Costume design and collaboration in Finnish contemporary dance in the early twenty-first century

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Abstract

Contemporary dance productions are experienced by costume designers as highly rewarding due to the creative freedom and quality of artistic allyships that they offer. To reveal characteristics of this specific genre, this article-based doctoral thesis investigates costume design in independent contemporary dance productions in twenty-first-century Finland. This study examines the topic by focusing on creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. Informed by previous research in costume, dance, contemporary co-creation, and postdramatic performance, it approaches costume design as an interrelational event and collaborative practice. Drawing from the experiences of active practitioners, it focuses on the work of three significant costume designers in Finland – Marja Uusitalo, Erika Turunen, and Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila – and their partnerships with choreographers. These examples reveal wider patterns of collaboration useful for highlighting the role of costume and the costume designer within contemporary dance-making in Finland. The analysis of their work follows a hermeneutic circle–inspired dialogical process where the notion of costume as an active agent steers the query. Developing in iterative cycles, oral materials from 16 semi-structured main interviews are analysed along with data from 15 performances as well as communications with Finnish dance artists and costume designers. Specific sources in philosophy and social theory, including Aristotle's notions of friendship (n.d.) and Derrida's definition of 'signature' ([1971] 1986) are applied to theoretically frame the key themes: creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. The main method of analysis across the interview materials, performance materials, and theory materials, is content analysis, and the results are twofold. First, through examples of design concepts from the simple to the spectacular, this thesis presents the ways in which costume impacts the event of dance. In particular, it exemplifies the powerful potential embedded in everyday garments as costume. Second, through increasing awareness of the creative processes of costume design within contemporary dance performance and the collaborative practices therein, it demonstrates the influence of the co-creative costume designer in the production of contemporary dance. It asserts that costume design in productions of contemporary dance gains from

supportive practices in co-creation. In conclusion, this thesis argues that the creation of costume is not only the creation of a physical garment, but also the creation of performance.

Acknowledgements

List of original publications and author's contribution

This dissertation is based on four original peer-reviewed journal articles. The articles, listed below, are referred to in the text as Articles 1–4, and reproduced in their original form by permission of the publishers in Appendices 1–4.

Article 1
Helve, Tua and Pantouvaki, Sofia (2016), 'Sharing "untamed ideas": Process-based costume design in Finnish contemporary dance through the work of Marja Uusitalo', *Scene*, 4:2, pp. 149–72, doi: 10.1386/scene.4.2.149_1

Article 2
Helve, Tua (2018), 'Political by Design: Costume Design Strategies within the Finnish Contemporary Dance Productions *AmazinGRace*, *Noir?* and *The Earth Song*', Nordic Journal of Dance, 9:1, pp. 14–31, https://www.nordicjournalofdance. com/NordicJounal_9(1).pdf

Article 3
Helve, Tua (2021), 'Time, being, discourse: Elements of professional friendship in the collaboration between a costume designer and a choreographer', *Choreographic Practices*, 12:1, pp. 67–89, doi: 10.1386/chor_00029_1

Article 4
Helve, Tua (2022), 'The costume designer as co-author of contemporary dance performance: Erika Turunen's signature style', *Studies in Costume & Performance*, 7:1, pp. 27–53, doi: 10.1386/scp_00059_1

The author is the sole author of this thesis compilation and Articles 2–4. Article 1 was co-authored with Professor Sofia Pantouvaki, who has been the advisor and supervising professor of this thesis. In Article 1, my role as first author was to conduct the research and collect the research materials, decide which case studies would be analysed in the article, and co-author the analysis of these materials. The co-author's role was to jointly write the research analysis,

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Introduction

I

This doctoral thesis investigates costume design within contemporary dance in twenty-first-century Finland, specifically between 2000–2015 through selected case studies analysed in four original research articles and this synthesizing thesis compilation. The work introduces this area from the perspective of interrelations, both between costume and dance, as well as between costume designer and choreographer as co-creators in performance-making. In particular, it examines insights into how various types of costumes are designed and how they are influenced by the collaborative processes undertaken in each production. The key themes of this study, therefore, are creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. These themes are researched within the frame of independent freelance productions, deemed as both intensely collaborative milieus for work and characteristic of Finnish contemporary dance. With such framing, this study responds to a complete absence of research in this area in Finland and a wider international need for more nuanced identification and recognition of costume within contemporary dance as noted in previous research by art historian, scenography and critical heritage scholar Astrid von Rosen (2020) and interdisciplinary designer and scholar Jessica Bugg (2020: 354, 2021: 213).

1.1 Introduction to the thesis

Among the drivers of this study is the notion that for costume design, Western contemporary dance performance allows for an open-ended, even subversive, terrain for artistic creation. As a genre, these performances 'rarely concern any previously known stories or follow a dramatic plot that can create clear expectations of the experience' (Moisio 2021: 187–88). Even when working with a dramatic plot or a storyline, contemporary dance performance tolerates, and even enhances, artistic licence in its expression. In costume design, this supports the search for a variety of expressive spectrums, as also argued by practice-based researcher Linnea Bågander (2021: 39). Thus, costume design in this genre allows for equal entwinement with concepts that draw from excessive to minimal, daily to experimental, as well as the popular and everyday to high art and fashion. In my investigation, in the early twenty-first century, such traits connect with postdramatic theatre and performance practice and theory as articulated by Lehmann (2006: 68), thus proposing a site for design to provide 'more process than product, more manifestation than signification, more energetic impulse than information' (Lehmann 2006: 85)[1]. This also includes the option to play with 'self-cancellation of meaning', as argued by Lehmann, meaning the refusal of either signification or synthesis through costume to allow for 'an open and fragmenting perception in place of a unifying and closed perception' (Lehmann 2006: 82). In artistic terms, contemporary dance performance appears as an unrestrained context that potentially offers costume designers great creative freedom from a given style, epoch, or normative premise, as also proposed by Bugg (2020: 353). This means a dream site for exploring the 'material gesturality and the tactile communication', 'performative continuities [...] in and out of the history of thought', and the 'political positions and cultural raptures' (Barbieri 2017: xx–xxi) that costume can provide.

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1. The English-language title of Lehmann's book is *Postdramatic Theatre*. In my research, the use of the term postdramatic throughout implies the performance characteristics associated with postdramatic forms as defined by Lehmann (2006), especially in the chapter 'Panorama of postdramatic theatre', as well as by Fischer-Lichte (2008).

By examining costume in contemporary dance performance, this thesis contributes to a shared and expanding interest in the agential qualities of costume. As an analytical lens for this study, I apply the notion of 'active costume'. This notion helps this study to focus on artistic processes, collaborative synergies, and costume outcomes that demonstrate the ways in which costume carries action and agency in contemporary dance production.[2] In recent research, Pantouvaki and McNeil (2021: 3) use the word 'active' to highlight the dynamism of costume as 'a tool for active participation, emancipation and self-exploration'. Bugg expounds on the costume as 'active' in its relationship with the body (2021: 213) and through its potential for creating choreography (2021: 217), and von Rosen (2020: 42) explicitly defines costume as 'an active co-creator of the performance'. Fajt, in turn, applies the term 'active costumes' to refer to 'costumes' that make a difference in public manifestations of grassroots politics through their capacity to 'create, mediate or take an active role'; she also further argues that 'costume inherently carries an action, a change, a metamorphosis' (2021: 361).

As the previous definitions imply, depending on the context and frame of reference, costume can always be viewed as active. However, the detail of and variation in how this occurs in costume design in contemporary dance, especially from the perspective of collaboration, merits focused analysis. I use the notion of 'active costume' as a lens to identify examples for this study that demonstrate the diverse, multifaceted, and interrelating agential qualities of costume as collaborative work in contemporary dance. From my reflective position, 'active costume' refers to costumes that have a formative role in the performance production. Importantly, this notion intends not to create hierarchies or a false dichotomy between 'active' and 'passive' costumes. Through collaboration, the concept that costume is 'active' not only denotes the impact of costume on experiencing contemporary dance performance, for example, by the performers and spectators, but also investigates the agential capacities of costume in the

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2. Lehmann in his writing contests 'action' as a term that belongs to the realm of dramatic theatre (2006: 68). However, the term 'active costume' is not derived from Lehmann's understanding of 'action'; therefore, it is not tied to a specific genre or type of performance.

preparation of and beyond the event of dance. As this thesis argues, the active role of a costume hence cannot be judged from its mere appearance: it addresses a wider frame of individuals, processes, and concepts. In terms of postdramatic performance, 'active costume' emphasizes the interrelational aspects of costume, concretized also by a definition of costume as a 'body, garment, action, context' entity (Lindgren 2021a: 307).[3] This definition by practice-based researcher Christina Lindgren depicts the openness of costume to questions of 'how' it is and 'how' it operates in performance, rather than 'what' it is (Lindgren 2021a: 307). Her phrasing also illustrates costume's disposition to change – change in itself and the change it provides around it. Accordingly, my examination through the 'active costume' lens highlights the processual and at times less visible effects of costume in the creation of contemporary dance performance.

