The Collaborative Editing Project to Document Dance

an initiative of the
Dance Division
The New York Public Library
for the Performing Arts

The New York Public Library

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Introduction to the Dance Division Project

OVERVIEW

Dance is an ephemeral art form whose rich history is perpetually at risk. Unlike other performing and visual arts, dance leaves few records in its aftermath and possesses no widely agreed upon standards for documentation. With a growing sense of urgency, the dance community has begun to mobilize in recent years to address issues of documentation and preservation. The Dance Division of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts has been a longtime participant and leader in this effort. As the largest and most comprehensive archive in the world devoted to the documentation of dance, the Dance Division is part archive, part film production center, and part consulting service to the professional dance community. Drawing upon over three decades of experience documenting dance, the Dance Division launched *The Collaborative Editing Project to Document Dance* in 1998, responding to a critical need in the field. The aim of the project, funded by a grant from the National Initiative to Preserve America's Dance (NIPAD), has been to explore how collaborations between choreographers and editors can extend the dance community's ability to produce high-quality records of dance.

The Collaborative Editing Project emerged, in part, from the Dance Division's extensive work with producing dance documentation and interfacing with the many people who make use of film and video records. Experience had suggested that the most effective documentation results when choreographers and videographers work in collaboration, sharing vital information about each other's process and working side by side in the editing room to produce a final product that reflects high technical and artistic standards.

The Collaborative Editing Project also built directly upon two influential studies released in the 1990s: *Images of American Dance: Documenting and Preserving a Cultural Heritage* (Washington, D.C.; Dance Program, National Endowment for the Arts, 1991) and *Report on the Findings of the Learning Applications to Document Dance (LADD) Project* of the San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum (SFPALM), Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC), Theater Artaud, and World Arts West (WAW) (San Francisco, Calif.; National Initiative to Preserve America's Dance, 1997). Both reports advocated the use of two cameras to achieve high-quality dance records. "The two-camera shoot offers the option of capturing performance details as well as context," noted the LADD report, "without sacrificing an exhaustive documentary approach to the range of action taking place on the stage."

Yet, the application of this two-camera approach—while vitally extending the range of material that can be captured on tape—raises many challenging issues for the field. How can the two tapes most effectively be combined into a single performance record? How can choreographers and editors work in consort to enhance the final product? What issues—aesthetic, technical, and personal—must be addressed if projects are to fully realize their goals?

Armed with these difficult and important questions, the Dance Division designed a two-year multiphase process. At the heart of the Project's design was the creation of a "laboratory" where critical issues in the field could be explored through hands-on work by choreographers, videographers, and editors, and the development of a process whereby findings could be documented, discussed, and more widely disseminated. The four major project components included:

- **Equipment Purchase:** The Dance Division purchased an Avid Xpress, a Macintosh-based editing system that can output on various formats such as analog or digital videotape, CD-ROM, or website publishing. Since the Avid is a nonlinear editing system, program material is immediately accessible and can be brought up quickly for viewing, just as computer data is brought up on a desktop screen. While the equipment's ease of use facilitated the exploratory process between choreographer and videographer in the editing room, the findings from this project apply equally to a wide range of editing equipment and systems, both linear and nonlinear that are currently available to the field.

- **Support to Choreographer/Videographer Teams:** With funding from the NIPAD grant, the Dance Division established six artistic teams of choreographers and videographers to record and edit at least six choreographic works. The projects, chosen to reflect diverse elements that might come into play in the documentation process—aesthetics, genre, company size, technical conditions—included:

  - **Neil Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance* performed by Dance by Neil Greenberg** at the Playhouse 91, New York City, April 4, 1998. Editing team: Neil Greenberg, choreographer; Molly McBride and Juan Barrera, videographers, Sathya Production Services.

  - **Lar Lubovitch's *Othello,* performed by American Ballet Theatre** at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York City, June 9, 1998. Editing team: Lar Lubovitch, choreographer, and Jay Millard, videographer, Harmill Communications.

  - **Geoffrey Holder's *Prodigal Prince* performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater** at City Center, New York City, December 2, 1998. Editing team: Geoffrey Holder, choreographer; Robert Shepard, videographer; and François Bernadi, editor.

  - **New York Baroque Dance Company in *With Sword Drawn He Dances* reconstructed by Catherine Turocy** and performed at Jarvis Conservatory, Napa, CA, August 8, 1998. Editing team: Catherine Turocy, reconstructor/choreographer, and Johannes Holub, videographer.

  - ***Badenya '98* including dances by Maimouna Keita Dance Company, Kotchegna Dance Company, and Les Ballets Bagata** at City University of New York, May 30, 1998. Editing team: Marie Basse-Wiles, choreographer; Vado Diomande, choreographer; Mamadou Niang, videographer, Damel Media; and François Bernadi, editor.

- **Eiko and Koma's *Breath*, presented as a month-long "living" installation** at the Whitney Museum of American Arts, New York City, from May 28 through June 21, 1998, and videotaped on June 8 and June 15, 1998. Editing team: Eiko and Koma, choreographers, and Jerry Pantzer, videographer.

(Because in most of the videotapings for this project, the videographer was also the editor, in this report the term videographer is used to refer to the work of the person editing the videotape.)

- **Public Forums:** Two public forums, convened at Cooper Union, on June 28, 1999, and The Kitchen, in New York City, on November 15, 1999, provided opportunities for project participants to show samples of their work, discuss core issues and concerns that arose during the collaboration, and reflect on ways the process might be enhanced.

- **Dissemination**: The publication that follows provides a mechanism for sharing information about project findings and outcomes with the public. It is complemented by a wide range of project-related materials that are available for review at the Dance Division, including the edited tapes generated by the six collaborative teams, tapes of the public forums, and related print materials. In addition, these findings will be posted on The New York Public Library's website.

DOCUMENT STRUCTURE AND APPROACH

The structure of this report reflects two key findings that emerged from *The Collaborative Editing Project*. The first is that there is no single "correct" way to approach the collaborative editing of a dance. This document therefore has been conceived less as a "how-to" manual and more as a handbook for thinking and action. It seeks to identify critical junctures at which decisions must be made, outline a range of solutions and strategies that may be appropriate, clarify what benefits and trade-offs may result from pursuing different approaches, and illuminate complex issues through the use of project examples.

A second critical finding of *The Collaborative Editing Project* relates to what precisely constitutes the editing process. If "collaborative editing" is conceptualized solely as what happens in the editing room, the process is likely to be compromised and its goals may go unrealized. "No amount of post-production magic can disguise poorly framed images, shaky camera work or glitches in the tape," noted the LADD report—an observation confirmed repeatedly by participants in *The Collaborative Editing Project*.

The aesthetic and technical decision-making that takes place in the editing room is only one part of a much more complex undertaking, whose stages include:

- Planning/Pre-production
- Production
- Editing

Each of these phases is chronicled in the material that follows, although central focus has been placed on the third and final stage of decision-making and collaborative process in the editing room. Detailed narrative summaries of each of the six projects can be found in the Appendix.

The Collaborative Editing Project has proved to be a valuable learning process for participants, providing choreographers, videographers, and editors opportunities to advance practice, grapple with complex practical and philosophical challenges, and hone technical skills. Through this publication, the Dance Division seeks to share findings and stimulate thinking concerning collaborative editing so that the rich cultural legacy of dance can endure and be strengthened.

Section 1: Planning/Pre-production of a Dance Documentation

OVERVIEW

"Live performances present challenges that no other studio productions are up against in terms of having to be there in the moment."

—Jay Millard, videographer

"Like most of my peers, all I have ever been able to afford is a one-camera shoot, so it has been amazing working with more than one camera."

—Neil Greenberg, choreographer

"Geoffrey [Holder's] vision was just like a film. I didn't see it as a stage piece; I saw it as a film, so we tried to figure out how to capture it so that in the editing stage, he would have all the ingredients to recreate his vision in the editing room."

—Bobby Shepard, videographer

The most critical stage in the collaborative editing process occurs long before a choreographer and videographer enter the editing room. Without careful planning the quality of the footage may be compromised. Critical shots can be unavailable for many reasons, including inadequate communication concerning artistic intent or failure to review the technical limitations of the performance venue in advance. "Many times we were constructing out of what we had," said choreographer Neil Greenberg, in commenting on the importance of planning. "I'd love to go back and do these again."

The more information videographers possess going into a shoot, the more successful their efforts to capture a choreographer's vision. Instinct and intuition carry even the most experienced videographer only so far. Conversely, the more choreographers understand about the editing process—both its possibilities and limitations—the clearer and more realistic they can be about desired outcomes for a project.

The Collaborative Editing Project revealed that there are four key areas that need to be traversed in the earliest stages of planning for a collaborative editing project. These include:
• Project Goals, Function, and Framework
• Aesthetic Issues
• Technical Issues
• Working Process

PROJECT GOALS, FUNCTION, AND FRAMEWORK

Dance documentation on video is done for many reasons: for historical preservation, as an aid in the future remounting of a work, for promotional and educational purposes, or to create an independent artistic entity. Each of these different goals may suggest a different approach to editing. For example, the recording of exits and entrances is essential if the tape is to be used to remount a work, but a choreographer in search of a more evocative record might willingly sacrifice some of this detail in favor of more dramatically or dynamically revealing close-ups.

In reality, because of budget and time constraints, few choreographers and companies have the option of editing multiple versions of the same work. Typically, tapes must function in several ways. Therefore discussions of project goals often involve an effort to understand priorities: What are the most important goals/uses of the edited tape from the choreographer's vantage point?

