

Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy

THESIS

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Dancer BA

Musical movement
Exploration of rhythm practice in dance

THESIS

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0. Key Notions

Rhythm

Vizualisation

Meter

Period

Independence of the bodyparts

Interweaving rhythm periods

Isolations

Phrasing

Loop

1. Introduction

The word “musical” is often used for the description of dance movement, in training, rehearsal, and performance critique. I have always been wondering, what this means.

This investigation aims to explore some ways in which dance movement can relate to music and which features - of the dance movement itself - make it relatable. Although music and dance refer often to each other, there are many differences in their means of expression. The element of rhythm appears in music as well as in dance. This research is made from the perspective of a dancer and choreographer and will focus on specific examples of dance practice: Farkas Zoltán Batyu’s approach to rhythm practice in the Rhythm and Folk training at Budapest Contemporary Dance Academy and Marco Torrice’s approach to rhythm in his Melting Pot dance practice. Both of the chosen practices relate strongly to rhythm. These dance practices integrate dance in a social form¹ where music carries the intention of dancing to it. These practices were chosen because they reflect experiences of my studies² and give different perspectives on contemporary dance. The rhythm-related and rhythm-producing dance movement in the practices of Batyu and Torrice will be described in detail. In the analysis, similarities and differences regarding both movement and rhythm will be highlighted.

The aim of this paper is to draw attention to the ways in which the dancer can visualize rhythm through movement and show the relationship with the musical rhythm. These trainings offer skills and awareness that are transferable to countless other situations of learning, showing, or creating dance. They can be of interest for other dance practitioners. They may also be of interest for musicians who work with dancers.

Rhythm as a term will be explained with a focus on musical structures. It will be important to differentiate between musical rhythm and movement rhythm. The language, which is applied to describe music and rhythm will be defined for this context. Visual presentation will be implemented.

¹ Batyu is a folk-dancer; Torrice describes the practice as a “[*Melting Pot of*] performance, pedagogy and participatory dance” (Torrice, 2017, ‘Melting Pot’)

² Batyu’ and Torrice are my teachers and have provided a lot of information during the training, which will be applied.

2. Rhythm

Rhythm appears in many contexts. The definition below describes rhythm in regards to music. This paper attempts to apply that description to dance movement, but also to clarify their differences.

A rhythm is a sequence of notes of specific durations. Any sequence of durations is a rhythm³. More specifically, rhythm is the patterning of the musical notes' durations⁴. Rhythm appears in all music⁵ or dance.

The perception of temporal duration is relative. It is commonplace to associate rhythm with regularity⁶; however, the musical term rhythm does not necessarily imply regularity⁷. When a certain temporal duration is continuously marked by an accentuated note, one can speak of meter. This brings a specific sense of expectation. The anticipation of the musical rhythm is based on the perception of meter. Dance movement can relate to the meter, because it is predictive. The music used by both Batyu and Torrice gives a sense of pulse and meter. A sense of meter depends on the presence of a pulse. The steady pulse of the music (sense of tempo: also beat) can be again subdivided. Meter is an elementary organizing mode of music; the accompanying music is therefore described by its meter. The rhythm of the individual instrumental parts is not always considered. In measured music the time signature informs about the musical meter. This duration is measured in pulses. The rhythm and regularity must be perceived in the present. This excludes long-term processes, as well as the dramaturgy and formal structure of a piece (music or dance).

Some musicologists propose the term⁸ period with the intention of finding a common language between different music theories. In music, it can describe all kinds of regular appearances (pulse and meter). In physics and mathematics, period refers to regular

³ London's article about rhythm in the 'Grove dictionary of new music' summarizes many researches on rhythm.

⁴ "*rhythm is concerned with the description and understanding of [the] duration and durational patterning [of musical notes]*", London p.1

⁵London, p. 2

⁶ *Oxford dictionaries*, (2019) 'Rhythm' Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/rhythm> (accessed 30st April, 2019)

⁷ London, p. 1

⁸See for instance Tenzer, p. 24

waveforms and occurrence of events.⁹ A period is a temporal duration. In contrast to meter, which can show irregular rhythmic patterns, period describes the same events repeating in the same interval. The term period will be used for movement sequences (especially in Rhythm and Folk), because it is able to emphasize the temporal duration and repetition of the dance movement. Arom's definition of period also highlights the looping character, which is an important factor in Melting Pot "*A period is a temporal loop based on the recurrence of similar events at similar intervals*".¹⁰

Accents play an important role in rhythm. A note can be emphasized not only through duration¹¹, but also through dynamics¹². Dynamics in music is the interplay of volume changes. How to set accents depends on the performer. Dynamics in dance is the interplay of energy changes. An accent in dance can be set by energy, speed or duration of a movement. These factors interact with each other. Dance can also use the means of direction or size.

In this paper musicality is described by rhythm. But the rhythm gains meaning and life through accentuation.

In this paper, we will make difference between movement rhythm and musical rhythm. The proposed question is whether the movement rhythm can be dealt with in the same manner as musical rhythm. Movement rhythm cannot be described by the same means as audible rhythm. The means of expression are different. In one hand there is kinetic expression, which one perceives visually, on the other hand there is sonic expression, which is audible.

In this paper, rhythm will be described by musical notation. In Labanotation the temporal duration of movements is shown on the vertical axis¹³. This has been an inspiration for my drawings. The depiction of period as waveforms has also served as an inspiration for the graphical explanations of movement rhythms. The movement will be described using words.