Using the notion that costume is 'active' as my analytical lens and focusing on the different ways in which the costume designer is a collaborator in contemporary dance performance, the primary task of this work is to identify, first, the role of costume beyond 'costume-generated performances' (Lindgren 2021b: 201). By this I mean focusing the research on processes and outcomes of productions that can be viewed in the Finnish context as the main type of work setting for costume designers in contemporary dance performance from 2000–2015. I examine choreographer-led projects that employ freelance artists to collaborate in the creative process towards a performance. Central to such a setting is the active, formative, yet collaborative contribution to performance through costume by the designer. In other cases, designers may more directly implement the visions of a choreographer or otherwise be limited in using their full potential for design. Consequently, the second task of this thesis is to explore how the interrelational aspects of the designer's work, prominently through collaboration, influence the creation of costumes. Although choreographers are the prime movers of such projects as is implied with the term 'choreographer-led', the teams in this study work with relatively flat hierarchies and substantial esteem towards the costume

3. Pantouvaki and Příhodová (2021: 145) refer to the 'post-dramatic context' for Lindgren's definition of costume. However, Lindgren's articles (2021a, b) lack a clear mention of this background.

work. The role of costume in the investigated productions is not prioritized nor put off: the costume designers are provided with a space for their unique input, an opportunity to create costumes that take on an active role. In addition, processes in such a setting are examined to gain insight from the agential roles of the costume designer to further link this work with current scholarship that views 'costume as both an active practice and activating object' (Pantouvaki and Příhodová 2021: 146). To maintain a clear focus, I have excluded from this research productions for young audiences.

The notion of 'active costume' helps to view the costume designer as a vital co-creator and esteemed collaborator of dance performance (Figures 1–3). As its principal data, this thesis hence draws from personal interviews with Finnish artists working with dance performances (Appendix 6).[4] Predominately, it engages with the following costume designers, in order of their appearance in the articles of this thesis: Marja Uusitalo (b. 1956), Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila (b. 1973), and Erika Turunen (b. 1966). To provide a thorough analysis of the themes drawn from the experiences of these designers, I also conducted further interviews with costume designers and choreographers for the purposes of this study (Appendix 7).

Figures 1–3. The works of Marja Uusitalo, Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, and Erika Turunen provide a wide perspective on the topic.

4. This study applies the term 'Finnish' in relation to productions created in Finland. However, such choice appears for geographical reference and does not seek to define or underline an imaginary 'Finnishness' (Järvinen 2016a, 2017: 25–26).

Figure 1. *A Blind Moment* (2001, choreography Harri Kuorelahti), costume design Marja Uusitalo. Photo Finnish National Gallery/Janne Mäkinen, in the image (from left) Liisa Pentti and Harri Kuorelahti.

Figure 2. *Mandorla* (2009, choreography Carl Knif), costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila. Photo Charlotte Estman-Wennström/Carl Knif Company, in the image (from left) Carl Knif, Terhi Vaimala, Jonna Aaltonen.

Fig. 3

Figure 3. *Disturbed Silence* (2004, choreography Susanna Leinonen, in the image), costume design Erika Turunen. Photo Heikki Tuuli/Susanna Leinonen Company.

The selection of these costume designers – Uusitalo, Turunen, and Koiso-Kanttila – from a number of professionals in the field is based on their significant activity in designing for dance during the time frame of this research, 2000–2015. As Uusitalo began her career in dance in the 1970s, Turunen in the 1990s, and Koiso-Kanttila in the early 2000s, the time frame of this study appears as a period in which these three designers, notwithstanding their different career paths and levels of professional maturation, stand out among their colleagues as notably prolific in the number of designed dance performances.[5] Furthermore, in their contributions, they not only provide diverse design concepts, varying and different from each other (Figures 1–3, 6, 19–23, 26–27, 31, 34, 36–42), but also engage in a number of modes of co-creation. This means that these designers' expertise ranges from national to international collaborations, small-scale to large-scale productions by independent or institutional producers, and from freelancer to permanent positions as professionals. In addition to providing this thesis with various examples of artistic approach, work milieus, and modes of collaboration, all interviewees have taken distinct educational pathways to the profession. This shapes the understanding of a certain multiplicity in costume designer identities in the early twenty-first century. Furthermore, their influence

5. In addition to their substantial roles within dance performances in Finland, Uusitalo and Turunen have also introduced their costumes created in Finland in international contexts: Uusitalo was shortlisted for the Gold Medal award in costume design in the World Stage Design 2013 exhibition in Cardiff, United Kingdom (Article 1: 164), and Turunen has presented her costumes in the 'Costume at the Turn of the Century 1990–2015' exhibition in Moscow, Russia, in 2015.

in the field is also significant in other ways, primarily through educational connections and written accounts in various forms.[6] However, geographically, all three are based in the capital city, Helsinki. Although their profession takes them across the country and abroad, the capital area remains the centre for their work. This is the area where the majority of contemporary dance productions in Finland are made (Laakkonen 2009b: 7–8; Dance Info Finland 2022).[7]

Based on the analysis of the interviews, this study examines costume design in fifteen productions as displayed in Appendix 9. The productions are selected to exemplify the entwinement of collaboration, creative processes, and range of costume outcomes; the full method and rationale for this choice are explained in Chapter 4. Such a selection presents the creative input by Uusitalo, Koiso-Kanttila, and Turunen in the following productions: *Sahara* (2002), *Being is Everything* (2009), and *Whirls* (2011), designed by Marja Uusitalo (choreographies by Alpo Aaltokoski, in Article 1); *The Earth Song* (2013, choreography by Sari Palmgren, in Article 2) and *Red* (2014, choreography by Carl Knif, in Article 3), designed by Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila; and *Wavelengths* (2000), *HUNT* (2002), *Georgia* (2003), *Borrowed Light* (2004), *Vox Balaenae* (2011), *VORTEX* (2014), *Kullervo* (2015), and *Third Practice* (2019) (choreographies by Tero Saarinen, in Article 4), designed by Erika Turunen.

To enrich the scope of productions, this thesis also engages with *AmazinGRace* (2010, choreography by Kirsi Törmi), designed by Soile Savela, and *Noir?* (2013, choreography by Sonya Lindfors), designed by Sanna Levo, both in Article 2.

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6. Turunen appears as a regular interviewee for Finnish magazines, thus being an ambassador of costume design for larger audiences in this country. However, Koiso-Kanttila, despite her impact on live performance – she has been noted as the most prolific artistic team member in independent productions performed between 2009–2011 (Oinaala and Ruokolainen 2013: 56) – and contribution to numerous Finnish films and TV series, has not received similar public interest in Finland. However, her work is credited in the Carl Knif Company's anniversary publication (Pyykönen 2022). Further written testimonies about these designers exist as auto-reflections in professional contexts (Uusitalo 2005, 2006, 2016a, c) and in passing, in an international edited volume (Bugg 2020).

7. Other important venues for contemporary dance include regional centres for dance; there are currently ten across the country (Dance Info Finland 2022), as well as festivals. Moisio outlines the Finnish system for dance (2022: 34).

The costume-led analysis of fifteen productions is brought into dialogue with the analysis of the costume designers' experiences of their creative processes (Articles 1, 3, and 4) and, additionally, with my investigation into the traces of the design process that can be deduced from the costume outcomes (Article 2). Designs by Soile Savela and Sanna Levo in Article 2 are based on the use of everyday garments. This broadens my analysis of a pervasive yet previously overlooked trope of costume in contemporary dance performance.

