

CHOREO/GRAPHICS: TRACING THE SOCIAL BODY

Oberlichtsaal der Bauhaus Universität Weimar
Hauptgebäude, Geschwister-Scholl Str. 8

PROGRAMME



IMAGE CREDIT:
Wassily Kandinsky,
"Tanzkurven:
Zu den Tänzen
der Palucca,"
Das Kunstblatt,
Potsdam, vol. 10,
no. 3 (1926),
pp. 117–121.

28.10.2025 **10:00–18:00**
WORKSHOP **OBERLICHTSAAL**

CHOREO/GRAPHICS: TRACING THE SOCIAL BODY

Oberlichtsaal der Bauhaus Universität Weimar (Hauptgebäude, Geschwister-Scholl Str. 8, 99423 Weimar)

While choreography is commonly understood as the organisation of movement in time and space, it originally emerged as dance notation—the art of describing danced movement on paper. The workshop “Choreo/graphics: Tracing the Social Body” revisits the notion of choreography through the lens of drawing and its social potential. Using case studies from the Soviet and Weimar Republic avant-gardes, as well as from contemporary practices of “expanded choreography,” the workshop explores the emancipatory and transformative power of drawing when dance notation engages the social body. In this context, choreographic drawing—simultaneously prescribing gesture and opening up movement’s potential—becomes the site where individual tracings (as inscription, drawing, or writing) intersect with collective spatial imagination, reshaping the *Umwelt* of moving forms. The workshop unfolds through three interconnected strands:

LABORATORIES OF THE AVANT-GARDES examines early modernist attempts to formalise embodied knowledge—from *Proletkult* theatre and the biomechanics of Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948) and Aleksei Gastev (1882–1939) to the experimental spatial systems of Gertrud Grunow (1870–1944) and Rudolf Laban (1879–1958). It reveals how these projects transposed bodily knowledge to remediate, re-socialise, and re-experience the relations between body, environment, and technology. The Oberlichtsaal of the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar will be structured into thematic sessions, guiding participants on a movement-based journey through successive themes, each introduced by a speaker.

EMBODIED ACTIVATIONS: Through participatory drawing-movement exercises, this strand tests how marks on paper can reconfigure spatial relationships. It turns the paper into a milieu where social bodies negotiate the space between prescription and possibility.

CONTEMPORARY RADICALIZATIONS explores how today’s practitioners treat choreographic drawing as an open system. It analyses expanded choreography that reimagines notation as tracing—a dynamic practice suspended between archival impulse and emancipatory gesture.

Organised by Marlon Miguel, Johannes Muselaers, Jonas Rutgeerts, Aleksandra Selivanova, Stéphane Symons, and Elena Vogman, in the context of the Disegni: Research Network on Autonomous Drawing, funded by the FWO—Research Foundation Flanders, and Counterpoint: Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Contemporary Dance (KU Leuven) in collaboration with the Freigeist Project “Madness, Media, Milieus” funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and the DFG Project “Animismus/Maschinismus” at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar.

PROGRAMME

10:00–10:30: Welcome

10:30–11:00: Introduction

11:00–13:00: SESSION 1: LABORATORIES OF THE AVANT-GARDES

1. “Signs in Motion. Motion in Signs”:

Choreographic Ecologies at the Threshold of Body and Architecture

Mats Werchohlad (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar)

The contribution explores how movement at the historic Bauhaus was conceptualized through artistic practice, with drawing and painting as media of translation and poesis. The argument takes its path from the writings of Swiss historian Sigfried Giedion, who conceived “movement as a form in itself” and interpreted Paul Klee’s *Pedagogical Sketchbook* (1925) in relation to the movement studies of Lillian (1878–1972) and Frank (1868–1924) Gilbreth. Giedion’s broader reflections, however, suggest that the diverse Bauhaus experiments with movement and space found their interpretive convergence in modern architecture. In this regard, the art historian Linn Burchert shifts the focus of movement to the “image as a living space” (*Das Bild als Lebensraum*, 2018). Burchert investigates “natural and biorhythmic time regimes” (*Natur- und biorhythmische Zeitregime bei Klee, Itten und Kandinsky*, 2020) in the work of Paul Klee (1879–1940), Johannes Itten (1888–1967), and Vasily Kandinsky (1866–1944), relating them to the approaches of Bauhaus master Gertrud Grunow, whose cosmological pedagogy was grounded in bodily practices of visual and acoustic resonance. The contribution unfolds these perspectives as a sequence of shifting viewpoints, culminating in an outlook on how the movements of the Bauhaus practitioners materialized and unfolded within the landscape of Weimar, where body, image, and space entered into dynamic relation.

BIO: Mats Werchohlad holds an M.Sc. in Urban Studies and is currently pursuing a doctoral project on environmental concepts and imaginaries at the historic Bauhaus. Building on his background in mechanical engineering, his research takes an interdisciplinary approach to exploring spatial and transformational dynamics at the intersection of technology, education, and society.

