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# Video Self Portrait: A Tangible Artefact of the Movement Arts

Amanda Levey

## ABSTRACT

The Halprin method of movement-based expressive arts employs the modalities of movement and dance, expressive drawing and creative writing to facilitate the creation of self-portrait dances connected to real life issues. Adding the medium of video to this process enables the dancer to view their expressive movement, and to create a tangible artefact, an edited video piece. In this study a single participant is facilitated in the creation of a video self-portrait.

The thematic analysis reveals 'authenticity' as central, relating closely to other themes such as 'freedom'. The making of a video self-portrait facilitates a therapeutic outcome – the participant has a strong emotional and kinaesthetic response to her video piece and her experiences of the process correspond closely to Csikszentmihalyi's model of a 'flow experience'.

## INTRODUCTION

### Thesis Statement / Hypothesis

The creation of a video self-portrait as a tangible artefact of the movement arts facilitates a therapeutic outcome, and supports the 'flow' theory of creativity.

*Movement has the capacity to take us to the home of the soul, the world within for which we have no name. Movement reaches our deepest nature, and dance creatively expresses it. Through dance, we gain new insights into the mystery of our lives. When brought forth from the inside and forged by the desire to create personal change, dance has the profound power to heal the body, psyche and soul.*  
Anna Halprin (2000, p.196).

Through movement, feelings and emotions can be expressed and the unconscious can become visible (Halprin, 2003). Anna and Daria Halprin, pioneers in movement-based expressive arts therapy, have developed a process (the Life/Art Process) to facilitate the creation of self-portrait dances generated from real life issues, utilising self-expressive movement, drawings and poetic writings. I have developed a method of adding the

medium of video to the self-portrait process, enabling the dancer to view their expressive movement, and to create a tangible artefact, an edited video piece.

Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi (1990) researched creativity extensively and proposes a number of elements as components of what he defines as a 'flow' or 'optimal experience'. I have found that the experience of creating and viewing video self-portraits facilitates therapeutic outcomes, and corresponds closely with the elements of an 'optimal' experience defined by Csikszentmihalyi. In this study I facilitated a single case study in the creation of a video self-portrait in order to enquire how another movement artist experiences this process.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### The Halprin Method

Dance innovator Anna Halprin, has experimented with new uses of dance and movement for many decades. According to Halprin's daughter, expressive therapist Daria Halprin, the core principle of the use of dance and movement as therapy is the natural

feedback loop between body movement, sensation, and gesture; and emotions and mental states. Movement is the natural language of the body and the stresses of our lives affect our bodies and its movement (2003). Several writers (Carleton, 1973; Chodorow, 1991) suggest that because the establishment of the somato-sensory system develops earlier than the thinking and verbal mind, movement therapy has the power to access unconscious material that cannot be achieved in other ways. Daria Halprin sums up this process.

*Whatever resides in our body – despair, confusion, fear, anger, joy – will come up when we express ourselves in movement. When made conscious, and when entered into as mindful expression, movement becomes a vehicle for insight and change* (2003, p.18).

Anna Halprin's work was highly affected by her illness with cancer in the 1970s (Ross, 2004). She applied arts therapy processes to her illness and survived, sparking her ongoing exploration of the application of the arts to healing (Halprin, 1995, 2000). She calls dances that have transformative powers 'rituals'.

Emunah (1994) defines rituals as ways in which communities and individuals confront fears and symbolise hopes, celebrate joys, prepare for real-life events, and increase their sense of control and empowerment (1994).

The Halprins have developed a method to access this life material by combining the use of expressive drawing and movement and creative writing thus making links between visual imagery and kinaesthetic imagery, and between non-verbal and verbal expression. They are pioneers of the use of 'intermodal' methods, that is, the combination and integration of different art modalities that has come to be termed Expressive Arts Therapy

(Halprin, 2003). Levine and Levine (1988) point out that though expressive arts therapists cannot be specialists in every modality, they must be skilled in intermodality itself. This consists not only of the ability to choose the appropriate modality at any stage of an intervention, but also to decide when and how another modality should be introduced. Through the interplay of all the modalities, there is constant feedback and integration between the different perceptual systems: kinaesthetic, visual, and auditory and also between bodily experience, emotion and imagination (Halprin, 2003).