⁹Tenzer, p. 24

¹⁰Arom, p. 91

¹¹ An accent can be set by the slightest delay or change of duration that can not even be notated.

¹² London, p. 9

¹³ Fügedi, p. 20-22

3. Farkas Zoltán Batyu's approach to rhythm in the Rhythm and Folk training

3.1 Rhythm and Folk training at BCDA

The folk dances of the Carpathian Basin show many similarities and variations concerning form, structure, and performance. Often there are different names for similar phenomena¹⁴. The dances are explored by means of comparative studies. Variations and shifting features appear regionally. Sometimes each village has its own dialect of movements, structure, and music. The motives, structural build-up, and relation to the music also vary¹⁵. In Rhythm and Folk legényes¹⁶, couple dances and circle dances are learned. The steps and jumps are described as motives¹⁷. These motives are linked as set sequences or in improvisatory etudes. During the training the motives are mostly learned in set sequences; however, the aim is also to be able to improvise with them. The steps' and jumps' motives will be mentioned and described as they appear in the exercises. Regional variety is not considered, and the various dance styles are broken down to their basic principles. This implies that steps can merge and inspire each other. There are basic principles¹⁸ like the half-weight step ("félűj"), the rolling steps ("gördűlés"), the slide step ("csusszanás"), and the dropping jump ("ejtű ugrás"). While various motives are produced by the feet, the most important principle is the bouncing ("lűkűtetés", particularly in a quick musical pulse or dynamic movement rhythm) as it creates momentum ("lendűlet") for all further movement. The bouncing must variate its amplitude according to the tempo of the music.¹⁹

The movement's rhythm is often expressed by the sound of touching the ground. The movement gives an audible feed-back, as does the clapping of one foot against the other heel. The steps use the ground in different ways. The articulation of the feed with the ground is another and produces another sound. The clapping of the hands can also produce an audible

¹⁴men's dance – Legényes, Pontozó, Verbunk. (Martin, p. 40)

¹⁵In the Rhythm and Folk styles of legényes (Dunántűli ugrások, Gipsy dances, Kalotaszegi, Kűlű) and couple dances (Mezűsűgi, Erdűyi, Szűkelyfűld) are differentiated. It is an interest of Batyu to teach the deviation of the dances. He points to the culture of folk dance collectors.



¹⁶Legűny – man before marriage; legűnyes – men's solo dance


¹⁷Martin describes the motives of the steps and jumps as the smallest unit of the dance, p. 41, 42.

¹⁸Batyu (2015) describes these in detail, p.10-16.

¹⁹Batyu, 14th December 2017

rhythmic sequence (the hands clap together or on the thighs or parts of the upper or lower legs). In these examples the movement's rhythm corresponds directly to the musical rhythm and uses the same means of (sonic) expression.

Exceptional musical characteristics of asymmetric rhythm appear. The accompanying music often shows a 3/4 or a 7/8 time signature.²⁰ The exercises described below, if not otherwise specified, would be practiced to music with a symmetric rhythm. For example: The Kalotaszegi dances²¹ are accompanied by music with a 2/4 time signature. The rhythm of the double bass is . The verses consist of eight measures. The closing of each verse is emphasized by a pausing of the bass. Therefore, the dance motives are also differentiated by their opening or closing finish. During the musical verse, one of the legs is available for the next movement. At the verse ending, the weight is shared on both legs. The closing step rhythm is .

The motives include all possible subdivisions and combinations (mostly in four beats). The movement of the feet is very diversive and often fast, while the movement of the arms can be more melodic, suspended, going with the beat (). This is one reason why moving the arms and legs independently of each other in terms of space and rhythm is practiced.

In some cases, the rhythm period, which is performed by the movement, can shift in regards to the meter of the music, as the following example shows: The music can be in 3/4 measure while the repeated sequence of movements is performed in a period of 2/4.

As the title of the training already indicates: the aim of Rhythm and Folk is the practice of rhythm through folk dances. Batyu emphasizes that his teaching method supports the learning of various dances of the Carpathian area as well as every other folk dance.²² Consciously teaching contemporary dance students, the training means to support the distinct relation with space, musical rhythm, dynamics and distinguished accentuation in coordination of the performing body parts.²³

²⁰ E.g. Bulgarian music pieces

²¹ Martin, p. 40

²² Batyu (2015) blurb

²³ Batyu (2011) p. 8

The structure of the training's description follows Batyu's proposition²⁴. The variations described here have been practiced during the training. This is a representation of exercises which have kept challenging and reordering the awareness and coordination. The same exercise has almost never been repeated, but variations were frequently used. Playfulness with the material and within the structure is a fundamental value. Even though fixed dance sequences are often studied during the training, after embodying the principles, the aim is that one could use them for improvisation and for the creation of own dances.

3.2 Exercises for rhythm practice

If not otherwise specified, the exercises are practiced on a music with symmetric rhythm with the tempo ♩ = 60-100. Usually an exercise begins on a lower tempo, which increases.

3.2.1 Upbeat and downbeat

In many cases the beginning of the dance movement is placed on the musical upbeat before the first beat in the measure. In order to place this movement right in the music rhythm, downbeat and upbeat is practiced.