This study follows the tradition of qualitative research: it aims to analyse its subject matter with and through verbalized qualities rather than quantities (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2009: 7). In this tradition, my thesis draws from hermeneutics as the dialogic interpretation of 'texts' both in their literal and figurative sense (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 126–27). In this approach, understanding evolves through entering into dialogues with people, research materials, and theories in a 'hermeneutic circle' (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 131); I describe this interaction in my research in Figure 4. Therefore, interviews and other types of communication from the field are examined in close exchange with visual and multisensorial data from the costumes in the selected dance performances and related written accounts. The main methods are thick description and thematic content analysis. Revisiting the earlier rounds of analysis and data collection proposes not only themes for further interviews but also complementary theoretical tools for their analysis as explained in Chapter 3. The development of the work towards the thesis findings in iterative cycles and through a back-and-forth movement between the various components is understood as a dialogical research process (Figures 4–5). In this hermeneutics-informed approach, the researcher's pre-knowledge is inseparable from and essential to the interpretation of the gained knowledge (Grondin 2016a: 521).
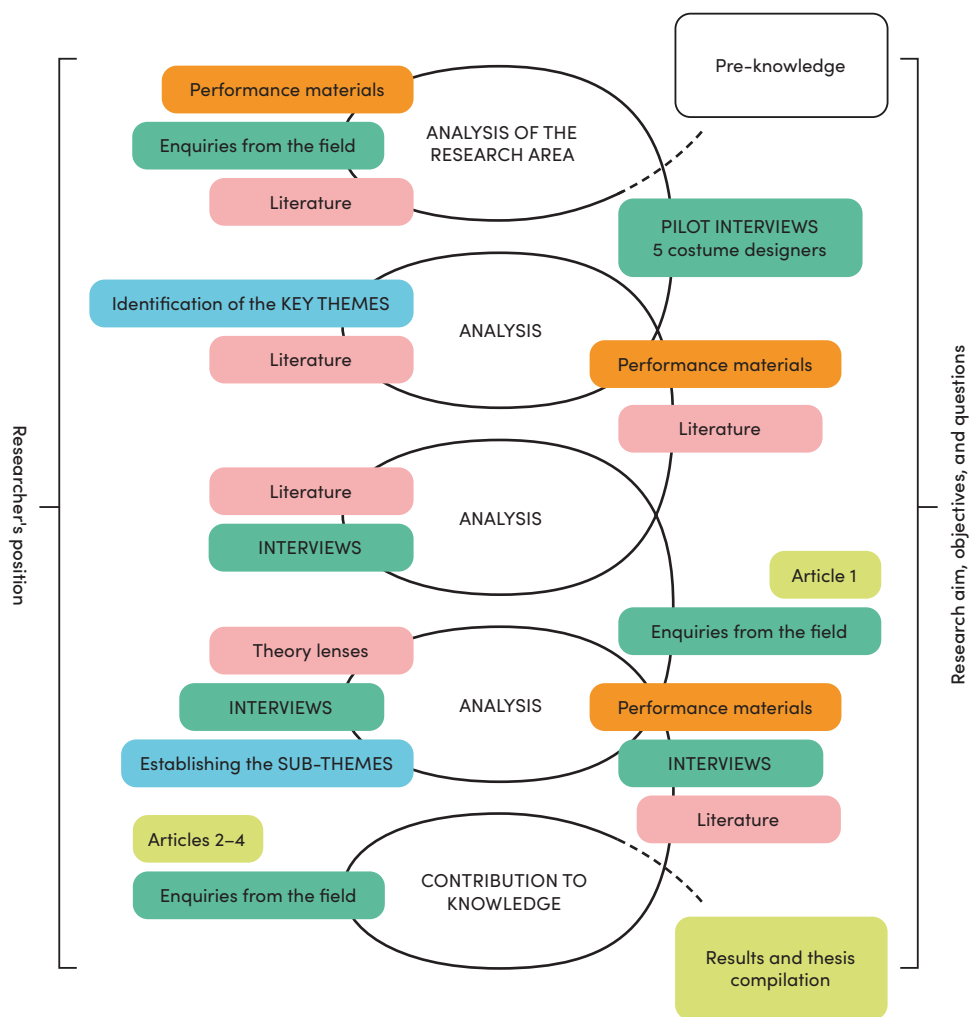
Figure 4. The study develops in a cyclical movement (from top to bottom in the figure) between research materials and research questions, theories, and pre-knowledge, guided by the researcher's subjective position.
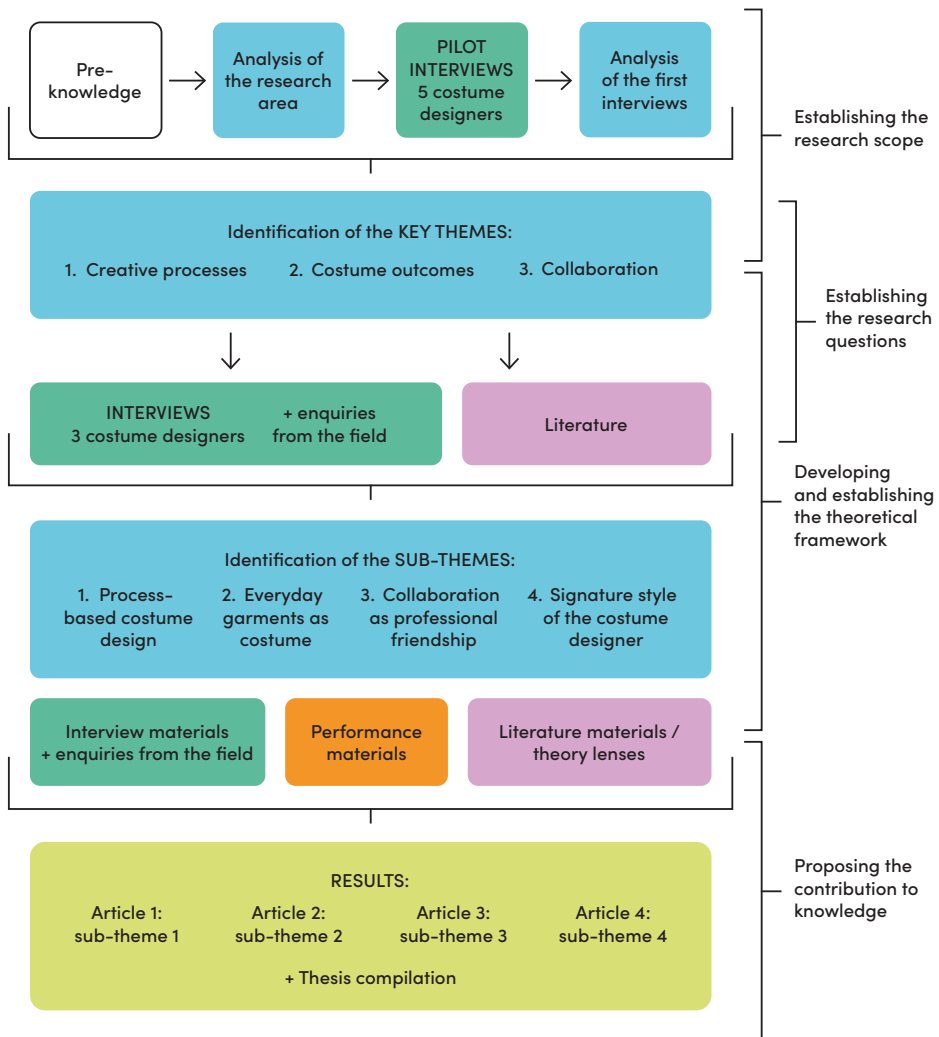
Figure 5. Constructed in a linear format, the study proceeds from the review of the research area to the identification of the key themes. It continues in iterations of data collection and analysis to the results, four articles, and the summary of the study in this thesis compilation.

Although most of the productions analysed took place from 2000–2015, my interviews for this study were conducted both before and after 2015. This means that post-2015 productions are implicitly present in this research as the three interviewees spontaneously reflect upon their past projects, undertaken before 2015, against the backdrop of their more recent ones. Moreover, two of the designers, Marja Uusitalo and Erika Turunen, had already entered the field as professionals before the turn of the twenty-first century. Thus, the practices that this study introduces may have been in effect before and after the 2000–2015 time period as well. The aim is not to claim the findings as specifically limited to this time frame but rather, as reflected by the thesis title, to present aspects that are emblematic of the early twenty-first century. Such aspects entwine with and arise from the select foci: the designers' singular 'ways of doing', which covers both the process and the outcome,[8] as well as the interrelated features of collaboration. Thus, in alignment with the view of dance historian Tiina Suhonen, this thesis acknowledges that events and practices overlap, enmesh, and change (2011: 16). A linear, chronological, and neat perception of any era as uniform and concordant is not only inadequate but also untrue. The same applies to the introduced artists and their processes.

Context for costume design in contemporary dance in Finland

In the Finnish language, 'contemporary dance' (nykytanssi) is a term that connotes a specific style rather than an epoch of dance expression (Kukkonen 2014). In Finland, it is widely used as an umbrella term that covers various emphases in dance-making since the 1980s (Hämäläinen 1999: 28). As Suhonen notes, contemporary dance encompasses performances that both reveal and dispel the connection to a certain 'technique or style' (2011: 17, translation added). Contemporary dance as a term thus accommodates the type of performances

8. Article 4 applies the wording 'ways of doing' to denote a costume designer's process. Furthermore, it parallels with a 'way of working' as defined by Melrose (2009), also discussed in Article 4.

discussed in my study. However, in international debates in the early twenty-first century, the term contemporary choreography was proposed in the wake of the 'renewal of European contemporary dance', to promote plurality in dance (Cvejić 2015: 1).[9] This term was intended to connote, for example, choreographed expression that can also be still and thus 'not dance', according to the most fervent critics. Cvejić suggests that in the making of Western theatrical dance performances in the past decades, the ontology has more broadly shifted from 'dance-making', understood as body-movement union, towards 'choreographing' (Cvejić 2015: 6, 8). Therefore the term contemporary choreography is applied instead of dance in many English-language discourses (Klein 2011: 21). Although the cases examined in my study can easily be adapted to the previous term 'contemporary dance', this study employs both terms in parallel. This is a deliberate choice to acknowledge the international discourse in dance studies and the Finnish approach to it.

Around the millennium (Rouhiainen 2003: 172, 188) and early twenty-first century (Laakkonen 2009a: 14, 2009b: 7; Laakkonen and Kukkonen 2010: 5), contemporary dance was undergoing a period of vigorous growth in Finland.[10] For costume designers, this signified increasing opportunities for work as well as a proliferating area for innovation within dance: the growth in dance enabled a corresponding growth in costume design. However, public subsidies failed to reflect the expansion of the dance field (Laakkonen 2009b: 10; Laakkonen and Kukkonen 2010: 5; Suhonen 2011: 20) and therefore, the prevailing system for the creation of dance performance was organized around free-standing artists, groups, and companies (Laakkonen 2009b: 9; Trux 2021; Moisio 2022: 34). In

9. Beyond the scope of this study, Järvinen (2018) and Cvejić (2015) provide critical remarks about the term 'contemporary dance'.

