

Sonja Karoliina Aaltonen  
Bachelor Programme Dance Performance  
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Stockholm University of the Arts, Sweden  
Supervisors: Josefine Wikström, Zoë Poluch, pavleheidler

Loops? from Micro to Macro  
- in Relation to Subject Formation and World Making

## Dear Reader

“We are as always, as everyone, everywhere and anytime, being conditioned.”<sup>1</sup>

As a prologue for the written part of the Degree Project, I want to invite you to read this text from the place where you are at the moment. Take a few minutes, before reading this text. Feel the place, where you are now. Let all that is there, things, feelings, sounds, memories, moments be there.

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## Acknowledgements

“Remembering and re-cognizing do not take care of, or satisfy, or in any other way reduce one's responsibilities; rather, like all intra-actions, they extend the entanglements and responsibilities of which one is a part. The past is never finished. It cannot be wrapped up like a package, or a scrapbook, or an acknowledgment; we never leave it and it never leaves us behind.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> André Lepecki, *Singularities – Dance in the age of performance* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 2.

<sup>2</sup> Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway – Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), Preface and Acknowledgments.

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## An Introduction

The work of the Degree Project is constructed and worked in Stockholm, Sweden, Northern Europe. The work takes its place in Helsinki, Finland. It is still going, ongoing, a perpetual doing. It takes its place in dance studios at Stockholm University of the Arts. It takes its place on the street while walking. It takes its place while dancing. It takes its place through oral exchange. It takes its place through feelings. It takes its place while sleeping. It takes its place while reading. It takes its place in seeing. It takes its place in public. It takes its place in private. It takes its place within. It takes its place in-between - continuously intertwined to its multidimensionality. The work is going to wonder around questions of – *How repetition belongs to subject formation? And How repetition and looping construct and affect world making?*

In the Degree Project, I am interested in researching the relationality of repetition and loops in connection to subject formation and world making. In the work I am going to experience and walk around theories of the performative, a subject, storytelling, branding, repetition and looping. There exist multiple stages of subject formation in the conscious and the unconscious layers of doing in subject's daily actions. One could argue these acts as labor in 2020's production of subjectivity. These constant acts and experiences could be seen as loops through repetition and cyclic rhythms. According to this, loops could be seen as actions, habits, repeated thinking processes, understandings of norms and different kind of interactions, which change and transform our perception and understanding constantly about ourselves and the world we are living in through persistent repetition. Among many other things, these loops are linked to meaning making, communication and experiencing. The phenomena are closely related to milieus, to contexts. Within contexts, we could zoom in to smaller ranges and layers of looping patterns or then look at bigger looping constellations in societies, which affect subject's behavior and experiences.

In this text I am using >subject< as a concept to speak about >a person<. I prefer to use the word >subject< instead of >an individual<, since I want to observe and highlight a positional and relational aspect of this integrity; namely, how the subject is always in relation and conditioned by something. As the dance artist Anna Grip would say: "You are many". Or if connecting this phrase to the thoughts of María Lugones, an Argentine feminist philosopher, activist and Professor of Comparative Literature and of Women's studies, described by dancer and performer

Fabián Barba: “You are and you are not”<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, I am interested in decentralizing the focus of individualistic point of views of world making and moving towards relational ways of thinking; when wondering around subject formation. The relational aspect is willing to highlight aspects of caring and healing for example in the subject’s everyday actions.

How are our experiences of ourselves, others, and the world constantly affected by multiple particles, situations, felt-sensed experiences and conversations? I ask this question relative to generally accepted and expected dichotomous or hierarchical strategies of thinking. Following Karen Barad’s, an American Professor of Feminist Studies, Philosophy and History of Consciousness with a Ph.D. in Physics, line of thought - “Existence is not an individual affair.”<sup>4</sup> How then could we activate our consciousness towards many instead of one? This text is about to observe active relationality and listening in daily doing, through micro and macro loops. The work cannot be perfect; it cannot be controlled but it can be actively noticed, questioned, worked and decentralized. This action brings us to a point where through recognizing ranges of loops and actively dealing with them we could change and transform them in praxis.