Clapping

Dancer 1 claps in the first and third of four beats while dancer 2 claps in the second and fourth. The hands of dancer 1 are positioned horizontally while the other positions them nearby vertically: The clapping takes place in the same space. One dancer can clap only when the other gives space (The exchange of the action is visualized. This makes it easier to understand the rhythmical phenomenon of downbeat and upbeat. Mistakes are very easy to recognize when dancers touch each other while they shouldn't.)

dancer 1: ♩ ♩ |

dancer 2: ♩ ♩ |

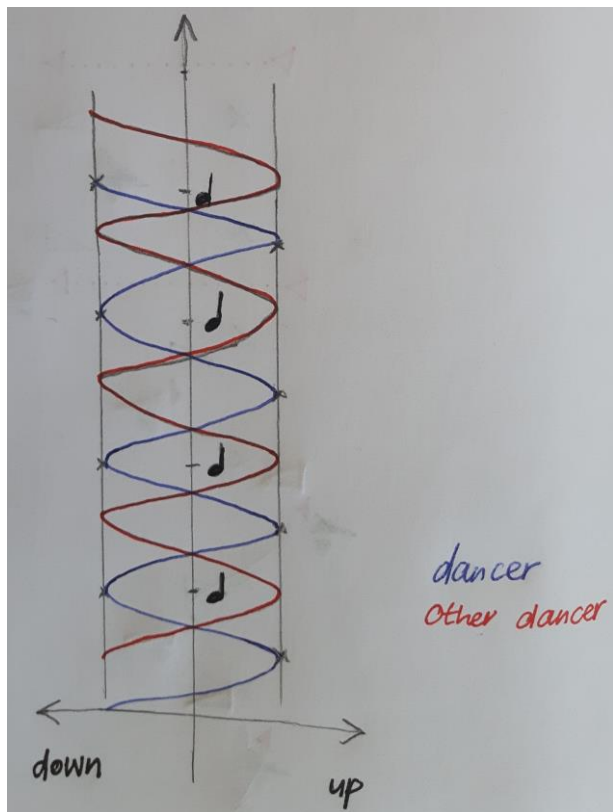
The speed of clapping rhythm is doubled and the partners can exchange the rhythm vice versa at a given beat (e.g. 4)

dancer 1: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ |

dancer 2: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ |

²⁴ Batyu (2015) p. 5

Bounce („lúktetés“)



Partner exercise: Dancer 1 lands (touches the ground) while dancer 2 is bouncing up.

Similarly to the clapping exercise the division of the rhythm is visualized.

The tendency is to anticipate the partners' movement bouncing together up and down. Usually this is challenging.

3.2.2 Independence of the extremities' articulation

3.2.2.1 Independence of the hands' and feet's coordination by spatial direction

Exercise practiced in Batyu's training²⁵

The motive of the arms goes rhythmically with the legs' movement ||: ♪♪ ♫ | ♪♪ ♫ :||

Palms showing towards the torso, the arms lift sideways and close again inwards. The movement sequence is ||: lift-close-lift | close-lift-close :||

The motive of the legs is a bounce of ||: up-up-down :|| on the spot.

The arms' motive is replaced by another²⁶ dance movement. The arms open diagonally up in front and the lower arms close; the hands approach the face. ||: Open-close-open | close-open-close :||

²⁵Work diary, 21st March 2019

The legs' movement will be varied:

-With the arrival downwards one foot shoots out to the front a weight shift from left to right foot. In the next repetition from right to left and vice versa with each repetition.

-The legs bounce up and in the following up bounce the legs separate and close again with the downward arrival. The independence of the spatial direction of the hands and feet is obvious in the latter variation of the legs in combination with the arms motives (the motive of lifting and closing the long arm sideways as well as the motive of opening diagonally up and closing the lower arms towards the face). The simultaneity of the opening of the arms with the opening of the feet is patterned in the movement (parallel). While the closing of the hands simultaneously with the opening of the feet is a challenging task:

hands: ||: open-close-open | close-open-close :||

feet: ||: up-open-down :||

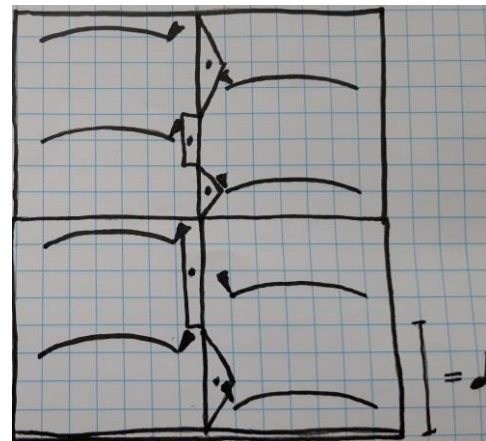
3.2.2.2 Independence of the hands and feet movement with regards to the rhythm

Exercise practiced in Batyu's training²⁷

The dancer steps sideways with the right leg and closes with a step of the left leg, steps again sideways to the right and closes with a step of the left leg (♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩). His/her palms clap in the double tempo onto the outside of the legs, exchanging each other (♩♩♩ | ♩♩♩).

In another variation (drawing) the dancer steps and closes sideways and doubles with the tempo of the next opening and closing to the side, before he

takes a slow step to this side (♩ ♩ | ♩♩ ♩) and then changes direction for the next repetition.



