

My Degree of Uncertainty

Approaching the idea of making a self-portrait for me has been a challenge from the beginning because I did not know how to represent myself with a finished piece of art. After my visit to the National Portrait gallery, I found myself very fascinated by those artists who defined themselves in a very abstract way, such as Frank Auerbach or David Bomberg. While at home for the summer break, I started to interrogate myself about who I am and how can I define myself. I tried to explore and understand how other people, my friends and family see me, and I started to form a very ambiguous perception of myself. Everyone was telling me that I was very different, unrecognizable and bizarre; that made me feel very sad and I started to question if I was being cruel to them. I became very miserable because I was giving them all my love and attention, which is the only thing I have to give them without asking anything back. Through a very personal and deep research, I figured out that I was not being harsh to them in any way and I did not have anything to blame myself for. I realised people are different between each other and can perceive me in vary subjective ways, each one very different from the other. I ended up identifying myself as a reflection of other people's perspectives and at the same time an echo of all the affection and attention that I give to them. I tried to portray this idea initially with my visual art piece that represents three masks joined together. I then attached to it some love notes coming from the only personal collection I have ever had.

When I finally started the process of making the solo in response to the art piece, I found myself struggling a lot with it. I found that sharing my research journey with another person helped me because the essence of my exploration was already there, and I just had to develop it into movement. I started thinking about family and friends, how they both make me feel uncertain and confident at the same time, and I started looking for the essence of this relationship.

For the first series of improvisation sessions, I gave myself different tasks based on challenging my way of using rhythms, sizes, scales and directions; I then discovered that what was most interesting for me

to explore was arms and hands. For my personal investigation I think that these two body parts represent the essence of people. I then decided to look at some videos of my friends and family that I taped over the summer and I started to extrapolate their gestural movements. With 10-15 minutes of material, I started to explore different possibilities. I tried to break down some sections and replaced them with others, to use repetitions, changing directions and focus. But even if all the explorations were very interesting, I wasn't sure it was the true essence of what I was looking for.

A very important turning point, was showing the material to other people and to my tutor. I perceived that everyone who looked at it was very interested, but that there was a sense of uncertainty that could not be perceived with those movement pathways. After a few long sessions in the studio, I discovered that the idea of indecision should have been transferred to the movements themselves. It was very hard to do this, because I was not sure about how to do it. Initially, I started to portray these indecisions with my gaze and directions, but I was not convinced. Therefore, I realised that the best way was to mutate every movement by trying to link one to the other without fully completing them.

A significant challenge that I encountered was the use of different rhythms. In fact, I have found that the process of distillation gives a very dynamic and fast tempo and I am concerned about how the work might develop in relation to the use of different rhythm qualities. If I had the opportunity to develop it in future, I would be very interested in trying to find the same sense of uncertainty and fragmentation with a broader use of tempos. In addition to that, I did not travel a lot through space because I wanted to give more importance to the gestures. Rather than making it bigger in terms of scale, I would rather try to place the dancer in different locations in the space to allow shapes to emerge, without covering the entire surface.

What I am very willing to develop is the idea of numbers and their use. I started to explore this at the beginning of the process with the number 3, which, for personal reasons, has always been very

important for me. Over the process of distillation, however, this research became secondary to the main idea of uncertainty behind the piece. Only a resonance of it remained, which one can find in the three different faces on the sculpture and in the movement sequences being repeated three times. A deeper exploration of the number 3 as odd, holy and peculiar in different ways, will definitely be part of the future development of the piece.

From this process I learnt a lot, firstly to let go of ideas to embrace others that otherwise would have never arrived, but also to stay positive about the work. From beginning to end, this has been a real journey inside my self, to the point, that my choreography sketchbook became a diary more than just an assignment project. I feel this solo is still almost alive. For the very first time, I feel proud of my work and with a sense of ownership as never before.

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