10. Further sources that address dance in this period include Moisio (2022: 35–39), who focuses on the late 2010s in Finland. Part of this information is relevant for my study; for example, she provides context for the productions I analyse in Articles 2 (about Zodiak – Center for New Dance) and 4 (about Tero Saarinen Company). For non-academic publications, see anthologies by Ojala and Takala (2007) and Hallikainen and Pentti (2018), and Chapters 9 and 10 in the educational materials by Makkonen (2017).

other words, a greater number of independent artists sought opportunities to work together and organize the work with the limited resources available. Hence, a wide range of processes and modes of collaboration for the creation of costumes characterize this period.

The costume designers this study focuses on entered the expanded dance field in the 2000s from various pathways.[11] Although Uusitalo, Koiso-Kanttila, and Turunen have graduated from the University of Art and Design Helsinki (UIAH; at present Aalto University), the Costume Design bachelor and master's programme that exists in the same institution was only piloted in 2000–2002 and was then established in 2003 (Weckman 2015: 14; Gröndahl 2020: 137).[12] Prior to this programme, courses in costume design at UIAH were offered as part of the Set Design and Fashion Design programmes (Ijäs 2022). Turunen, who studied fashion at UIAH between 1988 and 1993 and was keen to specialize in the performing arts, was able to benefit from such optional courses. Furthermore, she gained valuable experience from designing for the student productions at Sibelius Academy in the 1990s (Turunen 2017). Through opera, she entered ballet productions and developed her career in contemporary dance productions while working as the head of the costume department at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet from 1995 onwards (Article 4: 28; Weckman 2021b: 189). In contrast, Uusitalo describes her pathway to costume design and dance projects as a chain of coincidences as well as involving intuition rather than a decided ambition (2017a, 2022).[13] She had entered the field of contemporary dance in the late 1980s through previous experiences in theatre and film and was thus well established professionally in the 2000s (Uusitalo 2017b). Eventually, Koiso-Kanttila studied scenography at UIAH at the turn of the millennium and was therefore able to enjoy a course established in the late 1990s dedicated to choreography, lighting, sound design, and scenography, *Tanssin valo ja ääni* ('Light and sound of dance').[14] In 2000, Koiso-Kanttila was among the first participants in this course (Koiso-Kanttila 2022).[15] Thus, she was among the first designers to enter dance productions in the 2000s with skills directly arising from higher education in Finland and was able to start working with existing colleagues in the field (Figure 6).

11. Costume design within dance remains a fertile and unexplored research area in Finland. As a notable exception, Weckman has examined the hundred years of costume design at the Finnish National Ballet from 1922 onwards (2021b). Moreover, Weckman's research in the early history of costume professionals in Finland and their training in the profession provides some helpful information regarding their educational pathways (2015: esp. 51–55, 66–67, 227), including their education abroad in the 1970s (2015: 91, 131). Juntunen also sheds light on these developments (2010: Sections 4.8–4.10). However, my pre-understanding based on the archival scrutiny of artistic teams in dance productions in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century is that those responsible for costume decisions, not always necessarily identifying themselves as costume designers, entered independent dance productions through other art disciplines and professional backgrounds.

12. This is the first and only higher education programme focused on costume design in the country.

13. Uusitalo trained as a costume designer at the 'Lahti Institute of Industrial Arts' (translation added; in Finnish, Lahden taideteollinen oppilaitos, Jokela 2022). However, costume in this context referred to the design of clothing for industry needs; Uusitalo learned costume design for the screen and the performing arts through various work experiences. Later, having realized through teaching about the value of her experiences for others, she entered the UIAH pedagogical training programme for artists to continue teaching costume design. Uusitalo worked for the UIAH/Aalto University Costume Design programme in 2003–2011, first as an hourly paid teacher and later, as lecturer (Uusitalo 2017b).

14. The higher education department for dance and choreography started in Finland in 1983 at the Theatre Academy Helsinki, followed by lighting and sound design in 1986 (both currently part of University of the Arts Helsinki). Prior collaborative student projects between UIAH and Theatre Academy were for set designers and directors and initiated as early as the 1970s (Gröndahl 2020: 111–12, 114).

15. The master level course, *Tanssin valo ja ääni*, was held bi-annually and offered as optional study for the scenography students (Ijäs 2022). Records suggest that this course was first held in 1998 (Gröndahl 2022; Karjunen 2022). The course name was later changed to *Tanssi kokonaistaideteoksena* ('Dance as a Total Form of Art'). At the time of this writing, it runs between the two Universities with the name *Artistic collaboration*.

Fig. 6

Figure 6. As an example of the trajectories of student projects, Koiso-Kanttila's collaboration with choreographer Kivelä started from such work and continues to date. In the image, Theatre Academy and UIAH student production *Pyhä koulu* [sic] ('Sunday school') from the year 2000. Choreography Jenni Kivelä, costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila. Photo Maria Lähteenmäki/Theatre Academy Archive, in the image (from left) Simo Kellokumpu, Satu Rekola.

Concurrently with Uusitalo, Koiso-Kanttila, and Turunen, several contemporary costume designers in Finland have designed for dance. However, a scant number have developed a more continuous career, or even specialization therein. To name a few, Jaana Kurttila, Taina Relander, Riitta Röpelinen, Sari Suominen, Terttu Torkkola, Päivi Uusitalo, and Pirjo Valinen all began their careers in the 1980s and 1990s working in various types of performance. They also have continued to contribute to costume design in contemporary dance performance in twenty-first-century Finland (Figures 7–10). Furthermore, several productions during the time frame of this study included designers with diverse careers that parallel their contributions to dance performance, including Monika Hartl, Suvi Hänninen, Anne Jämsä, Teemu Muurimäki, Anna Perez, Janne Renvall, Minttu Vesala, and Joanna Weckman (Figures 11–14), and younger professionals, such as Suvi Forsström (née Matinaro), Ingvill Fossheim, Laura Haapakangas, Heidi Kesti, Sanna Levo (Figure 35), and Maria Sirén (née Hämäläinen) (Figures 15–18). Naming these designers in this study acknowledges their role in shaping the current understanding of the examined period in Finland. A glimpse of their work in Figures 7–18 allows the reader to grasp the breadth of designers and designs from which this thesis arises.

Figures 7–18. A visual map of works by twelve costume designers in Finnish contemporary dance from 2000–2015 provides context for the analysis of Uusitalo, Turunen, and Koiso-Kanttila's designs.

Figure 7. *IHO – SKINLESS* (2001, choreography Sanna Kekäläinen), costume design Riitta Röpelinen. Photo Heli Rekula/Theatre Museum Archive, in the image Sanna Kekäläinen.

Figure 8. *Stage Animals #2 – Sissi, Anno 2010* (2010, choreography Liisa Pentti), costume design Terttu Torkkola. Photo Esko Koivisto/Zodiak – Center for New Dance, in the image (from left) Mikko Orpana, Satu Herrala, Andrius Katinas, Nina Viitamäki.

Figure 9. *Sine* (2005, choreography Kati Kallio), costume design Sari Suominen. Photo Uupi Tirronen, in the image Riikka Kekäläinen (in the front) and Satu Rekola.

Figure 10. *Guardian of the Night* (2001, choreography Alpo Aaltokoski), costume design Taina Relander. Photo Ninna Kuismanen/Alpo Aaltokoski Company.

Figure 11. *Friedenplatz* (2006, choreography Kirsi Monni), costume design Suvi Hänninen. Photo Heli Sorjonen, in the image (from left) Katri Soini, Vera Nevanlinna, Joona Halonen.

Figure 12. *MEVOTH* (2008, choreography Petri Kekoni), costume design Joanna Weckman. Photo Kirsi Saarhelo/Petri Kekoni Company, in the image Andrius Katinas (in the front).

Figure 13. *Morphed* (2014, choreography Tero Saarinen), costume design Teemu Muurimäki. Photo Darya Popova/Tero Saarinen Company, in the image (from left) Mikko Lampinen, Eero Vesterinen, Oskari Nyyssölä, David Scarantino.

Figure 14. *Sold Out* (2007, choreography Eeva Muilu), costume design Monika Hartl. Photo Uupi Tirronen/Zodiak – Center for New Dance, in the image Eeva Muilu.

Figure 15. *Scars – Breaking the Barriers of Intimacy* (2013, choreography Pirjo Yli-Maunula and William Petit), costume design Heidi Kesti. Photo JP Manninen, in the image William Petit.

Figure 16. *Fields of Glory* (2015, choreography Jarkko Partanen), costume design Laura Haapakangas. Photo Katri Naukkarinen/Zodiak – Center for New Dance, in the image amateur performers from the local Helsinki cast.

Figure 17. *Wonderful and Fine* (2012, choreography Janina Rajakangas/FREEcollective), costume design Maria Sirén. Photo Hanna Lappalainen/Zodiak – Center for New Dance, in the image Rea-Liina Brunou (in the front).

Figure 18. *The Greatest Dance Hits* (2014, direction and concept Maija Mustonen), costume design Suvi Forsström. Photo Timo Wright/Zodiak – Center for New Dance, in the image Anni Rissanen.