How else might the tape function (now and in the future), and can the demands of these secondary uses be accommodated? What provisions are in place to preserve the original material and what impact does this have on editing choices? By mapping out project goals and clarifying the "framework" (see below) in which a project is being undertaken, collaborators can map out the key parameters that will guide their work from inception to completion.

Choreographic/Archival vs. Evocative/Creative Records: A major consideration in the creation of a dance record is the kind of document that the creators need or desire. There are several different types of records, which are referred to by varying terms. "Archival" often refers to a recording that documents the choreography, whereas "creative" generally refers to a recording that seeks to evoke the experience of viewing a performance.

However, the terms "archival" and "creative" have no commonly accepted definition. References to "archival" tapes range in meaning from any record that is non-broadcast quality to any tape that is placed in or intended for an archive. Another assumption often made about the term "archival" is that it implies that the "archival" recording is *the* definitive record that ultimately and completely represents the dance. In fact, choreography may change over time and many types of material can represent the dance, including multiple videotapes, photographs, notations, and other forms. "Creative" ranges in meaning from a videodance work to any tape that does not record all movement.

In *The Collaborative Editing Project*, participants, mindful of the Dance Division's mandate to create choreographic records, consistently expressed a preference for a record that would serve as a dynamic evocation of a dance piece rather than a straight archival record. "It must be good television," said choreographer Lar Lubovitch. "I don't believe making a purely archival tape is at all interesting to most people to watch. It's boring. It lacks energy. It lacks evolution. It's very flattened." Choreographer Neil Greenberg similarly observed, "We pushed more and more to give people watching the videotape something of an experience of what it might be like in the audience watching the dance—which is that you miss some things."

This preference for an evocative record reflects, in part, the realization that videotape can never provide an exact "replica" of a performance. From the start, it involves a translation from one media to another, so collaborators must make determinations about what is to be represented. "A big question for a choreographer is do you want the camera to tell the story or do you want to try to recreate the theatrical experience that the audience is seeing?" said choreographer Catherine Turocy.

The push for a "creative" record among participants was regularly predicated on the assumption that there exists a wide shot that fully preserves exits and entrances (either from a rehearsal shoot or the two-camera shoot), that it has been adequately preserved, and that it contains sufficient information to restage a work. However, project participants noted that some of these assumptions may be misguided: the wide camera may not capture all (especially subtle movements and the nuances of style and facial expression), and, equally important, it may not be adequately

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preserved (as archival practice sometimes falls short of ideal standards). For this reason, the Dance Division continues to emphasize the importance of a full choreographic record, while supporting efforts to chart new ground in the vocabulary, techniques, and approaches to editing by which this can be achieved.*

Documentation Frameworks: The term "documentation framework" refers to the overarching context in which a dance documentation occurs. By clearly understanding a work's "framework," choreographers, videographers, and editors can make more informed planning, production, and editing choices. Fully described in "Toward a Dance Documentation Framework Analysis," prepared by the Dance Heritage Coalition and written with the assistance of Allegra Fuller Snyder, the six basic frameworks include:

• Choreographer Centered Framework
• Repertory Reconstruction Framework
• Historical Reconstruction Framework
• Community Generated/Cultural Transmission Framework
• Media Framework
• Ethnographic Framework

(See chart, pp. 11–12, for more detailed descriptions of each of these frameworks.) The full report is available on-line at www.danceheritage.org.

Two examples from *The Collaborative Editing Project* underscore the impact documentation framework may have on the editing process.

Example One: Historical Reconstruction Framework
The New York Baroque Dance Company's *With Sword Drawn He Dances* falls clearly into the category of "Historical Reconstruction Framework," which is described as follows: "The reconstructions provide a resource for the study of dances we might not otherwise be able to see performed. They also return the works to the body memory of dancers." Working within the historical reconstruction framework, Catherine Turocy, choreographer/reconstructor, felt it was essential that the videographer understand the cultural context of the work. During the planning stages she spoke in detail about the fact that action is always around a central axis, that there is a close relationship between dancing and fencing during the Baroque period, and that spatial design and pattern are central to the form's aesthetic. Armed with this knowledge, the videographer, Johannes

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*In the past, the Dance Division's documentation practice has been to videotape a work fully, recording all movement, using a wide camera to record the entirety of the piece with all entrances and exits and a close camera to catch smaller groups, movements and nuances of expression. Videotapes are generally shot in performance to capture the energy and dynamics of a live performance. The overall intent is to create a record that can be studied today by the dance community and used in the future to reconstruct work. To achieve this end, the Dance Division often suggests that videographers maintain a wide camera and a close/medium camera in its shoots and then edit to have a single record for study that includes all movement and entrances and exits. Medium and close-up shots are included only when no choreography will be lost in the edited version. In recent years, with input from esteemed choreographers, the Dance Division has come to rely on the separate preserved wide camera and close/medium camera tapes as a record of the movement and pattern of the dance. It has made an edited version of the work for public viewing that does not necessarily contain all choreographic information. In the final tapes from this project, often not all movement is represented. Artists made decisions to omit entrances or exits or to focus on some dancers and eliminate others in order to achieve a final product that best represented their work artistically.

Holub, could make informed decisions about camera placement and editing. Further, the collaborative team could make a range of decisions in the editing room that enhanced the pedagogic function of the final tape, including the use of historical still photographs.

Example Two: Media Framework

The documentation of Eiko and Koma's *Breath* falls into the category of "Media Framework" in which the dance documentation is a creative media interpretation outside of the boundaries of performance with fixed time and place. Since Eiko and Koma's *Breath*, a "living" installation work, took place at the Whitney Museum of Art over the five-week period, the choreographers and videographer had to invent a documentary strategy during the planning phase. Since leaving the camera running five weeks would be impractical, expensive, and unlikely to produce a useful documentation, the team looked for other solutions—taking into account light levels in the performance space, the work's slow dynamic pace, and the audience/performer relationships that the work engenders. Through careful planning, the team opted to record outside of performance (the only project team to do so). This allowed them to address issues of camera placement, light levels, and the videographer's desire to use a dolly and triple access head (which allows up and down and turning on an axis movement) so the camera could move without compromising the choreographers' aesthetic sensibilities.

Additional examples concerning the ways the documentation framework influences the production and editing process can be found in the detailed case studies found in the Appendix (see p. 29).

AESTHETIC ISSUES

An understanding of the broader goals and framework of a dance documentation project must be complemented by a thorough grounding in the aesthetic vocabulary and cultural traditions that inform the specific work to be recorded. The more a videographer knows in advance about a dance, the more specific a choreographer can be about what he or she is after (both in the choreographic work and in its videotape representation), and the stronger will be the final product. By familiarizing themselves with a work, videographers can anticipate exits and entrances; capture major shifts in the focus, direction, and dynamics; address technical issues related to lighting, scenic elements, and stage space; and make appropriate choices concerning camera placement and usage.

This type of knowledge building can take place in a variety of ways, all strongly advocated by participants in *The Collaborative Editing Project:*

• **Conversations between the choreographer and videographer about the work.**
The choreographer can describe the content and structure of each section and what is of most significance. The videographer can pose specific technical and aesthetic questions.

- **Viewing of videotapes, rehearsals, and/or performances.** The videographer can gain familiarity with the choreographer's aesthetic vocabulary and structural elements in the work by viewing performances, both live and on tape. It may also be helpful for a videographer to review other work by the choreographer.

- **Creation of a "scratch tape" for joint review by the choreographer and videographer.** This approach provides an opportunity for the choreographer and videographer to discuss, in a very direct and intimate way, what is needed, at each juncture in the piece, in order to best realize the choreographer's intention. If time and resources do not allow for the preparation of a scratch tape, joint observation of a rehearsal can serve a similar function.

An important finding of this project was that while participants uniformly recognized how vital the above outlined steps are to the creation of the desired record, they often fell short of implementing them fully, due to time constraints and other factors. During the exact time period when these interactions should take place, choreographers are usually consumed with the production and performance of the dance work, making it difficult to schedule meetings. All participants emphasized that time must be found for these discussions if the desired record is to be achieved.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

Technical issues related to the recording must also be discussed during the planning process. These relate to:

- **Venue:** Is it a union or non-union house? Are there any aspects of the way the space is configured that are likely to create opportunities or impediments when shooting?

- **Camera Usage:** How many cameras will be used and what is their optimum placement? Are there house cameras available that can augment existing equipment?

- **Performance Circumstances:** Are there factors related to the performance that might impede or have a bearing on access and camera placement?

- **Sound:** Will it be live or recorded? If live, will musicians be miked and can the audio feed be accessed through the house soundboard? Are there additional audio sources that are important—i.e., speaking by the dancers or sounds made by their bodies?

More information about technical issues that arise during production can be found in

WORKING PROCESS

Finally, to the degree possible, collaborators should map out how they will work together. Among the questions that are likely to arise are the following:

"All of these discussions that took place in the edit room would probably have been better served had we done a trial run of a rehearsal and sat down and gone through the dance and talked about these beforehand, to really sit down with a scratch tape or something with the choreographer and say, 'These are important moments that you have to pay attention to. This is what I want, and I don't care about that.' That would affect a lot of the choices that I made totally on the fly, by instinct. I would like to think that if you take the time to sit down with the choreographer ahead of time that a lot of those questions would be answered."

—Jay Millard, videographer

"I think as choreographers that we have to think about how specifically to choreograph with that frame in mind. They're two different animals. I think the stage is one thing, and I think that the camera is another. I think they're both incredibly wonderful, but they should be defined and treated differently."