Through looping, pulsating, vibrating, changing and transforming the work of this Degree Project seeks and challenges opportunities for dancing together, when being posited, affected and confronted by continuous flow of interactions and repeated loops in the everyday of a subject. How could the intently articulated complexity exist on a broader scale in the doing of “an active subject”<sup>5</sup>? I am affected by María Lugones, who introduces for example the term >active subject<. For Lugones, the active subject tries to work and direct active consciousness towards collectivity rather than an individual. The active subject tries constantly to see the effects of dichotomous logics and how these create the social order. Even though the active subject wants to see the logics, it must question and work the praxis and disentangle these in active doing. Lugones also introduces a term “world of sense”<sup>6</sup>, which insists that we attend to how each subject perceives world. The world of sense of the subject is always posited and affected by several concerns for her. I feel and argue that Lugones’ thoughts are vital in relation to life,

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<sup>3</sup> Fabián Barba, Method course at Stockholm University of the Arts, October 22, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Preface and Acknowledgments.

<sup>5</sup> María Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes - Theorizing Coalition against Multiple Oppressions* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003), 209.

<sup>6</sup> Lugones, *Pilgrimages/Peregrinajes*, 208.

living as a human and world making. I want to give acknowledgements to her work and the work of many others, that I am referring to in this text. In this Degree Project I am willing to work with loops in relation to the thoughts, which are presented in the text. How does the experience of looping, recognizing actions of looping and questioning them affects the subject in praxis – what emotions or experiences are involved in the active doing? How can looping be perceived in relation to something and from a point of view of a spectator? How can loops be perceived from micro to macro layers and worked actively?

## 1.Theories of performative

### 1.1 Subject in relation to performative

Returning to Lepecki's "We are as always, as everyone, everywhere and anytime, being conditioned," I ask *how* are we "always, as everyone, everywhere and anytime, being conditioned"? In this text, repetition and loops are linked to an idea, that when subject experiences, repeats an action or an experience persistently - the repeated action affects subject's behavior and its psychophysical integrity. The action can become an element of the subject's historicity or the action can transform for example to a habit or an understanding of a norm in the subject's worldview. If we understand Lepecki as saying that being conditioned means being in constant interaction of multiple forces as psychophysical integrities, his argument encounters several viewpoints into the discussion of: What matters affect the processes of subject formation and world making? This discussion incorporates concepts such as normativity, relationality, experience and affects. How subject's history, surrounding and millions of different interactions affect the present being, the experience of being and the processes that condition (or influence) the subject's understanding of the world?

In this text, I am introducing a number of theorists and philosophers who have worked and wondered around theories of performative, since I am interested in observing repetitive and looping matters as a part of subject formation and world making. In this text I am using > matter< as a concept to speak about repetitive and looping phenomena, which are affecting subject formation and world making. I am interested in the totality of a subject – how experiences of a bind<sup>7</sup>, a bodymind, are affected by many matters, which then construct or change our understandings of self-image and worldview of the subject. I am observing how the

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<sup>7</sup> Eleanor Bauer, Method course at Stockholm University of the Arts, September 16, 2020.

subject's historicity affects its behavior, its way to communicate and interact with itself, its relation to other subjects and the world it is living in. How does the subject's bind restore experiences and how do three-dimensional memories, which are felt-sensed, a part of the present moment?

In 1960's J.L. Austin, who was a British philosopher of language, started to use a concept of performativity in his work *How to Do Things with Words*. Austin stated, according to Oxford Bibliographies, that: "there was a difference between constative language, --, and performative language, which does something in the world"<sup>8</sup>. Performative was then related to something that actually performs a relation between subject and another subject or the world and does something. Richard Schechner, who is an American Professor of Performance Studies, theater director, author and editor, argues that after Austin introduced his observations concerning his theories of speech acts "we began to think of the performative, the actual doing of something by performance, by speaking, by gesturing, because we are taking a broader view on - what constitutes language? There is body language, there is gestural language. Not only is there spoken and written language."<sup>9</sup> Moreover, Schechner speaks about the idea that parallel to language, our bodies are performative and those include many intertwined layers of language, communication, as I have understood.

In relation to Austin's thoughts, Erving Goffman, who was a Canadian-born sociologist, social psychologist and writer, wrote a book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* in 1959 in which he observes subject formation through a concept of a performance. Following Goffman's line of thought, a sociologist Ashley Crossman describes Goffman's thoughts and introduces Goffman's idea that subjects in daily life are "actors on a stage, each playing a variety of roles. The audience consists of other individuals who observe the role-playing and react to the performances."<sup>10</sup> Crossman also describes Goffman's thoughts about the term performance in her article as follows:

"Goffman uses the term 'performance' to refer to all the activity of an individual in front of a particular set of observers, or audience. Through this performance, the individual, or actor, gives meaning to themselves, to

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<sup>8</sup>"Oxford Bibliography," Performativity: introduction, last modified March 10, 2015, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199766567/obo-9780199766567-0114.xml> .