Researcher's position

As a researcher, my subjective position on the topic of costume, dance, and collaboration arises from a background in practising dance. Embodied experiences in dance costume as a non-professional in classes and performances entangle with my training in the cut, fit, and feel of garments as part of my master's degree in Clothing Design (University of Lapland, 2000–2008). My growing interest in examining the merging point of these two body-centred fields, dance and dress, is manifest in my master's thesis, where I began to map the possibilities of costume by combining the theory of dress with costume design in dance performance (Helve 2008). Inspired by this journey, I continued to the doctoral programme at Aalto University in 2012.

The prime personal spark for asking the questions that led to the development of this doctoral thesis project arose from an aesthetic change I experienced as a spectator in the costume designs in dance performances in the early 2000s. Suddenly, in a range of works, costume emerged with its own 'voice' and was paramount for granting the performance its distinctive quality. I was equally amazed by performances such as *Trickle, Green Oak* (2003, choreography Susanna Leinonen, costume design Erika Turunen, Figure 19) and *Red-Letter Days* (2003, choreography Jenni Kivelä, costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, Figure 20). Both provided holistic experiences, the first with visionary multisensorial imagination and the second, with an elegant continuation of the recognizable spirit from German dance theatre by choreographer Pina Bausch with designers Ralf Borzik and Marion Cito. Furthermore, in contrast with a line of previous works in the late 1990s where ordinariness, contemplation, and even austerity seemed to be favoured both in costume and choreography, in *Fairy* (2002, choreography Jyrki Karttunen, costume design Marja Uusitalo, Figures 21–22), *Georgia* (2003, choreography Tero Saarinen, costume design Erika Turunen, Image 23), and many similar performances, a certain playfulness or uplifted spirit permeated my experience as a spectator. In these performances, costume seemed to carry a key agential role.

Figures 19–20. *In Trickle, Green Oak* (2003, choreography Susanna Leinonen, costume design Erika Turunen) and *Red-Letter Days* (2003, choreography Jenni Kivelä, costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila), costume design creates the 'world' for contemporary dance performances.

Figure 19. Photo Heikki Tuuli/Finnish National Opera and Ballet Archives, in the image (from left) Salla Eerola (née Suominen), Johanna Nuutinen.

Figure 20. Photo Marko Mäkinen/Jenni Kivelä and Kind People, in the image (from left) Katri Soini, Carl Knif, Joona Halonen, Ninu Lindfors.

Figures 21–23. *Fairy* (2002, choreography Jyrki Karttunen, costume design Marja Uusitalo) and *Georgia* (2003, choreography Tero Saarinen, costume design Erika Turunen) exemplify performances in which playfulness usurped austerity both in the costume design and choreography.

Figure 21. Photo Tiiti Hynninen/Theatre Museum Archive, in the image lighting designer Kimmo Karjunen (on the left) and make-up artist Tuija Luukkainen (on the right) prepare the Fairy, Jyrki Karttunen.

Figure 22. Photo Ninna Lindström/Theatre Museum Archive, in the image Jyrki Karttunen.

Fig. 21

Fig. 22

Fig. 23

Figure 23. *Georgia* (2003, choreography Tero Saarinen, costume design Erika Turunen). Photo Sakari Viika/Finnish National Opera and Ballet, in the image Nina Hyvärinen.

Becoming a member of a community with shared interests in costume at Aalto University supported my research with theoretical means. This was in parallel with the growing hub of theoretical focus on costume design practices that has generated an emancipation of costume as a scholarly field. Central elements of the current research ecology on a global level, such as the *Critical Costume* network and the *Studies in Costume & Performance* journal, were initiated in temporal, intellectual, and geographical proximity to the beginning of my doctoral studies. One of the first steps was to clarify my approach to the term 'costume' within this growing research ecology. While 'costuming' in a broad sense is understood as 'showing dress', or using dress with a certain intention also in connection to practices beyond the art context (Hann 2017: 8; Sandoval 2021), my approach aligns with Barbieri and Pantouvaki's (2016: 4) definition that 'places the costumed body in the context of live and mediated performance. By separating it from the practice of dressing for the everyday, it reclaims costuming as a preparation of the performer specifically for performance'. Building upon this definition with my experiences of costume in contemporary dance, I have come to view costume as a decision made. This acknowledges a variety of costume forms, choices, and approaches, nudity included, as costume decisions and grants them equal weight within the performance. My research interest lies in seeking to understand dance in order to understand costume design and to understand the designer's milieu for this work in order to understand the decisions made. Furthermore, the research trajectory of this thesis reflects my fascination with recent and present-day performances. With such a foundation, the subsequent focus of this thesis is on performance processes that develop from the cultural and temporal context in which I live, amidst the Finnish rendition of Western culture. Situated as a contemporary, I am equally drawn to learning about the processes behind costumes that appear to the spectator as mundane or minimal, or innovative in terms of abstraction or the use of materials and techniques. Therefore, each costume I experience in performance is an invitation to enquire into its concept and collaborative basis.

Beyond theoretical enquiry, in a study environment at Aalto University that proposes practice as research as the prevalent mode of investigation, I was encouraged to understand design processes from within my research area through a deeper hands-on experience. Therefore, along with this thesis project, I have developed my practice as a freelance costume designer in contemporary performance. Specifically in my work with the Helsinki-based international performance group, Oblivia, I have learned how the entire team engages in performance-making in a favourable atmosphere. Such an atmosphere is supported by a clear method in the creative process, an organizational structure, and a material frame, in this context meaning a reasonable salary, working hours, as well as an aim for continuity in contracts (Helve 2020: 19). Although not included in the methodology, design work has thus appeared as a laboratory for grasping, testing, and shaping the arguments of this study. Furthermore, personal experiences of co-creation in the performing arts, particularly the rewarding aspects with Oblivia in juxtaposition with my encounters with BA and MA students at Aalto University have fed this thesis project with a further collegial-educational research interest. Learning that there is a dearth of tools for handling collaboration as well as a gap between the envisioned modes versus the real-life experiences with collaboration in student productions strengthened my motivation to highlight the interpersonal underpinnings in contemporary costume practices.

With such an accumulation of elements, my unique position as a researcher for this project can be summed up as one that is emotionally rooted in dance, strengthened by an academic and professional passion for costume practice, and enriched by attention to art, aesthetics, philosophy, and social theory in my private and working lives. It is nurtured with a craving to better understand the experience that made me begin this project: to investigate the ways in which costume unfolds its active role as part of dance performance in contemporary times.

1.2 Research aim, objectives, and questions

Arising from the particular milieu for designing costumes within productions of contemporary dance in Finland, my initial aim was to examine costume designers' creative processes. However, the first round of interviews with five costume designers proposed the centrality of collaboration for the processes and rarely included mentions of costume outcomes. Given my personal affection for costume as an expressive element in dance performance, such an observation led me to investigate the interrelationship between the three: creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration (Figure 5). Therefore, with Finnish costume designers and productions of twenty-first-century contemporary dance as the topic, this thesis aims to widen the current knowledge within costume studies by highlighting the active role of costume in the creation and reception of dance performances. More specifically, my research places the focus on the human interrelations between the costume designers and choreographers: not only is costume design a collaborative practice due to necessity but also, and more significantly, collaboration equips costume designers with a chance to thrive. In costume designer Koiso-Kanttila's words, 'to develop your work, the trust alone won't help much if you're totally alone […] [you need] dialogue' (Koiso-Kanttila 2017b; Article 3: 74).

With such grounds, the four key objectives of this study are to, first, view collaboration as an integral part of costume design processes and as consequential for costume outcomes. This means that I produce analyses of select costume concepts and their interrelations with specific productions to provide insights into processes and outcomes of performance through their material and intellectual convergence. In particular, I describe the influence of the co-creative artistic environment on the work of a costume designer. Through collecting first-hand knowledge from artistic co-creators, the second objective is to better connect certain aspects of collaboration – which I articulate in detail in my articles – with the current understanding of the processes of costume design as well as the resulting costume outcomes. Embedded in this is the third objective to render visible costume decisions in every performance to make explicit the ambit of costume design and also credit the practice when it is visually concealed. This

includes enquiries into the typically overlooked use of everyday garments as costume to both exemplify the level of conceptual thought ingrained therein and their subsequent active influence on the experience of choreography. The fourth objective of this thesis is to increase awareness of how artistic partners may support their common undertaking across preferred styles of costume and modes of collaboration and to allow for the elaboration of approaches to artistic co-creation from the perspective of costume designers.

Following the described aim and objectives, this thesis addresses four research questions. The first and main research question shapes the groundwork by investigating the following:

> Research Question 1: What is the relationship between costume design processes, outcomes, and collaboration within contemporary dance productions in twenty-first-century Finland?

The centrality of processes arises directly from the first interviews with costume designers conducted in the early phases of this study. However, while the existing literature in performance-making widely discusses the impact of processes on performance outcomes from the viewpoint of performers, directors, and choreographers (White 2009; Britton 2013: 28; Melrose 2016; Simonsen 2017), as I indicate in my review of previous scholarship in Chapter 2, such understanding has only recently gained critical attention by select costume scholars (Barbieri 2021; Lindgren 2021b: 208; Osmond 2021; Taylor 2021a: 274; Weckman 2021a: 147) and would still benefit from the voices of additional costume designers. Consequently, processes significantly interlink with aspects of collaboration. Processes, outcomes, and collaboration form the core of this study as is evident in Research Question 1.