²⁶Baty (2015) p.26

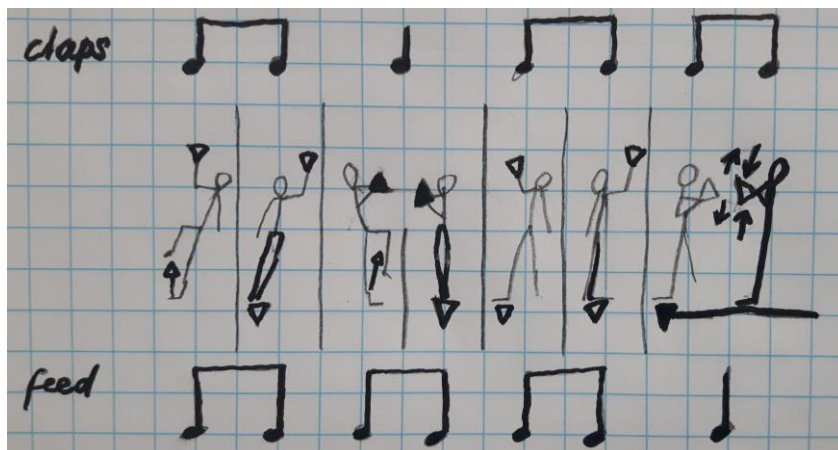
²⁷ Work diary, 19th March 2019. Drawing in Work diary, 27th April 2019. The Notation was learned by Fügedi, p. 78

Partner exercise practiced in Batyu's training²⁸

clapping: ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ :||

jumping: ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ | ♪ :||

The dancers stand looking at each other and clap twice together using their hands one after the other (♪ ♪ ; dancer 1: left right, dancer 2: right left). They clap their own hands together (♪), again they clap each other's hands and then twice their own hands. Meanwhile the feet perform a jump to both sides left and right (♪ ♪ ♪). The leg opens to the side while jumping up and the feet collect while landing (reminiscent of an assemblé²⁹). This jump moves sideways but doesn't move the dancer in space because it is performed in both directions, one after the other. Three steps (♪ ♪ ♪) are performed to the direction where the jump began. The beginning leg interchanges with each repetition, while the hands perform the clapping always beginning with the same hand.



²⁸ Drawing in Work diary, 17th January 2019

²⁹ Ballet - Collecting the legs in the jump and arriving with closed legs.

Exercise practised in Batyu's training³⁰

On the first beat the dancer performs a double tip on the floor with the right foot and then steps on it. Along with this step the left leg elevates and suspends to perform the next double tip. After some repetitions, the dancer interchanges the step with the variation where he/she suspends the leg on the first beat before its double tip. The hands clap on each beat.

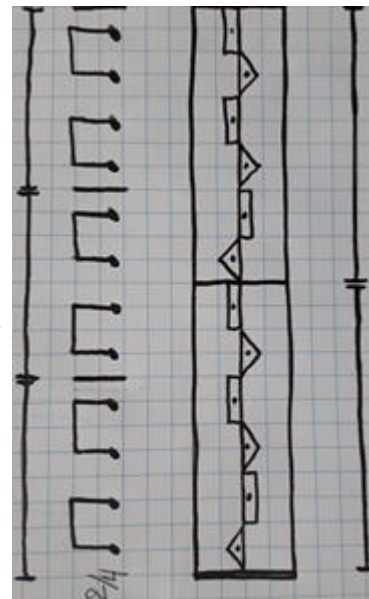
Steps ||: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ | ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ :||
Music/claps ||: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ :||

3.2.3 Interweaving rhythm periods

The length of the rhythm period³¹ differs between music and movement or between arms and legs.

Music and Steps relation³²

The phenomenon of interweaving rhythms between music and movement appears often in the circle dances. While the time signature of the music is 2/4, the motive sequence is performed in three: one step to the left side followed by the right leg a making a half-weight step closing next to the left leg; one step to the right side, closing, another opening step to the right side and again closing with a half-weight step of the left (||: 3/4 ♩ ♩ ♩ :||)



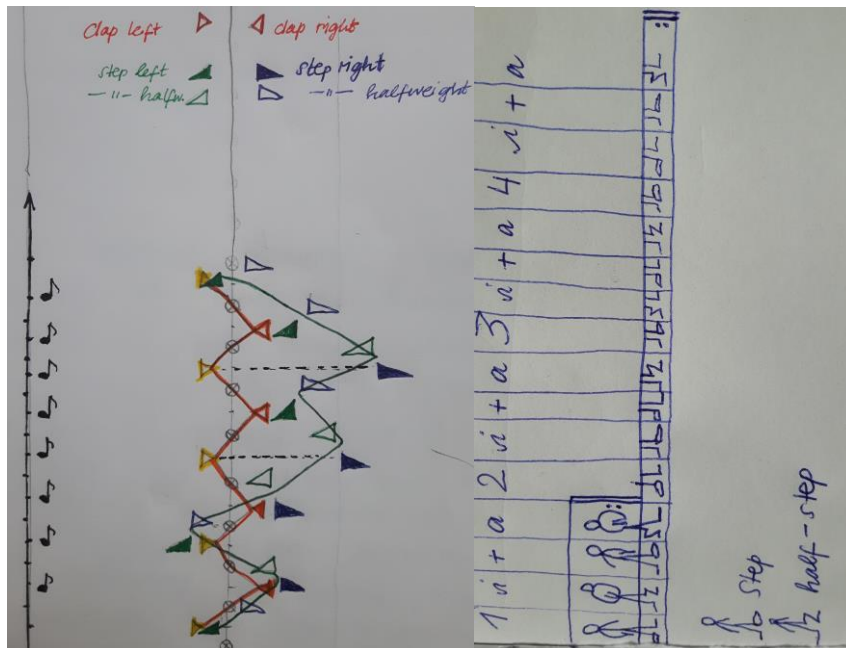
³⁰Work diary, 11th February 2019

³¹ "temporal loop in which similar [rhythmic events appear] at similar intervals" Arom, p. 91

³² Drawing in Work diary, 27th April 2019. The Notation was learned by Fügedi, p. 30

Clapping and Steps relation³³

The rhythmic period of the hands' movement repeats every two beats (clap to one leg, both hands, clap to the other leg, both hands) while the period of the steps takes eight beats (one step and a half-weight step to one side, the same to the other side; one step and a half-weight step goes to one side, another step and a half-weight step goes to this side. The whole sequence will be started from the beginning again, but into the other direction.)



