A Study of Dynamic and Spatial principles in Modern Dance

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ABSTRACT

The field of dance involves the elements of movement, time and thematic representation in a three-dimensional space, thus it has much to contribute to the architectural discourse. This paper seeks to investigate movement and spatial conceptions in modern dance specifically. Through an analysis of the modern dance technique and a study of modern dance works, in particular the works of prominent modern dance figure Martha Graham; I have arrived at the following spatial and dynamic themes of pulsating volumes, dynamic balance, organic rhythms, organic relations, body-environment interaction and sequential movement.

To understand the interactions between bodies and the environment, I will be looking into the organic relationships that exist in the dance theatre. The dances by Martha Graham are of much interest as she, together with sculptor, Isamu Noguchi, pioneered the break away from the traditional notion of a stage set, thereby allowing for an increase in interaction between the dancers and their surroundings. This could serve as a model for establishing an organic relationship between the elements that are traditionally understood as static, and the users of architecture.

Points and ideas raised in the discussion of such dynamic and spatial relations respond in part to Bernard Tschumi’s view of movement in architecture. In drawing correlations between the two disciplines and using it as a catapult for greater interpretations, it is my hope to enlarge the ways in which we conceive of architecture spatially and dynamically. This paper contains no answers but seeks instead to unearth relevant dynamic and spatial principles from the field of dance to draw out further discussions in the architectural discourse.

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