To include multiple perspectives in Research Question 1, Research Question 2 seeks to advance the current discussion about costume design processes from the perspective of outcomes. In so doing, it helps to illustrate the variety of costume design in Finland during the examined time frame. Instead of drawing from audience studies, responding to this question relies on the researcher's

subjective interpretation and is combined with the reflections provided by the costume designers and choreographers in the interviews conducted for this study. Hence, Research Question 2 is formulated as follows:

> Research Question 2: What is the meaning-making potential
> that the select twenty-first-century costume designs provide
> within contemporary dance productions in Finland?

In the iterative cycles of this study, the 'meaning-making potential' in this research question has been increasingly understood in light of notions about postdramatic performance. Meaning-making potential here thus connects with the transformation and event-ness of costume in the spirit of Lehmann (2006: 61) and Fischer-Lichte (2008: 16–17), highlighting both the processual and interrelational aspects of costume and the experience of costume without fixed signification. Through attentiveness to the detail of transformation that costume provides at different points of a dance production, the meaning-making potential also parallels the agential capacities of costume.

Drawing from the assumed connection between costumes, design process, and collaboration, Research Questions 3 and 4 were formed during the research process. Research Question 3 is derived from the pilot interviews (Appendix 5). To recognize the circumstances under which the profession is conducted, it examines the effects of the artistic environment and collaboration on the costume designer's work. Hence it asks:

> Research Question 3: What kinds of artistic environments
> and collaborative milieus influence costume designers' work
> within contemporary dance productions?

By acknowledging the diverse dimensions of human interrelations that are both integral and critical to the design process together with the extra-artistic challenges in the productions of contemporary dance, Research Question 4 seeks tools to organize better working environments for costume designers:

Research Question 4: Which aspects support costume designers' collaboration and hence the processes of costume design within contemporary dance productions?

Although Research Question 1 presents itself as a broad point of departure, methodologically, such a question supports the process of this study that relies on a gradually evolving approach. Research Question 1 is effective in the early phase of this research and the first research article; yet, implicitly, it is present in all subsequent articles as well. Research Question 2 similarly informs all research articles by framing the area of interest as investigating the processes and productions where costume has an active role: it seeks to demonstrate moments of costume 'action' in the frame of independent dance productions before, during, and beyond the performance. In tandem with enquiries into various types of costumes, it allows this study to address the agential capacities of the mundane, everyday garment type of costume. In contrast, Research Questions 3 and 4 emerge from Research Question 1 and connote a more analytical approach to the central theme of this study, which is collaboration, thus helping to unearth findings related to this theme across the articles.

As this research develops article by article towards a synthesis that aims to cover the key themes of costume outcomes, creative processes, and collaboration, each article has a specific perspective on the whole. By addressing these central themes as indicated in Figure 24, one by one they demonstrate the intrinsic interrelation between the investigated terms, themes, and approaches and thus accumulate knowledge, allowing them to respond to Research Questions 1–4 through their cross-analysis (Section 5.5). To summarize, Article 1 examines collaboration through the lens of a process-based design approach; this extends the discussion to costume outcomes. Thus, its main target is Research Question 1. Overall, this article lays a thematical groundwork and functions as a stepping stone to the following three articles. Article 2 complements Article 1 by examining strategies that highlight costume as an active agent of performance through the lens of costume outcomes; its main target is Research Question 2. This brings to the fore remarks on the creative processes. Influenced by notions about friendship, Article 3 examines the designer's creative process through the lens

of collaboration and, in parallel, provides insights into the costume outcome. Therefore, it responds to Research Questions 4 and 1, in particular. In a similar manner, Article 4 revisits terms from philosophy and social theory to examine the costume designer's creative process through the lens of costume outcomes; in parallel, it engages with aspects of collaboration. Accordingly, Article 4 responds to Research Questions 1 and 3. By sharing the focal aspects with Article 1, it provides a subsequent discussion of the key themes of this study, affirming and extending the early findings. It also shows the potential of these themes for increasing knowledge in future enquiries.
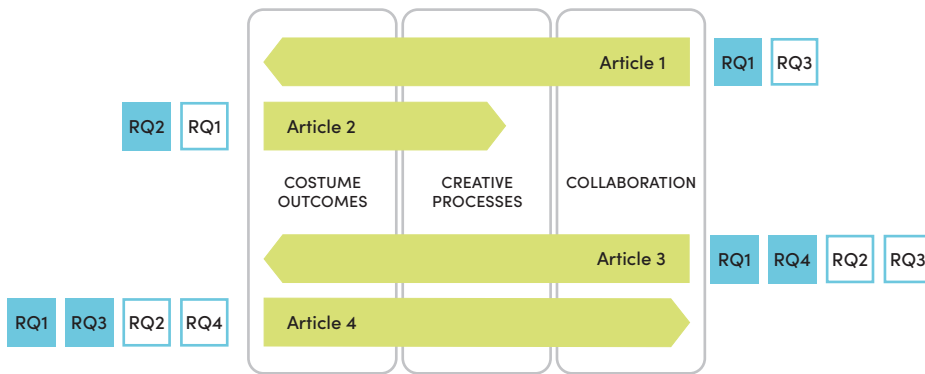
Figure 24. The key themes – costume outcomes, creative processes, and collaboration – appear as the starting points for the research articles. Moreover, each article feeds the research questions (RQ1–4 in the Figure) to differing degrees.

The selection of the academic journals in which the articles were published reflects my desire to engage equally with both the dance and costume communities. Articles 1 and 4 are published in journals dedicated to costume and/or performance design, in *Scene* and *Studies in Costume & Performance*, respectively. Articles 2 and 3 appear in dance journals: in *Nordic Journal of Dance* and *Choreographic Practices*, respectively. In so doing, I have employed publishing as a way for my study to both connect with and analytically gain from the fellow discipline that is dance.

New insights emerge in the thesis from the publication format through peer review and in exchanges with the editors of the journals, especially in dance. Furthermore, such a process reflects the dialogical approach adopted in this thesis: the goal is to pursue each article as an independent, self-sustaining outcome that also advances the overall project.

1.3 Thesis structure

This thesis consists of four research articles and this compilation, structured into six chapters, that synthesize the findings of the individual articles. Full articles are included in the appendices.

Chapter I: Introduction
This first chapter begins by introducing the topic of this study together with the background and motivation for the research. It also presents the research context, aims, questions, and objectives. Last, it introduces the thesis structure.

Chapter 2: Literature review
Chapter 2 positions this study in an academic context by providing a review of previous scholarship relevant to this topic. First, it reviews research on costume within dance. Second, it presents previous enquiries into collaboration in costume and dance as well as in dance and performance practices, including reference to studies in dance and performance dramaturgy.

Chapter 3: Theories and concepts informing the research
The third chapter locates this thesis in the trajectory of research into dance, costume, and collaboration more specifically through elaborating on research that has guided the understanding of the key themes in this study – creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. Furthermore, it introduces the theoretical lenses applied in the articles of this thesis and establishes the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this study.

Chapter 4: Methodology and implementation of the work
The fourth chapter introduces the research design, the main method that is interviewing, triangulation of data and methods, and the implementation of the study. This includes presenting the full research methodology as a combination of methods, materials, and approaches.

Chapter 5: Results
Chapter 5 summarizes the articles and presents their main findings one by one. The cross-analysis section combines and further develops the article findings in light of the four research questions, previous research, and theories informing the work. As part of the discussion of the findings, this chapter also articulates implications for the field.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and discussion
Chapter 6 concludes the main results and proposes the contribution to knowledge presented in this thesis. Ultimately, it evaluates the research process and addresses the limitations of this study. Combined with concluding remarks, it proposes future research.

Literature

review

2
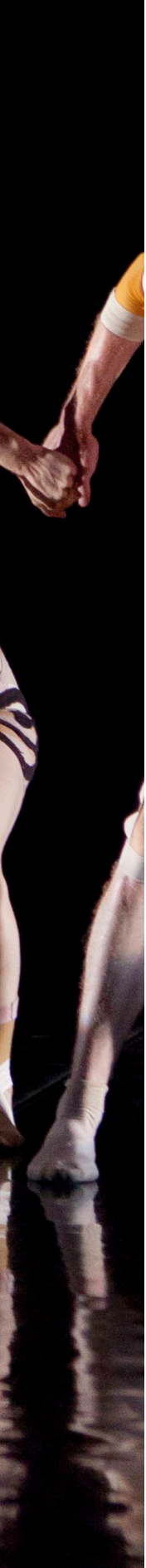
In Western contemporary dance, the perception of performing bodies develops from not only their choreography in space and time but also, equally, from decisions on how the bodies are composed in terms of costume design (Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2016: 4, 5). This is unequivocal in von Rosen's words as she refers to 'dance as an art form that explicitly uses the dancing costume-body as an expressive tool' (2020: 33–34), indicating with the term 'dancing costume-body' the special relationship between body and costume in dance, their mutual capacity to move each other and to morph into one (von Rosen 2020: 48). With such notions as the backdrop, this chapter constructs a scholarly review of previous research in costume in relation to dance. Moreover, it extends to reviewing the selected literature in dance and performance practice in order to show the need for research into the focus of this thesis, which is collaboration.