The graphs illustrate how the period of the steps shifts further from the period of the claps. In the articulation of the coordination, a shift of movement concept takes place: On pulse 8, 1, 2, 3, the coordination of the movements is homolateral, because the hand claps onto the weight-taking (active) leg; while on pulse 4, 5, 6, 7, the hand claps onto the weight-leaving (inactive) leg. A change from homolateral to contralateral coordination appears³⁴. In the moment of the change the hands don't anticipate the repetition in the same direction, which is performed by the legs. In the graph, the lines move apart from each other instead of moving in parallel. The period of clapping or stepping can be varied³⁵ in temporal duration as well as being altered using motives.

³³ Drawings in Work diary, 27th November 2018

³⁴ The change of concept presents the challenge. Its name could be different, but it is important to mention that a change of direction in the coordination can be surprising.

³⁵ E.g. repetition, speed, ...

The name **interweaving** was inspired by an article on polyrhythmics³⁶. Considering the coordination, the **interweaving** rhythmic periods show an independence of the arms and legs in terms of space and rhythm, but the interweaving character emphasizes the duration of the movement period. The independent movement of music, dancer, and his/her body parts does not synchronize in the same measure but meets regularly while shifting in relation to each other.

3.3 Summary of Rhythm and Folk

Each exercise proposes a problem. Each problem describes a different aspect of the phenomenon of rhythm. While practicing, the dancer will suddenly understand the clue. Sometimes the body understands first, sometimes the mind understands first. Both moments are exciting. No final solution is found, but rather a way to practice more. It provides a great motivation for the student, when he/she experiences these moments of 'lightning'³⁷. The exercises are structured according to the challenge. This structure makes the training very accessible, because a success can occur with every step or clap.

The rhythm that is produced by the Rhythm and Folk movements can be perceived also by other senses. The movements create audible beats and the dancer touches him/her own body. The created rhythms are not only visualized - experienced in movement by the dancer - but involve hearing and haptic senses.

³⁶ Arom, p. 91

³⁷ This is my terminology. It describes the moments in practice, when one can feel, that something changes, although the coordination or thinking might not work yet.

4. Marco Torrice's approach to rhythm in the Melting Pot practice

4.1 Melting Pot

The Melting Pot Jam is a social event, a performative and pedagogical practice. In the framework of the pedagogical method each of the technical principles³⁸ is explored and practiced on its own in various exercises. The communal (and community building) aspect of the event is important. Melting Pot is a party for coming together, sharing the moment, seeing each other dance (civil gaze) and letting go of all possible emotions.³⁹ In the Melting Pot Jam the connection to the group and to the music are in focus. The dancer performs solo rhythm **phrasing** or shares a **rhythm loop** with a group of other dancers. The dance movement is spontaneously improvised. The basic rule of Melting Pot is to emphasize the percussive-rhythmic quality of the movement. The dancers "*make the beat always visible*"⁴⁰ through dance movement. The movement visualizes rhythm. The percussive character of the physical movement is animated by the musical beat. The movement relates to the musical beat by subdividing or multiplying it. The movement relates to rhythm, accents, and meter in music, but does not necessarily adapt to them and doesn't aim to visualize the musical rhythm. The melody or individual instrumental parts can also offer inspiration for the dance. The accompanying music includes DJ sets from various cultures which give a strong sense of the beat. The movement principles are articulation of the spine/ torso, clear trajectories, pushing/pulling, and walking.

The choreographic framework is also nourished by the shared rhythm loop and the individual rhythm phrasing. When a group of dancers gathers, there are several possibilities of formation

³⁸"- *The dialogue between the floor and the body through pushes, pulls, frictions, pivots, turns, falls and jumps.*

- *The movement possibilities of the torso/dorsal spine and the combinations of these movements in relation [to] the floor.*

- *Group connections and awareness through the space.*

- *Rhythm*", Torrice (2017, 'Melting Pot')

³⁹ Torrice: "*Whatever you come with, leave it on the dancefloor!*" Work diary, December 2017.

⁴⁰Torrice: "*[...]We have to see clear beats, no slow motion or fluid[...]*" Work diary, December 2017.

in space.⁴¹ An important factor in a group dance, but also for the individual dancer, is the travelling through space. When travelling and covering large distances, the rhythmical phrasing (or loop) will be expressed more by the walking and pushing into the floor. Meanwhile, when travelling less or dancing on the spot, rhythmical phrasing is rather expressed by the articulation of the spine.

4.2 Dance movement principles of Melting Pot

Articulation of the spine is practiced in rhythm phrasing improvisation to the music. One after the other, the head alone, the shoulders alone, the chest alone, the hips alone, are explored. Moving these body parts often arouses certain emotions or social connotations for the dancer (e.g. moving the pelvis). This aspect is a part of the performance. The eyes look and see. A more challenging practice of spinal articulation is the holding of an alternative position and exploring one part of the spine while the supporting structure remains still. Spinal articulation is also practiced in a partner exercise: One partner touches a point on the torso of the other (This point can be frontal or lateral, separated from the spine by ribs or stomach). The other partner moves from this point.

