

Convergence: A Dance Film in the Redwoods

Project Overview:

Convergence was shot on and around train tracks found in a redwood forest in Henry Cowell State Park in Santa Cruz County, California. The redwood trees provide the perfect metaphor for permanence, juxtaposed with the fleeting movements of the human body. The dual images of the redwood forest and the railroad tracks show the contrast between nature and the manmade world, which parallels the relationship between the organic nature of the moving body and the contrived realm of edited dance video.



Results:

Filming this project in the redwoods provided me with the opportunity to fully realize my desire to integrate dance and nature and to explore the issues of humankind's relationship with nature.

By working in an improvisational manner with the video camera rolling, I was able to capture the rawness of my initial investigations of the physical space. The medium of film allowed me to make the spontaneous movements inspired by this glorious environment "permanent."

I completed two versions of the film. The first, with a score of pre-existing music by Ólafur Arnalds, screened at the esteemed Sans Souci Festival of Dance Cinema in Boulder, CO, and two other venues in Colorado. I collaborated with Dan Smith on a score for the second version, which was screened at *Evening of Dance* at FSU.



Impact:

Convergence has served an important function for me thus far—as an example of my creative work that can be easily shared online. Because the work is made exclusively *for* film, the medium used to share the work is an accurate representation of the work itself. Video documentation of my choreography for stage performances seldom captures the immediacy, drama, or dynamism of the live performance. To have an easily sharable representation of my creative work that I feel accurately exemplifies it is a huge boon.

Although I had worked as a dance performer in film in the past, this was my first time directing, editing, choreographing, and working the camera for a film. Learning these skills has opened up new possibilities as an artist; I am now interested in working more in that medium and have seen how film has subtly impacted my choreographic methods. Working without music during the process of shooting was very different for me, as I am usually very tied to music in my choreographic practice. I have gained confidence working in a new way musically and I am eager to see how it affects my future work. I also changed my typical methodology by working much more improvisationally than I normally do and I learned that this approach suits me. In addition, the process of honing my skills as an editor will certainly shape my editing of live dance.

This film has led to a future film project. I have been commissioned to make a new dance film by Perry-Mansfield Performing Arts School in Steamboat Springs, CO.

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