Anna and Daria Halprin have coined the term the 'Life/Art Process' to describe their method of developing expressive performative art using real-life material (1995, 2000, 2003). The resources for the self-portrait dance are developed through sessions of exploration utilizing intermodal transfer, where the participant moves, draws and writes the imagery associated with their personal stories, themes and myths (Halprin, 2003). Through this process the individual increases their self-understanding on three levels of awareness and response (physical, emotional and mental) and shape their resources into a score (plan) (Halprin, 1970) according to their themes and intentions. In a self-portrait dance, the participant performs the score enabling them to embody these personal metaphors and narratives to facilitate change and growth. Halprin explains that the individual is attempting to make their experiences visible, while endeavouring to stay connected with authentic sensation and emotion (2003).

### **Video Self Portrait**

I studied with Anna and Daria Halprin for many years and because I lived so far from the

community of peers who could witness and provide feedback in response to my movement expression, I started using a video camera on a tripod in order to become my own witness. I learned how to edit this material and started to shape pieces that I termed video self-portraits. I was then able to show these to my peers and teachers when I travelled to the USA and thus able to receive the witnessing and responses of others.

As well as those advantages of video I also discovered that it was possible to create in an improvisational manner and freely express emotional and personal material without self-consciousness as the editing process gives control of what is shown to others. The task of editing is an important creative and therapeutic process that involves the integration of the kinaesthetic, visual and auditory sensory modes, and decisions based on both artistic and emotional criteria. It is possible to perform in any environment and editing allows the integration of material from different times and places. It is possible to alter the appearance and the speed of the images, and to add effects. This process enables the witnessing of personal and creative development of movement expression over time as well as the possibility for unlimited sharing and feedback.

Research in neurophysiology has found that there is a preverbal mimicry mechanism in the brain that is involved in such functions as non-verbal communication, empathy and emotion (Kaplan, 2000). This would suggest that video of movement that is expressive of emotion would evoke in the viewer an empathic responsiveness on a kinaesthetic and/or emotional level. Research in media studies suggests that moving images that use effects such as slow motion, misty light or ambiguous

images encourage a 'subjective' viewing style that makes a viewer more likely to activate associations from their semi-conscious or unconscious and may lead to strong feeling responses (Grodal, 2000).

### **Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Theory**

Psychologist and creativity researcher, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, coined the terms 'flow' or 'optimal experience' to describe what gives life "joy and meaning" (Kaplan, 2000, p.71). Csikszentmihalyi (1990) proposes that the following elements need to be present in an activity in order to bring about a 'flow' or 'optimal experience' in an individual: the activity challenges the individual to utilize their skills to the fullest of their capacity without overwhelming their ability; the activities promote the merging of action and awareness; there are clear goals and intentions; concentration on the task at hand, to the exclusion of all distractions; a sense of control of the process; a loss of self-consciousness or self-judgement; an altered sense of time; and an enjoyment of the experience for its own sake.

Gervais describes it thus:

*...there is a sense of awe, wonderment, and ease. There is a feeling that you can do no wrong, and if something does go wrong you know how to fix it. There is often a misapprehension of time, you think that you have been doing something for only a few minutes and actually several hours have passed (2002, cited in Grant, 2002, p.14).*

### **Related Research**

The word 'video' is Latin for 'I see', and this root contains the notions of visualisation, visual sensation, thinking as envisioning, and insight (Hill, 1999). Both performance art and the visual arts have seen an enormous

increase in the use of video as an art medium in recent years (Rush, 1999). The use of photographic and video feedback to clients in therapy has also seen a corresponding increase. This includes the areas of dance/movement therapy, eating disorders, trauma, learning and behaviour difficulties, and pain management (Horwitz, Theorell & Anderberg, 2004; Martin, 2001; O'Rourke, 2001).

