

Amor3

What is it that connects human beings to each other the most, if not love? Love can be conceived as an abstract and evanescent concept, like the untouchable figures of a painting or a sculpture. But in an ephemeral scenery and mood, I am presenting a real, concrete and authentic feeling of how love can be perceived. Three different figures of women are presented as majestic statues, dancing around the scene and sharing love between each other; by doing so, I am showing the idea of love as a connection between humans through the Ancient Greek theory of the three kinds of love.

Initially, I looked back at the previous works and researches I had carried out throughout the year. I then started to notice similarities and common points that I wanted to further develop. Unfortunately, even after this initial research I struggled to find a specific concept I wanted to work on. A turning point has been listening to different music scores that could raise in me different emotions and inspirations, and this eventually allowed me to collect my ideas. I decided to initiate the process from the notion of number 3, that had already emerged in my self-portrait.

I decided to work with three women and started off the process with different improvisation tasks. Those were based on personal experiences, family, hobbies; everything that makes us human beings. The tasks were based on images, emotions, sound scores and automatic writing which then developed into movement practice. The singular exploration further progressed with the interaction between the dancers through contact improvisation practices. Throughout this initial period of discovery, I found myself very frustrated with my research, as I could not see it progressing. I started asking myself how I could let my piece develop, why I was so unhappy with my work.

Suddenly I realised I had to focus on what was making me happy in life and after a long period of reflection writing, I asked my dancers this same question. By using automatic writing, we found a common answer: what makes us happy in life are the people we care about, and we identified this feeling with the word *love*. Starting from our personal experiences of love and what they mean to each

one of us as individuals, I researched on the grander history of representation of love in arts and literature. I looked at how ancient Greeks considered love and how they categorized it into three different species: Eros (the passionate love), Philia (the love we share with family and friends) and Agape (the ideal love, the one that only gods can reach). I proposed three different sound scores, each representing to me a singular type of love and, through improvisation and under my guidance, we created three different solos. Following that, I narrated to my dancers different mythological and folkloristic tales based on the concept of love. The dancers then collectively responded with movement, portraying a narrative story by using abstract movements. By looking at their dances, I realised that the three figures moving in front of me were creating an ethereal atmosphere, which immediately brought into my mind figures of sculptures and paintings. I then decided to use visual sources such as Antonio Canova's statue *The Three Graces* and Sandro Botticelli's painting *Primavera* amongst others as a source of inspiration.

At this point, music was definitely an aspect of the work I had to focus on. I found myself very inspired by the many sound scores that reminded me different moments of my life. At that stage I was not yet looking for the music score I wanted to work with, but more generally I was looking for a sound that could inspire me and my dancers, as we had mainly worked in silence since the very beginning of the process. Only one of the tasks we explored had a clear emphasis on music, as each of the dancers created a solo in response to a track I had chosen for each one of them. Finally, during one of the rehearsals, I have tried out a piece of music I am very emotionally connected to, which is *Dolcenera* by Fabrizio De André. This Italian soft-pop music was composed in 1996 with the idea of celebrating love through the metaphor of a rainy storm. What I find fascinating about this score is that it has three layers itself: a music melody, the main lyrics and a female choir singing in dialect; furthermore, I did not necessarily want a clear and obvious link between the dance and the music. I tried out different music scores alongside silence, but I found that this specific song was contributing to the overall piece, being somehow essential to enrich the mood of it.

I have encountered many challenges throughout the whole process of creation, but one of the first ones

was translating my ideas into practical tasks and finding a common way of thinking between my dancers and me. I often started rehearsals with long discussions and many general tasks, with the result of confusing my dancers and getting demotivated because I was not getting what I was actually trying to reach. To make it easier for us all, I decided to focus on one specific aspect of what I wanted to explore, stick to it and be much clearer with my instructions. I also found very useful starting each session with exercises that could help the dancers feel more connected to each other.

Furthermore, I also experienced as a challenge the step I had to take from the investigation of my theoretical research to the actual structuring of the final piece. In fact, it took me a while to realise the audience's point of view, as our (my dancers' and mine) way of looking at the work was very subjective, for the reason we had been going through a personal journey together since the very beginning. I understood the importance of an outsider's eye, which in my future works I am going to include earlier in the process.

One more lesson I have learnt is the necessity to research and investigate outside the studio and without the dancers, in order to be able to come in with a structured and clear plan for the next rehearsal. Moreover, what has been essential throughout the entire process was coming to rehearsal with a positive energy to create a good environment in which the dancers could freely and safely explore and investigate. For the first time, I had to direct a bigger group of people and I had to imagine the piece not only in terms of movement, but also investigating areas such as setting, lighting and costume design, which was for me a huge lesson to learn.

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