

Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy

THESIS

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SITE-SPECIFIC DANCE ON TOUR

How to transpose a Site-specific dance performance
to different locations?

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Introduction	4
I. Definition of Key notions	7
II. The Site-specific dance performance	8
III. Spatial methods used to make a Site-specific dance performance transposable	9
1. Generic sites	10
2. Set structure	12
3. Portable Site	14
Chapter 1 - Creation of Les Kiosques spécifiques	16
I. Spatial methods selected to make a Site-specific dance transposable	16
II. The Site-specific dance performance's location	16
III. First Pavilion	19
1. Inspiration	19
IV. Rehearsals	22
V. Experience	24
1. Personal	24
2. Dancers	26
Chapter 2 - Transposability	29
I. Transposability to the second and third location	29
II. Second Pavilion	30
1. Expectations	30
2. Experience	31
2.1 Personal	31
2.2 Dancer	32
III. Third Pavilion	33
1. Expectations	34
2. Experience	34
2.1 Personal	34
2.2 Dancers	35
Synthesis	37
I. Conclusion	37
II. Further development	38
References	39
Illustrations	41
Appendices	42

Introduction

In the past few years, Site-specific dance has become particularly popular in arts festivals around the globe. Well-known dance festivals start to schedule more and more Site-specific dance performances among those: Edinburgh festivals, ImpulsTanz in Vienna, Kuopio Dance festival in Finland, La Biennale di Venezia in Italy, PLACCC festival in Hungary, etc. However, some festivals only provide Site-specific dance performances such as the INSITU dance festival in The United States of America, Site specific performance festival Prague Quadriennial in Czech Republic and many more. Site-specific dance involves a social dimension by opening the dance world to a wider audience. Art in public space does not only just make contemporary art less elitist and closer to people, but it can also help tackle social, cultural and political issues. However, in my thesis, I highlight the gesture of leaving the traditional theatre space and the impact of developing new ways of creation, production and interaction with the space, context and audience of a site.

In the past few years, I started to manifest an interest in Site-specific dance performances and I had the chance to participate in different Site-specific dance performances. Through these works, I experienced different approaches of dancing in alternative spaces. It was a new way to explore my performative presence as I did not only relate to myself and what I had learnt during the rehearsals but I also had to work on the entire environment that surrounded me. I needed to be aware of the choreography but also of the demands of the space and of the audience. Furthermore, I will say that I experienced two types of connection with the audience: one that is similar to performing in a theater as most of the people in the audience know about the upcoming performance and come to see the performance intentionally and the second one is that the upcoming performance is not announced and you as dancer try to reach the people to band into the performance and start to be part of the audience.

This experience of working on a Site-specific dance performance inspired me to ground my thesis in that field. Aside this fact, I found that the approach of mobility in a Site-specific art form was interesting. It was clear for me that this approach fulfilled my expectations; to experience and create a Site-specific dance performance and to work on the ability to travel with my own work. Because the demands of Site-specific dance performances are increasing, I found worthwhile to explore that field. Moreover, this research allows me to experience how to carry my work into various places and to be flexible regarding the different locations where the work will be presented.

This paper is divided into an introduction and the two following chapters: *Creation of Les Kiosques spécifiques* and Transposability. I will briefly present the different parts here.

The introduction refers to several principles of the Site-specific dance performance, principles that were important to have in mind at all times during the creation process of my own Site-specific dance performance. In this introduction, I explain how my starting point is firstly based on the spacial consideration of a Site-specific dance performance. Then, I develop three possibilities of spacial methods that can be used to transpose my Site-specific dance performance to different locations.

The first chapter refers to the creation process; It starts as a continuity of the introduction in which I stated which spacial methods I wanted to apply in order to find my site location and which site locations I decided to use. It continues with the description of the first site location, which has inspired me to create the choreographic material. I develop this chapter further with a description of the rehearsals, both in studio and on site: how I work with the site and how I collaborate with the dancers. Finally, I conclude the chapter with my personal experience as well as the experience of the dancers regarding the creation process and the first production of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*.

The second chapter focuses on Transposability; which is the ability of the Site-specific dance performance to transpose to another site location. It begins with the explanation of the steps I follow to transpose my Site-specific dance performance to different locations. After that, I introduce the second site location and discuss my expectations, comparing them with the previous site as well with my own experience and the dancers. Regarding the third location, I develop the same criteria as for the second previous locations.

This paper ends with the conclusion of the work I accomplished during the creation process of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*, Which is more a movement research rather than a performance in its present form, and its transposition to different locations.

I. Definition of Key notions

These terms refer to my lecture and my personal vocabulary as used during this research. The words in italics are used for performances' titles, locations and Dancers' experience.

- **Site-specific dance**

The term 'Site-specific' dance defines a performance that has been designed to exist in a certain type of site, outside the traditional theatre space.

- **Environment**

The environment is the surroundings of the site; the conditions that influence how I work with the site.

- **Transposability**

The quality or state of something being transposable.

- **Transposable**

The ability of the Site-specific dance performance to move between different locations.

- **Methods**

The tools and techniques used to create a Site-specific dance work.

- **Generic site**

A public site which is common for the eye and that can be found in multiple locations, but with the same function. Examples: fountain, stairs, etc.

- **Pavilion**

A structure set in a park or in a garden. This outdoor space is designed to accommodate musical bands, concerts or performances.

- ***Les Kiosques spécifiques (can be translated to Specific Pavilions)***

The title of my Site-specific work directed by myself, Justine Copette, in collaboration with the dancers Kira Kubus and Meggie Malou.

II. The Site-specific dance performance

I perceive the Site-specific dance performance as a performance that has been designed to exist in a certain type of site, outside the traditional theatre space. The gesture of leaving the traditional theatre space situations holds implications both for the creation and for the production, as the Site-specific work requires for the choreography to be fully aware of the site and to be inspired by the influence of its environment.