<sup>9</sup> "Performance Studies: An Introduction - Performativity," Companion Websites, YouTube, December 17, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm3kvxRFS58> .

<sup>10</sup>"The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life," Social Sciences, ThoughtCo., updated July 1, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-presentation-of-self-in-everyday-life-3026754> .

others, and to their situation. These performances deliver impressions to others, which communicates information that confirms the identity of the actor in that situation. The actor may or may not be aware of their performance or have an objective for their performance, however, the audience is constantly attributing meaning to it and to the actor.”<sup>11</sup>

For me, Goffman’s thoughts are articulating an idea of a corporeality, which consists of repetitive actions of loops between a subject’s self-image and others. In the quote this constant doing is described as performing, as performance. In relation to this, Tove Salmgren, a Swedish dancer, choreographer and dramaturge, has worked with a question of “What kind of social space does a performance situation carry?”<sup>12</sup>, which I can see related partially to Goffman’s thoughts concerning everyday performances.

Among many other, Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Giorgio Agamben have observed the performative of a subject in their works. Jacques Derrida, a French philosopher, linked his thoughts to J.L. Austin’s theories about performative according to Schenker in the following way: “We are always performing a text. -- With a text he did not only mean a written text, but also a performance text. He meant behavior text.”<sup>13</sup> Derrida was also interested in the relational subject according to the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, where Derrida’s work is described as follows: “Instead, Derrida wants to reveal that every so-called ‘present’, or ‘now’ point, is always already compromised by a trace, or a residue of a previous experience, that precludes us ever being in a self-contained ‘now’ moment (SP68).”<sup>14</sup> Michel Foucault, a French philosopher, discusses about a subject and production of subjectivity by using the term >technologies of the self<. “They define a mode of action that an individual exercises upon herself and uses to produce her subjectivity.”<sup>15</sup> Foucault’s thoughts are described about the term technologies of the self in a book called *Public Sphere by Performance*. In relation to Derrida and Foucault, Giorgio Agamben’s, an Italian philosopher, work has been described as follow by Bojana Kunst:

“For Agamben, the subject is always a result of the relationship between living beings and dispositives, in which the dispositif – as a conglomerate of practices, tasks, processes, inclusions and exclusions – must always imply some process of subjectivisation; without subjectivisation, the dispositif would be sheer violence. Agamben defines the dispositif (apparatus) as “literally anything that has in some way the capacity

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<sup>11</sup>“The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life,” ThoughtCo.

<sup>12</sup> Tove Salmgren, Subject Specialization course at Stockholm University of the Arts, April 30, 2020.

<sup>13</sup> “Performance Studies: An Introduction - Performativity,” YouTube.

<sup>14</sup> “Time and Phenomenology,” Jacques Derrida, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, <https://iep.utm.edu/derrida/#H4>.

<sup>15</sup> Bojana Cvejić and Ana Vujanović, *Public Sphere by Performance* (Berlin: b\_books, 2015), 125.



to capture, orient, determine, intercept, model, control, or secure the gestures, behaviours, opinions or discourses of living beings.”<sup>16</sup>

Kunst is a philosopher and contemporary art theorist, who I am also referring to considerably in this text.

Judith Butler, an American philosopher and gender theorist, observes a theory of performative in relation to gender and identity. Butler has developed a concept of performing identity in the early 1990's. Performance theorist and performance maker Bojana Cvejić and cultural worker and Ph.D. in Humanities Ana Vujanović, comment on Butler's work in their book *Public Sphere by Performance*:

“Her theory of identity politics, drawing on Foucault's analyses of the institutional and historical constitution of the subject as well as the theory of speech act, is situated in poststructuralist queer studies and made a remarkable contribution to the destabilization of the notion of “identity”, thus disputing identitarian postulates of feminist theory.”<sup>17</sup>

As I have perceived, Butler's theory of the performative discusses complex systems, structures and strategies, which are constructing and affecting a subject, and this way constructing subject's identity and for example gender. In the essay “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory”, Butler's work has been articulated as follows:

“In this sense, gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time – an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts. Further, gender is instituted through the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self.”<sup>18</sup>

According to this, the subject is for Butler always constituted by its historicity, context and interactions. The essay also refers to a philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty in relation to Butler as follow: “In claiming that the body is an historical idea, Merleau-Ponty means that it gains its meaning through a concrete and historically mediated expression in the world”<sup>19</sup>. I am interested in Butler's thoughts towards the idea of subject as something constructed and affected. Her

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<sup>16</sup> Bojana Kunst, *Artist at work – Proximity of Art and Capitalism* (Winchester: Zero Books, 2015), 32-33.

<sup>17</sup> Cvejić and Vujanović, *Public Sphere by Performance*, 129.

<sup>18</sup> Judith Butler, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory”, *Theatre Journal*, vol. 40, no. 4 (Dec., 1988): 519, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3207893>.

<sup>19</sup> Butler, “Performative acts and gender constitution,” 521.

thoughts of constructed identity can be linked back to Lepecki's quote of, how "we are as always, --, being conditioned". In the Degree Project, I would like to highlight Lugones' comment about positionality next to these thoughts, since the subject is closely connected and affected by many.

## 1.2 Storytelling and intra-actions

How are we then always conditioned by something? Next to the theories of performative in relation to subject formation and subject's understandings about the world, I will observe some processes of communication and interaction connected to the thoughts presented before. How are we posited and affected by many, and how does our active consciousness or unconsciousness work with these moments in the present? Here, we are walking around experiences, meaning production and subject's visceral feelings.

If we are observing communication and interaction for example in a subject and between subjects - what can we recognize as something? I am using the word storytelling here to describe this relationality as loop like sensations, thoughts and actions, since I am interested to articulate the communication or interaction not only through words but also through experiences and feelings. Storytelling here connects to meaning making, reading, understanding, knowing, feeling and experiencing. In this text storytelling is also connected to the experience of the previous doings overlapping. How can we as subjects recognize sensations, thoughts and actions, and relate them to ongoing interventions? This text is not going to expand into the history of knowledge production, epistemology or semiotics, even though it could extend also in that direction. This text acknowledges that there are multiple affects and particles in the act of knowledge making processes in relation to world making and experiencing. It also acknowledges that these processes can vary relative to subject's context and historical situation.

"The way we write the stories, we build the reality"<sup>20</sup> This text is looking at a place between two or many entities and questions what happen there in-between. The in-between can be described as corporeality or intra-actions as Karen Barad would state. Dancer and choreographer Alice Chauchat would describe and comment on Barad's work in relation to dancing as follow:

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<sup>20</sup> Fabián Barba, Method course at Stockholm University of the Arts, October 22, 2020.

“Karen Barad’s theory of agential realism, grounded in the study of quantum field theory, proposes that phenomena are “the ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies”. Following this idea, dancing is also an inseparability, whose distinct and entangled agencies would be the dancer and the dance. Can we dance our intra-actions? --. Can we practice what Barad calls response-ability towards that which we do not grasp?”<sup>21</sup>

Chauchat’s questions resonate something very tingling in me in relation to the thoughts of dancing and what it is. For me as a dancer this is also related to the question of: What is dancing? Or when does dancing start? How is dancing differentiated from other doings? Perhaps we can definitely practice intra-actions in dancing.

Linked to the thoughts of overlapping networks in relationality and practicing intra-actions in dancing, the following quotes from Karen Barad bring important essence to the constant corporeality of storytelling and intra-acting in everchanging present between two or many entities, subjects. Continuing the quote from Barad introduced already before:

“Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals do not preexist their interactions; rather, individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating. Which is not to say that emergence happens once and for all, as an event or as a process that takes place according to some external measure of space and of time, but rather that time and space, like matter and meaning, come into existence, are iteratively reconfigured through each intra-action, thereby making it impossible to differentiate in any absolute sense between creation and renewal, beginning and returning, continuity and discontinuity, here and there, past and future.”<sup>22</sup>

“There are no solutions; there is only the ongoing practice of being open and alive to each meeting, each intra-action, so that we might use our ability to respond, our responsibility, to help awaken, to breathe life into ever new possibilities for living justly. The world and its possibilities for becoming are remade in each meeting.”<sup>23</sup>

From Barad’s contributions we can deduct that we are constantly reconfigured as subjects through each intra-action and our positionality. Barad’s term intra-action is connected to the thought of storytelling in this text. Intra-actions are linked to world making, as well as to dancing, like Alice Chauchat would state – “Charged with mystery, dance can become our teacher in matters of ethics.”<sup>24</sup> I could argue that intra-actions and stories are teaching us about

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<sup>21</sup> Alice Chauchat, *POST-DANCE* (Stockholm: MDT, 2017), 32.

