to talk, eat and make distracting noises in the theatre audience. I asked our young spectators, if they knew why we have this rule even when in the movie theatre it seems to be a common habit, for example, to eat sweets. Someone replied immediately: “It is distracting for others” and another young male spectator added, “For the actors”. Where I replied: “Yes, exactly, it is distracting for the actors. When you are watching a movie, Brad Pitt can’t hear what you say even if you say it very loud, but these boys can hear it. This work is very delicate and the dancers can be easily distracted. There are also these quiet sounds and gentle moments, which are important.” Then I still added, directing it more at our adult spectators: “But I have to say that together we educate a new audience – so this is the way it should happen.” If we want new audience to come and see theatre and dance performances, we have to show them that they are welcome. We have to confirm that we are interested in how they react and what interests them. But we have to understand that new things often cause uneasiness, and this is what we have to accept when inviting people to see what we have done.

Our educational discussion continued further when a girl from the audience replied: “Yes, first of all, I have never been in theatre before, and second, I apologize. You can even ask our teacher, we are a really noisy class. And third, it is pretty rare to see the butts of five guys in front of you...”, when the audience, of course, reacted by giggling. Our discussion kept on going when the woman continued: “I was just thinking that it was great that when the music started, and the work carried us away, the distracting behaviour stopped. It was a kind of victory. As an art educator, I thought it was great, because, at first I thought that I will go and say something to the girls, but then I thought that if the work carries us, the girls will get quiet.” The teacher of the girls admitted that she was at first horrified herself, but then she was positively surprised that it went so well with her students. I told that we have experience of youth audiences which “kind of get interested” in *Katiska* “by accident”. First they may behave badly but then suddenly they follow the work silently. I think it is the most satisfying thing to win over a “difficult” audience; to get them to truly engage with the work because it speaks to and with them.

Lauri took part in the conversation and added that sometimes he thinks that it is really good for them as actors that the audience reacts loudly to the acts on stage, but that the other times in the scenes, when they are dancing in an “ethereal trance”, it can be distracting. So sometimes it works but sometimes he feels sorry for those “who are not so comfortable with themselves that they could not just watch it, but that they have to start making sounds like fake farts or other noises”. At this point our lighting technician Jere M. also took part in the discussion: “About men’s butts...” And again the young audience was giggling. “Yes, in theatre, if it makes you to giggle, it is kind of okay, because every reaction that is caused by something that has been done on the stage, if it makes you laugh or cry, it can’t be wrong. So if something makes you giggle, then you have to giggle, if you feel like it. You shouldn’t be afraid of reactions in theatre. You *can* react.”

This excerpt from our audience discussion is important on many levels. I wonder how much more this audience learned from their visit to the theatre, firstly because we had this audience discussion, secondly because the woman articulated her annoyance at the girls, and thirdly because we continued this discussion together. I am thankful for the girl who had courage to reply and apologize for her own part, but, I believe, also on behalf of many others. It is not the misbehaviour that worries me as an educator, but the way we handle it. Misbehaviour can lead us to a dialogue, and at its best, it can create a communicative space where multiple perspectives are revealed. At the end, we should all have a feeling that we now know a little more about things and about each other. Such honest discussions are important on many levels, as another middle-aged spectator pointed out when she described that the audience discussion, which we have included as part of *Katiska* shows for our young audiences, are an “excellent opportunity to reflect the content, dance and music together with adolescents”.

The previous example of the audience discussion with *Katiska* spectators shows us the importance of creating communicative spaces in which the different parties face each other in an understanding, honest and respectful way. The discussion showed an example of a situation where behavioural questions were in focus, but this leads my thoughts to any other situations where adults and young people confront each other. It is crucial to understand that in communication we are not aiming to change the other, at least not in the sense that we have some definite goal which we are trying to achieve. I agree with Noddings that “we cannot shape students as we do pottery”, and I would add that it is not even what we are aiming at. Not just in outside school activities, like the *Katiska* project, but as Noddings says, also as teachers at schools, we must help students to bring their own interests and the topics of the curriculum together in ways that have meaning for our students. By doing this teachers help

students to make connections between school studies and great existential questions. (Noddings 2005.) This is only possible if the way in which we fulfill our pedagogical responsibility is justified only on pedagogical grounds and not on a rationale derived from religion, business, politics, or science (Manen 1991, 69). Respectful relations provide the best foundation for ethical education by showing young people how to engage in dialogue about themselves, others and the world.

Even if I am not following the programme of some particular religion or political view, I am still doing art, research and education from my own *ideological* base. To be clear, by ideological I do not mean a specific ideology of some political party, but rather a set of beliefs and ideas which form the basis for my actions. I agree with Bertolt Brecht (2001/1964, 55) that “[f]or art to be ‘unpolitical’ means only to ally itself with the ‘ruling’ group”. Education which claims to be apolitical is blind to its own affiliations to particular ideologies. That is why I want to make it clear that my own worldview and my idea of the human shape my practice as an activist artist and educator. For example, I believe that every human being is valuable and also interesting as she/he is, and I also believe that everyone can dance and be a fascinating dancer. Compared to traditional classical dance training these are very different ideological stepping stones for my practice as a dance educator. It could be said that *Katiska* was from the beginning strongly a political project, in its broad meaning: the whole project was built on a critical and emancipatory interest in knowledge. A former dance critic once claimed that *Katiska* is a “dance politically significant” work of art. Even if street dance, especially hip-hop and funk styles, are increasingly popular among men, dance, principally when it is considered as an art form, is still not allowed for men.

This fact has also been recognized by the media which has written about our “dancing boys”. *Suosikki*, a magazine for young people, quoted Mikael: “If I had been asked, if I would like to dance, I would have probably declined. It was a leap into the unknown.” Mikael continued: “This has taught me a lot and opened my eyes to dance. This opened a totally new world for me.” This kind of media coverage is important. It brings the dancing boys close to the young audience, to the media that they are familiar with. Mikael’s words also showed that also he had preconceptions about dance, but now he thinks of it differently. Our boys had not done any artistic dance before this project, thus they could be like any of those majority men who do not dance, who do not watch dance and who do not like dance. In other words, they do not know what dance really is, if they have never had an opportunity to visit the world of dance.

If we keep thinking that dance is not suitable for men, or that art in general is “too difficult” for young people, both girls and boys, or that it is such a waste to offer them

something so valuable, we are giving a signal that we are not interested in communicating with our adolescents, because they do not reach the standard for those we think are capable of receiving art. We are also shutting them out of the whole world of art. One of the aims for my art is to liberate people from the existing social rules and cultural norms which set the boundaries for individuals to express themselves as they are. In other words, I want to honour people for who they are, not through their age, gender or achievements. Honour depends on the credit given by other people (Ricoeur 2005, 207). That is why I claim that without mutual respect we cannot communicate sincerely.

Art can be a powerful medium for communication, but as art educators we have to understand how to provide suitable opportunities for our young audience to engage with works of art. At first, art can be like a foreign language for our audience, and thus it takes effort from the receiver to understand the language and the whole cultural codification of the art field. Following Merleau-Ponty (2008, 429) I argue that it is the other's gaze which transforms me into an object and similarly my gaze him. Merleau-Ponty also adds that "the objectification of each by the other's gaze is felt as unbearable only because it takes the place of possible communication". A student who refuses to talk to her/his teacher, or a teenage spectator of *Katiska* who sits in the back row of the theatre and tries to hide behind his baseball cap are still communicating with us. In Merleau-Ponty's (2008, 420) words: "The refusal to communicate, ..., is still a form of communication." It is critical to understand in our attempt to build more communicative, trustful and respectful relations in education that the social world is "not as an object or sum of objects, but as a permanent field or dimension of existence: I may well turn away from it, but not cease to be situated relatively to it", as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 421) expresses it. Like it or not, you are still forced to be in communicative relation with others. But *what kind of* communication – that is where we should address our energy into.

Leppäkoski's (2005, 134) thoughts on theatre making are very similar to mine. She believes that theatre has instrumental value: performances should – not teach, or preach, or declare – but rather raise awareness. She is not after representations that seek to manipulate the audience, but acknowledge the fact that the performance is about something that has gone through her own sight. *Katiska* also tells something about the world as the boys, Maija and I saw it. It is a performance about the peculiarities of the world we wanted to put on the stage and through them to tell the story of young men.

Aristotle (1994, 35–36) states that the key elements of the plot are reversals, recognitions and suffering. According to him, the best plot should involve a change of fortune: tragedy should thus imitate actions arousing fear and pity, and it should proceed from

good fortune to bad, and involve a high degree of suffering, physical harm or even death, for the protagonist. *Katiska* does not have a clear plot line and thus it also does not have a single turning point, but rather it plays with several different moments of reversals. With *Katiska* we could clearly notice that it is important that the recipient can identify and empathize with the world that the piece of art presents, or more precisely, creates. The work of art raises feelings, and at its best it raises conflicting thoughts and emotions, because they are, after all, also the important feature of the entire spectrum of life itself. *Katiska* made the public reflect on the self and the other, but also the whole world that we inhabit. The content of the work and the meanings of the different scenes do not exist in a vacuum, but they happen somewhere *in-between* the sender and the receiver, *in a relation* between the work itself as the object and the subjective experiences, thoughts, feelings and memories of the artists, as well those of the spectator, which are initiated by the work. Art is an experience and a feeling. Through art we can learn how to deal with different emotions – even contradictory ones:

We are trying to comprehend what we saw. I am still astonished. I laughed, I was amazed, I was scared, I cried and I got irritated – my body was filled with different kinds of feelings. I would like to see the performance over and over again. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

Art functions as collective memory, as shared experience of our life world, where the memories are worked on and shaped, by and at the same time it also affects, what kind of memories there will be in the future (Sederholm 2007, 148). I believe that art can have an effect in our perceptions and thus also challenge the commonly accepted truths. Art does not only help us to accept diversity, to see beauty in the diversity of life, but on the other hand, it also helps us to see another more like myself, to see the similarities, and not only the disconnection. Generally, we stress the differences, the separation between the self and the other. But I claim that art can help us to come closer together, to find ways to see us together, as one of our spectators also experienced:

Everyone knows that women are difficult, that a woman is only understood by another woman. From a female point of view, men are another story of their own, but it feels that the performance took a little peek into their psyche. We should get a similar work on women, and then perhaps men could also understand women better... (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

The ability for empathy, the capability to stand in another person's shoes, can be supported through art, as the previous excerpt shows. When we see a highly expressive and genuine artist or a work of art which conveys empathy, it also reinforces the recipients' own courage and ability to empathize with others. Anttila (2006a, 70) believes that compassion and ethical sensitivity are based on our bodily sensations and feelings, on our ability to perceive all the little nuances of our emotional life. Art teaches us how meanings and relations are not always clearly readable from single gestures. Following Merleau-Ponty (2008, 220) I also claim that art can show us how everything in us is both natural and both manufactured: "It is no more natural, and no less conventional, to shout in anger or to kiss in love than to call a table 'a table'. Feelings and passionate conduct are invented like words." Men are not taught to show their pain or hurt feelings. I remember when I was working as a schoolteacher that boys seemed to have difficulty to admit that they were bullied. They could have tears in their eyes, but still they were insisting that "everything was okay" and they were just "joking". You are not allowed to show your weakness and cry. One of the scenes tells about that:

From the separate scenes I remember best the one where Mikael and Jere were together and Mikael was abusing Jere. Jere was hurt, but he was just laughing – after all, behind the laugh you could sense fear. I think the scene was really horrible, but extremely powerful.

(spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

Abstract movement may lead the spectators into the significant experiences and interpretations. Each interprets the work through their life experience, the current situation and the perception of the world. An upper secondary school student is at a turning point in his life: childhood is more controlled from the outside, dictated by other people. Upper secondary school students are also considering the directions of their lives, further studies and the future careers. The world opens up from the family towards the whole society. The pre-given life of childhood turns towards adulthood, which is coloured by the endless choices they have in their lives. This poses a serious challenge to young people, as one of our spectators interpreted:

I thought that the table scene was like a society. The guys were trying to hang on it, trying to get a grip. (spectator, upper secondary school student, male)

Some of the scenes were born from the images presented in media. The work deals with and questions the stereotypical image of men. “Men do not” lyrics, as well as the scene of the popular music icons, such as Elvis Presley and Michael Jackson, address male identity issues with ironic criticism. The revitalizing perspectives into the images of identities caused excitement and pleasure in *Katiska*’s audience as a middle-aged woman described:

I was impressed by what I saw ... the most refreshing performance that I have seen in a long time. ... As I have seen the performance, I dare to claim that Katiska, which addresses the experiences of manhood, functions as a great art education production to the people who created it as well as to the people who experienced it. Apart from rock concerts, I have never seen so many enthusiastic youngsters in a theatre! What an exemplary way to introduce stage art to young people... I recommend it. Art education at its best.

The audience was impressed by the sensitivity of the young men. The table scene in which the performers move lyrically, gently and beautifully on, under and around the table, made the spectators re-evaluate the norms in Western society. The boys are touching and carrying each other, they have to support and rely on each other. This also made the performers evaluate the importance of touch and physical intimacy. According to the prevailing norm physical closeness among men is not accepted, except in some special cases, as one of our young male spectators also stated:

I think it is great when you are trying to break the normal way of thinking; that men are not allowed to touch. When you turn 18, you are only permitted to hug when someone is congratulating you. (spectator, upper secondary school student, male)

The work clearly presents both the boys’ subjective perspective and a perspective which is somehow more generalized. I believe that a work of art which is created on the existentialist ground happens in the very space of “an exchange between generalized and individual

existence, each receiving and giving something” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 522). At its best art can help us to recognize, around our “strictly individual project” “a zone of generalized existence” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 523). Art helps us to embody the cohesion of the self and the other.

Lyrical, sensitive movement, which is typically considered feminine, delivers a powerful and highly emotional new message about young men, as Aimo commented after seeing *Katiska* in the first performance season: “Some of the scenes were simply so beautiful and emotional that I was totally blown away.” The image of aggressive and strong man is joined by the touching and thoughtful young man. Even if this interior dimension of the boys is not described in words, it is, even more affectively, present for an audience through the moving bodies on stage, as a middle-aged female spectator described: “power of their overall expression made my soul shiver”.

But why is art such a powerful tool to create spaces for mutual communication? If an art work does not represent clear meanings, but creates questions and perhaps suggests something new, the receiver of it is also forced into creativity. Dance animateuring encourages participants, dancers as well as spectators, to interpret art affectively and to critically investigate the questions of identity and the whole life itself. I agree with Fraleigh (1987, 118) that “we live art through the affective, through moving out toward the art work and being moved by it” but at the same time “art becomes more meaningful as we relate it to our world at large and use it cognitively”. *Katiska* presents a montage. It does not present a clear storyline the one and only truth about these young men or any. Perhaps it does not even tell about just young men, but something more general or perhaps quite the opposite, something very particular that a single spectator perceives from the work. The nature and the aim of this kind of art work were also understood by a female upper secondary school student after seeing *Katiska*:

I and my best friend were comparing our experiences of Katiska all the way home. We thought that in order to understand the work it requires a certain artistic belief. All the actions are based on the audience's interpretation, and everyone may have a different understanding of what it tells about.

The theorist of socio-cultural animation Leena Kurki (2006, 29–31) claims that in order to develop animateuring methods and projects, we should profoundly consider the relationship between individual and society. She argues that the dialogical democracy and the

recognition of each person's uniqueness and willingness to listen other's points of view and to discuss them, is the only alternative to violence in many institutional and social fields. Kurki also notes that because an individual is both personal and social, we should always understand her/him in context. Therefore she comes to the conclusion that to be a human means searching our own horizon in life: a human being is an active subject, an agent, and it is the *action* which integrates the whole human being, her/his aims, thoughts and will into one. Also Merleau-Ponty (2008, 215) argues that communication happens through "the reciprocity of my intentions and the gestures of others". He continues: "The gesture presents itself to me as a question, bringing certain perceptible bits of the world to my notice, and inviting my concurrence in them. Communication is achieved when my conduct identifies this path with its own. There is mutual confirmation between myself and others." Because performance operates with bodies in action, and not just through images and words, it has the great advantage of resonating with in the living bodies of the art recipients; the communication happens in the direct bodily sensations and emotions as well as in the critical minds of the spectators as active agents:

Through its young performers, the performance comments on the life of a young, Finnish man and on the external demands, ambitions, hopes and dreams. The commentary is done in a way that is moving, sarcastic, critical and funny. The "a man does not dance, a man does not sing" sessions that were performed and sang with great energy at the end of the performance crystallize an image on stage about a naturally masculine youngster who is sensitive, artistic and has a fertile imagination and who is not afraid to criticize the surrounding society that incites materialism and materialistic competition. This is an absolutely charming and fresh performance that makes you to think. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

In this section I have investigated the ability of art to communicate. At first, following Merleau-Ponty, I acknowledged that we are always communicating, because we are at all times standing in relation with each other. In our attempt to communicate with new audiences we must treat everyone respectfully. We must be genuinely interested in listening to each other. Art education and art itself that honours voices from multiple perspectives creates fruitful dialogical spaces with the potentiality for a critical and questioning attitude to hegemonic structures. I came to the conclusion that performance which respects and

celebrates the uncertain plot of life resonates with the living experiences of spectators. I now look more closely into the comical elements of *Katiska*, and reflect on the power of humour and irony in creating communicative spaces.

Irony

The postmodern reply to the modern consists of recognizing that the past, since it cannot really be destroyed, because its destruction leads to silence, must be revisited: but with irony, not innocently. (Umberto Eco)

It is important that adults, teachers and parents, share their thoughts with young people on the work of art, but I also think that an art work should also speak to its young audience directly. If we aim to educate a new audience for art, we should think carefully, where we can initiate our communication. I would say that young people are easy to please with entertainment. Entertainment is familiar and safe. The comic characters as well as the light and entertaining content strike the audience, as we could also see with *Katiska*'s young audience. The problem which we have with entertainment is that it easily repeats the existing structures, it gives the answers we are used to getting; on the contrary, art is aiming to create something new. It calls the existing into question. Entertainment often plays with humourous elements. In addition art does not have to be just serious, but it as well can play with humour.

There can be multiple different perspectives and positions from which the narrative can be presented; in the simplest case of theatrical performance it is the same perspective that all the actions are presented, but often the perspectives are inconsistent with each other (Uspenski 1991, 154–155). Uspenski (1991, 157) claims, for instance, that it is a necessary condition for *irony* to have different levels of inconsistency with the selected perspectives. In short, humour is born when the perspective changes. In *Katiska* the boys comment on the events from both the personal and the “other’s” perspective. *Katiska* plays with many transitions between opposite positions. Irony is characterized by the shift in which the performer speaks or acts like the person, whose mask he has taken – but this person is the criticized object, not the subject (Uspenski 1991, 188–189). Humour can be used to deal effectively with stereotypes, to expose the prejudices and values of people, as Aimo described after seeing *Katiska* in the first performance season:

The message is brought up in a twisted way. As the work goes on the boys are singing a grotesque song which repeats different male stereotypes. The style of statement is genius, because the approaching of things with oppositions seems to be the most efficient way to acknowledge your own stupidity.

Normally the character's and the receiver's perspectives are consistent, so there is no need to distinguish them, but inconsistency may also be carefully considered when trying to achieve comical outcome and irony (Uspenski 1991, 186–187). Humour is often based on identification. The spectator identifies with the character – if not with himself – then at least with her/his next-door neighbour. If a spectator shares the ideology of the work, she/he understands the irony. But if she/he does not, she/he misses the conditionality of the scene and interprets it directly. For example, in the scene where the boys are trying to live up to the expectations of the girls' "dream man", we have repeatedly experienced that a teenage audience responds to the scene very differently from an adult audience. The adults laugh and the adolescents keep silent.

In *Katiska* the irony is probably the most obvious in the *Men do not* scene. The perspective revealed on the phraseological level is always subordinate to the ideological level (Uspenski 1991, 158), so the words of the song are understood as irony, as criticism of prevailing values. The boys sing together in chorus presenting the value perspectives which are clearly opposite to their own. The words "Men do not sing, men do not dance" and the boys' positioning and gestures undoubtedly signal the conflicting view, to what the whole work otherwise exudes. In the rest of the work the young men sing and dance and even do it well and enjoy it. The song does not reflect the ideology of the boys' own perspective, but rather a completely opposite one, which is still firmly the norm and the established idea of a man. Originally the scene was born from my preconception, that there are still some prohibitions for men – there are things that men cannot do or are not allowed to do. In accordance with my own ideology I wanted to criticize the prescriptive approach and through irony relieve a man of this format. But I must stress that the final words of the song are drawn from the boys' own writing and singing improvisations:

Men do not sing. Men do not dance. Men do not cry. Men do not freeze.

Men do not listen to any other than their own mother.

Men do not make up. Men do not hug. Men do not crochet. Men do not do the dishes.

Men are not allowed to freeze – but they still do.

Wilson (2003, 137) says that, on the surface, comedians are thought to be just entertainers, who spread a bit of fun around, but they also have an important social role which extends beyond this. As Wilson stresses, comedians have an educational aim: they reveal selfishness and stupidity, and also release us from living life too seriously. Wilson (2003, 132) also argues that the motivational and emotional strength of humour depends on how well the humorous material coincides with public concerns, desires and fantasies; its ability to deal with common pleasures, but also anxieties and frustrations. Through irony *Katiska* managed to create communication between different genders:

The performance made me think of the world and the position of men (and also after the show it made me talk about this several hours), the pressures that you have to have “six-pack” abs, singing skills and everything in between. And after all of these demands you are not even allowed to freeze. (spectator, upper secondary school student, female)

Aristotle says that comedy is imitation of people with lower moral values, but not so that they appear evil, but rather so that being ridiculous is a form of ugliness. It is because of some shortcoming, ugliness does not cause pain or injury. (Aristotle 1994, 21.) Wilson (2003, 127) believes that humour is based on a well-thought out mixture of warmth and security and of hostility or fear. Humour helps to deal with human weaknesses in a gentle and understanding way. Instead of pointing a finger at someone, ignorance is expressed with self-irony – this is who we are. The most difficult topics are often easier to handle with humour, as one of our spectators also pointed out:

With entertaining stylization and repetition obscene gestures and violence are integrated into the piece. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

Situations causing most of us laughter are always also social; they include relations with other people, or at least they require the other's presence (Wilson 2003, 126). Tickling yourself does not make you to laugh, another person is needed. Theatre is an ideal place to experience different emotions together, including joy and laughter, because there are always at least two bodies present, one of mine and the second the other's; the actor and the spectator.