2.1 Previous research on costume and dance

In the rapidly growing field of costume literature, research into costume and dance as a broader topic is gradually increasing. As Dotlačilová notes, perspectives and methods vary depending on the research data and time period under investigation (2019: 16). For example, in enquiries into costumes in past dance performances, a material culture approach has been applied to highlight how the examination of surviving costumes and their material practices informs the current understanding of past events and the cultural context from which they once arose (Barbieri 2012; Chartrand 2020; Järvinen 2020, 2021). Similarly, in tracing the histories of independent dance companies through the lens of costume, multimodal approaches that combine material culture studies and the analysis of oral records have been proposed (Pantouvaki 2014, 2019). Even a 'bodily empathy' pathway as part of a 'records-centred costume ethics' has been tested (von Rosen 2020: 34, 35). For the benefit of this study, such literature exploring costumes in the archives appears significant as it presents extant frameworks and proposes approaches for the study of dance costume, for example, by critically reviewing the use of various research materials and their methodological combinations.

A pertinent strand in previous research scrutinizes connections between dance costume and fashion. Their interchange and mutual inspiration are investigated from various viewpoints of, among others, fashion scholar Valerie Steele (2014), cultural anthropologist Gabriele Mentges (2019), and Jessica Bugg (2006, 2011) from the perspective of a practitioner-researcher trained in fashion. However, the logical focus of such research is on 'fashionable' innovation or fashion designers working for dance. In contrast, what triggers me in this present thesis is a different way of contextualizing innovation. By this I mean innovation through costume that arises not only from collaboration but also from the designer's continuing exchange with dance – specifically, innovation arising from the artistic environment of choreographer-led productions, as presented in Section 1.1.

In parallel with the research around costume, dance, and fashion, my study also deviates from a second distinct yet dominant strand in the scholarship on

costume and dance: one that draws from somatic practices (Dean 2011, 2014, 2016, 2021) or embodied and phenomenological design practices (Bugg 2013, 2014; Fortin 2020).[16] While thematically these studies share my interest in processes and often discuss collaboration and costume outcomes, their contrasting foci are on the body, movement, and costume-led approaches. As a recent example of such approaches, Bågander's practice-based doctoral thesis *Body movement as material: Designing temporal expressions* (2021) considers the temporality of worn garments in movement, movement as material, and material interaction. In a similar vein to Bugg (2014), Bågander's thesis creates costume-led experiments and refers to dress rather than costume. Insight into agential costumes is thus produced, yet it is in a different collaborative artistic milieu than the one in question in this present thesis. As I argue, such projects in this lineage of scholarship offer the valuable artist-as-researcher position towards the topic under investigation, whereas my project operates from a different position and with a different scope and aim, i.e., researching other people's work, not mine, in the theatrical performance context for costume design. By signalling distinct premises for both the creation and theorization of costume in dance and choreography – its creative processes and collaborative aspects – these lineages indicate a gap in investigations into similar themes in the specificity of costume design within choreographer-led projects.

Focusing on studies that draw closely from the same era and genre as this thesis – each generating a vital understanding of this area from multiple perspectives – I position my research among works by Summerlin (2019), Hammond (2019), and Pantouvaki, Fossheim, and Suurla (2021). In these works, both Summerlin and Hammond analyse their collaborative processes in costume design for contemporary dance: Summerlin, with a focus on the unusual costume material

16. In Dean's design methodology, the sensing body and how it interacts with various costumes and materials are at the core of the design process. Bugg draws from the dancer's embodied experiences with costume and creates 'clothing-centred performance' (2014: 68). Along these lines in a phenomenology-driven research context and costume 'laboratories', Fortin explores materiality, movement, and 'performance wearables' through her own costume designer's body (Fortin 2020).

that is porcelain, and Hammond, with a focus on 'new thinking in defining a creative relationship with choreography' that is an evolving methodology for the design process (Hammond 2019: 243). Collaboration and materiality are investigated also by Pantouvaki, Fossheim, and Suurla. They specifically explore biobased materials and 'thinking *with* materials' from an ecological, new materialist perspective through two contemporary dance productions as case studies (Pantouvaki, Fossheim, and Suurla 2021: 199, original emphasis). Such enquiries stand as examples of the potential embedded in costume practices in twenty-first-century contemporary dance performance and the vast possibilities for their innovative scholarly interrogation.

As this thesis argues, not only the extravagant but also the repeated, representational, and reproduced costumes (Fensham 2014: 43) can be significant in dance performance. This is evident, for example, in Fensham's research, which offers insights into costume in dance through select examples, particularly in the United Kingdom and Australia. It extends from the early twentieth century (Fensham 2011) to the early twenty-first century (Fensham 2014) and contributes to the identification of select, 'repetitive' costume-garment types that have significant repercussions in dance performance and the development of successive costumes over time. Similarly, highlighting the capacity of costume to partake in societal discussions, Collett and Alsop (2017) articulate how three stagings of one dance – i.e., in the 1960s, 1980s, and 2010s – with prominent use of everyday garments as costumes reflect the development of national identity in Australia. Barford, in turn, discusses the ways that costume choices based on the use of mundane garments create meaning through incongruence in choreographies by Pina Bausch (2016: Chapter 6, 108–09). Finally, von Rosen identifies costume habits based on repetition in the body of work of a Swedish independent dance group in the late twentieth century (2020: 35, 2021: 39). Such studies further contribute to the understanding of costume in dance in relation to their cultural and performance context and from the perspective of perception and experience. Additionally, they render visible the importance of everyday garments as costume on one hand, and the role of such costume in shaping history through dance performance on the other hand. In tandem, they propose the need for further research into the capacity of everyday garments as

a costume choice, hence supporting the inclusion of such aspects in this thesis.

Despite the growing body of literature on costume design in contemporary dance, little is written from the perspective of the costume designer's day-to-day work in such productions – i.e., analysis of the designers' accumulated knowledge and ways of navigating creative processes. Bugg's work on mapping previous research into the topic of costume and dance (2020: 354, 2021: 213) and outlining tendencies in costume within Western modern and contemporary theatre dance (2014: 69–71; 2020) emerges among key influences for this thesis. Even though the majority of Bugg's contribution to the field semantically highlights her research interest in dress rather than costume (Bugg 2021: 217; see also Helve 2020: 23, footnote 22), her recent book chapter entitled 'Dressing Dance–Dancing Dress: Lived Experience of Dress and its Agency in the Collaborative Process' (2020), focuses on costume in contemporary dance performance. Here, Bugg has collected a range of voices from dance artists and costume designers through interviewing. Importantly, she identifies themes central to my research: processes, aspects of collaboration, and agency. Therefore, Bugg's research supports this thesis, inviting a more thorough investigation into such fundamental themes.

In dance literature, costume is traditionally discussed as part of dance analysis (e.g., Adshead-Lansdale 1988, 2008; Preston-Dunlop 1998). However, considering the interrelation of body and costume, or in von Rosen's terms, the 'dancing costume-body' (2020: 34), including costume practice in the discussion of dance performance, not unlike Bugg's contribution to *The Routledge Companion to Dance Studies* (2020), can gain significant ground. For example, dance artist Lorraine Smith indicates how her dance practice has benefitted from discovering costume, preceded by the lack of possibility in her studies to 'experience costume and examine the impact it can have on the body, performance and the devising process' (2018: 180). Consequently, as dance and performance scholar Royona Mitra indicates in her critical opening about the spectrum of costuming 'British brownnesses', i.e., British South Asian dance in *Futures of Dance Studies* (Manning, Ross, and Schneider 2020), understanding costume from the context of choreography provides significant implications for dance performance. As this exemplifies, chapters in dance literature introducing costume can be used as multifaceted tools to support and promote the companionship between costume

and dance in performance-making, thus facilitating future collaborations, devising processes of performances, and the recognition of the ways in which costume leaves an imprint on the production. In addition to Mitra (2020) and Bugg (2020), such notable exceptions in dance literature include Fensham's focused enquiry into early twentieth-century costume practices within one group in Carter and Fensham (2011). Additionally, the *Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Ballet* (Farrugia-Kriel and Jensen 2021) analyses the role of costume in contemporary ballet in two chapters, by scholar and costume professional Caroline O'Brien (2021) and dance scholar Tamara Tomić-Vajagić (2021).

As I propose that dance practitioners benefit from their knowledge of costume, I similarly maintain that costume professionals working with dance, notwithstanding their role as researchers or practitioners, gain an advantage from having as much knowledge as possible regarding dance and choreography. Therefore, in addition to reviewing costume-related chapters in dance literature, dance theory itself provides a key area of research for this study. Three perspectives guided my reading in the field, mainly about Euro-American theatre dance theory and practice with a focus on the late twentieth and early twenty-first century. First, I explored approaches in dance-making as presented by Butterworth and Wildschut (2009)[17] as well as discourses on terms and concepts in dance and choreography by Cvejić (2015), Burt (2017), and Järvinen (2017), among others. Second, I observed the plurality of voices in current topics within the field. In particular, I was informed by discussions of dance and politics, ranging from the definitions of political and politics in dance by Lepecki (2006), Klein and Noeth (2011), Brandstetter and Klein (2013), and Hammergren and Foster (2016) to specific issues such as ethnicity, especially of African ancestry (DeFrantz 2002). Third, I searched for sources that would create a dialogue with my understanding of costume practice within contemporary dance: this meaning the shared principles between the two. Such kinship was prominent in Finnish dance artist Kirsi Törmi's practice-based doctoral thesis about her approach to

17. Here, to grasp the perspectives of dance makers, my focus was on Section 1, 'Conceptual and philosophical concerns', and Section 6, 'Relationships with other disciplines'.

processes of collaboration and co-creation as a choreographer (2016). Rather than providing theoretical insight, Törmi's thesis motivated my project as an echo from the dance field to my work in costume: this study shares her empathetic interest in interaction in performance-making, a sustainable practice Törmi describes as a 'profound encounter with another living being' (2016: 100, translation added). As a more direct result of my reading in dance, I adopted certain terms and concepts for the use of my research. These are explained in Section 3.2.