<sup>22</sup> Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Preface and Acknowledgments.

<sup>23</sup> Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Preface and Acknowledgments.

<sup>24</sup> Chauchat, *POST-DANCE*, 31.

life and living in this sense. At the moment I think strongly that we can practice our responsibility especially in dancing in relation to sustainable world making.

### 1.3 Branding

Branding discusses the opportunities of a subject to curate themselves through feedback and mirroring loops towards some outer outcome in this text. This is closely connected to storytelling. What do subjects tell for themselves about themselves or about others and the world? Branding especially connects to an idea that subjects can curate but also brand their self-image on a specific way for others to see. Accordingly, branding can be connected to subject formation and how subjects curate their self-image for example on social media platforms. This phenomenon unearths a question, how we are telling stories about ourselves to someone else and with what purpose? How does for example a virtual reality affect the behavior and networks in the experience of the subject?

In relation to this, how many times per day are you engaging your attention to consider, how am I connected to the present moment and the networks it is activated through? There exists an accelerating speed of ways to learn tools, which helps subject to compose and brand their self-image. The phenomenon happens continuously, and it affects our behavior by creating new patterns of being. Many societies have been speculating on, how to produce and how to use linearity as a game or tool of surviving and flourishing? How do people react to the present and how do they situate themselves into the network of bubbles, stories, and then to the divergent networks? This been said, the subject becomes an everyday curator, who stays ready to acknowledge any perceptible information, gaining more activity by formulating links and impulses between and from the subject. I am interested in wondering around the phenomenon of branding related to subject formation, since the action of curating can be a strong trend in specific contexts. Branding connects strongly to the core strategies of capitalism and tries to be in front of the accelerating rhythm of conversation on – What is fashionable or even more, what is contemporary? These questions can destruct sustainable ways of living and diminish communication between subjects.

In this sense, the action of branding is a strong loop itself, affected by bubbles of groups and societies. The loop of branding establishes itself as a tool of self-governance through constant

decision-making processes in a market driven society. Paz Rojo, a Spanish dancer, choreographer and PhD in Choreography, writes in her book *To Dance in the Age of No-Future* and follows Marina Garcés', a Spanish philosopher and essayist, thoughts in the following way:

“Besides this, Garcés mentions that today anyone can be the author and the spectator of her own image, her own brand. This is a way of managing the visible as a form of communication through personalized and individualized representation, which aim is to guarantee the coherence and smooth functioning of one’s own image as a subject-brand. A crucial element here are the so-called «technologies of the self» (recalling Foucault’s «care of the self»), which now in a globalised world have transformed into «an ongoing care in order to safeguard and guarantee the future profitability of the Self(ie).» These strategies capitalize on identity and communication in the management of the performance of a subject who undergoes a continuous process of recycling, reinforcing her presence and social integration. Thus, «performance [has become] a crucial element of the techniques of the self, that symbolize, aptitude through self-consciousness and performance through self-realization.»<sup>25</sup>

“The crisis of the subject thus reveals itself as an endless barrage of human abilities, actions and aspirations, the driving force of contemporary non-material production: one needs to be and constantly persist in a state of crisis in order to be even more creative”<sup>26</sup>, Bojana Kunst argues in her book *Artist at Work – Proximity of Art and Capitalism*. She observes, how “-- experimenting with subjectivity is at the center of capitalist production.”<sup>27</sup> In her text Kunst brings up, how today’s citizens are continuously faced and forced to encounter “brutal intensification of individualisation processes”<sup>28</sup> as Maurizio Lazzarato, an Italian sociologist and philosopher, would argue about the production of subjectivity. The continuous tension in capitalist production industry lies and owns its ground in subject transformation and flexible adaption. This tension morphs and changes strategies of the subject to behave, live and relate with another subject. In addition, it increases stress and anxiety in living as Kunst observes. In the world, where you as a subject, would have to constantly find out potential comprehensive ways of living and flourishing in order to make a living, you have to fill the requirement of actualize potentiality in you. “In this sense the performer becomes the ideal virtuoso worker of contemporary capitalism, producing ‘communication through the means of communication’; the means are the language

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<sup>25</sup> Paz Rojo, *To Dance in the Age of No-Future* (Sweden: CIRCADIAN BOOKS), 28-29.