The humour, the joking around, the strength, the hidden feelings and thoughts opened up to the audience to see in a moving way. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

It must be said that *Katiska's* direct and humourous commentary of male stereotypes would not function without opposing elements. The subjective perspective of the boys' emotional life emerges more subtly: abstract, dance-like scenes arise from the boys' own bodies. A middle-aged female spectator described this as follows:

I was indeed laughing a lot, but I also had tears in my eyes; I also saw gentleness that exists and is allowed to exist between guys.

Alterity and dialogue

Lauri: Every one of these guys is the greatest. Everyone is different and great in a different way.

In the dictionary definition *alterity* is described as "the state or quality of being other; being otherwise". The concept of alterity was created by Emmanuel Lévinas (1999) in the sense "otherness" in contrast to identity. As Ricoeur (2005, 153–154) points out, in phenomenology there are two clearly opposite views of this dissymmetry between the ego and the other: one view, which is Husserl's, remains on the level of the theoretical phenomenology of perception; the other, which is Lévinas's, is clearly ethical. Ricoeur does not want to favour one or the other, but argues that they both show how reciprocity appears "as an always incomplete surpassing of this dissymmetry". The egological understanding of consciousness places my ego as the subject of all possible knowledge. The alterity of the other person, like all alterity, is thus constituted in me. But then comes a paradoxical twist when we realize that

the stranger is a subject of experience, just as I am, and also capable of perceiving me as belonging to his world. (Ricoeur 2005, 154.)

I am at constant risk of misunderstanding another person, because I can only see him from my own point of view. When I hear him object to my arguments or actions, I face the fact of the other person also being a centre of perspectives (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 394). Merleau-Ponty (2008, 407) argues that there are two modes of being: being in itself, which is that of objects arrayed in space, and being for itself, which is that of consciousness. Another person seems to stand before me as an *in-itself* and yet to exist *for himself*. But, as Merleau-Ponty points out, in objective thought there is no place for other people and a plurality of consciousness. “Both universality and the world lie at the core of individuality and the subject, and this will never be understood as long as the world is made into an object” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 472). The Cartesian *cogito* obtains its significance only through its own cogito, but the plurality of consciousness is again impossible if I have an absolute consciousness of myself (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 431–434). The concept of alterity rehabilitates plurality, the possibility of multiple subjectivities occurring equally. The perceived world cannot only be *my* world.

Ricoeur (2005, 155) claims that “It is my own flesh that presents itself as the first *analogon* of another flesh, whose immediate, intuitive experience will remain inaccessible to me.” Ricoeur continues that this analogizing apprehension is given threefold support: The first, which we call a *pairing*, can be found, for example, in sexual experience or in conversation. Second, we have the confirmation of the coherence between the self and the other in the agreement of expressions, for example in gestures. Finally, *imagination* makes us comprehend, for example, that the other’s “here” coincides with my “over there”. Therefore Ricoeur (2005, 156) comes to the conclusion that the other does not remain completely unknown to me: “He remains ‘apperceived’ not only as other than me, in the exclusive sense of the term, but as another me, an alter ego, in the analogical sense of the term. ... In this sense, the ego and the other don’t really ‘appear’ together. I alone appear, am ‘presented’. The other, as presumably analogous, remains ‘appresented’.” Ricoeur (2005, 157) points out “the analogical relation can only repeat itself again and again”, and thus, “the lived experience of the other always remains inaccessible to me”. “The self is ‘at home with itself’ in this world that it inhabits. The stranger is what troubles this sense of being at home with oneself. The same and the other enter into a relation whose terms never form a totality.” (Ricoeur 2005, 158).

With Taylor, Ricoeur (2005, 214) argues that individual autonomy, “this eminently modern preoccupation, which joins together identity and recognition, was made possible, as

Haberman and Honneth also recognize, on the one hand only by the collapse of social hierarchies that placed honor at the apex of values of esteem and on the other hand by the promotion of the modern notion of dignity, along with its corollary, the egalitarian form of recognition.” As Ricoeur adds, following Taylor, it is collectively that we demand an individual recognition, and thus, in the name of liberal neutrality, we remain “blind to differences”, and it is this “universal identity” that appears as discriminatory. Hegel (as quoted in Ricoeur 2005, 177) also describes the expression of “unequal life” as “the relation in which the indifference and free has power over the difference”.

In an opposite relation to Husserl’s “analogizing grasp” Ricoeur (2005, 158) gives an example of Levinas’s concept of the *face*, of which he has said “that it does not appear in the sense of representation but expresses itself”. As Ricoeur says, following Levinas, “the face conjoins transcendence and epiphany. This epiphany is not an analogizing grasp, but rather a revelation *sui generis*.” Interestingly, what was the most important for me right from the beginning of *Katiska* project was the idea to give “face” for the boys. I thought that we should bring out the idea that first the boys are “faceless”, but then they are exposed as truly themselves. The boys should not represent some stereotypical image of a young man, but rather they should tell us something that we did not know before. The spectator would have to confront this face to face: I do not actually know, although I think I know. The spectator would then have to re-evaluate their preconceptions, be in dialogical relationship with the world.

According to Varto (2007, 62–64) *dialogue* happens in-between people, in caring relations; in contrast, *monologue* means exercising power and having one’s own opinion over others. Varto stresses the importance of trust and a mutual goal in dialogue. It requires willingness and braveness to share one’s experiences with others in an honest way. I follow Varto and claim that the richer and more polysemic the speech acts, or movements, are, the more likely they are to touch the true nature of dialogue.

By *dialogism* I mean more than just interaction with another person. I follow Merleau-Ponty (2008) and argue that it predominantly means being in a *corporeal relation* with the world and the other. I claim that in a dialogical relation one is also forced to evaluate one’s thinking, prejudices and attitudes constantly, and organize them again and again. Through dialogue the world becomes meaningful in many ways. The dialogue is active in both ways, and the meanings arise when the body accepts a certain attitude towards the world and places itself in it. Our connection with the world, the spatial, temporal and sensual as well as sexual aspects and their relations are born in the bodily dialogue. We cannot affect the dialogue through conscious decisions; the world is constantly defining us, so the individual liberty can

never be total. Instead, we should acknowledge that the freedom is included in human consciousness, in its ability to see itself as part of the world and to place itself in relation to endless possibilities and choices. I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2008) that the individual liberty is only possible in relation with the world and other people. The possibilities, capacities, choices, cannot be found outside me, but rather in my relation with the world, in me as part of the world. In my freedom I am still intertwined with the world.

A woman: I think it was great that at first they were in their own clothes. Then strip off their masks and clothes and became similar and having the same problems. Then again at the end they put back their own clothes and they all look slightly different.

Another woman: Then they did not wear the masks anymore. It was somehow a very impressive moment when they dressed and showed that this is who I am.

A man: They did not have to dance and performed behind the mask anymore.

The woman: Yes, it was so brave. I think it made a strong impact on several young people. It was not like usually in theatre that you come at the end to bow in the costume of your character.

Ricoeur (2005, 169) makes a distinction, referring Hobbes, between the person as a mask, a role, or the proprietary author, who is the possessor of his words and actions. As Ricoeur (2005, 170–171) stresses, it is not so much the self-identification that an artificial person, an actor, is lacking, “but the part of an alterity that cooperates in his ipseity”. He continues that “it is not only the invention of the subject of rights that is important for our conceptual history of the idea of mutual recognition, but the conjunction between ipseity and alterity in the very idea of right.” What was also central in *Katiska*, was to make room for each and every one of the boys as they are. I did not aim to fit them into some ideal model, but rather to encourage them to bring their personalities to the fore. An Australian dancer and choreographer, Paea Leach, said after seeing a *Katiska* rehearsal:

As a group they are diverse and interesting, a collective of very different voices giving life to one. It is their particular personalities, manners of dealing with movement tasks and dancing, that give this work its texture and form its innocent, if somewhat tortured, beauty.

Ricoeur (2005, 209) argues that the challenge in dialogue lies “in the capacity to awaken the actors of one world to values of another world”, to understand a world other than one’s own. Ricoeur describes this as the process of translating a foreign language into one’s own language: translation is “a way of making what is incomparable comparable”. The challenge is to accept that the world has no one Truth, and that life can be lived “correctly” in numerous ways. I must understand that what is good and right for me is not necessarily the same for others. Our historical and cultural background has shaped our understanding of right and wrong, good and bad. What I think is normal, may be abnormal for others.

It was clearly important for Mikael to get to know the other boys during the process. He often described how important it had been for him to work in collaboration with others. At first it was slightly difficult to be in close contact with strangers, but soon he noticed that he was no longer afraid of the others’ closeness and touch, and that it was really fun to do all the improvisations. Mikael admits that he had some preconceptions about the other boys, but then when he got to know the others better, he realized how great they actually were.

Katiska brought together boys from various backgrounds. Not just Mikael but the other boys, too, admitted that they had some preconceptions regarding each other at the beginning. They did not necessarily become best friends during the process, either, but at least they learned to get along and respect each other. Education which aims at mutual recognition is far from the concept of universality and sameness. We should listen to Ricoeur (2005, 176–177), who warns about the lack of individual autonomy: when we recognize a person as an “absolute concept”, as “free being”, it always lacks the recognition of difference.

I agree with Jaukkuri that if an art practice works as supporting the plurality of voices and initiating dialogue between multiple subjects through creativity, expression and reflection, the important acknowledgement of identity and alterity can take place. It seems that this movement from universal objectivity towards the *real* reality, the ambiguous network of subjectivities, is the message that contemporary art has to offer. This movement is not towards the big stories, the identification with ideologies and finding the security of these, but the movement is towards a world in which we live and which is full of secrets, inconstancies and invisible rules – its various manifestations, however, all attempt the good (Jaukkuri 1998, 42).

The globalized world has made us to face contrasting truths: the truths which are commonly believed and maintained in our own community and the “non-truths” which are lurking dangerously behind the neighbour’s fence. The globalized, postmodern world challenges us in a new way, on both a personal and a social level. In the world view which emphasizes oppositions, things appear for us as black and white – or East and West, Muslim and Christian. Our own culture and generation is treated as something better. Some people believe that only by isolating ourselves can we protect and maintain our identity. Difference is often seen as negative, abnormal or even wrong, but at the same time it seems important to highlight individuality; to bring to the fore the special features which separate us from others, from the mass. In other words, you have to be special, but in the right way. Minor things may have massive implications; specific clothing styles and music genres have a significant symbolic value for young people. Media has an important role in creating, selling and sustaining ideal, consumable, identities; accepted body types, respected professions and prized achievements are presented as taken to be the only truths, and thus, the recipes for universal happiness.