Clear direction in space: One point of the spine (and torso) describes a clear trajectory in space. This point can initiate the movement, changing the architecture; the body as an unchanged stable architectural structure can also be moved in space (by the supporting structure of e.g. the lower extremities) by considering a clear trajectory drawn from this point. The movement describes a vector in space.⁴²

Pushing from the ground and Pulling into the ground: Walking and every other action of the supporting structure (this can be the lower extremities or any other body part that touches the ground) is a pushing from the ground or a pulling into the ground.⁴³ Pushing and pulling movements can approach the ground or move upwards away from it. All levels of height or

⁴¹ The dancers can form a duet with same front, triangle, circle, or line. These frames give space for rhythm and dance variations and collaboration. The group formations are usually practiced in depths.

⁴² Work diary, 4th December, 2017

⁴³ "The floor is the only partner, who will never leave you; So, trust it!" Torrice, 6th December, 2017, Work diary

proximity to the ground can be used (e.g. jumping, squatting, etc). All body parts can relate to the ground.

In the walking patterns in space those principles apply, which are the basis of release technique⁴⁴ taught by Torrice: Use of the anatomical structure and physical reality (gravity) to produce movement efficiently. The anatomical principles experienced in walking are spirals, up- and down-momentum and direction of the vertical axis⁴⁵ (diagonally upwards frontal, backwards diagonally down.). Walking becomes a self-generating motion. The inherent momentum of being off-balance is emphasized when changing direction, increasing or decreasing the speed. The active gaze is part of the movement. The direction of the gaze can be changed first and the anticipation of body movement suspended; the direction in walking can be changed first and the anticipation of the gaze suspended.

The visual impression of percussiveness is supported by isolation of the moving body parts. In performing an isolation, parts of the body are dynamically clearly distinguished from other (non-moving) parts. Also the beginning and the ending of a movement are noticeably performed. The detailed articulation of the spine plays a key role for showing isolations in many dance forms⁴⁶. For example, in the Hip Hop style Popping⁴⁷ the arrival point of a movement is emphasized by muscle tension, which gives the impression of a popping out of this point or as if a ball had travelled on a distinctive pathway and arrived just there. This emphasizes the clarity, the beginning and the end of the movement. A clear trajectory in space of one point of the body is inherent, too. The speed of an action can vary.

⁴⁴ Torrice (2017, 'Pedagogy')

⁴⁵"*We grow up, because we fall downwards.*" Torrice, 5th December, 2017, Work diary.

⁴⁶The articulation of the spine and pelvis in Melting Pot is an element which refers to multicultural (for example African and Arabic) dance culture. More importantly, these are central influences for urban dance scenes (Hip Hop, for example). Torrice especially addresses groups, who are not self-evidently part of the institutionalized art scene. This approach reflects an artistic and social reality and goes beyond contemporary stage dance.

⁴⁷Engel (2001, p.359, 363) provides careful descriptions of the Hip Hop styles electric boogie and popping, which are characterized by performance of isolated movements and the articulation of the spine.

4.3 Rhythm practice in Melting Pot

The main ingredients of the dance in Melting Pot are the personal rhythmical **phrasing** and the rhythm **loop** shared with a group.

4.3.1 Rhythmical phrasing

The concept of phrase is equally present in dance and music⁴⁸. It is a sequence of movements or notes that create an integrity of meaning. Musical language mentions **phrasing** when a performer interprets a notated music by his accentuation of the notes. In dance, the association of phrasing and rhythm appears⁴⁹ too. Torrice establishes the term *personal rhythmical phrasing* for improvisation related to rhythm. Rhythmical **phrasing** is practiced using the movement principles. Other means of exercising are clapping, singing, and solo performance inside the circle of the group. The dancer recognizes the rhythm of the music (pulse, measure, accents, individual instrumental parts) and relates movements to these events. Consciously and intuitively, many decisions are made. The movement visualizes beats and their temporal durations. These can accelerate, stretch in time, interrupt, and suspend. The tiny or big version of a movement can be performed in the same temporal duration. A movement can be stopped with intervals - keeping the direction but pausing in between. A suspension is an enduring flowing movement that produces expectations for subsequent attack. The contrast of these elements is very effective: fast beats, which make the dancer tremble, slow-motion and sharp stops.

4.3.2 Rhythm loop

The loop refers to the musical rhythm, while the movement varies. The loop consists of the same elements as the personal **phrasing**, but a rhythmical sequence will be looped and repeated again and again (periodically). Any part of rhythm phrasing can become a rhythm loop. The creation of the rhythm loop is also practiced in solo exercise: By rhythmical phrasing using the spine and the pushing, the dancer creates a rhythm loop. The loop will be explored for a while until the dancer re-switches into free phrasing for eventual creation of a new loop. Another exercise is the establishment of one rhythm sequence (rhythm loop) with the same movement sequence; keeping it, but exploring it in order to “*get away with it, lose*

⁴⁸ *Oxford dictionaries*, (2019) ‘Phrase’ Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/phrase> (accessed 30st of April, 2019)

⁴⁹ Engel also gives space for a description of rhythmic phrasing, p. 363.

oneself in it."⁵⁰ This exercise aims for the performance of the same movement in the same temporal pattern but in variations of size and energy.