<sup>26</sup> Kunst, *Artist at work*, 25.

<sup>27</sup> Kunst, *Artist at work*, 21.

<sup>28</sup> Kunst, *Artist at work*, 21.

and actions of the body.”<sup>29</sup> This matter could be problematized and discussed further but I have to leave this for the future.

## 2. Repetition and loops

### 2.1 Repetition and seriality in artworks

In order to connect some uses of repetition and seriality in art, I will mention some artworks where artists have used repetition. “The element of repetition in art many authors used on purpose to comment on the state of the world around us and to challenge the public to slow down the race for the achievement of consumerism gods and idols.”<sup>30</sup> For example, in Andy Warhol’s works, an American artist working mainly with paintings, he repeats the same portrait of a celebrity while changing some settings of the pictures. Warhol’s art embraced consumerism and a culture of mass production. Among many other things, repetition and seriality have been used actively in 1960’s conceptual art and paintings. The surrounding of 1960’s has been affected by several wars, e.g., World War II, which have affected societies and the arts. Warhol’s interest towards consumerism and mass production can be seen in relation to the production trends around 1960’s specifically in Western societies, where the production moved towards consumer gods and mass production. Alongside Warhol’s, Yayoi Kusama’s works have employed repetition, patterns and seriality on a large scale. Kusama is a Japanese artist who works with mediums of painting, sculpture, film, and performance. Repetitive rhythms, patterns, and transformation can reveal something deeper and add depth to the work of art for me. The point of change can inform the observer on many ways and it may establish relations and affects into the experience of art.

### 2.2 Repetition and loops in dance

Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker’s, a Belgian dance choreographer, work *Fase* uses repetition of dance materials and works closely with the repetitive theme of the music piece from Steve Reich, an American composer. *Fase* creates strong associations and visual images through its repetition and patterns. In comparison to Keersmaeker’s work, where movements are executed and

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<sup>29</sup> Kunst, *Artist at Work*, 31.

<sup>30</sup> “Repetition in Art – To Be Exactly the Same Over and Over Again,” Widewalls, accessed August 24, 2016, <https://www.widewalls.ch/magazine/repetition-in-art-artists-photography> .

composed through repetition on a very specific way, Mette Ingvarstsen's, a Danish choreographer and dancer, work *Giant City* approaches repetition and looping from a different perspective. In the work *Giant City*, Ingvarstsen uses looping in the actions and relations of the dancers in space while combining the idea of loops with duration of light designing. I think that here the actions of looping have overlapping layers and ways of emerging in the actions of the dancers.

Ingvarstsen describes the doing in *Giant City* as follow: "They are bodies in a constant state of transformation, adapting to the imaginary spaces that surround them."<sup>31</sup> For me, the choreographic choices in the work are generating sensations, images and meanings for the spectator to experience. I imagine some of them can elaborate more consensus between different spectators, but I could argue that the experience and associations of the work vary considerably between spectators. This phenomenon is related to meaning making and storytelling. I am interested in the phenomenon, since it brings into appearance how our bodies include variety of information, which can be sensed, read, felt, and understood. The same kind of effect can be experienced from Pavle Heidler's, Yugoslavian/Croatian dance artist and performer, work *The Sun Practice*, where they are using looping to investigate the phenomenon of performativity as it engenders language and movement in-real-time.

Here I am interested in how a subject, through its historicity and several affects, is sensing, reading, feeling, understanding, perceiving, or knowing something and connecting that something to their understanding of the world? How can different body postures, gestures, levels in a space, relations or proximities to other bodies and many other factors be perceived and related to subject's understanding of the present moment? Here looping works as a method to challenge, change and transform the experiential side of a doer and an observer. As I mentioned already, repetition and looping may reveal what lies behind deeper layers. In the Degree Project I am interested in examining the experiential phenomenon in the work of dancers and from the side of an observer. This leads to the question of – What do we perceive as something and why?