The environment is made of three aspects; space, context and audience.

The spacial consideration consists of the performance using the spacial specificity of the site.

The contextual consideration relates to the understanding of the site, which means that you are aware of the history of the site and the social, cultural and political contexts.

The audience consideration relates to the differences present within an audience: people who are invited to the performance and come intentionally to see the full length of the performance, but also the unintentional audience: people who are the users of the site and who are banding into the performance and with them, users who do not take interest in the performance but are simply present in the space.

According to my aims to be able to transpose a Site-specific dance performance, my use of the considerations will be different than if I was creating a Site-specific dance performance with the aim of it existing for one defined site. In both cases, the environment and the performance have impacts on each others, like partners.ⁱ

ⁱ De Morant Alix, Clidière Sylvie (2009) *Extérieur danse: essai sur la danse dans l'espace public*, France, Entretemps

III. Spacial methods used to make a Site-specific dance performance transposable

My aim here was to research on transposability or the fact that a spacial action moves the performance to another location. In this case, I decided that the spacial consideration is the aspect that has the bigger impact on how I start the creation of my piece, even if the three aspects of the environment mentioned above do work together.

Firstly, I started by researching about well-known choreographers' works to support and deepen my research. I analysed some works which in my opinion, used a certain type of spacial methods that helps to transpose the performance to different locations.

The criteria of these examples are that the performance has to be produced and performed a few times, always in different locations. From this criteria, I can easily analyze the spacial consideration of the choreographer, what was the main structure of the performance and how it was transposed to the different locations. In this part of the thesis I use the term 'method' as I analyze the tools and techniques used to create the performance. By researching on the topics of Site-specific dance on tour, I found three clear types of methods which were used to create Site-specific dance work.

I choose to define and categorize these three methods, as follow 'generic sites,' 'set structure' and 'portable site'. I define these three methods by identifying them with the actual work of different choreographers. The chosen works are from the European, American and Japanese dance scenes, from 1970 to the present days. I try to give for each methods two works which differ by the years or location. The following examples are from my research on the topic, is initiated by the article of Melanie Kloetzelⁱⁱ which focuses on site dance on tour and by my personal knowledge on dance field. By means of these examples, I can support the process of my movement research called *Les Kiosques spécifiques*.

ⁱⁱ Kloetzel Melanie (2017) 'Site and Re-Site: early efforts to serialize site dance' *Dance research journal*, Vol 49 Issue 1 p6-23

1. Generic sites

This first method explains how to build a work in a generic sites. It means that a certain type of public site is chosen, a site that is common to find in different locations and which function never changes. The performance is transposable onto a series of similar public sites and uses similar content. The choreography is built around the generic site itself. The production of the performance can be considered as a series of Site-specific dance performances.

I chose the well-known works of Stephan Koplowitz (1956-) and Trisha Brown (1936-2007). Both American choreographers; Stephan Koplowitz specialized in the field of Site-specific works while Trisha Brown is one of the founders of the Judson Dance Theater and an important figure of the postmodern dance movement. Trisha's work was not specialized in the field of Site-specific works but her early works were often produced in alternative spaces such as galleries, studios and outdoor spaces.

Stephan Koplowitz most well-known work is *The Grand step project* (2004)ⁱⁱⁱ. *The Grand step project* is a series of Site-specific dance performances which were performed in different staircases around New York City. In these performances, the chosen generic sites are the staircases.

The Grand step project is performed at six grand staircases around New York City by fifty dancers; at each location, the piece was performed in a very similar version.

ⁱⁱⁱ Koplowitz S. (2004) *Stephan Koplowitz: The grand step project*, Available at: <https://www.skoplowitz.com/grandstepproject> (Accessed:03/02/2019)



*IBRONX COUNTY COURTHOUSE
New York City, United States of America
(23.07.2004)*



*ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
New York City, United States of America
(26.06.2004)*



*CUSTOMS HOUSE-BOWLING GREEN
New York City, United States of America
(28.06.2004)*

In her repertory, Trisha Brown exploits urban space. In my perspective, the performance *Man Walking Down The Side of a Building* (1970)^{iv}, which concept is to work with gravity is a good example of using the principles of the generic sites method. The performance is executed by a man walking down on the side of a building. The performance here was produced on the side of a building and evolved into a series of Site-specific dance performances. Throughout the years, this performance has been transposed to different buildings and each production was a close reproduction of the original version.

2. Set structure

This second method explains how to build a work in a set structure. It means that the performance is built around a main concept: how they want to relate to the space rather than to the physical form of the site. Which will be the foundation throughout representations produced in different locations. Compared to the generic sites method, which is created in advance for a specific type of site, the set structure method is a freer works, in the sense that it can easily be transposed to different sites. The performances can be considered as a continuity of the original work, where an element of the piece (concept, set material, costumes, etc) is recurrent.

I chose the works of Willi Dorner (1959-) and Stephan Koplowitz (1956-) to explain more in details the set structure method. Willi Dorner is an Austrian choreographer, working in the same field as Stephan Koplowitz. I found in these two following examples the same use of the set structure method: in each production, you find the use of the same elements throughout the different performances. Both choreographers are used to produce their performances in new locations with a new cast. Typically the performance is performed by local dancers.