Phototherapy refers to the use of photographs for a therapeutic intention to facilitate self-awareness and healing (Martin, 2001). One of the most potent uses of phototherapy is the use of self-portraits, in which the client has total control over the image's creation. These portraits allow the client to explore and confront self-perceptions as an aid towards desired change (Weiser, 2001). Ultimately the denied aspects of the self become visible therefore offering the chance for re-integration and acknowledging the depth and range of the self (Martin, 2001).

Phototherapist Martin (2001) found that the use of video allowed for instant playback in the present, and the opportunity for communication with a wider audience through projection. Clients were able to view their footage with "objectivity" and that "in re-viewing and editing the video, further objectivity [can be] achieved" (p.20). Health researchers Horwitz, Theorell and Anderberg in their study on fibromyalgia patients found that video feedback enabled their subjects "...to reflect on and deepen [their] sense of self-perception." (2004, p.162). Raingruber's (2001) research study used video of the interactions of nurse psychotherapists and their clients to study rapport. The study found that video-taping allowed clients and therapists to observe otherwise elusive material and to notice implicit behavioural meanings that:

"...they said they otherwise wouldn't have remembered" (p.18).

Rachel O'Rourke (2001) used the medium of video in a single case study in order to "facilitate creative expression and a visual exploration of traumatic memories". A nine year-old war survivor was given full control of the process. She placed herself in front of the camera, and O'Rourke found that this gave the participant an increased sense of being seen by others and herself, leading to self-enquiry and self-exploration. The therapeutic process of video making gave the child the ability to frame, manipulate and miniaturise the images leading to a reduction in fear in response to those objects that were once overwhelming. The child experienced a reduction of post-traumatic symptoms including nightmares and intrusive thoughts.

### **Aims of this Study**

In this study I collaborated with a single participant in order to facilitate her creation of a video self-portrait. The production of a video self-portrait allowed for an individual's integrated expression of kinaesthetic-based movement expression, emotional expression, visual composition and rhythm, music, digital video effects and editing techniques, as well as metaphors contained within the environmental context that the movement is performed within. This study explored the relationship of therapeutic and artistic intentions in the creation of a tangible product. It sought to establish whether the co-researcher benefits therapeutically, including the possibilities of ritual or healing as an outcome. The study also explored if this creative process promoted experiences that correspond with a theoretical model of the creative process, in this case the 'Flow Theory' of Csikszentmihalyi (1990),

and if the maker had strong emotional and/or kinaesthetic responses to viewing their self-portrait.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Single-Case Study**

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach. Soy (1996) states that the most recognised advantages of case study research are its applicability to real-life, contemporary human situations, which is appropriate for the phenomena studied in this project. An attitude of co-researcher rather than client was required, as the focus here was on the arts therapy experience itself rather than on a particular therapeutic issue. What was required was that the co-researcher be willing and able to articulate her experience in the form of verbal descriptions (Quail & Peavy, 1994), and had previous experience in movement and performance, as 'flow' theory suggests that the experience of 'flow' is more likely to occur if skill levels are challenged but not overwhelmed by the task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990).

### **The Co-Researcher**

The participant was a 35 year-old Israeli woman who had lived in New Zealand for two-and-a-half years. To preserve her confidentiality she chose the pseudonym Verushka. She had a strong movement and dance background, having studied ballet, jazz and modern dance, and also gymnastics as a child and adolescent.

Ethical approval for the study was gained from the Whitecliffe College Art and Design Board of Ethics and informed consent was sought from the participant for the reproduction and showing of visual work (drawings and video) and the publishing of interview material.

### **The Project**

Verushka had three sessions with the researcher learning the skills of the Halprin Life/Art Process in order to generate movement resources, images, metaphor and story to be expressed in a movement self-portrait. She then had two sessions with the researcher learning the skills to score (plan) for the video shoot. The movement score was performed and was videoed by the researcher. The footage of the video shoot was viewed and initial decisions for editing were made. The raw footage was edited into a video self-portrait with technical support from the researcher, and the finished video self-portrait was viewed as a projection.