Art can be used to reflect on one’s self, and the ways how we and others act. Art can help us to question our practices that are considered as “normal” and “natural”. Through art we can also identify the structures and roles in our society, in which we are also ourselves involved either as active producers, reproducers, or as passive condoners. My practice is driven by the relativistic perception of knowledge and truth. I have clear thoughts on my own on the world’s injustices, but I want to remain open to other views as well. I want to broaden my own thinking by allowing different perspectives to enter my works. If the different perspectives are not organized hierarchically, but are presented as being of equal value, a work of art is called polyphonic (Uspenski 1991, 25). *Katiska* aims to be polyphonic. The open and permissive creative process aims at dialogical, or “polylogical” (Ginter 2011), understanding. Since *Katiska* was built in collaboration between the performers and two directors, it is natural that the work contains a wide range of viewpoints. Often the projects can feel like the “art of compromise” (Kantonen 2005, 274). However, I agree with Kantonen that this is exactly the reason that makes community projects interesting, exciting and challenging.

When interpreting and analysing *Katiska* it is impossible to separate the “characters” on stage from the dancers, because the work is created from the boys’ personal point of view and from material which is improvised, at least to some extent, is based on their autobiographical content. The work reveals the boys’ own value perspectives, but they also present attitudes which are opposite to their own. Riina Hannuksela wrote in her critique in Savon Sanomat

newspaper on 18 June 2009: “First, they may proclaim the Truth, but in the next instant they laugh for all of that.” *Katiska* purposely plays with this oppositions, rules and norms that are taken for granted in our society. The improvisation also makes the play of values happen on a more personal level. The work also contains scenes that were originally, at least some of them and for some of the dancers, at odds with their own values. In the joyful and optimistic “sailor” scene, where the boys are dancing and hugging each other, the dance changed along the way to be more “drunken”. While the boys often emphasize that they are themselves on stage, as a director, I know that this particular scene presents at least some of the performers more like created characters than truly themselves. Happy and joyful dancing has become a stereotyped image of drunken Finnish men.

On a purely movement level we can say that sometimes the performers make their own movements, sometimes they copy each other, and sometimes they move in unison. In some scenes we have ended up compromising for choreographical reasons. For example, in the *Life Path* scene, the boys present movements arising, not only from their own bodies, but also from each others’ improvised movements and motion patterns. Originally, the particular movement may have not arisen from a boy’s own body, but is rather borrowed from another performer’s improvisation. But at the end the movement created in another body starts to adapt into another’s own body, and gradually becomes like his own movement. The movement may also invoke a variety of thoughts, feelings and memories, which are again interpreted and expressed differently by each different body according to their individual features and relations to the world.

Improvisational practice in a group and the whole animateuring process happens in a constant space of transition. What was a subject turns into an object. What was your experience becomes mine. What was originally part of my identity turns into alterity in the other body and its experience. In improvisation we live in the space of *in-between* and in the state of *becoming* (see also Springgay 2008), and it is there that we learn about identity and alterity. The stability and totality of things, persons, perceptions, experiences, interpretations and identities disappears. We step into the space of complexities and ambiguities where we can embrace, on the one hand differences, but on the other hand sameness. The line between black and white blurs and we get shades of grey. When we start to take other colours into account and let them mix, we get an infinite number of different colors and their shades, hues, tints and values of new meanings and understanding.

We have to remember that it is not only the author’s perception of the world that is expanded through art; the spectator can also reflect on her/his own world view through the work of art; what the world means for a person, and the meaning of different things for

the self and self-awareness. Identity research and art based on the makers' own life narratives does not intend to create accurate portraits of real people, but rather to find the significance of the world and the self in the world. When the openness of the artwork's signs and symbols allows freedom for interpretation, the reception becomes personal, in other words, the spectator is able to translate the things expressed into her/his own world (see also Jaukkuri 1998, 34). I also agree with Korhonen that when a spectator comes to express thanks after the performance shining eyes or in tears, the gratitude is then truly personal. The gratitude is not for a good work of art, but for an opportunity to think about her/his own life. Therefore Korhonen has come to the conclusion that the main task for theatre is indeed to offer spectators that few hours time to reflect on their own lives. (Korhonen 2005, 99.)

After the first performance season I received a spontaneous email from an unknown spectator. She was a 17-year-old vocational school student. She was very impressed by *Katiska* and wanted to thank me for the experience that it gave her. Her email convinced me that *Katiska* was not just a significant experience for us, for the working group, but that it also had a serious impact on our audiences. It made the female spectator reflect the life of men and also empathize with them, but also criticize the society and its norms:

I just had to email you due to Katiska! I do not even know what I expected to happen during the evening but it was a complete success from my point of view. I don't know if the performance was supposed to be so profound and full of things to reflect upon as I experienced it to be. The music in this performance made my mind become empty and the fluent role performances filled my head with thoughts. Everything that I saw and experienced I sensed strongly. From a female point of view, the performance made me think differently about the life of a young man. It made the opposite sex human. ... This really makes you think and it got me at least to appreciate my fellow human beings and life but also, on the other hand, to criticize society and the world about values, ideals of beauty, education and pressures. This performance awakens you in the middle of everyday life when an ordinary day is made up only of waking up in the morning, doing the same things each and every day and then going to sleep in the evening. What a magnificent work of performing arts!

Ambiguity and I-lessness

Rasmus:

The movement arouses different emotions, longing, beauty and sensitivity, strength, but at the same time weakness as well. I do not pay attention anymore to how I look, but I rather do what feels good and right. Moving with others makes, in my opinion, us all a unitary creature, or a person, or a feeling, who does many things and goes through them. Contact with others is a good thing, because then you feel that there are others as well helping the creature to say what it needs to say. Overall the table scene awakens sensitivity and tenderness, but also the strength of five men.

Rasmus' articulation reflects the disappearance of the object self. When he is moving together with the other boys he slips in to the space of *in-between*. The self that evaluates itself from the outside, as an object among other objects, fades away. The focus turns to the internal experience, the embodied self, but at the same time to the space between the self and the other. Rasmus' description turns our attention to the presence of emotions different from his own, but also to the physical and, at the same time, the *spiritual* connectedness with the others. Jere's description of the same scene is very different:

My movements do not feel like my own. I cannot take hold of what I do and what is the purpose of it – except that it may look good for the audience. The scene does not arouse a lot of feelings in me, but sometimes, very rarely, I get some insights, for example I may, in my opinion, do a nice looking movement to the dynamics of the music. It is nice, but happens rarely. Sometimes I am worried about what my waggle looks like. Nice scene, which probably looks quite nice, but I doubt if I can ever enjoy it properly. It seems that I cannot find a meaning for myself and my movements.

Jere seems to approach his moving from the outside. He describes how he is concerned about the appearance, the outside image, of himself and his movements. He thinks of himself as an object which is visually achieved by the outside gaze. He places himself in the eyes of

the audience. He is mainly focused on his own exterior and not on his co-movers. He is very self-conscious and struggles to find the meaning and the purpose of the scene. The whole description is coloured with a sense of constant *judgmental gaze*.

In the table scene the boys move organically around, under and on a table. During the dance the table is moved forward by the boys, first from back stage to centre stage and then stage front. At the beginning of the scene the back wall is illuminated and the boys are seen only as silhouettes. They move slowly and calmly. Everyone has their own movement sequence, but occasionally the boys may make a similar motion at the same time. The boys are also in physical contact with each other. This creates delicious moments. The boys' own sequences of five movements, which they repeat in a loop, are set, but otherwise, they improvise. From the video documentations it can be seen that the more the boys have performed the work more they are in contact with each other. The extension of their movements has also increased. The boys also use the table more diversely: they are standing, lying, and dancing on top of it. They hang and balance on it. They move at different levels and the movements seem to carry them organically forward. The motion continues and is repeated largely the same way. The audience can only sense their overall motion and the shape together, but the individual boys remain remote. Finally, the boys are at the very front of the stage, close to the audience. They are much focused and somehow look fragile. Their eyes are closed. At the end of the scene Rasmus' "troubled" movement is incredibly beautiful, like a wounded bird floundering. The boys are in their own world, without any direct contact with the public. Beautiful but harrowing cello music fades. The motion of the boys vanishes and they remain still, sitting on the edges of the table.

The scene aroused strong emotions in the audience even if it was created through a simple touch exercise. Originally the movement was initiated from a partner's touch; the movement is obtained from a concrete point of departure. The concentration and sensory sensitivity created natural, organic motion. The movement was born in the contact of two bodies, and it recurs in each performance honouring the moment of creation but also as a result of its current performance context. In the scene, the boys move in a delicate way, which is not typically associated with masculinity. As the boys dance with their eyes closed, it gives an impression for the spectators that they witness something intimate and private. Mikael described what an impressive experience it was for him to see the other boys focusing on their own movements in the table scene. He said that he had never seen the others so focused. He believed that the spectator must have an open mind to be able to enjoy the artistic scene; and then it can be very powerful experience.

The table scene seems to be pleasurable for Rasmus, but in contrast, uncomfortable for Jere. Toivanen (2007, 122) speaks of the experience of *flow* (see also Csikszentmihalyi 1991) in the theatre making process. According to him, art making includes experiences of success and spontaneous feelings of joy and excitement, which are the characteristics of the flow experience. Flow is a condition in which the maker focuses solely and completely in what she/he is doing. The actor's attention is directed towards the action, which leads the whole awareness to merge with the action. The actor does not think about the work in terms of success or failure, but she/he is motivated and stimulated by the activity itself. The pleasure of art making makes the activity relevant for an individual. As its best, Toivanen believes that the flow experience has a profound meaning as a deep, life world changing experience. (See also Tolle 2011, 24).

In Rasmus' and Jere's descriptions we can see the difference in their approaches to the scene. Rasmus is focused on his body in motion and all the sensations and the emotions currently present in the moment. In contrast, Jere seems to think of the outcome, the objectification of the movement. He treats his movements and the whole scene as a tool for achieving the audience's approval. By focusing on the motion Rasmus reaches the enjoyable experience of flow, where he experiences his body as part of himself, but at the same time as part of the common world with the others (see also Tolle 2011, 93, 97). Jere's interest is focused strongly on himself, but in an instrumental way, on the body as an object, somehow ahead of himself. He lacks the experience of enjoyment and flow, the body as a sensing subject, here and now, intertwined with the presence of the others.

Anttila (2006a, 71) argues that when a person gets in contact with her/his body, containing all the tacit knowledge and wisdom, it creates a strong base for communal understanding and ethics. She defines communality as an attitude in which the individual's immediate self-interest or pleasures are secondary and a community interest is given priority. In a collaborative attitude, the attention is shifted from the self to the other. An ability to focus awareness on the others' life worlds and to momentarily abandon one's own needs, according to Anttila, is the proof of identity, a strong and structured experience of self as a permanent and continuous being. This experience of the self is holistic and it includes, as an integral part, the experience of one's own body as part of oneself, Anttila stresses. Sava (2007, 122) argues that focusing on the self in arts requires a paradoxical process; when you become interested in yourself and your actions and you move closer to the self, you must at the same time be able to watch yourself further away as a part of the bigger social picture. The aim of this kind of practice is to form a broader self-understanding than narcissistic self-focusing.