^{iv} Brown Trisha (1970) *Repertory: Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*, Available at:<http://www.trishabrowncompany.org/repertory/man-walking-down-the-side-of-a-building.html?ctx=title> (Accessed:03/02/2019)

The work of Willi Dorner, *Bodies in urban spaces* (2007)^v is a moving trail performance, choreographed for a group of dancers. The performers lead the audience through selected parts of the public and semi-public spaces by holding the audience follow them along the itinerary. A chain of physical interventions set up very quickly and only existing temporarily. *Bodies in urban spaces* has been reproduced in many different cities around the globe since its first production in Paris. There are true differences as each of them are unique performances and they both result from the performers and audience member's reactions. *Bodies in urban spaces* uses principles of the set structure method as recurrent elements such as the costumes, the concept of moving a trail, the itinerary of the performance, the chain of quick set physical interventions and the aim to allow the viewers to perceive the same space or place themselves in a new or different way. By using each of these set elements, it allows each performance to be similar in the way it is produced.^{vi}

2



Bodies in urban spaces



Bodies in urban spaces

^v Dorner Willi (2014) *Willi Dorner: Bodies in urban spaces*, Berlin, Hatje Cantz

^{vi} Dorner W. (2007) *Cie Willie Dorner: bodies in urban spaces*, Available at: <http://www.ciewdorner.at/index.php?page=start> (Accessed:03/02/2019)

The work of Stephan Koplowitz *Task Force-Liquid Landscapes* (2008-2009) is a grouping of many Site-specific dance performances, each performance is connected and needs to be seen as a continuity of the first one. *Task Force-Liquid Landscapes* was built for several sites under unifying the thread around the theme of water. It took place on water related sites within a short period of time throughout six different sites in Los Angeles (2008)^{vii} and seven in Plymouth (2009)^{viii}

The main recurrent element of *Task Force-Liquid landscapes* is the use of water. All sites are closely connected and built onto the unifying thread of the theme of water. *Task Force-Liquid Landscapes* produced in Los Angeles and Plymouth uses principles of the set structure method as the recurrent elements, as they were perform in several sites and in a relatively short amount of time and as they focus on finding as many connections with the sites as possible.

3. Portable Site

This third method explains how to build a work in a portable site. The term ‘portable site’ means that each element of it is built into an installation. The purpose of the installation is to support the dance which is a constitutive part of the installation as in a Site-specific dance performance. The portable site method aims are that you can rebuild your installation anywhere, while keeping it identical and transposing it to different locations. It is seen more like an alternative space performance rather than a Site-specific work because the performance does not relate so much to the outside environment of the location (since it is specifically built to be performed inside of the installation). However, I maintain this third method in this part of my analysis as it is still an approach on how to transpose a work.

^{vii} Koplowitz S. (2008) *Stephan Koplowitz: TASKFORCE (LA) Liquid Landscapes*, Available at: <https://www.skoplowitz.com/taskforcela> (Accessed:06/12/2018)

^{viii} Koplowitz S.(2009) *Stephan Koplowitz: TASKFORCE (UK)Liquid Landscapes*, Available at <https://www.skoplowitz.com/taskforceuk> (Accessed:06/12/2018)

I chose the work of Eiko (1952-) & Koma (1948-) from Japan and Ali Salmi (1966-) from France. Both their works used the principles of the portable site method by building a work in a mobile vehicle. The portable site of Eiko & Koma *The Caravan project* (1999)^{ix} is set in a Jeep and can be transposed from one place to another without any problem. The performance was almost identical each time it was performed in different places or venues. *The Caravan project* is a mobile, outdoor installation which takes place in public site. It is designed to be seen from multiples angle and perspectives. The portable site of Ali Salmi *Transit* (2004)^x is set in a container along with Eiko & Koma's project which is using a mobile vehicle to make the performance easily transposable to any other locations. The container in Ali Salmi's *Transit* was turned into a stage, the walls were transformed in side glass panels to show the performance form the outside.

3



The Caravan project
MoMa, New York City, United States of America

4



Transit
Places des Lices, Rennes, France

^{ix} Eiko & Koma (1999) *The Caravan project*, Available at: <http://eikoandkoma.org/caravanproject> (Accessed:03/02/2019)

^x Osmosiscie (2004) *Transit*, Available at: <http://www.osmosiscie.com/navigation.html> (Accessed: 05/02/2019)

Chapter 1 - Creation of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*

I. Spacial methods selected to make a Site-specific dance transposable

I have been working with the generic sites method and I chose three different locations to transpose my work and enrich my own experience on the subject. This relate to the series of sites which is one of the distinctive features of the generic sites methods. The series of site use one generic public site to base the work on and then be transposed many times. Now that I have decided that the spacial method be the method I use to make my Site-specific dance performance, I have to consider the impact of context and audience inside the creation process and production of the work. In this case, I must spend time on the site I have selected and see what can inspire me to create the piece and how to conceive the choreography, which is evidently influenced by the site.

II. The Site-specific dance performance's location

I chose a Pavilion as the Site-specific location for my work. Pavilions were built in public spaces to offer entertainment to people in a wider context. These Pavilions are alternative spaces where you can see concerts and events. Pavilions are built in outdoor public spaces, mostly in gathering places like parks. Their designs are inspired by the town's typical architecture of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Mainly, They are spaces dedicated for entertainment with a privileged listening space delimited by benches or chairs. I can easily connect to this site in the way that Site-specific dance performances used to be performed in alternative spaces. Moreover, it opens the dance to a wider audience.

I was principally searching for an outdoor site and a site that can be found in several places. I found a few Pavilions around Budapest and through my research, I learnt that these buildings are frequent in many different cities around the globe. Their location is chosen as a meeting point, to reach the largest number of people.

I based my work on three Pavilions, all three of them located in Budapest. In the future, I will be able to easily extend the series of performances to other Pavilions.

Firstly, I chose to base my work on the Pavilion located in *Hunyadi tér*. I think this one is the most ordinary because it is located in a park around which there is not too many people. Its main specificity is that it is a squarish Pavillon and not a circular one.

Secondly, the work will be transposed into the Pavilion in *Margit-sziget*. Its main specificity is that the structure is raised by several stairs and its structure is circular.

Thirdly, the work will be transposed to the Pavilion in *Tárnok út*. Its main specificity is that its structure is circular and the Pavilion is located in a popular touristic site in Budapest. The work will deal with the users of the site in the way that it has to integrate them. The following steps of the creation will be influenced by the environment of the site.