2. Documenting Expressive Movement in the 1920s:

Labour and Theater

Aleksandra Selivanova (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar)

New graphic methods for capturing movement in the 1920s became a shared practice across artistic and scientific research in experimental theater, the scientific organisation of labour, and biomechanics. Almost simultaneously American

researchers Lillian (1878–1972) and Frank Gilbreth (1868–1924)—and later the Soviet biomechanic Nikolai Bernstein (1896–1966)—began using cyclograms, which transformed the movements of workers or dancers into light trails. This presentation will examine the simultaneity and interdependence of scientific and artistic experiments in the 1920s, particularly in relation to the study and regulation of human movement. In this context, the training of efficient worker movement almost merges with the rehearsal of expressive theatrical gesture. New tools for visual documentation (photography, film, cyclograms), analysis, schematisation, and the creation of plastic scores and movement instructions were employed in both realms. The underlying goal was the same: to increase speed and precision in movement—which, in turn, was expected to lead to acceleration and precision in thought, adapting both body and mind to the new reality.

BIO: Aleksandra Selivanova is a curator and art historian specialising in the history and theory of early Soviet culture. Between 2000 and 2021, she curated a series of interdisciplinary exhibitions in museums and galleries across Russia. In 2014, she founded and directed the Avant-garde Centre in Moscow, where she carried out research and organised seminars and exhibitions on the Soviet avant-garde and constructivism. Since January 2023, she is a research fellow (PostDoc) at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar.

3. Where “The Pencil Marked the Rhythm with Squares”, or Recording the Movement at the GAKhN

Sofia Michel (Universität Göttingen)

This presentation examines the methods devised to fix movement for analysis at the Choreological Laboratory (1923–1929) of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences in Moscow (GAKhN). Focusing on Alexander Larionov’s *Experiments on the Filling of Space* (1924–1925), the discussion traces the abstraction of modern dance—from its staging within the laboratory’s artificial environment, to its capture on film, and finally to the pursuit of a systematic graphic representation based on the photographic archive. The analysis also considers the role of the Laboratory’s annual exhibitions, *The Art of Movement* (1925–1928), in transforming graphic material into a dynamic medium for both the production and dissemination of knowledge about movement. Taken together, these practices demonstrate the interdisciplinary character of the early Soviet science of art and expand the normative understanding of scientific objectivity in the 1920s.

BIO: Sofia Michel holds an M.A. in Art History and currently pursues a PhD at the Georg-August Universität Göttingen, where she focuses on interdisciplinary research into European art before the Second World War. Her research interests include early Soviet visual and material culture, the history of knowledge, and museum studies.

4. Notation of Attraction:

Eisenstein and the Senses of Audio-Visual Montage

Elena Vogman (Bauhaus-Universität Weimar)

During the 1920s, Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948) expanded the notion of attraction from revolutionary theatre (*Proletkult*) to cinema and eventually to the audio-visual composition of image and sound. His concept of the “montage of attractions” described a conflictual arrangement of autonomous elements applied to a structure—montage—and deployed in time. In 1928, before the advent of sound film, he envisioned audio-visual montage not as a process of correlation or coincidence but of conflict: a “counterpoint.” This presentation examines Eisenstein’s experimental notations, developed as a spatial-sonic method of expression, and traces their unfolding as a dialectic of active and passive bodily motion, of the working body and the body on strike.

BIO: Elena Vogman is a scholar of comparative literature and media. She is Freigeist Fellow and Principal Investigator of the research project “Madness, Media, Milieus: Reconfiguring the Humanities in Postwar Europe” at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. Her current work focuses on the media histories of institutional psychotherapy and their intersections with decolonial discourse, psychoanalysis, feminism, and environmentality. She is the author of three books: *Sinnliches Denken: Eisensteins exzentrische Methode* (2018), *Dance of Values: Sergei Eisenstein’s Capital Project* (2019), and *Geo-psychiatry: Media and the Ecologies of Madness* (forthcoming, 2026).

B. WORKSHOP (14:00–15:00)

Embodied Practice

Carla Petzolt (Choreographer and dancer, Berlin)

This embodied workshop will bring together drawing and experiential movement research, to explore the concept of “*Kinesphere*” (Rudolf Laban) and the body’s spatial references. Participants will research how movement inscribes and negotiates space, experimenting with perception, orientation, and relational mapping. Through guided exercises, participants will trace their bodies’ pathways and explore how they contribute to composing the space.

BIO: Carla Juliane Petzolt (she/her) is a Berlin-based choreographer and dancer working at the intersection of contemporary dance, visual arts, and circus. Through physical research and artistic inquiry, she questions social norms. Her recent piece *Manufaktur Caring* (kollektiv lux&auma) reflects on power and powerlessness in patriarchy. Her current solo research explores questions of vulnerability, vertigo, and militarism.