The motivation for Jere's moving comes from the visually imagined form, while for Rasmus, it comes from the kinesthetic and tactile experience. Interestingly Merleau-Ponty (2008, 369) claims that "in visual experience, which pushes objectification further than does tactile experience, we can, at least at first sight, flatter ourselves that we constitute the world". I am the centre of the reality and thus able to control it. But according to Merleau-Ponty, "tactile experience, on the other hand, adheres to the surface of our body; we cannot unfold it before us, and it never quite becomes an object". As the subject of touch, I cannot flatter myself that I am everywhere and nowhere, in control of the world: "It is not I who touch, it is my body", as Merleau-Ponty adds. The self positioned outside the body is capable of the act of judgment. It is the subjective self, the thinking mind, who evaluates the object self, the body as an instrument, for a certain purpose. In contrast, as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 369) claims, "The unity and identity of the tactile phenomenon do not come about through any synthesis of recognition in the concept, they are founded upon the unity and identity of the body as a synergic totality." In short, the visual imagining of the body seems to appear *ahead* and *in front* of the self and it is the judgmental gaze that controls our bodies; when, in contrast, the lived body, the self as the body, happens right *now* in this moment and right *here* in this space, in the sense of spirituality, where the self is connected to the other and the whole world.

As *body-object* Fraleigh (1987, 14) refers to "a conscious, intentional position taken toward the body as an object of attention", while *body-subject* refers "to pre-reflective consciousness". But she highlights that body-object and body-subject are not correlates of body and mind. The subject-body does not refer to some entity beyond the body, like the soul or mind; it is the body as lived and complete wholeness. In short, the object-body can be known, but the subject-body can only be lived (Fraleigh 1987, 15). Fraleigh (1987, 37) argues that "part of the dancer's power lies in her ability to objectify, to visualize herself as she may appear to others, to make herself into the dance she visualizes". Fraleigh's comment reveals her attitude to dance and the idea of a specific standard for visually correct movement. I argue that the ability to visualize movement in front of you can also be an obstacle to moving freely and being "present". In the *Katiska* process I purposely decided not to show any video clips for the boys to avoid a self-conscious, objectified and visualized approach to their own dancing. I now understand that this was a major ideological choice, as was my choice to work with "non-dancers": I clearly wanted to separate my own practice from the skill-valued and technique-oriented dance practice stemming from Cartesian tradition. But as Jere's description shows, it is not easy to root out the persistent custom of approaching performing from the outside.

Lendra compares the actor's *presence* to a trance state. "When a person is in trance he is highly aware of his surroundings. During this time the person is deeply involved with what he is doing and at the same time he is capable of sensing and incorporating the events in his environment without being affected by them. This may be similar to the state of being of a powerful actor, whose 'presence' deeply affects the spectators as well as absorbs his or her surroundings. Her art is organic, a phenomenon generated not by his or her intention to 'show', but by her honest and sincere motivation to 'do' what he or she is doing." (Lendra 1995, 140.) I agree with Lendra (1995, 182) that performers should begin all their work from this state of readiness and not "from an artificial attitude, a bodily, mental or vocal grimace". Then a certain type and quality of relationship between the doer and the done can be achieved (Lendra 1995, 190). Performers have to be conscious of their own bodies and at the same time to be acutely aware of their surroundings. They have to forget their own artificial attitudes and superficial expressions and sincerely do what they are doing. I argue that, when the performer is deeply involved with what she/he is doing, she/he has a power to draw the audience's attention to her/himself. The spectator experiences a confident performer making an organic performance that has great effect on the audience.

Lived experience has a temporal structure: it can never be grasped in its immediate appearance but is always reflected as past presence and that is why it can never be taken hold of in its full richness and depth. Lived experience is, after all, the starting point and endpoint of phenomenological research. (Manen 1998, 36.) I agree with Sheet Johnstone 1980, 3) that "[w]hen a dance is there for us, we intuitively know that it is there; something alive and vibrant is happening on the stage, and as we are totally engaged in our experience of that happening, we are too alive and vibrant: we have a lived experience. (*Sheets-Johnstone 1980, 3.*) Merleau-Ponty (2006) also sees *art* as the direct way to understand our lived experiences. He mostly uses painting as an example. Art enables us to holistically understand our relationship with the world, which is based on our perceptions. The meaning of art comes alive if we have lived experience of it; it is not the result of knowledge of it (Sheets-Johnstone 1980, 4–5). But we must acknowledge that art "is first and foremost a created phenomenon: it is a created phenomenon which presented and which appears before us, a created phenomenon which we experience" (Sheets-Johnstone 1980, 5).

I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2006) that art can be an important way to understand and build our relationships with the world, such that in an art work the world becomes visible to us. Merleau-Ponty argues that the questions that art asks are metaphysical in their nature. The questions are focused on the existence where we are, but without truly being there. The Being is a weaving of the self, the other and the world. Art helps us to place the self outside itself

and makes possible it to rest in this Being. It helps us to understand at a distance how we are in the world, and conversely how the world is in us, as Merleau-Ponty (2006, 93) beautifully describes.

I follow Merleau-Ponty and claim that uncertainty is the essence of human existence, and thus everything we live or think always has several meanings. Existence is not a set of facts, and the thing expressed does not exist separately from the expression, but they rather exist and form “the ambiguous setting of their inter-communication, the point at which their boundaries run into each other, or again their woven fabric” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 192–193, 196). The philosophy which is interested in the relations of the self and the world is necessarily ambiguous and indefinite in the conceptual level, not because it is a relatively new trend in philosophy, but because the phenomena on which it focuses are constantly changing and formless in every way. I agree with Hannula (1998, 140) who argues that only when we have surrendered the illusion of one correct and controlled truth we are able to face the other, and the self.

We often seem to forget, both in ourselves and in others, that “the real subject of history, which it is trying to extract beneath the juridical abstraction called citizen, is not only the economic subject, man as a factor in production, but in more general terms the living subject, man as creativity” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 199). We create an identity, or rather multiple suitable identities, for ourselves as products. We expect similar control of the self from others. An important feature of this kind of produced identity is its ability to have power over itself with rational thought. It is the absolute subjectivity in control which reduces others into objects. But as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 413) points out: “The perception of other people and the intersubjective world is problematic only for adults. The child lives in a world which he unhesitatingly believes accessible to all around him. He has no awareness of himself or of the others as private subjectivities, nor does he suspect that all of us, him included, are limited to one certain point of view of the world.” When a child “achieves the cogito and reaches the truths of rationalism”, he realizes himself as “a point of view on the world” who is capable “to construct an objectivity at the level of judgment”, as Merleau-Ponty (2008, 414) continues.

Merleau-Ponty (2008, 413) argues that language is a particular cultural object which is destined to play an essential role in the perception of other people: “In the experience of dialogue, there is constituted between the other person and myself a common ground; my thought and his are inter-woven into a single fabric, my words and those of my interlocutor are called forth by the state of the discussion, and they are inserted into a shared operation of which neither of us is the creator.” After all, we must understand that “speech is not an action” and it “does not show up the internal possibilities of the subject”, therefore “speech

does not translate ready-made thought, but accomplishes it” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 203, 207). Thought and expression are constituted at the same time; thought is not an “internal thing” which exists independently of words (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 212–213). The problem is that we seem to separate our words from thoughts and our gestures from feelings, even “the spoken word is a gesture, and its meaning, a world” just as “the gesture does not make me think of anger, it is anger itself”, like Merleau-Ponty (2008, 214) states. Words, gestures, language, dance, thoughts and actions are always created in the world of intersubjectivity; their meaning rises in the communal rather than in the private setting.

Following Merleau-Ponty (2008, 221) I argue that “we must begin by putting thought back among the phenomena of expression” and emotions back with our actions. I claim that this is one of the most important tasks of art education. Art brings together expression and medium; the container and its content are the one and same thing. I agree with Merleau-Ponty (2008, 212) that “The process of expression, when it is successful, brings the meaning into existence as a thing at the very heart” of the work of art, “opening a new field or a new dimension to our experience”. Borrowing from Merleau-Ponty, I claim that in a successful performance a spectator experiences that “the actress becomes invisible” and “the meaning swallows up the signs”. Then we can experience the continuity and unity of the whole work, but as soon as we remove our immediate encounter with it, we interrupt the flow and defragment its inbuilt totality (Sheets-Johnstone 1980, 6).

Actor trainer Nancy Meckler (1994) also believes that “the movement becomes organic when it comes inside a person”. She talks about *exchanging energies*: “When two human beings are concentrating very hard on the same task, it can be watched forever. You can see how they are communicating with each other in real desire. If there is no real energy exchange, it is not interesting to watch.” I have also noticed that when the performers are occupied with clear rules, tasks or images the whole body–mind is in action, and therefore it is also more interesting for an audience to watch. When the whole *lived body* is moving as one, the spectator does not concentrate on any particular aspect in the dance but has a grasp of it as whole.

Occasionally the performers may feel stiff or uncomfortable inside their bodies. This unwanted state in improvisation can be caused by thinking of the movement instead of feeling it. Usually closing the eyes and concentrating to the tactile sense and enjoyment of the movement, as many of the boys described, helps to regain the right mood. I agree with Hamilton (1993) who says that an aesthetic aim is often the cause of the problem. We are educated to perform in a certain way. It can be like a blanket that covers a possibility to have pure movement happening organically. Sometimes a performer is simply trying too hard, he

may want to be more creative and he does not trust his body. I agree with Leask (1995, 83–85), who writes about Bausch’s work, that it does not matter if the steps are virtuosic or pedestrian, what is moving about the work is how *real* the performer’s moods are. Then the performers can touch “the world of essence”, like Laban has said, “the significance of movement is not merely physical: it extends to a real where the physical, spiritual and mental are entwined” (Kozel 1994, 47).

Similarly in Rasmus’ experience, from a dancer’s point of view, the conventional oppositions vanish. The external descriptions of himself and the other disappear, when he loses himself in the motion. The embodied experience blurs the boundaries of the bodies as an object and as a subject as well as the borders of the self and the other. In the motion of shared space the self enters a space that eludes definite constructions and explanations. This is a state that I have often heard described as “a world that I did not know that existed”. In improvising I have experienced thus myself and it is also something that *Katiska* dancers, the dancers of my previous works as well as my students have described numerous times.

Venkula (2003, 100–102) seems to talk about a somehow similar phenomenon. She speaks of a “selfless person”, but she does not mean a negative or empty space, but rather a person who is in constant dialogue with reality. The self is then not a consequence of reasons, but a current state formed from previous experiences and actions. Venkula stresses that the self cannot be explained only by searching for reasons from the past, but it is taken forward by actions. The self is not the result of the past, but the same stream which flowed in the past and will continue to flow in the future. I agree with Venkula that artistic experiences can be the most important pathway to the experience of losing the egoistic self and to find the flowing reality, to experience the selflessness – which I rather call *I-lessness*.