—Catherine Turocy,
    choreographer/reconstructor

• What are the respective schedules and availability of the participants and what impact will this have on how the process unfolds?

• When and where will the editing take place and what types of time and financial constraints are likely to influence how the working process is structured?

• Will the editing process be one in which both parties have equal say on outcomes, or will one of the collaborators assume a dominant role? (see p. 20)

• What opportunities will there be for the videographer to familiarize himself/herself with the work—on tape, in rehearsal, and during live performance?

• What opportunities will there be for joint viewing of and conversations about the work (live and on tape)?

The significance of advance planning may in some ways seem self-evident, yet this process often gets short-changed. Seldom do choreographers and videographers achieve the level of dialogue that is desirable and necessary. "When you're in the midst of creating something new for the stage . . . your mind is very much with the dance and how the audience is going to perceive it," said Catherine Turocy. Yet project success often depends on carving out that time, despite busy schedules and other demands on one's time and creative resources. "Every time we do these [dance documentations], we wish that we had more time with the choreographer," said videographer Molly McBride, "or a scratch tape to sit down and watch before we committed to the final tape."

Documentation Frameworks

Excerpted from "Toward Dance Documentation Framework Analysis,"
by Allegra Fuller Snyder (Dance Heritage Coalition, 1993)
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Choreographer Centered Framework: Many modern choreographers work with media that intentionally documents their work—they have consciously considered issues of documentation and in some cases the documentation becomes the art. These choreographers are often involved in artistic collaborations and in multi-media productions. They may be working with computers and other modern technologies which offer documentation tools. Often they have rejected formal dance notation and have developed their own systems of choreographic notation or notes which are sometimes considered art work in and of themselves.

Repertory Reconstruction Framework: Choreographic work is reconstructed by returning it to an active repertory, documenting that process, and then maintaining it in living memory on the bodies of dancers. There is a minimal break in the tradition—the dance still exists in the living memory of an original participant.

Historical Reconstruction Framework: This framework deals with the reconstruction of historical dances, which may have varying amounts of existing documentation. There has been a break in the tradition—the dances no longer exist in the body memory of dancers, neither the choreographer nor original participants survive. The reconstruction sometimes serves to provide a view and an interpretation of historical dances. If documented these reconstructions provide a resource for the study of dances we might not otherwise be able to see performed. They also return the works to the body memory of dancers.

Community Generated/Cultural Transmission Framework: Many cultural or community based dances are documented, similarly to performance based dances, through body memory. Dances are passed on from generation to generation and kept alive by this method. Additionally, efforts may come from within the community to further document the dance in order to preserve it beyond the body memory. (Documentation efforts instigated from outside the community are considered in the ethnographic framework)

Media Framework: Dance is often documented through the media in documentaries for public broadcasting, in productions for entertainment purposes, in music videos, and in multi-media products. This documentation occurs within a particular "industry" framework, often outside of the dance community

Ethnographic Framework: [This dance recording is often limited to copies to participants, observers, people in the anthropological field and cognoscenti. The tapes often do not enter the mainstream.]

Section 2: Production of a Dance Documentation

OVERVIEW

During the production process the actual footage that will provide the "raw material" for the edit is generated. This is a critical step in the editing process. No amount of creative magic in the editing room can disguise poor camera placement, ineffectual camera work, or inattention to issues of lighting and sound. When an effective and thorough planning process has taken place in advance of the recording (see Section 1) many technical issues can be resolved in advance. Still, the need for troubleshooting at the eleventh hour is not uncommon, so videographers must be flexible and creative in their approach to insure the optimum shots are obtained for the edit.

The technical issues of the production phase are covered in detail in "Learning Applications to Document Dance (LADD) Project," and are not discussed at length in this document. The "LADD Report," whose conclusions and findings helped shape the design of *The Collaborative Editing Project,* can be obtained on-line at www.danceheritage.org and in print formats by contacting San Francisco Performing Arts Library and Museum, 401 Van Ness Avenue, 4th Floor, San Francisco, CA, 94102. In the context of generating high-quality material for the final edit, collaborators should be particularly attentive to the following issues:

• Venue Characteristics and Performance Context
• Camera Placement
• Shooting Style
• Sound and Lighting
• Additional Shooting Options

VENUE CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE CONTEXT

Advance scouting of the venue is essential, as there may be aspects of the space configuration that affect camera placement. If the performance is in a union house, there may be restrictions on how many cameras can be used. If special circumstances characterize the performing context, such as a gala, there may be particular sensitivities that need to be addressed concerning camera placement. With one exception, the teams involved in *The Collaborative Editing Project* opted to shoot within the live performance context.

Live performance offers the best opportunity to capture dancers performing with full energy and with all lighting and staging in place. However, a dress rehearsal

provides the option of obtaining better camera angles and reshooting sections, should problems arise. A decision to shoot during performance is usually made because dress rehearsals are often interrupted to solve technical problems. In several cases, teams also shot during rehearsal and this proved invaluable, as the additional footage could be drawn upon during the editing process to cover mistakes, whether they occurred during performance or during the taping.

Two examples from *The Collaborative Editing Project* underscore how essential it is to scout locations well in advance and work through potential technical problems with the house staff.

Challenge: Camera Position During Gala Performance
The shooting of Geoffrey Holder's *Prodigal Prince* took place in a union house (City Center, NYC) during a gala 40th anniversary performance of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Because the work was filmed during a gala, there were concerns about blocking the views of patrons. Seats that could provide for optimal camera placement were not available.

Solution: Videographer Bobby Shepard scouted the space in advance. The Dance Division negotiated with the unions to approve a three-camera shoot (which is generally not permitted for an archival recording). Stagehands permitted use of the house camera for a center, lock-down wide shot, augmenting the two cameras Shepard was permitted to use under contract. The two cameras were placed on baby-leg tripods in the aisles in the balcony to get close-ups from the right and left of the center camera. Cables ran to decks and controls with remote heads in the basement. All agreed that three cameras would be necessary because there was too much possibility of technical failure when running long cables and remotely recording. In the basement with the rest of his crew, Shepard directed the camera people in the theater using Clearcoms (headsets for communication). The equipment set up in the basement included the three monitors so Shepard could watch the three cameras; the sound equipment that the audio technician monitored during performance; the decks, a vectorscope, a waveform monitor, a time code generator, and a paint box that allowed the video engineer to control exposures, light levels, and color.

Problem: Stage Interference
During the performance of *Badenya '98* the stage crew failed to remove three stage monitors which blocked the full view of the dancers.

Solution: The stagehands were able to remove some of the monitors as the performance progressed. During the performance the camera people tried to shoot around the monitors and later the editors tried to edit around them.

CAMERA PLACEMENT

Five of the six projects supported through *The Collaborative Editing Project* used a minimum of two cameras. (In some cases, teams were able to add a third

"Yes, if you're doing a dance film where you have an opportunity to have the company and you can actually move the camera around and you don't have an audience, you can get that angle. We had to put our cameras outside of the theater on wheeled dollies, so when the audience came in and they were seated, then the cameras could move in. Also, it was opening night so these are the high rollers, the patrons of the arts, and so you can't block their view."
—Robert Shepard, videographer

"I went back by myself about four or five times to spend many hours just observing in the dark and taking notes and making little drawings at home about what I saw and then planned out basically the single camera shoot that would include a dolly on the first day with a three-axis head to do turns. The actual shooting was two days."
—Jerry Pantzer, videographer

camera—either through the donation of a third camera by the videographer or by the venue where the work was being recorded.) When shooting with two cameras, the Dance Division typically asks its videographers to assign one camera to the wide shot and one camera to the close-up (which is more like a medium shot in standard film terminology). This strategy captures the piece's entire range of movement as well as details of the dancers' individual performances. The close-up camera, unless specified otherwise, generally stays far enough back from its subjects to capture the length of the full body. In order to economize, when it is not possible to hire multiple camera operators, videographers lock down the wide camera and operate the close-up.

When a third camera is available, it is often used for the more traditional close-up shot, although a variety of other uses were made of the third camera in *The Collaborative Editing Project.* For example, since spatial pattern is so critical to the aesthetic of Baroque dance, the collaborative team working on *With Sword Drawn He Dances* chose to use a third camera to shoot from above in order to show pattern clearly—although they ultimately used very little of this footage. For aesthetic reasons, videographer Jerry Pantzer wanted to use a dolly and triple access head since the movement in Eiko and Koma's piece was very small and incremental and he wanted to let the camera move without compromising the choreographers' aesthetic sensibilities.

SHOOTING STYLE

The LADD report recommended that "the energy of the camera movement should be appropriate to the energy of the dance." Shooting style is something that requires discussion between choreographer and videographer because in essence the camera work determines what material exists for the edit process. The shooting style is, in effect, a type of preliminary "edit." Choreographer Catherine Turocy noted, "I realized that the first editor is the camera person. It's the eye of the camera that truly captures the moments in the dance. Even though I was intellectually aware of this, it really came home when it came time to make the decisions about which edits to use to best capture the choreography."

Often, decisions about appropriate shooting emerge organically from discussions and viewing of work during the planning phase. Many project participants spoke about the need to "feel" the dance. "I take mental notes of the performance when I'm watching," said videographer Juan Barrera, "and then when I get behind the camera, I try to rely on my soul because it's impossible to watch a performance once and remember everything." Choreographer Geoffrey Holder urged videographer Bobby Shepard to "breathe" with the dance. Eiko said of videographer Jerry Pantzer's camera work, "We had to trust him. He danced with the camera, but we found out he was dancing too fast. And he saw that too. . . . He agreed totally, 'Oh, I was too fast, I was too excited.' So we slowed down quite a bit of his movement to fit."

