

“The man in Lunacy”, a dance solo by Andrei Jerschik (1929)
An arts-based, digitised inquiry through a Labanotation based score
(Presentation)

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Proposal:

This artistic research project investigates embodied knowledge through a score based on Labanotation and analyses dance practice as a form of researching and exploring movement within notational and digital practices. Thus the concept of this research focuses primarily on three themes:

- **Artistic Research (Arts-Based Inquiry):** Dance and movement are understood as processes of knowledge production, in which practice itself functions as research.
- **Labanotation Score:** Serves as a methodological tool to document and structure movement sequences and, through performative execution, to generate new insights into (Austrian) dance heritage.
- **Embodied Knowledge:** The methodological focus lies on experience-based reflection on movement and connects choreography, notation, improvisation, and exploration.

Funded as part of a digitisation initiative of the Austrian Federal Government, this research project was published in 2024 as a multimodal, user-centred web platform for dancers in “movementmachines.org”. The project links embodied knowledge with work on different archival materials as strategies of dance makers. The artistic production processes of contemporary choreography and dance today are beyond normative production practices and take place in an impressive diversity and individualisation. The use of media and materials of

different kinds has become a matter of course in dance-choreographic working strategies.

Specifically Labanotation not only inspires the creation and staging processes of dancers and choreographers. As a distinct trace of dance Labanotation can make dances visible beyond the performative act and rememberable as a cultural repertoire, as a "promise for the future". (Maria Ley Piscator)

The here discussed website “movementmachines.org” aims to make digitalisation and digital strategies usable for artistic production and mediation processes in contemporary dance. The focus is on a conceptually comprehensible and sustainable storage of specific dance repertoires and the specific use of digital possibilities in the rehearsal and mediation processes of dance making. The individual work with digitalised materials enables dance-makers to deal directly with specific themes and repertoires and can considerably expand conventional working strategies of dancers and choreographers. In addition, the digital process with its individual approach can make the creative work of dancers visible - work that has so far mostly been subsumed under the work of choreographers. Theorists such as Frédéric Pouillaude and Marc Franco convincingly point to gaps in dance research and dance publications regarding the perception of dancers' work in contemporary dance productions. Usually, the focus is on works and choreographers rather than practices and dancers. In the project “movementmachines.org”, selected and academically commented dance practice material is to be made accessible on a web platform.

A team of contemporary performers carried out the five case studies. They explored still largely unknown archive material by Vaslav Nijinsky, Gertrud Bodenwieser, Dorothee Günther, Olga Szentpál, Andrei Jerschik. All the dancers involved are distinguished by their expertise in dancing, choreographing,

notating and theorising. They realise the core idea of the digitalised micro-studies through their skills in the operative, artistic-compositional processes and "incarnate" the digitally prepared material into contemporary gestures and movements.

This lecture refers to the micro-study "The man in Lunacy", a dance solo by the Austrian "Ausdruckstänzer" Andrei Jerschik, created in 1929. It is a specifically conceptualized arts-based inquiry through a Labanotation based score in a collaboration with the dancer Damián Córtes Alberti. The lecture gives insight to the score and its specific usage.