At its most profound, art takes us to the experience of I-lessness – to the disappearance of the object self. In I-lessness the focusing into the ego does not exist; I am in my experience very much alive, inhabited in space and time with my whole being intertwined with others and the world. I merge into the world; the world merges into the events within me, at the time of my experiencing, doing and being. To experience the state of I-lessness requires an active shift in my awareness and also great courage to allow my whole personality to change. (See also Venkula 2003, 103–104.) I must understand that “my freedom, the fundamental power which I enjoy of being the subject of all my experiences, is not distinct from my insertion into the world”, as Merleau-Ponty states. “The central phenomenon, at the root of both my subjectivity and my transcendence towards others, consists in my being given to myself. *I am given*, that is, I find myself already situated and involved in a physical and social world – *I am given to myself*, which means that this situation is never hidden from me,

it is never round about me as an alien necessity, and I am never in effect enclosed in it like an object in a box.” (Merleau-Ponty 2008, 419.)

Similarly to Venkula’s idea of self-less person, I claim that I-lessness is not a negative concept, but a desired state in existentialist art where humanity is experienced holistically; body and mind experienced as one, and the self and the other exist closely connected. However, I-lessness does not mean the disappearance of the self or the disappearance of the other or the total absorption of them. As Merleau-Ponty (2008, 415) claims “interworld is still a project of mine”. “I perceive the other as a piece of behavior, for example, I perceive the grief or the anger of the other in his conduct, in his face or his hands, without recourse to any ‘inner’ experience of suffering or anger”, Merleau-Ponty elaborates and continues: “The grief and the anger of another have never quite the same significance for him as they have for me. For him these situations are lived through, for me they are displayed.”

I claim that the state of I-lessness is an abandonment of the egoistic self, which places the judgmental gaze of the self and the others from a controlling position of the rational thought above and front of the subject (see also Tolle 2011, 16–18). I-lessness is a rejection of extreme subjectivism, which highlights the individual and independent self over others. On the other hand the term refers to the overly accentuated position of objectifying and judging eye or I that is in control of everything. The term I-lessness is thus created by relating the pronunciation $\backslash\bar{\imath}$ of these two words “eye” and “I”. For this reason I have come to the conclusion that I-lessness is experienced when the concept of self is understood as fundamentally lived-bodily phenomena. I-lessness is experienced as the disappearance of the rationally controlled and constructed I, but not the disappearance of the self, the lived body. The state of I-lessness can only be born when we escape all kinds of mind–matter dichotomies, and search for real Being in mutuality, in relation with others and in the very living space of in-between (see also Springgay 2008, 27–28).

Lauri:

My movements feel my own. When I move alone I do not have any emotions – they come afterwards. The feeling in the table scene is calm. Now, when performing Katiska seems to be over for me, it feels melancholic. My own movements have transformed to more lyrical and tender. I do not have to think about how to move; the movements just come from somewhere. The reason for the change may be found in the fact that I have got to know myself and others, and I have started to move based on my feelings. That is why my moving has

become more natural and free. It is also easier to sense the others and adapt to their movements. The contact with the others has become second nature; it even feels necessary. The table scene is like gentle space, in which you can truly be in contact with others. The scene is also interesting because you do not have to be nervous or scared about it. It is like a deep sleep, which feels melancholic, but it is experienced as profoundly pleasant and peaceful.

Mutuality

In order to form the whole course of pedagogical recognition, we still have to attack the concept of mutuality and mutual recognition and find out what they really mean. Ricoeur (2005, 179) first argues that “we can detect the presence of the word *recognition* at two precise moments, the first linked to the formality of right, principally in terms of exchange, the second linked to the governing of a people under the aegis of justice.” But later Ricoeur (2005, 219) suggests that “[t]he alternative to the idea of struggle in the process of mutual recognition is to be sought in peaceful experience of mutual recognition, based on symbolic mediations as exempt from the juridical as from the commercial order of exchange.”

In many human societies the act of exchanging money or goods aims at social cohesion. A *gift* is normally understood as the transfer of something without the expectation of receiving something in return. Although the gift is meant to be free, we have probably all experienced it sometimes as “inseparable from its burden of potential conflicts, tied to the creative tension between generosity and obligation” (Ricoeur 2005, 245). Or in other words, gift-giving involves an expectation of reciprocity. Ricoeur first links the exchange of gifts and commercial exchange, but he also formulates an idea of gift as a form of symbolic mutual recognition. We can speak of noncommercial goods, such as security, responsibilities or honours, and as Ricoeur (2005, 237) points out, “perhaps we can find the gift in every form of what is priceless, whether it is moral dignity, which has a value but not price, or the integrity of human body, and the noncommercialization of its organs, to say nothing of its beauty, or that of gardens and flowers or the splendor of natural landscapes.” Perhaps mutual recognition can be compared to “the festive aspect of the gift” which Ricoeur (2005, 245) describes as *optative*, and “which is neither a descriptive nor normative”. Perhaps such an attitude, true mutual recognition, cannot become an institution, as Ricoeur suggests. Ricoeur (2005, 220–221) refers to this mutual recognition as a “state of peace” as *agape*, which exempts from

judgment: “it is a matter of an equivalence that neither measures nor calculates”. Interestingly Noddings (2005) compares the knowledge of a teacher in caring relations to a gift:

What is learned from caring teachers willing to share their knowledge and their pleasure in learning is often incidental and very powerful precisely because it is given freely. We live in an age that concentrates too narrowly on the specification of what must be learned and on testing to be sure that it has indeed been learned. There should be time and space for free gifts in teaching.

Kirsi Heimonen (2009) talks about dancing as a “gift”. For her the gift in dance means the energy in motion, and which is based on simultaneous giving and receiving. She also points out that in touch a person can feel her/himself as well as the other simultaneously; the person is sensing and sensed. Thus the touch is also a gift – for oneself and for the other at the same time. (Heimonen 2009, 214–215). I agree with Heimonen that in order for a gift to occur in dance, the dancer must give up control. Borrowing from Derrida, Heimonen claims that the dancer can never be aware of the gift. She/he is not conscious of the gift given or received. As soon as the gift is recognized as such, it withdraws itself. As Heimonen describes, in dance improvisation the dancers are not consciously trying to give each other anything, but at the same time they do actually give a lot. The gift means being in motion and sensing the other. In dancing together the dancers grasp something without obligations to each other. Movements cannot be captured, because they always exist only in the moment. The existence of a movement is linked to the mover, but the movement spreads out from the mover. Motion as a gift cannot be known. (Heimonen 2009, 218.) I agree with Heimonen (2009, 220) that dance improvisation offers us unexpected moments, and with its characteristics of surprise the gift has a similar nature. The gratitude for the gift in dance can be found in the motion itself, and thus there are no obligations, as Heimonen adds.

The gift is also presented in the moment of mutual recognition between performers and an audience: The performers of *Katiska* enter into the vulnerable space of a life performance and open up their self to the display by presenting their bodies and souls on the stage in the most honest way; and at the same time, the audience follows the performance in silence or bursts into the joyful laughter and at the end they show their respect for the performers with ample applause. At its best, there are no obligations or calculation of profit, neither in performing nor in watching a performance. There is only a mutual sense of recognizing and being recognized by both the performers and those watching the work.

It was clearly important for Lauri that his female friends were impressed by *Katiska*. The girls said that they were moved to tears because the boys' movements were so beautiful and subtle. But it was probably even more important for Lauri to get recognition from his father and his uncle. Lauri's father said that he could not even sleep well after seeing Lauri's performance. It was such a powerful experience for him. Lauri was surprised by the strong reactions from the spectators, because at first he did not know or expect the work to be so beautiful and great. The recognition from the audience was also very important for Mikael. It was important to notice that the work was also meaningful for the spectators. I think it is very important that the boys recognized the fact that they were performing not just for themselves, but for another as well; they were recognized by the other at the same time.

Mikael also thought that it was great that there was not only one correct interpretation of the work, but that everyone could create their own meanings. The audience then sensed being recognized in the moment; a spectator could feel that the work speaks *to* her/him, and often also *of* her/him. The spectator could recognize her/himself in the work. It can be said that in a performance situation the acts of recognizing and being recognized happen simultaneously and in a multipolar way. The lines between givers and receivers become blurred.

Mäki (2007, 240) claims that community art is often some kind of "tolerance building": a man tries to expand his experiences and world views and their intensity and diversity, in attempt to find and construct new aspects of himself and others. If we understand *tolerance* or *toleration* as "the practice of permitting a thing of which one disapproves, such as social, ethnic, sexual, or religious practices" (Forst 2008), I would hope that our aim in art education is rather to move on from *tolerance* to *mutuality* by means of truly understanding and valuing diversity. The practices of theatre and dance are ideal for this intend of educating into mutuality, because in Merleau-Ponty's (2008, 216) words "[i]t is through my body that I understand other people, just as it is through my body that I perceive 'things'." It is my body that reacts directly to the other body; it is my body that giggles in uneasiness, it is my body that cries at beauty, it is my body that laughs for joy. As already discussed, we can state, borrowing from Merleau-Ponty (2008, 216): "I do not understand the gestures of others by some act of intellectual interpretation; ... The act by which I lend myself to the spectacle must be recognized as irreducible to anything else. I join it in a kind of blind recognition which precedes the intellectual working out and clarification of the meaning."

I agree with Sederholm, who claims that art education teaches us to understand and manage open ended, multi-layered and even contradictory phenomena of life. Art is not a separate issue from life, and thus it should not be isolated from life either. (Sederholm 2007, 143.) Art may help people to see that there is not in life, as there is not in art itself, only

one correct truth. Everyone interprets art on their own terms, as we do with all the other experiences of life as well; all the information and experiences are attached to their context. I agree with Hiltunen, who points out that tension may arise in our practice, as collaborative art education believes in the open-ended process of art making. We learn to be different together. Consensus is not an aim in itself, but it is a question of goal-oriented, systematic work, which supports the participants' artistic learning. This requires skills, where listening and allowing enough space are important. (Hiltunen 2007, 138.)

I agree with Hiltunen that art education is not just some random scattering without any rules or goals. But it must be noted that the aims of a project cannot be claimed by the leaders alone, but on the most profound level, art education happens always as a common project with all the participants being its equal stakeholders. Some kind of shared *contract* must be formed, in order the individual participants to commit them to the common project. Ricoeur (2005, 184) claims that in a contract, "being recognized" coincides with the will, both the individual and the common. As Ricoeur (2005, 168) points out the mutuality can only be described in the definition of the contract, unlike the promise, which is never mutual, because it is always made to another. In *Katiska* the tacit contract was formed in reciprocal trust amongst us in the whole working group.

Ricoeur (2005, 161) argues that in the question of justice "whether one starts from the pole of the ego or the pole of the other, in each case it is a question of comparing incomparables and hence equalizing them". Ricoeur aims to form a passage from the dialectic of reflexivity and alterity towards mutual recognition, where with the term mutuality, "one another", "each other", it is crucial to agree the fact that *the one is not the other*. Ricoeur (2005, 167) claims that mutuality is inscribed in the definition of contract. I agree with Ricoeur (2005, 184) that the contract "makes being-recognized coincide with the will, both the individual and the common will". Making a contract often requires ability to find the middle ground in the network of different needs of the participants. I must be able to see a world other than my own and I need to understand the values of another: "It is then the capacity for compromise that opens a privileged access to the common good", as Ricoeur (2005, 209) points out. But Ricoeur (2005, 210) soon asks, "whether the common good is a presupposition or a result of process of compromise". How do we know what is the common good? Who defines it? Who commands and who obeys, Ricoeur (2005, 210–211) asks.