### **Data Collection**

The co-researcher was interviewed four times, immediately after each stage, using a semi-structured style. Verushka was not shown any of the video footage of her exploratory sessions until after her first interview, in order that this data reflect the Halprin method without the effect of video feedback.

These interviews were video-taped and transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

### **Analysis**

The study used the verbal description of the participant as the main source of data and the process of analysis is similar to that described by Aronson (1994); Morrisette (1999), and Quail and Peavy, (1994). The researcher read each transcription several times, highlighting key words and significant statements. Themes and metaphors were identified and colour-coded within the transcripts. The themes were co-rated by two supervisors. Two diagrams were generated in order to make the patterns within the data visible. One consisted of

the identified themes, which were placed graphically in relationship to each other. They were also placed according to their relative relationship to either artistic or therapeutic concerns, or where these overlap, which was termed aesthetic. Links were drawn between themes to show their connections to each other. A similar process generated a diagram of the most significant metaphors.

Both Aronson (1994) and Morrisette (1999) recommend the inclusion of the co-researcher feedback in the identification of themes. Before interview four, the co-researcher read the transcripts and during the interview she was shown the diagrams of the themes and metaphors already generated. The thematic analysis of the final interview thus included the co-researcher's feedback. New diagrams of the themes and metaphors were created integrating all the material (Figures 3 and 4, overleaf).

## FINDINGS

### Introduction

During the Halprin method sessions, Versushka explored the modalities of drawing, movement and writing. An example of the drawings can be seen in Figure 1. She identified themes and metaphors that led to a score (plan). She decided that her movement expression would begin indoors at her home, which represented safety and comfort. The next activity would be leaving this environment to embark on a walking journey to an outdoor environment, a beach nearby, which represented the unknown and 'freedom'. She was unsure if she would have the confidence to leave the known environment, and that if she did, whether she would be able to find the way to the beach. She wanted to keep these elements unplanned so that the performance of the score would reveal authentic material.



Figure 1. Drawing from the third session.



Figure 2. Versushka at the beach.

In fact Versushka did leave the house, by spontaneously climbing out of a window. She found her way to the beach, although with some difficulty. When she arrived at the beach, she responded to this environment in movement (see Figure 2). One hour and six minutes of video footage was shot by the researcher. During the editing process (with technical assistance from the researcher)



