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**Presentation**

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**Abstract**

**AffeXity: Capturing Affect with a handful of techne**

*And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane  
by those who could not hear the music.*

*Nietzsche*

Jeannette Ginslov is a specialist in Dance on Film for AR, screen and the internet. Her roots are as performer, choreographer and artistic director in South Africa, but for the last five years she has focused more on interdisciplinary platforms investigating the crossover between the media /dance /cinema/video and the internet. Her work centers on affect, haptic and digital materiality on several platforms: stage, screen, online and augmented reality applications.

Since 2010 she has been videographer, editor and researcher for the project [AffeXity](#) that draws together screendance, visual imagery and mobile-networked devices. She works in collaboration with Prof Susan Kozel at [Medea](#), Malmö University, Sweden. The project receives support from Living Archives and MEDEA, both connected to Malmö University.

Affexity is a play on both 'affect city' and 'a-fixity' using location and image based videos, tagged to city environments via [Aurasma](#), an Augmented Reality application for use on smart phones and other mobile devices. AffeXity is an interdisciplinary augmented choreographic project that explores affect, screendance, visual imagery, choreography, live performance with AR on mobile-networked devices.

Since its inception in 2010 it has had several outcomes: *AffeXity in Malmö*: the pilot project that used screendance shot in urban spaces were tagged onto QR codes (2012), *DansAR 01 & 02* in collaboration with Skånes Danseteater and Lund's Gymnasium (March 2013) where screendance video were tagged inside Skånes Theatre, a children's park and a skate park and most recently *AffeXity: Passages & Tunnels* (Oct/Nov 2013) where screendance and archival footage were tagged onto Nikolaj Kunsthal in Copenhagen and explored affect, memory and somatic materiality in urban spaces.

This paper is about: the developmental stages and outcomes of the AffeXity project, the interdependence of the collaborators, the relational field of aesthetics and the techne that brings viewer and screendance closer, the complicit, playful and dynamic formation of technical and human interventions, the encounters of the carnal, the haptic and the digital, the dialogic and temporal scaffoldings and encounters of techne: the hands that capture affect in city spaces.

The research covers areas such as affect, memory, the implicit body in augmented choreographies, emotional and kinesthetic amplification using the "omnivorous" camera, digital and somatic materiality, immersive, interactive and mixed realities as well as networked augmented performance and choreographies.

Jeannette Ginslov, Medea's Artist in Residence Spring 2012, gave a Medea Talk: *AffeXity - Capturing Affect with a handful of techne* 14 May 2012 Medea Talk #19 16:00-18:00

**Video:** <http://youtu.be/KAYsl98e2cl>

**Keywords:** Affect, Temporal, Relational, Interhuman, Carnal, Dialogic, Scaffolding, Techne



## INTRODUCTION

[AffeXity](#) is an interdisciplinary choreographic project examining affect, screendance, mobile networked devices, the augmented reality app [Aurasma](#) and cities. It is a project of embedded choreographies that began in the city of Malmö Sweden in 2010.

*AffeXity* reflects and attracts in both its processes and outcomes inter-human, inter-subjective and relational affective encounters. From concept to delivery this project is concerned with the necessary techne to deliver artistic encounters that reflect the performative and the social, the affective and the technical, the internet and bodies, bodies and cities.

Since 2010 it has had several outcomes:

2011: Dansens Hus Choreographic Residency where the majority of the videos were shot and edited by Jeannette Ginslov

2012 *AffeXity in Malmö*: Here screendance videos were shot in urban spaces and tagged onto QR codes

2013 (March) *DansAR 01 & 02* in collaboration with Skånes Danseteater and Lund's Gymnasium where screendance videos were tagged inside Skånes Theatre, a children's park and a skate park

2013 (Oct/Nov) *AffeXity: Passages & Tunnels @ Re-New Digital Arts Festival* where screendance and archival footage from 2011 and 1950 were tagged onto the Nikolaj Kunsthal in Copenhagen and explored affect, memory and somatic materiality in urban spaces.

These temporal encounters are reflected in the teamwork and the subsequent scaffolding that has arisen from the many hands and minds that develop the techne necessary for the *AffeXity* project. It is through this scaffolding of techne that I would like to show you some examples of the stages of development, share research topics that have informed *AffeXity* and reveal its

development and changes it has undergone within which many collaborators have and will still negotiate.