Overall, project participants advocated a shooting style that was unobtrusive. "You try to figure out what the story is and not interfere with it as a filmmaker," said Bobby Shepard. "What I try to do is try to tell stories where you're not

aware the camera is actually there." Videographer Jay Millard similarly observed, "My approach is to make my camera work as transparent as possible so that you're not really cognizant of it." For videographer Johannes Holub, "the highest compliment for me is for someone to say, 'Oh, I didn't know that there was somebody even behind the camera,' or 'I didn't know someone was editing'."

An important exception to this approach occurred in the shooting of African dance in *Badenya '98*. Here, the videographer Mamadou Niang asked two of the camera operators to keep moving, zooming in and out and panning to capture the movement style of the dance and record close-ups of faces, hands, and costumes. Capturing these details was viewed as central to understanding the overall aesthetic of the work.

SOUND AND LIGHTING

Five of the six programs in *The Collaborative Editing Project* were recorded during performance, a situation in which the lighting and sound are set, leaving the videographers to grapple with any difficult situations as they exist without options to adjust them. Some types of performances offer greater lighting problems than others, such as: contrasting high and low light levels on different dancers at the same time; slide, film, or video projections; and errors in lighting during performance. By discussing these in advance, the videographers may find alternative methods and solutions to creating the best record without altering the existing lighting. Recording in rehearsal or special sessions for the camera allows the lighting designer to adjust the light levels for the camera or add other lights. In *Breath*, which was recorded in a session for the camera, the videographer Jerry Pantzer, together with the artists Eiko and Koma, altered lighting by raising the existing light levels and adding a fill spot on the overhead set in order to best convey on camera the lighting of the performance.

Sound is often recorded with one input from a feed from the house soundboard and one input for the live sound to record the dancers' footsteps as well as audience reactions. Occasionally, sound can malfunction or be recorded too low, and microphones can fail or not get turned on. If necessary, the videographer might choose to boost the sound in the edit process. Sometimes an audio recording of the performance is made by the company or house from which the sound can be taken to restore faulty videotape sound. For Eiko and Koma's piece *Breath*, there was no music or sound track in the recording, so they edited the piece without sound and afterwards the videographer Jerry Pantzer created a sound track.

ADDITIONAL SHOOTING OPTIONS

Invariably during the editing process, collaborators expressed a desire for more options from which they could select. This was especially the case when technical or performance errors compromised some of the available footage. In light of this, collaborators recommended a variety of strategies to generate more footage during the production phase. In addition to increasing the number of cameras (not always

possible because of expense or union regulations) participants experimented with the following:

• Shooting an additional performance.
• Shooting a special session to address sections where there are performance or technical mistakes.
• Shooting a rehearsal.

Although all these approaches involve altering the record of the performance, project participants were generally comfortable with this trade-off since their primary objective was to realize the highest manifestation of their work in the taped documentation. About this subject choreographer Lar Lubovitch commented:

Why should the future see a screwed up version of a work we all tried so hard to create? To choose from lower manifestations is an unfortunate choice to have to make. But with an additional day, we could be truly following the dictum that art is, after all, a lie that we tell to point to the truth. So we might as well lie better.

Section 3:
The Edit of a Dance Documentation

OVERVIEW

"For example, it's much harder to edit a psychological drama than an action scene. With dance, there is a time that supposedly you cannot alter because you have the music, you have the duration, but, in fact, you can."

—François Bernadi, editor

"I was wondering if any of you feel as if film editing is analogous at all to choreography in that you are taking phrases, visual phrases, and putting them together. Because it always seemed to me that it must be."

—Jennifer Dunning, writer

In editing, artists create the desired record by the selection, ordering, and pacing of the shots available to them. The editing process is frequently likened to choreography, by both choreographers and videographers. "It's choreographing the shots," said editor François Bernadi. "That's why you need good shots." Choreographer Neil Greenberg similarly observed, "I didn't change the choreography for this tape, but we made decisions in the editing process about what to show. The editing choices were in a way choreographic, saying, it's all right not to show this in order to get this detail."

During the editing process collaborators address both technical issues—trying to correct or finesse problems that arise in the production phase—and also grapple with aesthetic issues—trying to select images and combine camera angles to best realize project goals. If a strong planning process has taken place (see Section 1), goals for edit should be well understood by all before the edit commences. "The edit is a creative process very similar to the last stages of polishing a dance once it is choreographed," said Catherine Turocy. "I felt I was sharing the final step [with the videographer] and polishing with the camera."

What follows is a discussion of issues related to the editing process that arose for participants in *The Collaborative Editing Project*. While these issues were of most pressing concern to the six choreographer/videographer teams, they are suggestive rather than fully representative of the many aesthetic and technical issues that can arise during the editing phase of a dance documentation.

PREPARING FOR THE EDIT

The first step in preparing for the edit is a technical one, which involves readying the material generated during the shoot so it can be manipulated and combined during edit. In the Avid Xpress system—the nonlinear, digital system used in *The Collaborative Editing Project*—footage from each of the cameras is first "digitized," that is, the analog Betacam camera masters are converted to digital Motion JPEG clips as they are copied into the Avid computer. These clips are generally the length of the dance work. (Such long clips are unusual in other types of editing situations.) Next, the editor creates a timeline. In *The Collaborative Editing Project* the editors usually began by laying one camera recording down on the first track of video and two tracks of audio. Then the second camera recording was laid down in sync with the first on the second line of video. This allowed the editor to go between the shots to choose the preferred shots. If there was a third camera, that recording was laid down on video track three of the timeline.

On another type of equipment, the Media Composer, a viewer can actually watch the two or three tracks run simultaneously, called multi-cam viewing. With the Avid Xpress, which was used in this project, multi-cam viewing was simulated by the creation of this timeline.

During this stage it may be possible for the editor to manipulate the material to compensate for technical problems that may have arisen in the shoot. For example, the editor may be able to cut around interference in the frame (as was the case in *Badenya '98* when the stage crew neglected to remove stage monitors before the performance began, see p. 14), or deal with such issues as drop frame in the time code, which occurred in the recording of Neil Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance* (see p. 30). Time code is the method of numbering frames of video so that exact edit positions can be easily found. In NTSC standard, the frame rate is not exact and therefore it is necessary to periodically drop a frame from the time code. Another way to record time code is non-drop frame, an approach which, as the name indicates, does not drop a frame. Usually all the cameras or decks at the time of recording are set to one or the other type of time code. If by accident one is different than the other, when it is time to put them together, they will not be in sync.

The other preparatory step during the initial stages of the editing process is of a nontechnical nature. Collaborators need to gain as much familiarity as possible with the basic raw footage available, identifying key technical and aesthetic issues that require attention during the edit. Sometimes this process takes place in the editing room; in other cases the collaborators review footage outside the editing environment, in advance of their joint work.

WAYS OF WORKING

There are two basic issues concerning the working process that collaborators should address as the edit gets under way. The first is technical—what basic approach will be used to cull and combine images from each of the available tracks? The second issue relates to dynamics of the collaboration—how will the varying perspectives of project participants combine to produce a final product?

Assembling Footage: During *The Collaborative Editing Project* the teams devised a variety of ways to create a sequence, which is the way footage is assembled. Among the key strategies were "subtractive," "additive," and "cut and paste."

• *"Subtractive"*: In this approach the editor initiates the edit by reviewing each clip, beginning with the close-up, which is the top video track, then the medium shot, and removing all sections that do not work—i.e., shots that may not be usable because of the camera moving between positions, refocusing, or focused away from the center of the action. If the close and medium shots are removed, the resulting shot, the wide shot, remains. This process of reduction, used in the editing of *Badenya '98* (see p. 35) is possible on the Avid system because it works by "seeing through" the video tracks: when material is removed from one track the monitor shows what is available on the next track below.

- *"Additive"*: In this approach the team compares footage on each synced track (one camera take on each track), finds the best and most appropriate image, then builds a sequence on another track by copying the preferred shot in order from beginning to end. This approach, for example, was used in the editing of Neil Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance*.

- *"Cut and paste"*: In this approach the wide shot, which records all entrances and exits, is used as the baseline material for the edit. Images from the close-up camera are cut and pasted into the wide shot whenever more detail is desired—much as you would insert a block of copy from one file into another on the computer screen. This approach, for example, was used in editing Lar Lubovitch's *Othello*.

Structure and Dynamics of the Partnership: "Whose vision are we seeing?" asked Jennifer Dunning, dance critic for *The New York Times*, in one of the public panels convened in connection with the project. "Is it a real collaboration? Is it the choreographer's? Is it the filmmaker's or videographer's?" Each team operated in a somewhat different way. *The Collaborative Editing Project* revealed that there are no standard structure, time frame, or operational rules for choreographer/videographer collaborations in the editing room. Some projects took a few days, others unfolded over several months. While participants collaborated with varying levels of contact, intensity, and levels of authority, three basic models emerged in terms of working process as follows:

- **Approach #1: Decision-Making through Consensus Building and Ongoing Collaboration:** In this approach choreographer and videographer work side by side throughout the edit. Together, they look at all available shots, discuss options and the relative merits of available choices, and jointly problem solve about difficult technical and aesthetic issues.

This approach, adopted by Neil Greenberg, Molly McBride, and Juan Barrera, in the editing of Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance*, produces an intimate form of collaboration that can have a transformative impact on the ways participants approach future projects.