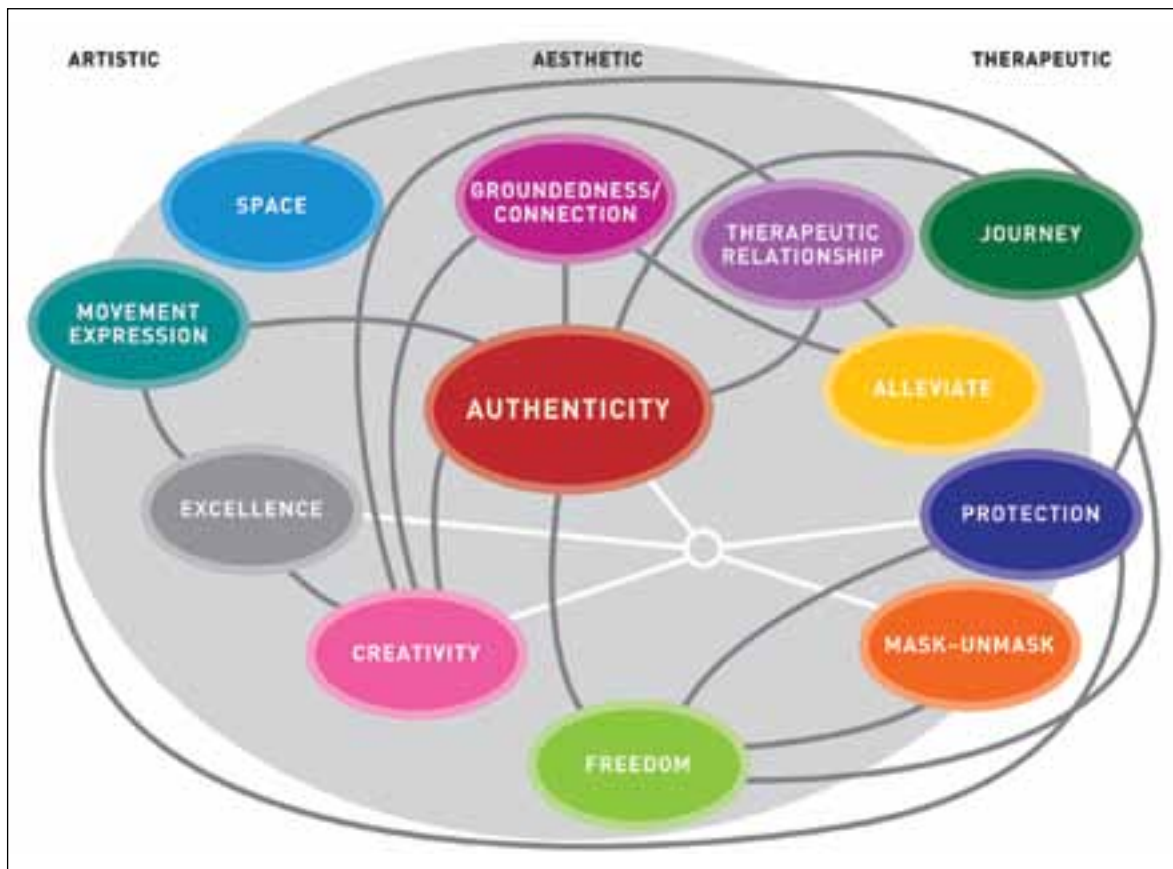


Figure 3. Final diagram of themes.