### **The collaborators:**

Susan Kozel (Phenomenologist, Professor of New Media MEDEA, Malmö University, Sweden) Artistic Direction & Concept

Jeannette Ginslov (Screendance Specialist) Videographer, effects and concept

Daniel Spikol (Professor Computer Science at Malmö University, MIT)

Jay Bolter (Professor of Media and Technology, Mixed Environments Lab Georgia Tech USA)

Maria Engberg (Lecturer Blekinge Institute of Technology Sweden)

Masters and PhD Students from Malmö University Computer Science Department

Wubkje Kuindersma and Niya Lulcheva – dancers in Copenhagen

Richard Topgaard - Social Media Strategist

The Living Archives - Malmö University

### **WHAT IS 'AFFEXITY'?**

*AffeXity* is an enquiry of affect in cities and a-fixity as an urban condition. It is an artistic research project, but really it is a set of overlapping practices: artistic practices of dance improvisation, video shooting, digital image editing, special effects and sound composition, combined with the daily practices of moving through a city and using mobile devices. Kozel (2012) states that “we are composing affective processes for the production of an affective experience” in cities. “It is a convergence between performance and mobile technologies” people and cities, media and affect.” [ibid.]

*AffeXity* recognizes that cities produce affect via the people residing there, moving in public spaces and they produce small narratives, chance negotiations and display affordances within cityscapes. These can provide us with a multitude of micro-narratives that we wish to amplify and share.

*AffeXity* is also an interdisciplinary, collaborative, social choreography project drawing together audiences, to view geo-spatially tagged or image based screendance videos that were previously shot in the city's locations. The videos are uploaded, float on the internet and are tagged to a place, an object in the space or an image pinned up in the location. With a smart phone device they are made viewable through an AR app such as [Aurasma](#) that triggers the floating media. They then play in the mobile devices display over the live feed from its camera. See the stills:

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/d\\_spikol/sets/72157637184344354/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/d_spikol/sets/72157637184344354/)

### **VIDEO 01**

DansAR 01 In Skanes Theatre <http://youtu.be/ip31ACoQWxE>

### **VIDEO 02**

DansAR 02 With Kinect <http://youtu.be/ZxGW8hMQBvM>

### **THE PERFORMATIVE**

Audiences are asked to meet at a “performance date and time” to access the screendance videos during “the performance” using mobile-networked devices, such as iPads and iPhones or any other smart mobile device. The

audience then walks within the location and views tagged video overlays of these choreographies shot in that location.

### **VIDEO 03**

DansAR 01 In Children's Park <http://youtu.be/XqqSyM6VwYA>

### **VIDEO 04**

DansAR 02 In the Skate Park <http://youtu.be/cC-lfbYf0b0>

So, *AffeXity* is an augmented reality, participatory and relational encounter where localized screendance videos are "pinned" into the visited area and accessed by active and mobile audiences within the location. In the most recent outcome and exploration, *AffeXity: Passages & Tunnels @ Re-New digital Arts Festival* we also included a live dance performance by the dancer who appeared in the videos that were shot in 2011. These videos were tagged onto the Nikolaj Kunsthal in Copenhagen. The live performance element added a further affective layer and a sense of play to the viewing of the tagged videos.

### **VIDEO 05**

*AffeXity: Passages & Tunnels* <http://youtu.be/41gB7exGZGo>

## **AFFECT**



*Carlsberg* (2011) Image Jeannette Ginslov  
Dancer: Wubkje Kuindersma

Affect is most frustrating to define as in itself when experienced merely leaves one with a feeling, a 'vibe', a resonance. Kozel (2012) defies clearly describing it, as it should not evoke any hard definitions as such, however she posits that affect is the passage of forces or intensities, between bodies that may be organic, inorganic, animal, digital or fictional. It is located in the domain beyond reason, logic or 'conscious knowing' (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010: 1 cited in Kozel 2012) and is not just about emotion and feeling.

Affect is about “the swirl of corporeal, conscious and pre-reflective forces that make up affect” and so “exceed the narrower domain of emotions” [ibid.] ‘Affect, at its most anthropomorphic, is the name we give to those forces that can serve to drive us toward movement, toward thought, toward extension’ (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010: 1 cited in Kozel 2012). Philosopher Gilles Deleuze qualifies affects as those moments of in-betweenness, stretchiness, the spaces between the binaries, as progressive intensities, change and difference.