The collaborators on *Not-About-AIDS-Dance* reviewed every single edit, scrutinized the length of each dissolve, discussed the exact point when each cut should be made, and articulated why one camera should be used over the other two at each juncture of the process. Sometimes the choreographer and sometimes the videographer would take the lead in advocating for a particular approach. When the team felt their work had approached completion, they output a rough cut, which they reviewed independently before returning to make final joint edits. The editing, which took place over a three-month period, with periodic breaks, allowed participants to immerse themselves deeply in each other's technical/aesthetic language. By alternating intensive periods of editing with time away for review and reflection, the team had the opportunity to constantly refine and clarify their approach. "The project was a real watershed for me in terms of editing," said videographer Molly McBride. "There are things you can't possibly know without the choreographer being there. This has really influenced how I've edited other projects since then."

• **Approach #2: Decision-Making with Alternating Stages of Input:** In this approach, the videographer generally produces a first-cut, which is reviewed by the choreographer. The choreographer then provides input and feedback and a corrected version is generated. The back-and-forth process continues until the collaborators resolve all technical and aesthetic issues in a mutually agreeable way. If the choreographer has limited experience with editing, the videographer may take the lead in offering suggestions, outlining options, and guiding the project toward completion. If both parties are highly experienced with video production, there may be more give and take, with the choreographer's perspective generally guiding the overall process.

For example, the editing of Lar Lubovitch's production of *Othello* for American Ballet Theatre brought together a choreographer and videographer who both had significant experience with dance documentation, although somewhat different perspectives concerning approach.

Videographer Jay Millard made a rough edit for Lar Lubovitch to review before Lubovitch even came into the editing room. After Lubovitch reviewed the tape, he knew exactly what changes he wanted to make. The entire process—rough edit, collaborative refinement, credits, and output—took only a few days.

The pairing of Jay Millard, whose technique favors the creation of a straight choreographic record (achieved with the wide camera locked down and straight cuts), with Lar Lubovitch, a choreographer who wanted to underscore the dramatic underpinnings of the ballet, led to a discussion of whose vision was being edited and who had the final control in the decision-making process. "It's my vision of your vision of my vision," said Lubovitch, further explaining, "Since Jay did the rough cut, it was really about making the story coherent and showing the right images within the confines of the screen." In retrospect, Millard noted in a public forum, had there been more discussion in advance of the shoot, he might have approached camera positioning differently, perhaps bringing the wide camera in closer, rather than having it frame the inner edge of the proscenium as is his custom.

• **Approach #3: Choreographer assumes a strong leadership role in the editing process:** In this approach the choreographer, generally experienced with the editing process, works collaboratively with the videographer, but has a strong vision for the entire project, which sets the tone and determines the parameters of the working partnership.

Choreographer Geoffrey Holder had clear ideas about how he wanted his work, *Prodigal Prince*, to be taped and edited from the outset. He reviewed rehearsal tapes with videographer Bobby Shepard in advance of the shoot, providing clear guidelines about where to focus attention when there was action in multiple places. The care and specificity of the planning well served the editing process, but so too did the "chemistry," and mutual respect that was a central element in the team's working dynamic. Holder encouraged his collaborators to "breathe" with the work and "dance with the camera." Their ability to do this, he said, was a critical element in the project's success.

"Geoffrey's vision was just like a film," said videographer Bobby Shepard. "I didn't see it as a stage piece, I saw it as a film. We tried to figure out how to capture the dance so that in the editing stage Geoffrey would have all the ingredients he needed to re-create his vision in the editing room." The team of *Prodigal Prince* worked most directly to create the vision of the choreographer Geoffrey Holder—listening to him first, "feeling" what he wanted during the shooting, and allowing the decisions in the edit to go to him, limited only by technical considerations.

Sometimes the editing process may combine more than one of these approaches, as was the case in the taping of Eiko and Koma's *Breath*, developed in collaboration with videographer Jerry Pantzer. In this complex project, the participants decided to find ways to represent a five-week installation piece within the confines of a ten-minute video. Many early decisions were arrived at through consensus building, as the collaborations considered a variety of options (for example, shooting within or outside the performance, camera placement, camera movement, light levels). As the project progressed, the videographer sometimes took the lead in preparing materials for review and input by the choreographer. For instance, the choreographer and videographer jointly chose their favorite shots, following which the videographer made an arrangement of elements that began to look like a piece. The choreographer provided feedback, following which the videographer developed a final tape, reflecting a dynamic editing style. Jerry Pantzer said, "What you will see are various pieces that are not necessarily up or down. And this was very interesting in the editing. It presented infinite possibilities of shots. Part of this process was to agree on what shots really worked and what did not. Two versions evolved out of this." As the project neared completion, the choreographers decided they wanted to generate a second version, reflective of a different aesthetic approach. These two tapes, available for viewing at the Dance Division along with other project tapes, demonstrate the critical role editing choices have on the final product. "Both versions are still the product of collaboration," said Eiko and Koma. "They would not exist without the collaborative approach." Yet at a critical point in the process, when it was decided to produce two different edited versions, each party assumed a dominant and independent role in the decision-making process.

ADDRESSING TECHNICAL AND AESTHETIC ISSUES

Editing can dramatically alter how a work is perceived. Selections made in the edit can include or exclude portions of what is performed on stage and can shift the viewer's focus from one point to another. The edit can change perceptions of such elements as time and space and can enhance or maintain dramatic interest. Principles that may guide the editing process include a desire to:

- Enhance narrative coherence.
- Heighten dramatic tension.
- Conceal or correct performance mistakes by the dancers or technicians.
- Compensate for technical complexities in the shoot.
- Translate the immediacy of live performance to another medium.

What follows is a crosssection of examples from the project that illustrates the ways participants encountered and resolved these issues:

Example One: Enhance Narrative Coherence

Since Lar Lubovitch's *Othello* is a story ballet, in the editing process he was particularly interested in enhancing narrative coherence and dramatic flow. A missed lighting cue at the end of Act II distorted the choreography. Instead of Iago standing center stage, alone, in spotlight on the final climatic beat of the music, Othello and Desdemona were also visible since the second spot did not fade as intended. This resulted in a fundamental distortion of the choreographer's intent.

Solution: In order to achieve the effect intended, the choreographer requested that the videographer freeze a close-up of Iago that occurred earlier and dissolve to this image from a close-up of Othello and Desdemona. The videographer initially objected that this was an interpretation, rather than an accurate representation of the performance. But the choreographer successfully argued that incorporating a shot with the missed lighting cue would alter the perception and meaning of his work.

Example Two: Heighten Dramatic Tension

In editing *Prodigal Prince*, Geoffrey Holder sought to emphasize a sense of mystery, the mysticism that was a major undercurrent of the work. He indicated he was much more interested in the feeling and emotion of the characters than choreographic pattern and specific steps.

Solution: Often during the edit, Holder favored close-up over the wide or middle shot. In the very beginning of the tape, for example, Holder chose not to start with an establishing shot, as is usually done, but instead with a close-up shot that by omitting the full stage conveys a sense of mystery.

Example Three: Conceal or Correct Performance Mistakes

In *Badenya '98* a dancer came in late on a change of pattern and a costume prop was mishandled. In *With Sword Drawn He Dances* a wig fell off during the dance. Such performance mistakes, unavoidable when filming a live performance, are often a focal point of the editing process.

Solution: In the first instance, the videographer used the close-up camera, thereby losing some choreographic detail because exits and entrances were not visible, but masking the performance errors. In the second instance, the collaborative team cut in portions of the rehearsal tape to avoid errors and accidents that occurred on the night of performance.

Example Four: Compensate for Technical Complexities

Neil Greenberg's "Luck," a section of the *Not-About-AIDS-Dance*, made use of over 60 slides of titles that were projected on the rear wall of the stage, which were too light to be read by the camera. Placing these titles over the wide shot

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would most accurately show the position of the titles relative to the dancers, but that would eliminate all close-ups when a scene had titles, making for a less interesting video.

Solution: For the close-ups, titles were superimposed above the dancers. Thus, in some cases a title appears directly overhead of the dancer on the video, whereas in performance it may have been to his/her right or left. The superimposed title had to be added to another line of video, opaque at 20 percent. This time-consuming process, while resulting in a video that was less strictly a record of the performance, made for a more compelling and evocative video record.

Example Five: Translate the Immediacy of Live Performance
The New York Baroque Dance Company's *With Sword Drawn He Dances* was both a dance piece and a play. When choreographer Catherine Turocy viewed the tapes, she felt some of the spoken language sections did not work. She also noted that certain aspects of the choreography simply did not translate well to the screen.

Solution: The collaborators made a number of cuts in places where the dialogue wasn't working, opting to alter the live performance in order to clarify the artistic statement on tape. In another section, where each character enters with a mask and makes animal sounds, the videographer started with fast cuts and close-ups to communicate the sense of chaos that was more evident in the stage version.

EDITING TECHNIQUES

Once a determination is made that an edit is required at a certain juncture in a choreographic work, a variety of more specific technical issues come into play in executing the edit. Will it be a straight cut or a dissolve? When precisely should the edit occur? How is it timed in relationship to the movement and the music? In what ways will it support or undermine the dynamic flow of the choreography?

Timing the Edit: A variety of principles may guide the timing of the edit. Often the decision-making process occurs intuitively. Some of the key issues that come into play are whether to cut:

• according to the dance movement (at the beginning of the movement, during the movement, or at the rest between movements).

• according to the music (at the change, on the beat, by syncopation).

• according to the camera movement (avoiding an image if the frame is awkward, or the camera is refocusing).