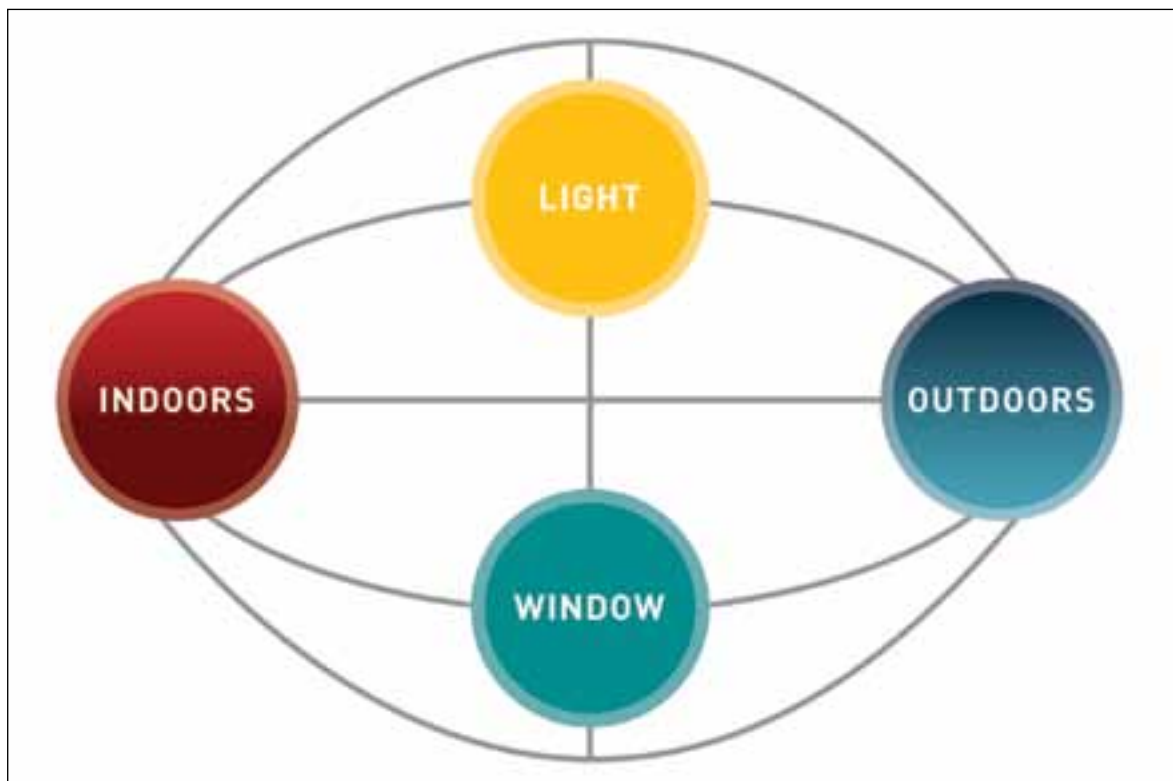


Figure 4. Final diagram of metaphors.

Versushka selected the footage she wished to include, added special effects such as changing the speed of certain clips and placing transitions between clips, and added some music while retaining the sound recorded at the time of shooting. She produced a video self-portrait of approximately five minutes, including credits. It is titled: "Like Wrecks of a Dissolving Dream".

After she watched the completed video self-portrait projected for the first time, although she had seen it many times on the computer screen during the editing, Versushka was overwhelmed with emotion. She spontaneously exclaimed: "it's perfect – I've never ever created anything so wonderful in my life honestly – the best I could ever imagine. I cannot think of anything, anything that I would change, or that I would prefer differently, it's just so whole and complete and right!".

### Themes

Of twelve themes identified (Figure 3), the most significant was 'authenticity'. During the third session she did the drawing that can be seen in Figure 1 and commented: "I don't want those sharp corners... and I tried to soften them. And then I realised I don't want to hide something that came out of me". After she viewed the video footage of the sessions she said: "...some were like movements that were – more close to what I call the 'beautiful' side, and some were more close to the still beautiful but more authentic side – and it was very obvious to me what's interesting and what's not! Like when it's connected it's interesting and when it's not connected or not connected enough, not fully connected, it's just not interesting... and I could clearly see parts that are connected and parts are not".

'Freedom' is another very important theme that emerged in the first session, and relates closely to authenticity. She used the term in relationship to physical expression, in relationship to the environment and also a psychological state. She commented after a movement exploration of a drawing: "I feel very free to do something that is just nothing – just feel like scratching, I'll scratch, just things come to my mind and I do and I stop – it's nice. It's a feeling of freedom". This contrasted with her self-perception of her usual way of doing things. She commented "I would [usually] go according to the rules, so if the rules are to do two drawings then I would do two drawings because these are the rules".

In subsequent sessions we discussed the environments in which to shoot the video, with the awareness that these physical environments could evoke emotional responses and also act as metaphors. In talking about an outdoor place she revealed a complex response to it: "I want to be in a closed place and then go out. What I feel from watching those videos [of the exploration sessions] is that I am protecting myself from something, and when I will go out it's my freedom there and I am protecting myself from my freedom... and when I'm truthful to myself that's my freedom, I'm not letting it go I'm hiding it".

Versushka articulated the way the themes were connected in the final interview as she viewed the researcher's first diagram of the themes: "And I know that the more I'm here (indicates authenticity) the more my creativity – is expressed! I'm definitely excellent, because that's excellence. Excellence is authenticity, it's not anything else. I know... there is no mask, and no need for protection." (Figure 3).

## Metaphors

Figure 4 shows the four major metaphors that emerged: 'indoors', 'outdoors', 'light' and 'window' and includes Verushka's response to viewing the first analysis of the metaphors. Verushka revealed a dialectic relationship between 'indoors' as a metaphor for safety and of limitation, and 'outdoors' as threatening and uncomfortable, and also as representing 'freedom'. In the first interview, when commenting on the insights she had gained so far from using the Halprin method, Verushka first used the metaphor of the window: "... but it sort of opens up the window more to what I want to do – to where I want to go". In the performance of the score she spent a lot of time at the closed window of the main room and when she moved into the kitchen she climbed up onto the bench, opened the window and climbed out. In the third interview she said: "it was of course improvised... I didn't know I'd jump off the window... it's definitely expressing a lot, of course". She reflected in the final interview: "...the window is a mid-way between... it's like this moment in life where you go from one place to the other and you make this decision... you see that there is – somewhere you can go... and then really taking the risk and going through it".