*AffeXity Phase 01 Red Wall Dreaming (2011)*  
Performer: Wubkje Kuindersma

**VIDEO 06**

Red Walls Feet <http://youtu.be/aRbm7BNYVfU>

**VIDEO 07**

Red Wall Dreaming <http://youtu.be/oh5l1r1FEd0>

At this juncture we also find **resonances** that are liminal, sensorial and affective. They are more to do with empathic responses, sympathetic vibrations, shimmers in the body, “a vibe”, the body vibrating in the right frequency: resonances are also ineffable, in a linguistically liminal ambiguous zone. Resonances are somatic, involuntary moments of proximity. These moments are dynamic, have a particular rhythm, pace and tempo, not complicated by narrative, representation, psychology or character.



*Still from AffeXity Phase 01 Delicate Passage 2011*

## **VIDEO 08**

PHASE 01 #3 DELICATE PASSAGE <http://youtu.be/aE0fWBuXfol>

Taking this into account in the creation of these video clips and affective journeys or derives that make up AffeXity “we are less concerned about the physical forms of bodies in urban spaces than the play of intensities radiating from and through people with their devices.” (Kozel 2012) The dancer does not “dance” in the real sense but performs, displays, radiates. The videographer captures subtle affective moments, its shifts and changes that reveal affect against urban spaces. The editor manipulates the video to amplify the stretchiness of time, the moments of in-betweenness, creating shimmers of experience. The viewer senses this play of intensities with mobile devices in short bursts of looped media. “The moment of affective emergence exists in between minute movements and decisions, it is performance through the tension and the flicker of motion.” (Kozel 2012). This is what drives the techne and the collaborators in their quest to create these affective journeys.

## **TECHNE**

This is where knowledge and craft come together, collaborators, relations between an artist and his practice, his collaborators, his epistemologies, his viewers.

I will relate this to my own experience of directing, choreographing, shooting, editing, researching, collaborative creative decision making and choreographies between dancer, director and camera.

## **SCORES AS CHOREOGRAPHIC TOOL**

Scores are according to choreographer, Joe Moran, energy forms with multifarious possibilities, non-linear, a means to integrate experience, a reference that is a nonrepresentational carrier of an idea and its realization. (“everybody’s performance scores” p.10)

Scores are an interface between ideas and movement. They are complete and incomplete simultaneously: they flicker. They conjure. They are poetic, liminal; they compose rather than set movement into action. They are ideas for movement that call for the mover to express without producing a clear “expressed”, represented or signified gesture. The moving body is invited to express and be understood as something outside a linguistic system, outside of concrete readability. The dance becomes non-representational, non-linear, amplifies a continuity of motion and is about the expression of intentionality. Media artist Nathaniel Stern calls this the “implicit body” rather than the “explicit body.” (Stern 2013). It reflects Gilles Deleuze’s notion of flow, any-instant-whatever, replacing mimetic gestures and poses with the laws of sequence.

So as a choreographer one calls for states, sensation, kinesthetic experiences, memories, speeds, intensities, nuances, submersions, presences, shimmers, unfolding manifestations, fluxus, spontaneity,

indeterminacy, immediacy, kinetic force and presence. The impact results in imagery that is both affective and haptic. (Brannigan 2011)

## VIDEO9

AffeXity Carlsberg <http://youtu.be/umlCMJ7Numg>

## DIRECTION

It is here that the screendance maker needs to be awake, alive, in order to capture, connect viscerally with the affect being delivered. More often than not the “performance” is improvised. So is the camera work. It is at this juncture of liminality, between the techne and the carnal, that the capture and amplification of affect takes place. Dance filmmaker Douglas Rosenberg sites this as a ritual, the space between the lens and the dancer becomes alive and intense.

Here are some of my personal observations that I made after shooting some of the videos in 2012.

*JG: I am very aware of the task at hand. The desire to capture affective gestures that the dancer is performing far outweighs the capture of movements or choreographies. I relax, breathe, but I am alert to all the subtle nuances. I try not to think too much or direct too much. This direction is a gentle persuasion. The dancer and camera need to sniff and tease these out by exploring her somatic connection to the space she is performing in. We do not think of dance, steps, counts, but enchainements of affect. There may be a score that is decided upon, something to work on. The dancer and I enter that resonant space. When I feel it is there, I hit the record button.*

I redeploy Rosenberg’s “carnivorous camera”, sniffing, nudging and teasing out the life forces of the moving body just in front of its eye. This “carnivorous camera”, now called by Rosenberg, the “omnivorous camera” has the capacity to explore what Susanna Paasonen calls “carnal resonances” or Deleuze’s affect images, that are a “dizzy disappearance of fixed points”. (Deleuze, G. a p77) The images may then become subsequently liquid, less stable and visceral or what Deleuze would say: melting, boiling and coagulating.