Many viewpoints and rationales surfaced concerning the treatment of movement during the editing process, some of them contradictory. These included:

• Cut during the movement; the human retina will hold the last visual image for a short period of time after it is viewed.

• Cut at the end of the movement so viewers can locate themselves within the dance space.

• Cut to avoid camera movements without the dancer in motion as it distracts from the choreography.

• Cut during the preparation for a dance step since it gives the viewer the chance to absorb the whole movement.

Music and Sound: Since the timing of the edits can create a rhythm and musicality that may complement or compete with the original choreography, this aspect of the edit must be approached with great sensitivity. Working with videographers who are innately musical facilitates the working process. "I find it disturbing if the rhythm of the sections in the edits don't have some kind of musicality," said Catherine Turocy, who commended videographer Johannes Holub for having the "eyes and ears of a musician." Even if a work does not have music, issues of musicality come into play in the rhythmic assemblage of the shots. In one project (Eiko and Koma's *Breath*, which had no music) the videographer Jerry Pantzer, in consultation with the choreographers, decided to add a sound score which organically reflected the piece.

While choreographers and videographers generally rely upon their innate sense of musicality in determining when to cut in relationship to the music, several expressed strongly held views on this subject—especially the redundancy of cutting on the beat. "There's a rule I run up against frequently that says the camera can only cut when the music cuts and I don't understand it," said Lar Lubovitch. "The music already cut, the dance already cut at that point in the music, so why does the camera have to do it? It has already been done. . . . I don't believe it's actually necessary or valuable to cut because the music cuts. I don't believe cameras are musical, and attempting to make them musical often takes the eye to a different direction and creates a conflict of statements rather than a complementary statement."

Mamadou Niang made similar observations about the editing of African dance, which is a profoundly syncopated art form. "In this age of MTV, cutting on the beat is overused. . . . This restrictive mentality of cutting on the beat is something we really try to get away from."

Dissolves: The collaborative teams pursued different approaches to the use of dissolves, depending on the style of dance within which they were working and the technical problems they needed to solve. Approaches included the following:

• Dissolves were avoided in the editing of African dance in *Badenya '98* because the videographer, Mamadou Niang, believes that straight cuts better reflect the quick percussive style of African dance.

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- Short dissolves were favored in the editing of *Othello* because choreographer Lar Lubovitch believes that the staccato rhythm of the straight cut can create a rhythm of its own that can be antithetical to the rhythm the dance has already created in time.

- Long dissolves were used by the collaborative team editing Neil Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance* to meld actions going on simultaneously but so far apart in the stage space that they were recorded separately in two cameras.

- Use of long dissolves is generally discouraged by the Dance Division in cases where it interferes with or confuses the choreographic record; for example, when a very long dissolve in a solo makes it appear that there is more than one person on stage.

- Use of dissolves in the editing of *Breath* became an important artistic tool for assembling the shots since the video was not a record of the choreography and had no sound duration. The collaborators experimented fully with the aesthetic possibilities of dissolves, pushing the limits of the Avid Xpress editing system by using lengthy dissolves and superimposing shots. Ultimately, they limited the use of this footage as they determined that it distracted from the choreographic statement.

PRESERVING THE TAPE

Preservation of the videotapes is a critical final step in the production process. In a two-camera recording, the "edit master" needs to be copied to a preservation master from which all other viewing copies are made. In this project the edit master was directly output from the Avid onto Betacam SP tape and that was copied to Betacam SP to create the "preservation master." The edit master and the camera originals should be sent to another site, preferably under temperature and humidity controlled conditions. It is very important to preserve the camera originals, which have the wide and close shots of the whole work, under safe conditions. Although the hope is always that their use will not be necessary, they can be returned to in order to generate a new edit if the need arises. The edit decision list from the Avid should also be copied to a disk, and the disk saved under appropriate conditions.

As discussed earlier in this report, project participants generally expressed a preference for creating an evocative record of a dance work over a straight choreographic record. They believed that this could be done in a two-camera shoot without the risk of losing choreographic information, since all the choreography was captured in the wide camera. However, if an evocative edit is made without ensuring that the camera original tapes are adequately preserved, the documentary record will be compromised. Ideally the wide-shot camera original should also have a preservation and viewing copy made so that it can be used to restage the work in the future.

An obvious, but sometimes overlooked step is labeling: all materials should be clearly marked as to contents: dance title, company name, choreographer, videographer, venue, date, as well as information as to the tape's generation, such as edit master, preservation master, or viewing copy.

Concluding Observations

Through its involvement with *The Collaborative Editing Project*, the Dance Division has been able to expand and deepen its understanding of the expectations and needs that choreographers bring to the documentation of their work. As noted, a major finding of the project is that artists overwhelmingly desire an edited version of their work that reflects their aesthetic intention—which means that the record that is produced may not include every movement or action in the original dance work. Yet this stated preference by choreographers is invariably predicated on the assumption that the entire long-shot and close-up versions exist and will be retained and adequately preserved, and will be available for future use. Taking these findings into account, it becomes increasingly clear how vital a role service providers, including the Dance Division, can play in making documentation resources and guidance available to dance artists so they can create and have access to the records of their work that optimally suit their needs.

The project also produced some more general findings that have relevance for the field at large. Specifically, the desire expressed by project participants to record outside the performance setting (either to augment or substitute for in-performance recordings) will require support in the form of the dance space and time allocations in the schedules of dance companies and performers. It is the experience of the Dance Division over the past quarter century that the budgetary realities of dance production almost always preclude this approach, unless massive special funds are made available. The search for strategies that will expand recording options is now the shared onus of presenters, companies, service organizations, and funding sources. In the coming years, a search for more flexibility in where and when recording can be accomplished should be folded into the ordinary course of work by all those seriously committed to dance documentation.

Another important finding with broad implications for the field is the recognition that collaboration was intensified by the on-line edit experience. While pre-production conversations are essential, intense learning and sharing between the dance and the video artists occur most naturally and profitably in the edit sessions. There artistic decisions are jointly made by the choreographer and videographer. This suggests that an increase in the sheer quantity of collaborative editing could dramatically increase the quality of dance documentation and an awareness of how this can be achieved.

A general conclusion is the implicit reliance, by choreographers and others, upon enduring institutions whose stability insures "preservation and access" for dance documents over the long term. How the many components of the global dance community interact with such institutions will play a crucial role. It will shape how the dance field's past and present are recalled, how the art form's vitality is supported, and how it can flourish in the future.

Appendix:
Case Studies from the Collaborative
Editing Project

by Neil Greenberg • Dance by Neil Greenberg

Neil Greenberg's Not-About-AIDS-Dance *performed by Dance by Neil Greenberg at the Playhouse 91, NYC, April 4, 1998. Editing team: Neil Greenberg, choreographer; Molly McBride and Juan Barrera, videographers, Sathya Production Services.*

The recording of Neil Greenberg's *Not-About-AIDS-Dance* provided the opportunity to explore how a contemporary work of choreography, with added technical elements (in this case slide projections), can be effectively documented. The project also demonstrated the ways creative problem-solving—both in the immediate aftermath of a shoot and in the editing room—can be used to address technical errors that occur in the performance and in the recording. Developed within the context of a "choreographer centered" framework (see p. 11), the documentation involved extremely close collaboration by team members.

Videographers Molly McBride and Juan Barrera of Sathya Production Services used three cameras to record the work (the third camera was donated for the project by the videographers). To cut down on the costs, the wide camera was locked down, rather than being run by a camera operator. One technical difficulty that surfaced during the shoot was that the frame got changed to a narrower view, for indeterminate reasons. As a consequence, the extreme left and right sides of the stage were not in the long shot, so a major challenge during the edit was to find ways to re-create movements that took place on those extreme edges. Other technical difficulties included a missed music cue by the sound technician during performance and some heads in the way of the wide shot. Some on-the-spot re-shooting of selected portions of the dance after the performance generated additional material that could be used during the editing sessions to mask mistakes.

To begin the edit, each complete camera take of the dance was digitized as one clip. Then, because there was no real time multiple-camera viewing, the editors and videographer simulated it by laying down the wide camera shot on one track, the medium on another, and the close camera shot on a third track, all in sync. This way they could move easily back and forth between the three to determine which shot was needed. As a shot was chosen, a fourth line of video was opened, building the sequence, one image at a time, with the sound already laid down on the timeline.

Another unexpected technical problem surfaced during the editing process: one camera had been recorded at drop frame, while the other two were non-drop frame (see p. 19). After trying various experiments, the editors decided to copy the drop frame tape to another tape and re-record at non-drop frame, losing a generation but getting rid of the sync problem.

The search for ways that the documentary record could effectively represent the use of titles—which were projected on the back wall of the stage during the performance—moved the collaborators away from what is traditionally considered an "archival" record. One section of the dance had more than 60 projected slides, which were too light to be read clearly by the camera. In addition, although using the wide shot would most accurately show the position of the titles relative to the

dancers, that approach would effectively eliminate all close-ups when a scene had titles, which would make for a less interesting video. Instead, in the edited version there are places where the dancer is in close-up and the title is superimposed directly overhead, when in actuality it might have been in another locale, and therefore not visible in the close-up. While this made the video less strictly a record of the performance, it looked so much better that Neil Greenberg preferred use of superimposed titles over the tight shots in all cases. The superimposed titles had to be added to yet another line of video, opaque at 20 percent.