5



First Pavilion

6



Second Pavilion

7



Third Pavilion

III. First Pavilion

The first Pavilion is located in *Hunyadi tér in Budapest (Hungary)* in a large neighborhood park. It was built in 2012 during the renovation of the park. The park serves as a place for amusement and gathering of people. It has a Pavilion located in one of the entrances as well as a café, a children's playground, a sports field and a fountain. The surroundings of the Pavilion are empty in order to allow gatherings and the benches define the listening space in front of which unfold the different performances.

The Pavilion is a metal construction (four meters by three meters) with a polygonal shape (rectangle) overcome a canopy (a glass roof) and raised by three steps. Its specific features are the three columns, which are placed symmetrically in each corner and the decorative headband that forms the perimeter of the Pavilion which is composed by two distinct decorations: one is larger and more geometrical while the other is thinner and chiseled. The users of the site seem to be locals living nearby the park who come daily to enjoy the different facilities offered by the park.

1. Inspiration

The creation of *Les kiosques spécifiques* grew through different inspirations. Firstly, the creation of the movement material comes from the Pavilion's architecture. I consider the architecture as the basis of my first inspiration to create movements.

Secondly, the movement material is set and the structure is built around the influences and possibilities that are offered by the new environment. Thirdly, the performance is influenced by the interaction or lack of interaction with people around the site.

The creation of the movement material is inspired by the physical form of the Pavilion. However, the consideration of context and the audience will influence the creation and production of the piece during the rehearsals on site.

I got three different ideas which result in a unison, two solos and one duet. One part of my inspiration comes from the decorative headband of the Pavilion. The upper part of the decorative headband inspired me to create a unison based on circular and linear movements. The movement material is created by lines and circles drawn by the body in space. However, I also focused on axis (tail bones-top of the head connection), and planes (sagittal, transversal, frontal) and the constant changes of those two elements. The focus on the different planes reflects the architecture of the Pavilion with vertical, horizontal, diagonal poles that connect to each other and form the structure of the building. The three vertical columns connect the building to the floor which represents, in my opinion, our vertical axis and the connection of the tail bone-spine with the top of the head. The details of the lower part of the decorative headband inspired me to include more details inside the unison.

The second part of my inspiration comes from the metallic texture of the Pavilion which has inspired me to create two solos. The coldness and dryness of this texture can be translated by sharpe movements as well as geometric movement shapes.

The third part of my inspiration comes from the symmetrical design of the Pavilion which has inspired me to create a symmetric interaction duet based on a specific rhythmic. This idea comes from the repetition of three half circles on the lower part of the decorative headband and form the three columns. I wanted to use the number three to create a rhythmical phrase inside the duet.

My inspiration coming from the site's environment influenced how I wanted to start the performance. I chose to let the dancers be there and incorporate themselves in the environment as 'non-dancer people' like certain users of the park. The introduction consists of being present in the space, observing the environment and exploring daily gestures made by the users.

This situation inspired me to merge together these three movement materials in order to create a choreography which explored the sensations of an open space and integrates the Pavilion area, the surroundings and the environment to form an image of landscape.



Vertical, Horizontal poles connections and three columns



Diagonal poles connection



Decorative headband upper and lower parts

IV. Rehearsals

Firstly, before we started rehearsing for *Les Kiosques spécifiques*, I went to the site location to see the Pavilion and let myself feel the space. I also went with the dancers to let them discover the space and play with some material they created in advance in order to get familiar with the Pavilion and its environment.

The creation of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* is divided into two parts as we started by rehearsing in a studio. The studio rehearsal time is important as we used it to build together the movement material. The movement material contains three different parts: a unison, a solo and a duet. We worked in a studio to take time to digest the dance and work on the coordination and qualities of the movement. Later on, when the dancers started to be comfortable and confident with the movement material, we went on the site to work on the connection between the movement material and the Pavilion in order to enhance the potential of the choreography that will soon be performed. Even though the movement material was created and rehearsed in a studio, I made sure to build movement material with a free structure as the choreography will be set during the rehearsals on site and will be influenced by the environment.

During the rehearsals we started to work on the solos. Meggie and Kira had the task to create a few short sequences of movements which included my inspirations drawn from the metallic texture of the Pavilion. We started together to warm up with some partner exercises that use the principles of pushing and holding back the partner with the forearm. These exercises had the objective of initiating the constant activation of the body, which is used for sharper movements. I also gave the instruction that I wanted geometric shapes with their forearms. From these instructions, they improvised to find and create a short sequence. After a while, I worked with them one by one to clarify the solos by modifying the dynamics, the pathways as well as the duration of the movements.

The unison was created by myself and with a few movements from the solos. I taught the movements combination to Meggie and Kira and together we defined the different rhythms and directions. We practiced the unison in different directions.

The last movement material is a duet. We started working on the rhythm by walking throughout the space. When the rhythmic got clearer, Meggie and Kira did it again but this time while walking around each other. We fixed the first steps and then we started to involve the arms; This idea was that the movement must always be symmetrical to the other partner's movement.

During the first rehearsal on site, we went throughout the entire movement material in order to feel more comfortable with the site and its environment. I let the dancers try out the solos and duet by themselves for few minutes to let them explore different possibilities within the environment, while letting myself see from an outside perspective how I could start to build the structure of the piece.

After their personal exploration, I worked with the dancers individually to incorporate the solos in the space and create a harmonious balance between their propositions, the use of the entire performing space and the connection between themselves.

Then, we started to practice the unison in different directions as we previously saw that there was no defined front and we tried to executed it in different spots, inside and outside, around the Pavilion. We still continued to work in the studio to define the order of the movements and set the first part of the entire piece, inspired by the result of the last rehearsal on site. We repeated this first structure to have it in mind and go back to the site.