In the second interview, when recalling the performance of the score, she remembered that her feelings changed on entering the beach: "And I started feeling good. First of all it was warm... and... every time I created more movement I... felt like I'm trying to do something. So I stopped. And then feeling the sea-shells was really beautiful for me, and feeling the sand... the sun was really caressing my skin and I felt so comfortable". (Figure 2)

Verushka had some very interesting insights about the metaphors themselves and how they related to each other. She commented: "Indoors and outdoors... is being within myself and also expressing things out... all these parts of me that I'm not revealing? – being afraid of the outdoors as – I think as a physical place, as well as... as a metaphor to relationship with people and to – to getting out...". When asked how she felt about 'indoors' and 'outdoors' after completing the video self-portrait she replied: "I should take a risk... the outdoor is also the intuition – the indoors is like what's familiar... then, being outdoors was very, very surprising then... I always find myself being afraid of trying new things, going outdoors, exploring that. I want to stay with my old knowledge – but every time I open myself to something new it's just so right for me... and the light is also connected to it, because I remember in the studio and looking at the light that came from the outside... something that I wish came from the inside...".

## Therapeutic value of Video

When asked about the role of the medium of video in our process of working together she made an important distinction between the traditional Halprin method and the addition of video feedback: "So I drew, I wrote something, I moved it out, and then I drew again and I moved it. And there was some kind of expression that released something. From a more insightful point of view... was to see myself on the video, to edit it... to get more and more familiar with that, I mean – of course I moved – it got lost – where is it now, I hardly remember... but watching it again and again and again, and seeing more and more dimensions of each and every minute of that

dance... I think it's – immeasurable from the value point of view – the artistic, the aesthetic everything”.

### **Experience of “flow” as defined by Csikszentmihalyi**

Verushka made many comments during the creative process that suggested that she was experiencing each of the elements of ‘flow’ states: for example “[I] was in the moment... just being there, very concentrated”, and in the editing process “...and I was so curious about it, like I obviously didn't feel whether we spent four hours or half an hour in front of the screen. Because I was just so curious about every little bit, every single second of editing”.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

The therapeutic outcomes of the process of producing the video self-portrait and the aesthetic quality of the artefact itself were beyond Verushka's expectations. The process provided a strong therapeutic experience, and I believe she created a ritual as defined by Halprin (1995) and Emunah (1994). She experienced all the elements of ‘flow’ states as defined by Csikszentmihalyi (2000), and she had strong kinaesthetic and emotional responses to her video self-portrait.

### **The Process**

Although Verushka had a lot of previous training in movement, and had experienced several models of psychotherapy, she had never before encountered movement-based expressive arts therapy, and had no idea of what to expect of the process. Most of her previous dance experience was directive, in which she was interpreting other artists' objectives.

Though the process and expressive orientation was new to her, what became evident from her first video feedback session was how readily she could identify the difference between movement that had value to her purely in terms of artistic criteria, and movement that had fulfilled an ‘aesthetic’ criteria, that is, was both artistically and emotionally connected (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Halprin, 2003).

During the project, she went through an unexpected life crisis, and stated that our filming day coincided with “...one of the most difficult days of my life”. She was able to use the process to create a ritual, to pass through a literal and metaphorical ‘window’ and to transform her relationship with ‘outdoors’ from danger and discomfort to freedom and possibility. This was reflected in the life changes she made after the project.

### **The Artefact**

Minimal and expressive movements of the hands, face and eyes are the major movement motifs that repeat throughout the piece. Hand movements are central: in the indoor environment her hands fiddle with the window blinds, crawl on the floor, and reach for the light. At the beach she buries them in the sand in the shallows, and washes them in the water and the light (Figure 2).

Verushka made the decision to shoot the initial indoor space in black and white, and asked to change to colour in the transitional space of the kitchen and outdoors, which creates a radical shift of mood as she transitions from the first section to the rest of the piece. The entire footage was shot in a slightly slow shutter speed giving the colour a saturated quality.