The team also moved away from the strict "archival" approach by doing what Greenberg called a "fancy cheat" to address the problem of some dancers being out of frame. In one section of *Judy Part III*, the dancers sat on opposite sides at the extreme edges of the front of the stage. The wide shot camera only recorded the dancer on the right. The dancer on the left was cut out by the framing. During editing, to simulate two dancers appearing on the stage, the editors duplicated and reversed the image of the dancer on the right and added it to the timeline just after the image of the dancer on the right, so that the viewer would see first a dancer on the right, then one on the left as well.

During this post-production work, the team collaboratively and thoughtfully decided upon each shot, discussing cuts, dissolves, trims, and other refinements with all participants having equal say. When the team thought they had arrived at a final edit, they output a study tape and allowed time for reflection before completing the edit.

Over the course of the editing process, all the participants, including the choreographer, began to use the Avid. The team made frequent use of dissolves to create the illusion that the viewer could see simultaneous actions on different sides of the stage. They took the time to go over each edit, to view each camera take, and to discuss each decision. In the process they learned each other's aesthetic and aesthetic/technical language. They also found that the intervals between editing sessions, when they could review the work and make notes after having a little time away from it, were particularly useful in making more changes to the rough cut. The collaborators were able and willing to give extensive time to the project, which is not usually possible due to artist schedules and the availability and expense of editing equipment.

OTHELLO
by Lar Lubovitch • American Ballet Theatre

Lar Lubovitch's Othello*, performed by American Ballet Theatre at the Metropolitan Opera House, NYC, June 9, 1998. Editing team: Lar Lubovitch, choreographer, and Jay Millard, videographer, Harmill Communications.*

The documentation of Lar Lubovitch's *Othello* provided an opportunity for the collaborative team to explore what issues arise when creating a record of a dramatic dance work that is in the repertory of a major ballet company, which performs in a union house. The project, which falls clearly within the "choreographer centered framework," brought a choreographer and videographer together

who both have extensive experience with dance on video, but approach the process from somewhat different vantage points.

To prepare for the shoot, the videographer, Jay Millard, visited the Metropolitan Opera House to determine where he would be permitted to place the cameras. To gain familiarity with the dance, he watched a rehearsal videotape of *Othello* from the previous year's production. This proved helpful, although there had been changes to the dance since the rehearsal video had been recorded. On the day of the shoot, Millard also watched the dress rehearsal of *Othello* before an invited audience.

In making decisions about camera placement, Jay Millard decided to record with the wide camera locked down so he could operate the close-up camera himself. This is the strategy he generally adopts when shooting a ballet performed on a proscenium stage. This approach gives the edited piece a structured look and rigorously maintains the entrances and exits. The house and unions would not allow a third camera, so its use was not discussed.

Millard began work on the edit independently, preparing a rough edit that he and Lubovitch later reviewed together. He had recorded four channels of audio but the computer would only input two channels at a time, so he digitized the wide shot with channels one and two; then the tight shot with channels three and four. He edited by laying down the wide camera, then reviewing the close-shot in the pop-up source monitor and "dragging" the desired clips over the wide shot and inserting them. He finds that this system of "cut and paste" works well, especially for a two-camera shoot. Millard closely follows the choreography, being particularly sensitive to the inclusion of exits and entrances and other choreographic details that would be important for any restaging of the work. He used no dissolves, only straight cuts.

When Lar Lubovitch came to the editing room, he knew exactly what changes he wanted to make. Most of them were geared to heighten the dramatic tension and storytelling aspect of the choreographic statement. The entire process lasted only a few days and took place in three basic stages: development of the rough edit by the videographer, refinement of the edit by the videographer and choreographer, and addition of credits and output. Because of the schedules of these busy professionals, however, these days had to be scheduled over a three-month period.

The pairing of Jay Millard—a videographer who favors the creation of a straight-forward choreographic record with a lock-down of the wide camera and straight cuts—with Lar Lubovitch, a choreographer experienced in the editing room who wanted something more dramatic, led to discussions of whose vision was being edited and who had the final decision when disagreements arose between the two (see p. 21).

The project participants also had somewhat different perspectives on how much manipulation of the original material was appropriate to mask performance mistakes. For example, because of an error in an important lighting cue (a spot did not fade so there were three dancers on stage instead of one during a dramatically important moment in the dance), Lubovitch wanted to take an image of the single

dancer from earlier in the tape and cut to it in the final climactic moment of a scene. In this way, the original choreographic intent would be accurately reflected on the tape. This strategy was ultimately followed, although there was considerable discussion about whether or not it was appropriate to move away from the record of the performance to a record of the intended choreography by manipulating the material in this way.

Ultimately, the project pointed to the critical importance of advance planning. Millard noted that in retrospect, if he had been more fully aware of the degree to which Lubovitch preferred a dramatic evocation over a more archival approach, he might have addressed the issue of camera framing somewhat differently during the shoot.

PRODIGAL PRINCE
by Geoffrey Holder • Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater

Geoffrey Holder's Prodigal Prince *performed by Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater at City Center, NYC, December 2, 1998. Editing team: Geoffrey Holder, choreographer; Robert Shepard, videographer; and François Bernadi, editor.*

The editing of Geoffrey Holder's *Prodigal Prince*, performed by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, provided an opportunity to explore issues that arise when working within the "Repertory Reconstruction Framework" as well as a "Choreographer Centered Framework." The work, created in 1968, was shot during a performance at the company's 40th Anniversary Gala, a circumstance that added further complexities to the shoot.

Since the video was to be shot during a gala, issues related to camera placement had to be addressed carefully during the pre-production phase. First, the venue—City Center in New York City—does not have good sites for camera placement. Second, because patrons had purchased very expensive seats to attend the gala, the company and the Dance Division were concerned that no one's view be blocked. Accordingly no seats could be used for securing the optimal camera placements. The videographer, Bobby Shepard, visited City Center and got special permission to use the house camera for a center, lock-down wide shot to augment the two cameras he was permitted under union contract. These two cameras were placed on baby leg tripods in the aisles of the balcony to get close-ups from the right and left of center camera. Cables ran to decks and controls with remote heads in the basement. All agreed that three cameras would be necessary because there was too much possibility of technical failure when running long cables and remotely recording. In addition, since the only place for his cameras were to the left and right of center, each had areas of the stage which were not visible in their camera's frame. With the cables from the cameras to the decks in the basement under the stage, Shepard directed his camera crew from there while another person ran sound and an engineer adjusted the recording and light levels.

Choreographer Geoffrey Holder had many specific ideas concerning the ways *Prodigal Prince* should be taped. He showed Bobby Shepard a rehearsal tape of *Prodigal Prince*, and pointed out important movements when several things were

going on at once. In terms of taping, he told Bobby Shepard to "see *that* [the dance, the movement], become that." Shepard and his camera people also watched the rehearsal on the day of the performance.

The house camera developed intermittent interference that didn't show up until the lights and sound of the show were on. The house camera is hung on the lighting grid in front of the balcony and it may have been affected by the lights. The engineer had done a lot of adjusting to make that less-expensive house camera recording visually compatible with the two Betacam SP cameras being used for the recording.

At the editing sessions, Geoffrey Holder wanted to be involved with everything, including the digitizing of the recordings. The close-up camera was shot by Ronald Gray, who also attended several editing sessions.

The editing began and Geoffrey Holder had exact ideas of what he wanted done to produce a theatrical edit that captured the pageantry of his choreography, with the knowledge that the wide camera captured the choreography. Then, editor François Bernadi cut around the interference on the tape, which sometimes gave a more intimate feeling than might have been chosen if the wide camera were consistently available. Geoffrey Holder noted that the sensitive work of the videographer allowed him to "choreograph" the shots during the editing process.

The team of *Prodigal Prince* worked most directly to realize the vision of the choreographer, Geoffrey Holder. This was accomplished by listening to him first, developing an intuitive feel for the type of footage he wanted to obtain during the recording, and allowing the decisions in the edit to go to him, limited only by technical considerations in the recording process.

WITH SWORD DRAWN HE DANCES
by Catherine Turocy • New York Baroque Dance Company

New York Baroque Dance Company in With Sword Drawn He Dances *reconstructed by Catherine Turocy and performed at Jarvis Conservatory, Napa, CA, August 8, 1998. Editing team: Catherine Turocy, reconstructor/choreographer, and Johannes Holub, videographer.*

The recording of the New York Baroque Dance Company's *With Sword Drawn He Dances* falls into the category of "Repertory Reconstruction Framework" (see p. 11). The project provided interesting insights in the ways a documentary record can be created that is both artistically compelling and effective on a pedagogic level.

During the planning Johannes Holub, videographer, and Catherine Turocy, reconstructor/choreographer, talked extensively about the historical context in which the dance was originally created. She felt that it was important for the videographer to understand some of the formal characteristics of baroque dance (for example, that action is always around the central axis) and be aware of the broader social context in which the dancing took place (for example, the relationship between fencing and dancing). Turocy and Holub also discussed

technical issues. For instance, Turocy thought it might be a good idea to record with an overhead camera to capture the patterns. Johannes Holub set up his own digital camera overhead in the center of the stage to achieve this. Later, in the edit, the team found this footage useful only once.

Johannes Holub attended and recorded the dress rehearsal the day before the performance. Catherine Turocy explained that the geometry of the dancing and the path the dancer makes in space have meaning and that she always wanted to orient the audience to the shape of the dance. She indicated that if she wanted any close-ups of hands or feet, she would tell Johannes Holub.

Since the piece was a play as well as a dance performance, during the editing the team decided to use some sections from the dress rehearsal to replace sections where accidents occurred, such as a wig falling off or someone stumbling over a word. Catherine Turocy found still images from the period and Johannes Holub recorded them to insert as background for the credits. Johannes Holub did a pre-edit, mostly of the acting sections, leaving the dances so that Catherine Turocy could be more involved in that part of the editing process. During the edit, the team also decided to cut some non-dance material entirely, as it did not translate well to video.