When the rhythm **loop** is shared among a group of dancers, several dancers establish a rhythm loop⁵¹ between themselves. As soon as the rhythm loop is embodied by everyone (the dancers must always communicate through watching each other and through eye contact), it will be taken out into the space in various movements. The movements vary in size, energy, height level, and distance covered in space. In the beginning, this procedure is often practiced as a partner exercise. Dancer 1 creates the rhythm loop; as soon as dancer 2 could recognize and embody the loop in his/her movement, the couple goes into space. The dancers challenge the common rhythm by going down and up from the floor, creating further distance between each other, and losing visual contact.

The dancers are challenged, when the rhythm **loop** does not coincide with the meter of the musical rhythm. When the loop can be performed twice or halfway (1:2) during the musical meter, it is quite easy to balance this difference. Other relations are trickier to perform. The beginning accent of the movement loop shifts in relation to the first beat of the musical meter. These are **interweaving** rhythms.

4.4 Summary of Melting Pot

Melting Pot is very much about performing and showing oneself. It is very much about empathy and the social event. The civil gaze is emphasized. The dancer is involved on a high energetic level. The tasks for the rhythm phrasing and looping are simple and effective. Countless possibilities of movement rhythm phrases can be generated with these tools. The dancer creates rhythm loops quickly and quickly understands the rhythm loops of others.

Another very important emphasis is the use and articulation of the spine, chest and pelvis area.

⁵⁰ Work diary, 11th 12, 2017

⁵¹ In the Melting Pot pedagogical method, the rhythm loop is instantly created by one dancer and proposed to the others. While in the Melting Pot Jam the rhythm loop can be created by more dancers together, who can cooperate dancing and showing it, but even shouting.

5. Comparison of Batyu's and Torrice's approach

Common features:

Both Folk Dance and Melting Pot use a similar principle to produce momentum for further movement. Bouncing ("lúktetés") brings "lendület". The up-moment and down-moment in the walking are used to produce suspension and further movement, as well as the upward and downward direction of gravity. This is produced by sensitive and precise articulation with the floor through the rich variation of motives and the pushing/pulling principle.

Both dance forms are social and refer to numerous dance cultures. Both methods put a special focus on the **visualization** of rhythm through movement. In both trainings, rhythm is not only visualized but also produced through sound. Anticipation of the accompanying musical rhythm is the basic principle. The musical **meter** is always considered. Sometimes the dance movement is inspired by the rhythm of individual instrumental parts. Both practices demand the skills of subdividing the musical rhythm and distinct placement of the movement with regards to the musical measure. Playing with the musical meter appears in both methods as **interweaving** rhythm periods.

Improvisation is an integral part of both trainings. Improvisation in both practices demands playfulness and precision in relation to the musical rhythm. The individual style and details of each dancer are welcome.

In both methods, **independence** and **isolation** of the body parts create the visualization of rhythm.

Differences:

The practices differ in their use of the physical structure. In Rhythm and Folk, the dancer moves the arms and legs independently. There is specific emphasis put on practicing their coordination in different directions and on performing different rhythmic elements simultaneously. The rhythm periods of the arms and legs can even interweave. Meanwhile in Melting Pot, any body part can be isolated from another. Specific direction of the movement in space is practiced and the use and articulation of the spine is emphasized.

Melting Pot provides endless possibilities for moving. There is a drive to unify by performing a loop rhythm together. The dancer recognizes personal phrasing and the setting of a looping rhythm, that can be accessed by others. The handling of rhythm in Melting Pot emphasizes the choice between the individual dance and negotiation with the group, showing the social

function of rhythm. The improvisation aspect of Melting Pot demands a spirit of presence and an ability to make quick decisions. The dancer constantly creates movement rhythm through **phrasing**. The tools speed (faster/slower), pause, and suspension are very clear. They enable the production of all variations of rhythmical phrasing. These tools are very effective and accessible in any dance situation.

In the Rhythm and Folk training, considering the basic principles, the motives of movement and rhythm appear in an endless number of variations. There is a set vocabulary though. The interdependence of dance and music rhythm is distinct. The set motives of the Rhythm and Folk training make the practice of precision in relation to the musical rhythm obvious.

Accompanying music with asymmetric rhythm presents a special challenge. Awareness of these rhythms is practiced. Subdivision of rhythm and distinct rhythmical placement of the movement in the music are practiced, not only through visualizing rhythm but also producing audible beats and beating one's own body. The exercises consist of specific combinations that are designed to challenge the coordination in a certain aspect. An exercise can be built of simple movements, but it can provide specific difficulties. The structure of the training is transparent.

Conclusion of the comparison:

Both training methods influence and can support each other. The trainings provide skills, awareness, and potential for many different situations of learning, performing, and creating dance.

Both practices provide tools and improve the skills, which are needed in order to create rhythmical movement and relate to the music. Overall similar principles are used for this purpose. But each of the practices shows its own advantages. When a dancer trains and performs in both methods the knowledge of each of them can add to the other. Speaking from my experience, each of both methods has strengths. In comparison, Rhythm and Folk focuses more on the improvement of the skills of coordination and awareness to the music while Melting Pot focuses stronger on the improvement of the tools, how to work with these kind of skills:

In Melting Pot the individual is very generous by supporting the group and showing himself/herself. The dancer is very aware of the other dancers and the music. The tools for the rhythm phrasing and the loop are formulae, which can be applied instantly in any situation. These can support the learning and the ability to improvise in Rhythm and Folk.