The camera needs to become an extension of the filmmaker’s eye in order to capture both affect and the haptic in an attempt to disrupt a viewer’s hegemonic power over objects, closure and allow the haptic to loosen the reigns of logic most usually found in mainstream linear narrative dance production. It supports phenomenologist Brian Massumi’s claim, that here we must forego the linguistic models of coding and try to find a “semiotics willing to engage with continuity.” (Massumi, B. p 4) It is in this ever present kinesis, movement and change that philosopher Merleau Ponty suggests is how we anchor our bodies to the world, functioning as spaces in which we express ourselves.

I also use the notion of the “hot spot” – where the most affect and resonance is seen and felt through the lens. I try to zoom in and focus on that as well as

using my body as a bipod – the best tripod there is. I connect with the movement of the dancer to my centre of gravity, through and with the extension of my eye – the lens of the camera, trying to engage in this relational semiotic of movement rather than the choreographic score, narrative or character.

*JG: I shoot. I remain calm and breathe. I shoot from my centre as if in a contact improvisation with the dancer and the affective gesture. I try not to direct too much, but rather express an allowance to the dancer, an open space in which to explore affect. I can sense it immediately when it is there. All the wires, plastic, glass and metal of the technology melt away.*

*The shoot becomes very subjective and I am patient. I wait if the affect leaves the dancer or the resonance is not there. I try again to find a somatic connection with what is being captured by the lens. My eye, the lens and my body's centre always trying to connect with the affective resonances before me. My legs are the tripod. My lens is my eye. My centre is alert and all three are connecting.*

*This connection is a space that is very particular, a condensed vision of what I really see before me, that is the dancer in the environment. I have to 'zone in' on the resonances and 'zone out' the environment trying to capture the same intensities and resonances the dancer is sensing. I use my screendance and choreographic techne subconsciously, allowing it to guide these short moments of intensities.*

*There is no shot list, no script and no narrative, no psychological development of a character in a location and linear narrative. In the edit process one uses a montage structure. One intuitively trusts the choices, the pace, rhythm, timing and cutting all connecting to the score or affective gestures and states of being expressed and captured. My job is to amplify that, cutting out all other extraneous information. I try to achieve this without too much intellectualization. I try to amplify affect and movement through the edits and overlays. If it is present it is there. It was a good take. Both camera and dancer worked in harmony. Sometimes if there was a good connection during the shoot, the video practically edits itself. There are no special effects required.*

*However sometimes the intellectual processes need to surface in the edit. I need to shape the affect. I need to amplify the affect. I use layers and shots of the dancer in a moving lift, dancing in a stairwell and outside against a building. I layer these takes and make the moving images transparent. I amplify the dancer's face, her looking sublimely upwards, her hands trying to reach for spaces and moments that are escaping. She seems ethereal, in a dream state. The edit needs to reveal this in a non-linear montage, as if she were in a loop, in a lift forever reaching and moving skyward. She is in the lift, the building, the stairwell, the area outside – the lift, the building, the stairwell and area outside are in her. They merge. (Ginslov 2012)*

## **CONCLUSION: A DIALOGIC RELATIONAL AESTHETIC VS THE MATERIAL UTOPIC OBJECT**

*AffeXity* is ultimately an online social choreographic project. Its evolutionary nature of temporal formations is a good example of a project using a relational aesthetic not only in its outcomes but also in its scaffoldings of development.

*AffeXity* it is about being human today. It expresses the temporal nature of the subject in collaborations and people moving in cityscapes. It invites affective participatory expressions via the internet, expressions that are, as Bourriaud describes, “everyday micro-utopias” that replace “passively representative image(s)” (Bourriaud, N. p99). The artistic processes of *AffeXity* are less about *what is* affect but about the *how to* affect.

*AffeXity* utilizes temporary nomadic scaffoldings and rendez-vous, rather than utopic objects. It calls for relational inter-human participation with cultural objects that express our affective natures within cityscapes. It encourages meetings, relations and the materialization of encounters. It reflects our present day concerns of inter human relations via models of sociability and mobility – the internet and mobile technologies. We engage rather than passively view. We partake rather than consume. We have become as Guattari observes “operator(s) of junctions in subjectivity” (ibid.).

With *AffeXity* our reception of affect is dialogic, inter-human and temporal, reflecting “the world that we live in: one that is ceaselessly recomposing itself.” (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010: 13 cited in Kozel 2012). Furthermore Kozel states that *AffeXity* uses choreography that composes and captures actions, bodies and affects. We use the social choreographic to recompose them’ “mediating them with our lives and our many devices: composing, decomposing and recomposing urban spaces.”

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