True mutuality can be found in such recognition where love and right are interwoven, as Ricoeur (2005, 182) stresses. Here we come again to the attitudes of pedagogical love and caring-for. In pedagogical recognition mutuality can only occur, when we accept the

participants' equality. This does not mean transforming the participants into sameness, but rather, in the most profound way, accepting them as *equal in their difference*.

The public undressing, the personal peeling off of your individual clothes and dressing in matching outfits, allows time for the spectator to join in the story. It also makes the individuals turn into a community which is more than the sum of its parts. The "one for all and all for one" spirit is strongly present; everyone was crafting their own story of their growth, individually and collaboratively. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

I agree with Sederholm (2007, 145) that art education may also help us to tackle identity issues, and art practice may even be therapeutic, but by merely concentrating onto the individual skills, in the worst case, we are led into the ignorance of others and the world. Even if art can also have a therapeutic role, I agree with Venkula (2003, 65) that life is not a disease from which we should be healed. It is important to highlight the individual but most profoundly also the communal aspects of arts education. I agree with Piscator (2003, 102) who says: "For us, man portrayed on the stage is significant as a social function. It is not his relationship to himself, nor his relationship to God, but his relationship to society which is central. Whenever he appears, his class or social stratum appears with him. His moral, spiritual or sexual conflicts are conflicts with society."

Perhaps growing into manhood is like being in "Katiska" [which in Finnish means a fish trap]; the boundaries have been set and the struggle causes damage. Actually life is like being in a fish trap. Katiska evoked thoughts and emotions; it has continued its life inside me, the process is ongoing. As a mother of three boys, it came onto my skin; it tingled and tickled. I have not been thinking of "what a man should be like" in order to be good enough. But growing into a man, as well as into a human, is a stony road. (spectator, middle-aged woman)

Today's fragmented world causes anxiety for many. The image of reality mediated by the media is often desperate and one-dimensional. The experience of reality is chaotic; perhaps even more chaotic than *Katiska* presents, as one of our spectators pointed out. As

Katiska portrays, it has become increasingly difficult for an individual to feel in control of her/his own life, at the same time, when the demand for control has increased with the development of individualization. But at its best art can also give hope, as was often described by the spectators of *Katiska*. *Katiska* has shown us that a work of art can help us to organize our experiences; it can sum up our feelings. Paradoxically, when it observes the world at a critical distance, it also helps to see close, right into the self. It presents in this precise moment, here and now, the simultaneous presence of the shared past and a glimpse into the future. I agree with Sederholm (2007, 149) that art is a practice that allows us to cope with our life world. As Sederholm claims, the main thing that experiential learning can offer us is to make us understand that all the issues are interrelated in various ways, not just mechanically in sequence.

Everyone lives their own life and has their own pressures. But when I look at you – and you are such perfect young men, like diamonds – it makes me realize that after all, we are in the same boat, no matter what we look like, what age we are or what dress size we take.
(spectator, middle-aged woman)

On the internet I found a text written by an upper secondary school student who came to see *Katiska* with his school group in 2009. The text was entitled as “*Katiska* – a play about people for people”:

*Everyone tramps through their life in their own way and everyone looks at *Katiska* from their own perspective. It opens up to each and every individual in a unique way. I experienced it myself very profoundly. The boys committed themselves to the work in order to bring to the fore the gentle side of a man. The performance broadens your perspective; the human body is capable of plenty of things that you usually do not think of. Locking into one method benumbs you. A human is allowed to be a human.*



Conclusion: Practising methodology and theory

This research has aimed to describe in the light of the *Katiska* project how dance animateuring practises the pedagogy of recognition. The research task was to illustrate an ethical pedagogy through the polysemic use of the word “recognition”, following the example of Paul Ricoeur’s *The Course of Recognition* (2005). *The pedagogy of recognition* aims to grasp the broad and complex phenomenon of education from the inside perspective, not just by investigating it empirically or analysing it theoretically, but by *practising* the pedagogy.

This research is important for two reasons. First, it proposes a new *methodological framework*, which can be implemented in any practice and action based educational project. The methodological approach of *eragraphy* targets the chiasma of theoretical and empirical research, by proposing the practice of educating–researching–animateuring. Second, the research writes a new *theoretical framework*, *the pedagogy of recognition*, which can be seen as a proposal for a pedagogical approach, but which, on the other hand, can also be used as a guideline to plan new educational projects with reflexive and collaborative aims. The pedagogy of recognition accepts society as a network of diverse and complex relations; it celebrates multiple ways of understanding the world and creates spaces for dialogue (see also Andreotti & de Souza 2008, 11).

In this concluding chapter I will clarify the critical steps which this research proposes for the new paradigm of the practice of *education*, but also for the practice of *educational research*. I will first revert to the challenges of research methodology in education. Then I will turn to the three pathways of pedagogical recognition, as identification, self-recognition and mutuality.

Sauli Salmela (2011, English abstract) claims that “educational science has largely been reduced to doing empirical research in the fields of social policy and sociology, or psychology of learning and neurophysiology. As a cost of this reduction, the historical and theoretical self-understanding of educational science has been diminishing.” Antti Saari (2011) also criticizes the prevalence of empirical research and especially the positivist approach of philosophy in doing educational research in Finland. Both Salmela and Saari suggest a return to the historical understanding of educational theories in order to critically approach the tradition of doing educational research as well as to better understand the fundamental values of education in today’s world.

This research does not set these two different, and often clearly separated, traditions against each other. In contrast, this research draws on both these customs of empiricism and intellectualism, but without being purely either of them. As a result, the research practice of eragraphy seeks a holistic approach to research. In eragraphical practice the roles of self as an artist, researcher and educator are allowed to fuse in order to find alternative epistemological, theoretical and methodological groundings for educational research. These groundings can further be traced to the questions of ontology.

Eragraphy is a specific form of action research and practice based inquiry. It is always practised in *educational* situations and in the relations of “educator” and “educated”, but in such a way that the borders between these roles are blurred. In fact, I agree with Värri (2004, 159) that more meaningful than the question of “who educates and who is educated” is the action itself happening *in-between*. This research gave an example of an eragraphical research project which took place in an in-formal educational situation, but I venture to suggest that eragraphy can also be implemented in the setting of formal education. I claim that it may challenge the way teacher-researchers think of schooling, and so also change the practice of *teaching* to become the practice of *education*.

Eragraphy is a particular form of art-based inquiry. It includes the practice of art education, but in such a way that the art is not taught but *created* in collaboration. It does not support the conservative understanding of art as socializing students into its existing forms and techniques, but seeks to find *new understanding* through the practice of art. This research presented an example of collaborative art making in *dance* animateuring, but I claim that the art form could be any at all. I suggest that the practice of art in eragraphy should be understood mainly as *animateuring*, in its main goal to inspire people to *action*.

What the concepts of education and arts in eragraphy have in common, is the way they are understood as the practices of *collaborative questioning*. Both the educator and the educated are learning in the process, and the roles of the artists and the spectators are also blurred, so that the meanings are always co-created, in the experiences and interpretations of art works; they are never given clearly in advance.

Katiska challenges the meta-narratives by bringing to the fore the “minor” narratives of individuals. These stories of people must be understood as connected to a certain time and space. The collective presentation, the art work of *Katiska*, draws on the autobiographical material of the boys, as well as on the stories derived from the world of media texts. It investigates the constructed nature of our narrative and performative identities. With movement improvisations it extends beyond intellectualization by connecting the self to its corporeal origin. The lived body’s experiences, sensations, emotions and memories, are

understood and articulated as immediate bodily expressions, but also analysed and presented as analytical, socially constructed material.

Katiska is not only about the artistic expression of the identities of the boys, but most fundamentally, it also poses questions about the existence of art and its meaning for us in today's world. *Katiska* project is a representative example of multi-disciplinary art projects, which are typical for postmodernism. It combines various elements of dance, music and theatrical expression. It does not form a coherent style of a particular art form. It plays with improvisational elements and a process-like approach, both in the creative process and in the performance situations.

The era, to which the name *eragraphy* refers, is the postmodern era. Postmodern re-evaluates and questions the universal Truths and the idea of continuous progress. The Truth is declared in *Katiska* – but with an ironic twist. “Men do not dance” but they do anyway. The words of the boys' singing and the real meaning of this song are clearly contradictory; but thus can only be understood when the words are related to the whole content of the work. The humorous aspects of *Katiska* are mainly coloured by these sarcastic remarks on human behaviour and its normative performances. That is why the comical content of *Katiska* may be entertaining without being entertainment. The irony of *Katiska* works as an attack on the oppressive manners. But it is not only the audience, which is informed but also the boys themselves, and probably most of all, me.

A new portrait of a sensitive and gentle young man is revealed in *Katiska*. The stereotypical image of rough and aggressive men is challenged. The vigorous competition between the boys is presented along with the moments of care. It must be noted that the tenderness of these boys cannot be taken as a sign of weakness, but rather as a testimony to their fearless and vital energy. I claim that, if this gentleness is covered over with the normative masculine façade, there is a risk of a person losing touch with the self. It is important, as the *Katiska* project shows, that boys are also recognized just as they are, and not through the male image which they are expected to reproduce and represent. The vitality can be found in the person's recognition of the various aspects of the self's serious, playful, quiet, kind, determined, active, and many other, also contradictory, characteristics.

The animateuring practice in eragraphical research abandons the modernist's view of art as an autonomic phenomenon. Animateuring does not create art for its own sake, but in contrast, it connects the practising of art with communal, educational or political events. Animateuring is not just “art making”, but also primarily the practice of research and education. The role of the participants is crucial in the animateuring process. The aims and goals of animateuring projects as well as the outcomes are always unique. The practice is

connected to the participants' everyday lives. The collaborative process in animateuring projects highlights the interpretative nature of socially constructed and represented truths.

An animateur has many equally important roles in animateuring projects. First, the animateur is the organizer of the project. In *Katiska* I had the major responsibility for organizing the whole project. I applied for funding for our performances and tours. Together with Maija I planned the timetables for our rehearsals, performances and tours. As an animateur I am the one who has the responsibility to create a space for the action to happen. I had to make sure that we had a physical space, where we could gather, but most of all I had to take care of the right kind of mental space, where things started to occur. At the beginning I had to motivate the *Katiska* boys to take part in the process. Then I had to stay open to and be able to take up the suggestions that the collaborative process with the boys initiated. This kind of collaborative and improvisational practice was new for Maija, so I gave her thematic suggestions, but also clear scores and even the durations of the songs to compose the music for *Katiska*. The task of an animateur includes the constant work of feeding and selecting, facilitating and supporting, in order to lead the process to its goal. But it is crucial to understand that an animateur is not an independent "executor" or a "leader" solely responsible for the process. Especially in those moments, when the boys are performing *Katiska*, my role as an animateur becomes invisible. Then the work is in the hands of the boys. In the performance situation the work lives in its own life, separate from me. I have made myself superfluous.