The combination of coordination and rhythmical placement poses a difficulty in each exercise of Rhythm and Folk. Through repetition, this challenging rhythm division and coordination will be more familiar for the dancer. By training these kinds of patterns, the dancer will develop the physical skills (independent movement of the body parts) and the awareness of timing (music) that are necessary to learn and create rhythmical movement.

6. What skills and tools can these trainings offer that are transferable to other dance situations?

The aim of the rhythm practice in both Rhythm and Folk and Melting Pot is the **visualization** of rhythm through movement. The trainings develop skills of physical coordination and awareness. When a coordination skill develops, the awareness for this coordination will improve. With increased awareness, there will be more availability for physical coordination. **Independence** and **isolation** of the body parts is practiced, as well as precise articulation with the floor. This increases attention to movement processes occurring (simultaneously) in the body. Rhythm sequences can be recognized in the dancer's own movement. By watching the movement of others, rhythm sequences can be understood and performed in movement.

Each movement phrase, sequence or motive is a rhythm **phrasing**. This gives the dancer the possibility, to become aware of this rhythm (and of the existence of several simultaneous independent individual rhythms). As soon as the dancer is aware of the performed rhythm, he/she can create or vary this rhythm. For rhythm phrasing the tasks of Melting Pot are very useful. The directions are clear and can be instantly applied in any situation of dancing: fast speed, slow down, pause, suspension. Rhythm variations are those that are durational/temporal. Temporal variations change the kinetic speed or dynamic. For these actions, the developed skills (Rhythm and Folk) are supportive: subdivision of rhythm, distinct placement of the movement according to the rhythm, distinct recognition of the musical meter.

Music brings a sense of tempo and **meter**. The musical regularity provides objectivity for the duration of the movements. Thus music supports the work with rhythm visualized through movement. The actions of accelerating, decelerating, pausing, and suspending; the division of the rhythm, and the conscious rhythmical placement of the movement in the rhythm are

supported by the awareness of the music. The relation to the music is often stressed in order to influence the dynamic of the movement⁵². A relation between movement and music unavoidably exists; it is up to the attention of the dancer to make use of this relation. The music can give company and support, but also provides inspiration. It can function as a play partner. By anticipation of the musical rhythm the strong accentuated beat of the meter is usually recognized. The dance phrase often begins on this beat or at least accentuates it. But this is only one of many possible choices. Any other beat can be accentuated through movement. When a movement sequence periodically repeats, or a rhythm loop with improvised movement is established, the creation of **interweaving** rhythm periods is possible. Sometimes this playfulness is not produced by doing, but by recognizing it.

The term rhythm is noticeably interwoven with the action of repetition, referred to in this paper in speaking of **period** and **loop**. Repetition and rehearsal are integral parts of dance training and creation. The dynamics of a movement often hold the key to finding precision, momentum, and energy. Searching for and trying out different rhythmic versions can thus support the training. Repeating and looping also help the dancer to become aware of a rhythm.

Throughout this paper, a major difficulty was differentiating between a musical rhythm and a rhythm visualized or performed by movement. The difference does not lie in the phenomenon, but in the means of expression. Rhythm is rhythm. The interaction between embodied rhythm and musical rhythm opens the attention toward the space, colleagues, stage, and audience.

In Rhythm and Folk and Melting Pot the clear direction of the movement in space is emphasized. If the dancer develops the awareness for the surrounding space, he/she becomes more aware of the movement on the very outside edges of his/her physical perception. Hence for the rhythmical movement the relation with the floor and the idea of reaching out to the edges of the skin and beyond are simultaneously present. In general, the awareness for simultaneous, independent movement processes is a very important principle for rhythmic movement. Unintentionally, several independent movements are always generated

⁵² E.g. The Ballet teacher Varnagy Kristof asks students to explore the rhythm, but sometimes points to a specific handling, for instance he demands to “*fill*” the music in order to find length in the muscles during the rond de jamba. Work diary, March 2019.

simultaneously in the body anyway (e.g. breathing, etc.). It can support to develop awareness and sensitivity for these in order to produce independent rhythms and isolated movement.

In this paper, the interdependence of the visual and auditive senses, as well as the interrelation of sensory perception and movement, was not emphasized, although it would be necessary in order to claim the title “musical movement”. The focus was instead on tools for improving the performance and creation of rhythmical movement. It would be interesting if movement that produces audible rhythm demands the same physical coordination skills as the dance movement. In Rhythm and Folk, audible beats are produced, as well as in the Melting Pot, rhythm creation is practiced by clapping. Rhythm production through movement with visual or sonic expression might be supported by similar principles.

The understanding of musical and movement rhythms can be supported by notation. It was a surprise for me to learn that Labanotation deals essentially with the description of movement rhythm (and can be easily put in relation with musical notation).

Researching, thinking, and writing about rhythm have raised my awareness for each of the described phenomena. Skillfulness is not only the ability to produce a certain movement, but also the ability to recognize certain processes, and to enhance them. Clarity and precision in understanding brings clarity in performance. Practice and involvement in analysis symbiotically support each other. With lengthy practice, skills grow to physical reality. I have participated and practiced in the Rhythm and Folk and Melting Pot training. During the theoretical study, a big step toward understanding and intention has been made. Now there comes a wish for further physical practice in order to embody this understanding more deeply. Torricce instructs “*Act instinctively*”⁵³, which becomes possible through physical practice and trust.

⁵³Torricce. Work diary, December 2017.

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