### 2.3 Loops – an opportunity of change and transformation

Parallel to writing this text, I have worked the practical part of the Degree Project with four dancers and four sound designers mentioned in the beginning. The interest towards looping in

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<sup>31</sup> Mette Ingvarstsen, "Performances: *Giant City*", <https://www.metteingvarstsen.net/performance/giant-city/>.

dancing started from an observation I have made in relation to experiences from doing, dancing itself. While dancing, I have from time to time found myself in places of repetition or looping. Looping is an activity I often return to and from which something often arises, something that either reveals, transforms or creates an opportunity in the experience of dancing. These moments do not end up only developing into practical transitions. They end up affecting the psychophysical integrity.

First, we started to observe the question of a loop together with the working group in the studio. What is a loop in dancing? Is it a pattern, which recognizes its beginning in hindsight, or does it have more specifying ingredients? Are loops then curvier or like an ellipse? Or could these be monotonic actions, which are repeated? Or can a loop be something, which loops spatially in space? Soon, we encountered sounds and relation to rhythm in loops. We observed and had discussions on, how the relation to rhythms is related to a process of understanding loops in dancing? Through the relationality with rhythms and active consciousness towards the articulation of doing, we started to wonder – How long could a loop be? Maybe it is as long as the cycle of breathing in and out, or perhaps it takes as long as the Earth spins around itself. Maybe it has also other loops within itself? With these examples we encountered different ranges of loops. Accordingly, we started to notate different loops on a paper from micro towards macro layers as experiences, actions or phenomena. As we took time for this in the studio, we started to engage the idea of loops towards everyday experiences. What matters from the everyday life could be seen as loops, from micro to macro layers?

In the beginning of the process, I introduced and referred for example to Björn Sjöfsten's, a Swedish choreographer, work on loops in dancing. His practice on loops has been one of the starting points for the process of practical observations. We also encountered Salva Sanchis', a Spanish dancer and choreographer, principles of "every body part counts"<sup>32</sup> into the active focus and consciousness in dancing, in order to enhance the awareness in every cell in the doing. As following the process, we started to focus more on the points of change and transformation, when looping an action. Here we tried to let go of decision making in doing, so that through following and doing the loop the doing will change and transform gradually. pavleheidler brought up a comment in the supervision that has stayed as a one grounding principle in the work: "What if you are not making the different decisions yourself, but the loops decide it for

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<sup>32</sup> Salva Sanchis, Performance course at Stockholm University of the Arts, March 4, 2020.



you?”<sup>33</sup> As we continued the work on the floor, we went back to the relation of sounds and rhythms in the process of looping. Through this relation, we played with three subtitles of: being the music, companioning, and experiencing the music. The music invited us to involve repetition, repetitive loops and looping in dancing, since it had repetitive elements and layers itself. Here we encountered layers of music into the work and observed how these affect the experience of dancing. In addition, we worked with the notated materials and embodied micro and macro loops into materials.

Since I am intrigued by the dance itself, we focused a lot on the articulation of doing. While keeping this dimension in the work, I wanted to pay attention to the idea of relationality in the work in connection to storytelling and Barad’s thoughts about intra-actions. In order to underline this, we encountered a conversation score that looked at where you are always in a relation to another dancer, other dancers. I have tried to practice active consciousness and responsibility towards subject’s positionality and interactions in dancing. We used loops here as a tool to communicate through dancing. Since the task was executed in pairs, in the conversation you could agree, disagree, listen, tune into or for example add on something to the ongoing and changing conversation. The conversation score is based on the idea that your dancing is constantly communicating something through for instance the intensity and quality of doing, proximity or postures – here your dancing is the language, your speaking. We also involved such aspects as duration and evolution into the doing.

Finally, the presentation will consist of the materials practiced throughout the process and play with the thoughts presented in this text. I am willing to examine the effect of choreographic choices and see how these can affect the experience of the doer and spectator. There could be still many things to be presented and wondered in the Degree Project, but I will continue the work of wondering around various particles of this text in the future. The Degree project wants to experience and observe – how dancing together and dancing alone are entangled and overlapped? “Not in order to know in advance or project, on the contrary to labor for a future that remains to be shaped, to change how things change.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> pavleheidler, Degree Project course at Stockholm University of the Arts, November 25, 2020.

<sup>34</sup> Martin Spångberg, *POST-DANCE*, 18.

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