C. SESSION 2: CONTEMPORARY RADICALIZATIONS (15:30–18:00)

1. If you could see traces of your everyday movements, there would be drawings everywhere

Gwendolyn Lootens—Artist (Brussels)

situation/performance, duration ca. 20 min. 2025

This work emerges from a practice of continuous drawing as a tracing of gestures and movements, using everyday materials. This ongoing process gives rise to drawings, video works, and live situations. Repetition, interruption, intuition, and play are central in Lootens' visual art practice. During a short, one-week residency preceding the conference, the artist will exchange with researchers and artists contributing to the workshop on the notion of choreography in her work. Lootens will explore drawing as a notation of ephemeral and intuitive movements, and attempt to relate it to the historical avant-garde. She will develop a new activation using tools from the household, which will result in a situation-performance that can evolve into a participative moment involving the audience.

BIO: Gwendolyn Lootens is a Belgian artist working with drawing, video, and performative as well as participatory situations. She studied visual arts and documentary film in Ghent, Amsterdam and Brussels, and participated in residencies at, among others, WIELS, Nida, and CAB Foundation. Her work has been shown at Gauli Zitter, M Leuven, Mu.ZEE, and Krupa Foundation, and received an award at Punto y Raya in Lisbon. In 2015, Lootens co-founded Cinemaximiliaan, a socially engaged film platform created with and by newcomers in Brussels, and made the documentary *Me Miss Me* (2019). She is currently working on *Scales of a Moment*, a project that includes video installations, sound, and research on choreography and scenography, in partnership with, among others, KIOSK.

2. Livre d'images sans images

Mette Edvardsen—Artist (Oslo)

On the occasion of the workshop, Mette Edvardsen will share excerpts from *Livre d'images sans images*, a work developed in collaboration with Iben Edvardsen. The performance takes place on a large sheet of paper, with the audience seated in a circle around it. Drawing with black markers, the white paper is being filled, little by little, leaving only a small circle in the middle. *Livre d'images sans images* borrows its title from a book by H.C. Andersen, also known as *The Moon Chronicler*, which narrates a conversation between a painter and the Moon. Using the weather report as a dramaturgical guide, the work was generated through a collection of materials—including drawings, recordings, text, and found images—in the order they arrived. These elements function simultaneously as source material, traces, and supports for new collective imaginings. The work exists across three media: vinyl, paper, and live performance.

BIO: Mette Edvardsen works within the performing arts as a choreographer and performer. She has worked since 1994 as a dancer and performer for several companies and projects and has developed her own work since 2002. She presents her works internationally and continues to develop projects with other artists, both as a collaborator and as a performer. Making books and publishing is an important part of her practice. She is co-founder of Varamo Press and her long-term project 'Time has fallen asleep in the afternoon sunshine' involves publishing as well. She runs Norma T, a bookshop and project room, in her workspace in Oslo, and is currently finalizing her PhD at Oslo National Academy of the Arts.

3. PANEL DISCUSSION: Drawing and/as expanded choreography

Mette Edvardsen, Gwendolyn Lootens, Mona Mahall, and Jonas Rutgeerts

Following the two performances, Gwendolyn Lootens and Mette Edvardsen, will engage in a discussion with researchers Mona Mahall and Jonas Rutgeerts on the relation between drawing *and/as* tracing and contemporary choreography. Over the past two decades, choreographers have expanded the notion of choreography, detaching it from a purely causal relation to dance. Rather than defining choreography as the art of arranging dancers' steps and movements or the codification of those steps into a fixed score, it has increasingly come to be understood as the capacity to organise bodies, objects, and ideas in space and time. In this sense, choreography is now often framed as a general organizational principle that may be applied across different media and in diverse contexts. Building on this perspective, the panel will explore the resonances between drawing, tracing, and choreographing and consider the potential role of drawing within the field of expanded choreography.

BIO: Jonas Rutgeerts is a dance researcher and dramaturge based in Belgium. He obtained his PhD in Philosophy at KU Leuven in 2015 with a dissertation examining the performance of temporality in contemporary European dance. He is affiliated as a postdoctoral researcher with the Cultural Studies Research Group and, since 2025, has been coordinating Counterpoint, KU Leuven's interdisciplinary research centre for contemporary dance. He is the author of *Re-act: Over re-enactment in de hedendaagse dans* (Tectum Verlag, 2015) and *Unbecoming Rhythms: Performing Temporality in Contemporary European Dance* (Intellect Books, 2021), and editor of *Choreographing Visuality: Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker and the Visual Arts* (Routledge, forthcoming). As a dramaturge, he has collaborated with artists including Begüm Erciyas, Ivana Müller, David Weber-Krebs, and Arkadi Zaides, among others.

BIO: Mona Mahall is a researcher and professor for Practices and Politics of Representation at the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism of the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar. She works in various collaborations across spatial, image, sound, and textual practices with the aim to rethink the (re-)production of our spaces and implied power relations.

Exhibition design & workshop assistance:
 Daria Lashutina, Sebastian Veloza;
 graphic design: Uliana Bychenkova;
 workshop assistance: Felix Brieden,
 Christian Scheerhorn.