The next site rehearsal started by us trying out the first structure that we had previously set in the studio, adjusting some details and adding the beginning part which resulted from the inspiration of letting the dancers simply being in the space and the use of daily gestures from our observations of the users. We continued to work with the same process to finalize the structure of the choreography.

During the site rehearsals, the audience consideration became important. The following question arose: How much do the dancers need to react if somebody comes and interacts with them. During the rehearsals, we experienced different people's reactions; most of the people were just walking around and sometimes stopped to watch us dancing. Some came closer, one asked if he could take a picture of the Pavilion without us dancing in it, some children ran in and crossed the space, two girls came a few times to ask what we were doing and started to dance and copy our movements.

I asked the dancers to be open if someone crossed the space or interacted with them during the piece. The dancers were told to adjust their movements to the situation and if an interaction happened between them and the users, they should not stop the choreography but integrate this interaction with their movements as that person is welcome to share the space with us.

We practiced the choreography a few times and to finish we performed it four times in different days and times to reinforce our connection with the environment.

The performance aims to incorporate the dancers in the environment of the Pavilion by using the surroundings, crossing and running in and out of the space, using the negative space and being open to work with the people surrounding us, so that all these elements merge to an image of landscape.

V. Experience

This chapter ends with my personal experience and the dancers' opinion concerning the creation process of the piece and of the first performance of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*^{xi}.

1. Personal

My first impression about the Pavilion is that it is a very charming place. When I went there for the first time, there was a concert where some musicians (inside the Pavilion area) were playing folk music and people around the Pavilion were dancing folk dance and/or were just listening to the music. The creation process began with me going to the site several times to get a better idea of how I could create my own Site-specific dance performance around such a place. I drew and took photos, I sat there a few times to see the environment. Later on, I did the same with my dancers, trying to share my experience by bringing them to the site to let them create their own image of the site. From that experience I tried to build an image of how the final product would look like and decided which details would be kept during the whole process such as the lack of

^{xi} Copette Justine (2019) *Les Kiosques spécifiques - Hunyadi tér, Budapest* (Youtube) Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LAJejbMCZ0> (Accessed:28/04/2019)

music, the costumes, the starting and ending position and the full use of the Pavilion's area and surroundings.

The second step of the creation process happened in the studio because I felt important that the dancers be confident with themselves before going out and potentially be distracted by the outside world. It was obvious though that we needed rehearsals both in studio and on site, to let ourselves be inspired by the Pavilion and its surroundings and to create the choreography.

During each steps I tried to keep my vision open to the influence of the dancers, of the environment and my perception of my own work while I was working on my own Site-specific piece changed slowly. It was my own decision to let the structure be open until we were all together on the site; because even though I had a clear image of the site, the present moment also influenced me, as I could not clearly imagine what could have happened in the space without physically being there. I think the dancers shared the same experience because their way of dancing got richer when dancing in the real performance space.

An important part of the piece which only came when we spent time on site, was how to behave with people's interaction. I saw that the Pavilion was often used for concerts and events which means that the users of the park were used to see events in that place.

Mostly, People were just watching us but children came to interact with the dancers as if they were curious about what we were doing. We tried to integrate their interactions inside the choreography as our aim was to include the performance into the entire environment and create one image of landscape. This landscape was built by dint of the dancers beginning the structure in such a way (they walk around as if they are 'non-dancers') and this landscape was also shaped by my decisions to use the whole Pavilion's area and surroundings as well as the dancers' costumes: They wear daily clothes to not show a clear-cut distinction between performer and viewer, using a range of warm natural colors.

One unintentional factor of the building of a landscape was that the dancers were not sharing a same actions. This resulted in the users and people who crossed the park not feeling the need to stop or come closer to watch us, as there was no clear indication that was a performance.

During the four different versions of the performance, our relation with the audience was quite different and I could see a clear distinction between the intentional audience, the unintentional audience (the users of the site who partially watch the performance) and the users who do not.

During this experience I also wondered a lot about the perception of the rehearsals on site and how they were perceived, since there is always a kind of audience watching us, drawn by the performative presence of the dancers.

2. Dancers

I gave the dancers the following questions to help them to put words on their experience. How did the creation process of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* work for you? What were your feelings about the tasks given by Justine? How did you feel about the combination of the rehearsals in studio and on site? What did you experience by working on site?

When we started this whole process a few months ago in the studio, It was my first experience with Site-specific dance. Justine started to give us an image of the Pavilion (descriptions, photos, drawing). It was a new experience and I needed time to imagine the space and also to give time for my body to be able to envision the entire site.

Then when we went to the site, it really surprised me that even if Justine gave me a very precise description of the site, I imagined it in a different way that it was. The next part was me creating some movements sequences and Justine taught us a sequence, which was difficult for me to learn.

Justine was very patient when teaching us and clarifying the details together. It was a good feeling that she gave us the freedom to be creative in the process but still with certain directions as she gave us some fixed material. We practiced a lot inside, then when we went out to the Pavilion the next surprise came. We had our material and we knew everything well but being outside affected us greatly because it was much more different from the studio. I could feel that the whole environment affected me.

Then the last part of the work was that we started to set the structure of the choreography in connection with the Pavilion. We practiced a lot inside again then when we took it outside it was a surprise one more time. It was a really nice experience to work outside because I felt that the nature, the sunshine and all the people around me gave me new energy and creativity. It influenced how I behaved and looked around, I danced the choreography in a much different way as before. I was more open to everything and I lost my stressfulness to become more honest in my way of dancing.

Kira Kubus

Inspired by the Pavillon's steel construction, we started to work on movements that reflect the stiff and sharp quality of this material. We explored the possibilities of this quality in different improvisation tasks that mainly included upper body and arms and a shifting of the legs. In the beginning, it was hard to find the sharpness and clear stops in the upper body and arms while the legs should be rather soft and yielding into the floor. I think a general question to solve was: how can we have this rather static quality move in space without becoming robot-like? We tried to fix short sequences with this movement quality based on the image of building a box or structure in space. Meanwhile we also worked on walking, crossing the space and integrating those materials in the performance.