Secondly, the task of an animateur is to bring different people together in dialogue. In animateuring projects the participants take part in the process voluntarily. In the *Katiska* project the boys were selected by Maija and me, but they decided to stay with the project of their own free will. Even though Lauri had to leave the project in 2009 because of his compulsory military service, he later made a decision to return to perform the work in Joensuu in 2011. The *Katiska* boys were not friends with each other when we started the project, but they were all from the same school, except Aimo, who joined in later. The project brought together six boys with the different circles of their lives. The project did not make the boys become best friends with each other, but it made them understand and value each other's different qualities, skills, opinions and values. Some of the boys clearly feel a closer connection with the others and some of them keep their distance, but overall the project has shown that we can get along with different people and create something "bigger" together if we only are willing to step out of our "own circles" and to see further. I claim that the value of the whole *Katiska* project as well as the impressiveness of the performance itself are both based on respecting the individual voices of the boys and at the same time appraising the

power of collective creation. The task of an animateur is to develop and support the respectful dialogue between the participants and guide the group towards the common goal. The *Katiska* performances also brought different audiences, boys and girls, young people and adults, together to see dance and to interpret and analyse it and to discuss the issues that the performance of the boys opened up.

Thirdly, an animateur aims to raise awareness. The animateur her/himself attempts to understand reality in a new way, and encourages others to see things differently. On the *Katiska* project I provided different movement improvisation tasks for the boys, and that way pushed them to explore their lives on an unconscious, corporal, level. The learning of new things about the self, others and of the whole world happens in action. In this never ending process both the animateur and the participants create new meanings in their communication. The aim is to uncover the hidden emotions, thoughts and acts and to become more aware of them. In this way *Katiska* has also shown how things can be different. The narratives and performances which define who we are, and which are often given to us from above, can be questioned through creating and presenting art.

The varied tasks of an animateur also require diverse skills and interests of her/him. Animateurs need to be optimists and idealists, but at the same time, they need to be realists and have practical abilities to organize complex projects. Animateurs cannot just create art from their own personal ideas, interests and ambition; they create art together with others. They must commit themselves to working with others, often on long term projects. They must be able to set goals, but also to remain open to the new pathways which the process may suggest. An animateur must have the attitude of a researcher: she/he must also be able to compose and evaluate the process. Most of all an animateur needs to be willing to serve others. The animateur becomes excited about working with other people. She/he takes the collaboration as richness – creating from multiple perspectives offers a deeper and broader picture of the phenomenon. The others bring to the fore things that I did not think of myself. The animateur must be present in the moment, but she/he must also be able to let the others go. She/he is a facilitator, who motivates others to action by encouraging the inventiveness of others. She/he guides the way to creativity, reflection and exploration in collaboration. She/he must be socially sensitive and committed to the others in order to critically approach the issues meaningful for the community. It is not always easy to question the existing social structures and our deeply rooted roles – that is the reason why an animateur needs to have the soul of a revolutionary.

As an animateur I cannot make others excited if I am not excited myself. When I started to work with the boys, it was my passion to let them show who they really were. Such an

attitude can be described by the term “pedagogical love”. On the one hand I wanted the boys to respect themselves as they were, and on the other, to become more aware of their unique capabilities. I have also become aware of the fact that such intensive projects also carry the dangerous potential to manipulate the participants. It is crucial to understand that the purpose of the animateuring process is not to transform people, but rather to open up new perspectives and activities for people to engage with. In this way they can become more sensitive in their perceptions and more critical in their thoughts. The aim is to support the holistic growth of people in the individual, social and cultural frame.

An animateuring is based on experiential learning. The meaning making process always starts from an experience. Similarly the whole process of eragraphical research is committed to experiences gained from practice. Both theory and practice are equally important in eragraphy, but so that the theory is always derived from the practice. Through the theory we can describe the reality, but the theory can also offer new ways to do practice as well to providing guidelines for the evaluation of our practices.

The *Katiska* project seems to work well on many levels. The creative process produced a fine end product, the *Katiska* performance. The boys have committed voluntarily to the project for years, like Maija and myself, as well as our lighting technician Jere M. and our sound technician Jukka. The wide audience, nationally and internationally, has connected strongly with the work. Yet as a researcher I am interested in *why*. Why has the whole project been such a success? I did not start the project by practising the pedagogy of recognition on a conscious level. Borrowing from the boys, I can say that “we just fooled around” at first. The interviews with the boys and the feedback from the audience helped me to gain more perspectives on our practice. It was clearly important for the boys to get recognition from the audience. But the strangeness of the movement expression of *Katiska* also made spectators to recognize phenomena which they had not paid attention to before. The word *recognition* with its different usages seemed to come up. Then when I ended up with Paul Ricoeur’s *The Course of Recognition* (2005) I realized that it was talking about the same issues of which I had an intuitive apprehension. Ricoeur’s lexical and philosophical analysis provided an important framework for my own pedagogical theory.

In the third chapter I suggested a change in pedagogical attitude on three levels. First, I proposed the idea of education from the model of knowing and producing “Truths” given above towards the pedagogical approach of experiencing and expressing in improvisation. The practice of improvisation is especially useful if we are trying to see beyond the given structures of our society. Teaching usually refers to an activity where we are teaching, borrowing from Fraleigh, an “it” for our students. The “it” is something given beforehand; it

is an ideal technique, a piece of knowledge or some other “Truth”. But in contrast improvisation starts from an “empty head”. There is no “teaching” in such practice, but rather improvisational tasks are given to the participants in educational situations. The improvisational exploration may start from an idea, words, images, texts, music, perception of a space or some other impulse, but it does not aim to arrive at any particular outcome. Improvisation rather intends to enter the fields of the unknown. To be clear, I claim that in experiencing the expression of art and in interpreting the subjective meaning of it, in the spirit of animateuring, we are creating new understanding through recognizing rather than knowing. Recognition opens up a way to a new understanding. In improvisation we are not afraid of mistakes. In fact, I am excited if a dancer “misunderstands” the tasks I give him, because something totally different can then occur; something I did not think of myself before. I argue that the practice of art, in the spirit of animateuring and with the existentialist attitude, has the ability to challenge the mechanistic world view, the idea of objective truth, which is still so often taken for granted.

Second, by following Ricoeur’s model, I moved from recognition as identification to self-recognition and questions of identity as narrative and performative. Education with the spirit of extreme individualism focuses on the development of people’s self-esteem. In contrast, the pedagogy of recognition is based on the realistic recognition of the self with its abilities. Our existential being is life and the world happening in spontaneity; it is an open process, not closed and decided totality. On the other hand both the concept of narrative and performative identity refer to our capability to form a somehow coherent sense of self. It must also be noted that both these concepts of identity assume a recipient: narratives are always narrated and performances are always performed for someone else. Thus I argue that we should at all times look at the concept of identity in relation to the other. We cannot understand ourselves separately from other people.

It must be noted that it was not just the identities of the *Katiska* boys which were re-narrated in the performance situation. Emotions initiated by the art work also made spectators reflect on their own subjective experiences and relate their identities with the work. Strong experience moves the spectator; an impact which is caused by the art work changes something inside the recipient. *Katiska* also caused cathartic experiences, at least for some audience members. The spectator can feel release when she/he understands through the art work how the narrative and performance of his/her own identity is socially constructed. In a way, the sense of self, may be experienced as more coherent in the moment of catharsis.

The third level in the course of pedagogical recognition is the means of mutuality, where the celebration of difference and ambiguity is central. The shift from a traditional

choreographic process to animateuring rises from the true interest to understand the other. Dance animateuring is not a one-way monologue, a choreography created with the superiority of a choreographer, but rather a montage created in dialogue – not just in collaboration between the animateur and the dancers but with the audience as well. *Katiska* has offered not only the directors and the actors but also the general public an opportunity to reflect on one's self and the world. It helps us to see the world in different ways; it broadens our horizon. Both the performer and the spectator can realize that one's own perspective is only one among many others. There are as many perspectives as there are people. We share common experiences, thoughts and beliefs, but everyone's world is still personal and unique.

We are so accustomed to the way we look at our truth and knowledge as well the performances of accepted identities that we think of them as the only Truths. Art can teach a critical approach, and the courage to throw ourselves fearlessly into the unknown. As *Katiska* has taught us, art may confuse and even irritate the public, but the new cannot arise if the old does not first burst out. It is central for dance animateuring to celebrate diversity and different, even contrasting views. Art sees richness in multiplicity. Only then, I claim, can we progress from just tolerating other people to true mutuality, living peacefully side by side.

The *Katiska* project has brought dance into young people's lives. It has provided experience which has caused the recipients to consider them as an active part of the world. *Katiska* has discussed with young people. It has taken into account the voices which have often kept silent. A project with young people does not work if an adult tries to fit young people into her/his own world; the voice must be heard honestly from the young people's own mouths – and bodies. The artwork aims to raise issues which might otherwise be buried under silence.

A work of art can offer a powerful, but at the same time also a safe, medium for dialogue. The work can support one's sense of self and identity – sometimes it feels that the work tells about you. *Katiska* also shows how you can relate yourself with others in a new way. *Katiska* is both a private and a public experience. In the same space and at the same time, people are experiencing something together, but each in an entirely personal way. After the experience the work loses itself as it was. The audience has shared an experience which can never be recovered as it was. The experience can only exist for those who witnessed it. Even among the audience no one can completely share another individual's personal experience, because the bodily response, the physical and psychological reactions, thoughts, feelings and memories, caused by the work, are unique to each receiver.

Following Keller (in Wood et al. 2011, 8) I could say that I have done some sort of "curriculum work": the participants of this project – the performers as well as our audience –

and I “interact as we cross over into the tenuous territories of each other’s identities, reshaping, reforming, and reaffirming. As we move fluidly back and forth, open to what arises from those spaces for creative and critical thought, we grow and develop, in a forward and backward motion as we attempt to make sense, together, of our worlds and our world.”

Creating art, researching and educating, are all one and the same activity for me. I cannot separate these actions in my own practice. It does not matter if I am working in the field of art, science or education, I always use the same kind of methods, or to be more precise, I have a certain *attitude*. I create a new understanding together with other people. I encourage others to creativity, discussion and action. I get excited about different events and people; specific art forms, materials or techniques are not the main focus of my practice. The main thing is to learn new things, to experience and think differently. I agree with Nurminen (2007, 261) who says that the artist’s freedom means that you do not have to categorize yourself according to others: it is enough if you are honest with yourself, and if the guidelines which you have created for yourself make you act with a good conscience. As animateur – artist, educator and researcher – I do not want to teach “Truths” for others, but rather to learn myself together with the others, and at the same time to support everyone to question and critically observe the world around and in us. Art, research and education can all be understood as practices of sensing, perceiving, experiencing, wondering, improvising, interpreting and understanding together.

The world of knowledge takes a crazy turn when teachers themselves are taught to learn. (Bertol Brecht)

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