The edit took about six days over the course of three weeks. Catherine Turocy began with specific things she wanted to address. For example, in 18th-century dances, the space between the dancers is very important to create the tension. She therefore had no problem with the center of the screen image being the space between dancers, in contrast to most of the other project teams, who tried to avoid this. She explained the history and meaning of the dances as they edited them, pointing out what to emphasize or deemphasize.

Beyond the desire to restage and reconstruct, this project had an educational goal as well. The choreographer was able to provide the videographer with extensive historical background, so he could more easily "feel" the essence of the dance in the shoot, and make appropriate editing choices. At the same time she was ready to follow his lead concerning a variety of technical and aesthetic issues that arose and use the entire process as an opportunity to ground herself much more thoroughly in the medium of video.

BADENYA '98
by Marie Basse-Wiles and Vado Diomande • Maimouna Keita Dance Company, Kotchegna Dance Company

Badenya '98, *including dances by Maimouna Keita Dance Company, Kotchegna Dance Company, and Les Ballets Bagata at City University of New York, May 30, 1998. Editing team: Marie Basse-Wiles, choreographer; Vado Diomande, choreographer; Mamadou Niang, videographer, Damel Media; and François Bernadi, editor.*

The documentation of *Badenya '98*, a three-hour event featuring music, speeches, and performances by several African dance companies, provided an opportunity to explore issues that arise when working within a "Community Generated/Cultural

Transmission Framework" (see p. 12). The documentation process involved a completely different approach to shooting and editing than other efforts supported through *The Collaborative Editing Project*. This reflected the structure of the event, the circumstances under which it was being performed, and the style of the dance.

The videographer, Mamadou Niang, had limited advance opportunity to familiarize himself with the program since there were no dress rehearsals or additional performances. However, he was aided in his work by extensive past experience watching and shooting African dance. He was also familiar with the work of the choreographers whose pieces were to be documented.

Mamadou Niang was able to obtain an additional camera the night of the performance, so the recording was done as a three-camera shoot. The third camera was hand-held from the floor at the edge of the stage. In terms of shooting style, Mamadou Niang had two cameras constantly in motion, zooming in and out and panning, while the third camera captured the full stage view. Through this approach Mamadou Niang attempts to "see with the camera" in much the same way that an audience might view a work. This approach differed significantly from methods used in the other projects, where the cameras generally remained relatively static. While it produced a higher ratio of unusable to usable footage, it was well within acceptable range.

A technical oversight during the performance—the failure of the stage crew to remove three stage monitors—obstructed the sight-lines of the camera operators. While the monitors were gradually removed as the performance progressed, the camera people had to shoot around them during portions of the performance and, later, the editors had to try to edit around them.

Another technical difficulty that arose during the performance concerned the lighting, which changed erratically, causing the camera operators to adjust repeatedly to deal with very bright then suddenly dim lighting. While technical problems are common in all types of video documentation projects, they can occur more frequently in the recording of traditional dance, which is often less well funded than contemporary theatrical dance.

Marie Basse-Wiles, choreographer and artistic director of Maimouna Keita Dance Company, and Vado Diomande, choreographer and artistic director of Kotchegna Dance Company, edited their works in collaboration with the videographer, Mamadou Niang, and editor François Bernadi in a process that took approximately two weeks. Before the editing sessions began, Mamadou Niang gave the choreographers a copy of the wide and close camera originals so they could familiarize themselves with the material in advance of the edit, and thereby clarify what issues they wanted to address. To initiate the edit, the editor and videographer digitized the three camera shots as one clip each, and laid them down in the timeline as video line one, two, and three. Then, editor François Bernadi began editing through a "subtractive" approach. He reviewed all music and speaking parts rapidly by looking at the close-up camera and eliminating from that line all the parts that did not work, such as cameras moving between positions, or refocusing, or simply focused away from the center of attention. Then he deleted all of the medium shots that did not work. He

was left with an edit of the entire piece, by means of reduction. This is possible on the Avid system because it works by "seeing through" the video tracks, so when material is removed from one track the monitor shows what is available on the next track below.

Having reviewed the wide and close-up shots in advance of the first editing session, choreographer Vado Diomande approached the edit with definite things he wanted to address, including performance mistakes and preferences at various junctures for either full figure or close-ups of a dancer. Mistakes in the credits were also addressed. (Imperfect credits are a common problem in dance documents, particularly in recordings of traditional ethnic dance.)

Then Marie Basse-Wiles, artistic director and choreographer of Maimouna Keita Dance Company with Mar Gueye, began her editing sessions. To economize on time, François Bernadi and Mamadou Niang prepared a rough edit of her dances in advance of the first session. Basse-Wiles then made corrections and refinements.

From the rough edit, Basse-Wiles concluded that she particularly liked the side-angle shots. She also had pre-identified things she wanted cut, such as the opening activity of the drummers, some of the applause, all of the resetting between songs. She also indicated that she wanted to use solo close-ups only when the dancer was performing with particular intensity in conversation with the drumming. The choreographer and videographer also discussed the importance of facial expressions in African dance, which influenced the use of close-ups.

Mamadou Niang used almost all straight cuts because he believes that the style of West African dance demands this by its rhythm and action. He generally begins with an establishing shot as his opening and then he tries to show details. This was the only edit in the project where the choreographers expressed the need for close-ups of faces and hands and costumes, as they were so important to an overall understanding of the works.

BREATH
by Eiko and Koma

Eiko and Koma's Breath*, presented as a month-long "living" installation at the Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC, from May 28 through June 21, 1998, and videotaped on June 8 and June 15, 1998. Editing team: Eiko and Koma, choreographers, and Jerry Pantzer, videographer.*

Eiko and Koma performed *Breath*, an installation work, at the Whitney Museum over a five and a half week period. The development of an appropriate documentary approach required a complete rethinking of the usual parameters of the documentation process. At first, there appeared to be no obvious way to make a document of the performance, other than leaving a camera running for five and a half weeks, which would have been both too expensive and of questionable use as a documentary record.

The collaborators discussed a range of approaches during the planning phase.

Initially, Eiko and Koma wanted at least a few days of straight documentary footage, shot with the camera placed in the room without an operator. However, after many conversations with the videographer, Jerry Pantzer, they mutually agreed that the best option would be to record out of performance. Several factors went into this decision. First, there were no options for camera placement during performance that would allow for the recording of the whole stage. Second, the videographer found that the exposure for the museum light levels was three or four f-stops below the widest opening of the lens on the video camera and therefore the lighting needed to be boosted. Raising the light levels during performance was not an option, since the lighting was a key artistic element in the piece. Therefore, the collaborators began to explore how, without an audience, they could make adjustments in the lighting that would still retain the artistic integrity of the piece when it was translated to a different medium. Finally, because the movement in the piece was extremely slow and subtle, Jerry Pantzer decided to use a dolly and triple access head so the camera could move without compromising Eiko and Koma's performance sensibilities.

Jerry Pantzer recorded over two days. On the first day, he used a Sony bvw 600 Betacam SP Videocamera, a Chapman Super Peewee Dolly on a track which was run into the environment, with a Weaver Steadman three axis tripod head. The second day of shooting, which took place the following week, was done to get closer, more static shots without the dolly.

The editing process involved the creation of a completely new work of art out of various movement shots. Early on, the collaborators had to create a framework that would guide this process since the piece didn't have a beginning, middle, or end; a sound or music score; or a preestablished time frame. They decided that the final video document would be short—about ten minutes—and that the videographer might make a soundscape using a recording of water.

Next the team needed to discover a way to proceed. They launched into a thorough exploration of the limitations and possibilities of the Avid. Guided by editor François Bernadi, they explored what was technically possible—from superimpositions on specific areas of a frame, to slowing down the motion, to running the material backwards, to using a still image and having a body float into frame and over it.

François Bernadi put all the material on a timeline and then he and Jerry Pantzer went through the four and a half hours of video and made a selection sequence of 42 minutes. Then they added another ten minutes of effects. The selections were chosen to be representative rather than definitive, and the effects were mostly randomly placed.

Over many conversations and frequent viewing of the material and various selects sequences, Eiko and Koma and Jerry Pantzer made individual selections of their favorite shots, outputting stills from them. Finally it was decided that they would make a randomly ordered selects sequence with only those shots that they all agreed on, leaving out many shots that were very beautiful but for some reason one or the other found objectionable.

Once the shots were fully agreed on, Jerry Pantzer made an arrangement of the elements that began to look like a piece, starting with several nearly static shots that faded in and faded out, and then proceeded to longer shots with a little camera movement or dancer movement. Following considerable discussion, it was agreed that Jerry Pantzer should try to make a more dynamic edit, which included material that was more manipulated by the camera and was brought together with faster pacing.

Although Eiko and Koma initially responded quite enthusiastically to the completed work, upon reflection they decided it did not really convey their underlying artistic intent. Although they found it to be very poetical, they felt it didn't leave the audience with the real-time sense of their dance work. They decided to create another version in which they cut some shots and extended others to the full length of the take. This entire process took approximately five months, with periodic interruptions to address professional and personal obligations.

The two versions of *Breath* can be seen as a model for collaborating on a dance/ video. The two dance videos that resulted from the project both document *Breath*, but in rather different ways. The collaborative process forced the participants to distill and define their personal aesthetics, so the process could move forward.

NOTES