Later, we learned a longer movement sequenced choreography by Justine which included her approach to the movement quality. We were trying it in different directions since the site was opened by its four sides. Doing all this in the studio sometimes felt restricting, as it is a very closed and limited space. This resonated in our gaze which became often introverted and narrow in the range of attention. That might be a reason why I also missed some connection with Kira every now and then.

When we went to the site for rehearsing, I felt that I could open up more and see a clearer point in what we were working on in the weeks before. Looking at it in the end of the process, I think it could have been useful for my motivation and inspiration if we would have done a research/rehearsal on site in the beginning of the project.

After coming there and exploring the space for real, we started building a structure with all the materials we had gathered throughout the preparation phase in the studio. It was a nice experience to finally merge all of them and to dance together with Kira. Being outside, walking and dancing the actual distances and feeling the different structures of the floor helped me understand the thrill of site-specific performances. It gave me a new understanding of how differently dance can be perceived depending on where and under which circumstances it is performed. Sometimes, I wished to know about the passing people's opinions on what we did.

Generally, it seemed that people's behavior in public spaces was rather shy or restrained even though they might have been interested. That does not count for children, they were the only ones asking us about what we were doing and did not hesitate to share the space with us or start a conversation at any moment.

Justine as a choreographer was always patient and generous with us, from the beginning on she had very clear ideas about what movements she wanted to include in the final performance and pushed us to work in this direction. All rehearsals seemed to be well thought over and prepared. She seemed to have a clear image about the space and its details and we could always rely on her responsibility.

Meggie Malou

To sum up their experiences concerning the first Pavilion, they felt that my instructions and artistic direction were structured and clear. For both of them, it was a new type of work and their first experience with the Site-specific dance field. They appreciated the fact that I choreographed one part of the movement material and let them free to create some other parts. The rehearsals in studio were efficient in term of learning, however it also gave them some restrictions as it is a limited space and it closed their gaze and relation to each others. I gave them a clear image of the Pavilion but when we went on the site to rehearse, their expectations of the space changed and by spending time on site, their executions of the movements changed as well, as they were evidently affected by the environment and this gave them new feelings about the work.

Chapter 2 - Transposability

I. Transposability to the second and third location

This second chapter is based on how I transpose my original creation *Les Kiosques spécifiques* to two different locations using the generic sites method. To transpose a Site-specific work means that I do a spacial action, since I put the focus on the spacial consideration from the beginning of my researches.

Working with the term transposability instead of the term adaptation was clear for me as I think transposability is initially related to space: I keep the structure and choreography and I play with the change of space locations instead of adapting the structure to the new space, context and audience. Once that *Les Kiosques spécifiques* had been created and produced for the first Pavilion, I needed to transpose the whole piece to two different Pavilions in order to seize the opportunity to have two different experiences. I chose to use these Pavilions because they have similarities but also differences in term of environment, and I had to work with what each Pavilions had to offer. The second Pavilion suggested new considerations on spacial and context aspects while the third Pavilion suggested to work more with the audience as it was located in a touristic place.

My aims was to keep the structure and transpose it to two new locations, so the fact that the three Pavilions were very different environments with different specificities, I needed a choreographic adaptation and spacial adjustment in order to transpose the entire structure of the piece. The idea of making a Site-specific transposable involves adaptation and adjustment but for me the use of these two terms together is what creates the transposability of the work to new locations.

By transposing the structure of the piece to different locations, I had to adapt the choreography. This means that the environment did not allow a certain part of the movement sequence to be executed how it should have been, so the dancer adapted this part in order to be able to execute it in this new environment.

I also had to adjust the space, because the environment did not allow one part of the movement sequence to be executed where it should be, the dancer had to adjust the space and direction of that part in order to be able to execute it in this new environment. However, my aims were to keep the structure while transposing the performance, the different locations will affect the interpretation of the performance in relation with the environment and its three aspects, and this produced different versions of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* each time it was performed.

II. Second Pavilion

The second Pavilion is located on *Margit-sziget*, an Island in *Budapest (Hungary)*.

The island is a vast park with several places for leisure, such as sports facilities, theaters, swimming pools, restaurants as well as a hotel. The island has an imposing structure which is called *Zenélő kút (Musical fountain)* on top of which there is a circular Pavilion (three meters in diameter) made of stone, wood and plaster. It is overlooked by a metal dome, which reminds us of a church monument. The base is impressive and raises the Pavilion of approximately three meters, with fountains surrounding the base. There is an access to the Pavilion through a double staircases of fifteen steps each. The users of the site seem to be locals and tourists who come with the intention to enjoy the different facilities offered by the island.

1. Expectations

My first observation about the second Pavilion was that the architecture was quite different from the first one. The Pavilion located in *Hunyadi tér* had the principal function of welcoming performances to entertain the users of the park while the second site had a monument function. The height of this monument offers an ideal point of view of the park and the Danube but it also entails a lack of visibility for a possible performance and its audience.

This specificity implied to reconsider the space, including the staircases and balustrade for a better visibility if the spectator stayed on ground level but It also hold the possibility for the audience to move during the performance.

2. Experience

This subchapter ends with my personal experience and the dancers' opinion concerning the process of transposability to the second location and performance of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*^{xii}

2.1 Personal

The architecture of the second Pavilion is different form to the first one by its form and I did not know exactly how it would work to transpose the choreography to that new space as it was my first experience with transposability. But I was confident that when I would be there with the dancers, the environment would give me the inspiration and a few ideas to help this experimentation on how to transpose *Les Kiosques spécifiques* to different locations.