Verushka was clear in her choice of clips from the raw footage that she considered for the

edited piece. She was only interested in the movement sequences that were authentic and expressive. She had to decide how to select and order the clips and how to create transitions between them so that she could create a unified whole that had integrity and meaning for her. She applied slow motion effects to many of the clips. She also made many of her transitions between the clips gradual cross fades. These editorial choices make the images look dreamy and thus they became more evocative of internalised feelings, as Grodal (2001) predicts. His theory helps to account for the shift in Verushka's viewing responses, from a focussed analytical orientation when watching the raw footage, to her subjective emotional viewing when watching the finished artefact.

### **The Relationship of Therapeutic and Artistic Intentions**

Although Verushka initially was disappointed that she didn't create more obvious, dramatic or artistic movement in the shoot, she also had the insight that maybe these expectations were connected with being a dancer, which is suggested by writers such as Halprin (1995), and Payne (1992). I have observed this tension between artistic and therapeutic intentions in many arts therapy endeavours, including the Halprin method, and it becomes even more evident when a tangible product is available for artistic judgement. Verushka, being more familiar with a product-orientation was excited by the therapeutic and creative discoveries she was making in terms of the emotional power of this more 'authentic' movement, yet she initially desired to create a 'beautiful' product. However, the overlap between artistic and therapeutic intentions that are labelled 'aesthetic' increased markedly for Verushka throughout this project, and she was entirely

satisfied with the final product. There would be different challenges using this method with someone not already skilled in movement expression.

### **Emotional and Kinaesthetic Responses and 'Flow' Experiences**

A strong emotional and kinaesthetic response to viewing video feedback, predicted by mirror neuron theory, was also supported by the findings. Verushka had a strong emotional and kinaesthetic response to the material where she could identify that she was moving with what she called 'connection', that is, being authentic and aesthetic (the movement having both emotional and artistic content). This corresponds with the 'flow' theory. One could say that the movement that she termed 'connected' were the times when she was experiencing a 'flow' state.

In viewing the raw footage of the score Verushka had a strong kinaesthetic response of 'stuckness', wanting to see bigger, more dramatic movement that was expressive of the strength of the emotion she was feeling on the day of the shoot. Her emotional response was frustration, both because the movement was disappointing to her from an artistic point of view, and also because she was reminded of the difficulties in her life at the time. In contrast, Verushka's emotional and kinaesthetic response to the edited piece was unequivocally powerful and positive. She was overcome with emotion as she watched, and for some time afterwards. She reported that she could strongly re-experience the kinaesthesia of all the movement in the edited piece. She identified that she was able to have this experience because she was able to edit in order for only the 'authentic' material to be included. This would support the notion that the edited piece

only contained movements when she was in a 'flow' state. Adding effects such as slow motion and cross-fade transitions during editing would have also contributed to her having a 'flow' experience while viewing the projection of the final piece (Grodal, 2001).

## CONCLUSION

"As a work of art, the dance is as specific as it is universal; it points from the known to the unknown or deepens that which is already understood" (Blom & Chaplin, 1982, p.15). Verushka's final observation corresponds closely with this: "...and that's why you can connect to others when you are truthful to yourself because it talks about something that is true in the world and other people can relate to that...". I believe that Verushka not only created a video self-portrait that had a therapeutic effect, she performed a ritual as defined by Anna Halprin (1995) and Emunah (1994). There are many factors that lead me to this conclusion including: themes such as authenticity becoming paramount; the transformational metaphor of passing through the window and the meaning she was able to make of this; her overwhelmingly positive emotional response to the final work; her experiences of 'flow' during so much of the process; and the subsequent life events that were prepared for in this piece.

I am very interested in a future study into the possible therapeutic effects of viewing such video works by others. Mirror neuron theory suggests that there can be aesthetic responses to the expressive work of others, and this could have considerable applications for those who do not have the opportunity to, or do not yet have the movement skills to make their own works.

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