Firstly, I tried to visualize what were the possibilities and elements of the surroundings that we could use. The dancers were helping me a lot by suggesting ideas and proposing different possibilities such as what to do and where to do it. This time I felt that we were more creative together than last time, even though I had let them free to create and propose ideas since the beginning of the process. I believe that, because of their last experience, they were more active in terms of creation this time. This Pavilion offered two new perspectives: one for the choreography as created different images by using the up and down space area of the Pavilion and another one for the audience as it was possible that the audience felt the need to go up the stairs during the performance.

^{xii} Copette Justine (2019) *Les Kiosques spécifiques - Margit-sziget, Budapest* (Youtube) Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mqu4DF5SJjs&feature=youtu.be> (Accessed:29/04/2019)

Throughout the three different versions of the performance, our relation with the audience was different because once the environment was empty of people; there were only a few people who were present but none of them were stopping to watch us. Another time, there was a lot of people around, which was due to *Margit-sziget* holding a big event on that day. In addition, an intentional audience was invited to my performance and I felt that because there were some people gathered to watch us, the unintentional audience stopped more easily to watch us for a while.

2.2 Dancer

I asked the dancers the following questions to help them formulate their experience. How did the transposability of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* from the first Pavilion to the second Pavilion work for you? How did you feel about the new environment? What was different or similar to the first experience ?

I really enjoyed to transpose the choreography to the second Pavilion. When we arrived to the second location it was obvious that this was a completely different environment from the first one. The Pavilion's architecture had much more stairs, columns and a circular shape instead of a square one, also the ground and surroundings were totally different.

We started to work: we thought about how to keep the same structure and quality of the original choreography. We managed it so it was our first accomplishment and I enjoyed it, so it was a success for me as well. I felt that the new environment gave another atmosphere because for example first time, we performed, we were just seeing grass, flowers, trees, benches, animals and people but then during the second time we also saw the Danube while dancing and it was a wonderful feeling.

Also at the first Pavilion we had to deal more with people interactions as we were closer to them. In the second Pavilion, however we had a quite calmer atmosphere, and we did not have to explain to children what we were doing, so I could concentrate more on myself and connect with the new situation.

Kira Kubus

Transposing the project to another space was a different experience even if there were lots of similarities because of the way Pavilions are built in general.

The most challenging were probably the long stairs leading to the upper part of the Pavilion which required more care and also changed the perspective completely.

In the end, I could enjoy these differences as the new space offered more diversity in its architecture and the whole setting: being surrounded mostly by trees and water gave a very good feeling.

The movement phrases stayed kind of the same, only this time we were walking more up and down instead of back and forth.

Actually, the Pavilion's pedestal was for me the most interesting element in this performance as it divided and connected the space in two parts (up and down).

Meggie Malou

To sum up their experiences about the second Pavilion, the action of transposing the structure to a new Pavilion was challenging for them as the architecture was very different and because we kept the structure, we needed to use the specificities of this new environment: the division of the Pavilion area into two distinct parts (up and down). Both of them appreciated the different influences generated by this new environment.

III. Third Pavilion

The third Pavilion is located in *Tárnok út in Budapest (Hungary)* near the touristic site of *Halászbástya*. The Pavilion is a metal construction with a circular shape (four meters in diameter) and overcome a canopy. The characteristic feature of that monument is its simple design. Indeed, it does not contain a particular decorative element nor does it have stairs. It is nonetheless surrounded by benches, which determines the listening space in front of which the performances unfolds. The users of the site seem to be mostly tourists who come with the intention to visit, discover the greater area of *Halászbástya*.

1. Expectations

My first observation about the third Pavilion was that it was quite similar to the first location as the architecture did not involve a big change in terms of the structure of the work. It is also similar to the second location as both these Pavilions did not have the function of welcoming performances to entertain the users of the site, and had more of an architectural function.

The third Pavilion's specificity is its location. The *Halászbástya* is one of the most visited places in Budapest. I expected to have a greater amount of people in that location mainly filled with tourists who have time to stop and watch parts of the performance. For the transposability of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* to the third Pavilion, we needed to adapt or adjust some parts of the choreography and use the surroundings, as we had to in the first Pavilion

2. Experience

This subchapter ends with my personal experience and the dancers' opinion concerning the process of transposability to the third location and performance of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*^{xiii}

2.1 Personal

My first impression about the third Pavilion was that it had similarities with the previous Pavilions and, because I had experienced two different locations before, I felt more confident on how to structure the process of transposability of the piece. Also I saw that the dancers were more confident to dance in a public space and it showed in their performative presence which slightly decreased in comparison to the previous locations.

^{xiii} Copette Justine (2019) *Les Kiosques spécifiques - Tárnok út, Budapest* (Youtube) Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-EjtIvTnHw&feature=youtu.be> (Accessed:29/04/2019)

The important difference with this third site is the greater awareness of the audience and the people's reactions during the performance which might have caused spacial adjustments in the choreography. During the time spent on the site, I saw an abundant amount of people fluently entering and leaving the space. I felt that this unintentional audience was reactive about the performance but they were only watching during a short period of time and often with a certain distance between them and the dancers. I observed that in this environment, even though there were a lot of people, none of them came to interact with us which was surprising as I thought that this site would be the one holding the most interactions.

2.2 Dancers

I asked the dancers the following questions to help them formulate their experience. How did the transposability of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* from the first Pavilion to the second and third Pavilion work for you? How did you feel about the new environment? What was different or similar to the previous experiences? What is your general experience about how to transpose *Les Kiosques spécifiques* to different locations?

It was a really nice experience for me to think about how we can take the whole choreography into three different places. These were three Pavilions, so maybe from an outside perspective it can seem easy: the whole thing is the same and we just go there and do it, but the truth is it is not, the whole environment was really new every time we came to a new Pavilion.

The first Pavilion was flat, it had a really relaxed mode, there were not that many people and mostly from an older generation who did not really care, or maybe just when we began the performance.

The second place had much more possibilities with the stairs and it had kind of a stage feeling. More people stopped, watched for a while and then stayed until the end or went away.

The third Pavilion was the most crowded one. It was in the heart of Buda. There were so much people there, mostly tourists and they changed in about every fifteen minutes. There were so many reactions for example some people, just sat down and watched us, others sat down but did not care and were on their phones. There were some people who did not want to cross the Pavilion while we were performing so they walked around the Pavilion in a big circle in order to not disturb us. There were some who were really close and when they realized that we were dancing, just stopped there and watched us for a while. This third place had a lot of life inside it with all the people, the music from the restaurant's terrace near, the birds and the ever changing tourists. It was a really different but really nice experience had there.

Kira Kubus

The third location felt clearly similar to the first one since the Pavilion was not built on two different levels. People mainly come to visit this place in order to see the sights around it so I felt more like an obstacle in their beautiful picture. However, I liked that it was a busier atmosphere and that more people were crossing the space we were dancing in. The music that could be heard from the nearby café was neither distracting nor supporting our work but gave a nice feeling of 'everyday life happening around us'. I had the impression that we became quicker and more efficient in putting the materials together. As there were more people passing by compared to the other sites, it seemed that also more people kept sitting and watching what we were doing although most of them tried to avoid being filmed. In general, people seemed more open to see what is happening. Maybe because they were mostly tourists trying to absorb any kind of experience and visual information they could get from this foreign place.

On first sight, I thought it would be difficult to dance on the ground but it turned out that it was similar to other places, so no problem at all with that aspect. Somehow, I really enjoyed that the whole area was a bit smaller and compact maybe, because we were only two dancers and it was easier to fill out the space then. To sum up, I would say that the more similar the original and the new location are, the easier it is to transpose the choreography.

In short, I really enjoyed the process of creating and dancing being inspired by a specific site. The Pavilion's materials as a basis to find movement materials helped a lot in establishing a certain quality. Every aspect of the final performance therefore represents a part of the Pavilion's reality: the metal structure can be found in the stiff and sharp movements, the walking represents the everyday use of the site, the more danced parts show the value as an art piece and are the meeting point of the usual and unusual.

It was a very interesting and inspiring experience to dance outside, surrounded by people, nature, music... the dance became more of a living thing, similar to the people that were reading in the park around the Pavilion or the tourists passing by taking photos. These are all actions, that can happen anywhere at any time just like dancing. I would have liked to try out how the choreography could be transposed to more extreme and diverse sites in order to better see what difficulties it could bring for us dancers. Also, it would have been nice to try out the project with more dancers in order to fill up the space with more energy and dynamics. And then there is also the question of how and if the audience should be invited to be actively part of the performance.

Meggie Malou

To sum up their experiences about the third Pavilion, the structure of the Pavilion was similar to the first one but the difference was the constant crowd of tourists. Both of the dancers felt interested in how the different tourists' reactions impacted the performance. In general, the process of creating and producing a transposable Site-specific dance performance was for both of them an enjoyable experience and it enabled them to let themselves be inspired by the environment of each site while dancing. In each performance there were similarities related to the differences of the different environments.

Synthesis

I. Conclusion

I have been working on How a Site-specific dance performance is transposable to different locations. With this question my aims were to create my own Site-specific performance called *Les Kiosques spécifiques* in order to have my own experience with that subject. My researches on Site-specific dance performances increased my knowledge about that field; nevertheless, my thinking and consideration about the impact of the environment on the performance were changing throughout the development of my movement research even if my idea to work with costumes and my work plan and not using music did not change. *Les Kiosques spécifiques* has been performed several times in the three different locations in order to gain more experience. We had eleven versions in total with a length fluctuating between three to seven minutes. Each version was different as the environment was changing constantly. When working with generic sites, it was first for me to project my ideas into the next phase and it gave me a stronger desire to extend that work to several Pavilions and cities. I think the limits of this method will be the system of transposability as the process tends to quite redundant and thus we might lose the connections with the environment.

I saw that the audience was an important and complex part of the environment as their actions influenced the production. Because the unintentional audience was banding in and out during the performance without expectations, I was able to observe that their principal intention was defined by their behavior.

In *Hunyadi tér* it was mainly a everyday life intention from the residents of the neighborhood, in *Margit-sziget* it was a pleasure intention from locals and tourists and in *Tárnok út* it was mainly a touristic intention as there are not many locals in that area. My conclusion on that work is that the eleven versions of *Les Kiosques spécifiques* gave me a deeper experience on how to work in the Site-specific field. The three locations helped me to see how much impact the environment has on the creation and production of a piece.

Even though we performed a few times in the same place, the environment of the three sites was changing constantly. It seems for me there is no original performance which I can relate to but I was able to observe similarities and differences in the environment, the dancers' execution and the viewers' interpretation of the performance.

In my opinion, *Les Kiosques spécifiques* is not only one performance that can be transposed to different locations but every time I transposed the work I created a new version of the piece. The large range of versions came together as *Les Kiosques spécifiques*, and I would like to transpose it to more Pavilions in order to have more diversity.

II. Further development

I estimate that the further development of the practical part of my thesis is to continue the movement research of *Les Kiosques spécifiques*: I want to increase the number of performers, the length of the piece as well as the territory of the movement research in order to create a new artistic approach and establish connection with both the Pavilions and his users.

Regarding the continuation of the theoretical part of the thesis, my aim is to develop further the few parts that I did not have time to expand for this work. Furthermore, I would like to deepen a few terms in connection with the mobility of a Site-specific dance performance such as site-sensitive, site-adaptive, location-specificity, context-based adaptation.

The aim of the final development of my thesis will be to create a performance which would be the result of all these researches.

Synopsis:

Les Kiosques spécifiques is a collection of Site-specific dance performances designed for all types of Pavilions. The performance is free to travel anywhere in the world in the condition that the venue is a Pavilion.

The work mined the different parts of one Pavilion; the physical form, the daily use and its principal function. It gathers people and the environment to merge into one landscape.

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