2.2 Previous research on costume designers and collaboration

As highlighted by Bugg (2020: 362), Osmond (2021: 287), and Taylor (2021: 263), among other scholars and reputed practitioners (Bicât 2012: 11–12; Curtis 2016: 43), human interrelations are central to the praxis of costume design. Yet, although the notion of collaboration lingers in most research that engages with costume design practice and processes within dance (e.g., Hammond 2012; Pantouvaki 2019; Man 2020; Rybáková 2020), the notion has not to date been approached as the key driver for research in the field of costume. Even in research where aspects of collaboration are more vividly present, for example, in the investigations by Connolly (2017) or Hammond (2019), the topic remains as a sidebar in the discussion about artistic practices. Contrastingly, the same notion more explicitly forms part of enquiries aiming to examine the convergence between artistic practices in the making of dance performance. This type of research often draws from the author's artistic background, such as in the investigations by Danjoux (2020, from fashion) or Summerlin (2019, from fine arts).

Beyond such academic perspectives, the centrality of collaboration and interpersonal skills is more heavily underlined in textbooks about dance production by educators with a professional design background, for example, by Jeromy Hopgood (2016). In this line of literature, costume designer and pedagogue E. Shura Pollatsek (2021) provides a significant contribution with an enquiry into the collaborative aspects of costume within dance through interviewing. A similar outlook regarding collaboration between a costume designer and a

choreographer in the form of a transcribed interview is provided by theatre scholar Aoife Monks (2015a) in her co-edited scholarly volume *Costume: Readings in Theatre Practice* (Maclaurin and Monks 2015). Monks's contribution, despite its brevity, supports my research through its closely aligned remarks arising from the words of costume designer Lez Brotherston about his collaboration with choreographer Matthew Bourne. These remarks reveal the benefits of a deep-rooted relationship and close exchange between the costume designer and the choreographer. Furthermore, Monks's interview points out the possibilities for an active role of costume in creating the choreography, scenic composition, and non-verbal storytelling, or in Monks's phrasing, even 'reclaiming' and 'recalibrating' a classical choreography (2015a: 99–100).

In a similar vein with Monks yet developed more extensively, interviews conducted by E. Shura Pollatsek (2021) echo the key themes of my study. In discussing the insights from the collaborating costume designers and choreographers, Pollatsek makes use of her professional experience as a costume designer. As a result, she outlines styles of collaboration and approaches to costume that are helpful in understanding the basis for joint creation in different productions. By indicating existing concerns about collaboration, costume, and dance with limited scholarly attention, these various sources tangentially serve this study with the development of the articles. However, in contrast with the focus in my study, little attention in these books is dedicated for independent and small-scale productions. Therefore, these sources also indicate the need for further research into the practice of the designer's work across areas and perspectives of specialization. In addition, further connections remain to be drawn between the closely related contributions of Pollatsek's book, published in the final year of my research process, and this thesis.

Another approach to collaboration, from an educational perspective, is articulated as part of the need for an earlier integration of costume and dance students (Smith 2018; Lindgren 2021a). In this vein, a consequent understanding of aspects of collaboration between the artistic team members is deemed paramount (McLaine and McCabe 2013). A lack of 'awareness of costume' and training in collaborative skills among dancers and choreographers is also expressed by select professionals in the field (Bugg 2020: 360). In extension to

such a discussion, costume practitioner and researcher Madeline Taylor (2021a) yields a more explicit articulation of aspects of collaboration. Coming from a costume technician background, collaboration in her words is 'usually described in generalities like trust or good communication, attributes that do not facilitate an understanding of this predominantly tacit practice' (Taylor 2021a: 263). In connection with Taylor's remark about varying understandings of the term, this study examines the translation of 'trust' and 'good communication' into concrete actions that support joint creation. By creating an understanding of what is specific to collaboration within independent and freelancer productions (for a close example, see Ikonen 2006), this research contributes to the formation of scholarship on collaboration in costume that characterizes the theorization of professional practices within other design disciplines (Osmond 2021: 277).

Contrasting with the current literature in costume studies, in recent research into dance practice the notion of collaboration has been subjected to renewed and increasing interest since the late 1990s (Colin 2016: 109). However, focusing on the costume designer as a collaborative agent within contemporary choreography in any discipline is a new perspective. In this present thesis, the edited volume *Collaboration in Performance Practice: Premises, Workings and Failures* (Colin and Sachsenmeier 2016) significantly contributes to understanding the aspects of collaboration between costume designers and choreographers. Importantly, Colin (2016) shapes a landscape for artistic creation from a UK-based perspective with select examples from Europe during the time frame of this study. Colin's research focus thus provides evidence of sufficiently similar milieus for artistic co-creation to the Finnish examples introduced by my study, thus underscoring the value of this research for wider international communities of practice and research. Such a choice of literature from a large number of sources about collaboration in the theatre prioritizes perspectives relevant to my study of joint creation in the productions of independent contemporary dance. This is based on the notion of this context differing from the milieus for collaboration in institutional, high-budget, or commercial theatres. However, parallels arise from literature in ensemble and collective practices in theatre and performance as described by Britton (2013), Radosavlejić (2013), and Syssoyeva and Proudfit (2013).

Hand in hand with analyses of collaboration in performing arts in the Euro-American context runs the notion of the influence of social and economic climates for the creative work. The systems of employment and work climate within which both designers and choreographers exist also influences the nature of their collaboration. Although to date, the perspective of costume designers has been lacking in this discussion,[18] complexities in arranging freelance work have been identified among their colleagues in dance and performance. From a broader international perspective, Kunst has raised issues related to 'contemporary methods of production' (Kunst 2015: 1), or in other words, how 'flexibility' of work 'results in even more rigid and exploitative working conditions' (2015: 183). This also pertains to the freelance life.[19] Along the same lines, in the context of contemporary choreography and with concrete examples, Ruhsam addresses issues equivalent to those encountered by collaborators in independent dance in Finland, depicting these freelance types of projects as 'spaces of possibility and sites of crisis at the same time' (2016: 86). Colin (2016) contributes to the same topic with further analysis of freelance-based work in past decades. Both Ruhsam and Colin place collaboration at the centre of their analysis. As collaboration is based on the people available, due to the unstable nature of freelance work, artistic teams are not always ideally built. In Finland, the changing artistic teams have been noted as 'extremely challenging', and 'group dynamics' appear among the key skills for dance professionals to master (Trux, Turpeinen, and Sorri 2021, translation added). These strands of discussion, perceived as friction in contemporary dance productions, have influenced how this study views the interrelations between creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. By this, I mean the friction experienced between unstable work conditions and

18. Koiso-Kanttila comments on the costume designer's freelance life in Carl Knif Company's anniversary publication (Pyykönen 2022: 48).

19. In a non-academic anthology, Finnish dance artists align with Kunst (2015) as they give further evidence of how structural demands for 'solutions', newness, 'success', and 'effectiveness' influence their work processes (Torkkel 2018: 261, translation added), i.e., how they feel forced to follow the neo-liberal system and how precarious freelance work in dance is (Lindfors 2018: 284–87, 292–93).

the highly rewarding processes and the possibility this genre offers for inspiring artistic creation.

Aspects of collaboration are also examined in literature pertaining to dramaturgy in contemporary, process-based performance including dance. Such literature has fed my understanding of the interrelations between costume and dance and is applied in Articles 1 and 3. While costume as a dramaturgical device has been introduced in previous research (Osmond 2021: 286), relevant to my study is the dramaturgs' and designers' shared position as the 'other', someone different from – and from an orthodox point of view, supplemental to – the dancers and the choreographing self or collective. Such a position requires techniques to integrate one's creative input into the work of dance. Therefore, notwithstanding the obvious differences between the two practices, studies articulating the role of dance dramaturgs inform here the theorization of costume practice: for example, to better understand the nuances at work when a costume designer joins a dance project, the perspective of a dance dramaturg is relevant, as 'an experiencing subject and collaborator' who seeks 'a complementary relationship' (Hansen 2015: 8) and benefits from the similarly 'adaptable nature' of their professional 'modes of engagement' with the production, as expounded upon by the scholar in dance and devised performance dramaturgy Hansen (2015: 2).

Furthermore, reference to dance dramaturgs solidifies the tasks of the costume designer in many artistic collaborations with flat hierarchies or a co-creative ethos. Due to the physical off-stage position and the costume designer's expertise in carefully watching costume as 'body, garment, action, context' (Lindgren 2021a: 307) for the benefit of the performance, tasks customary to a dramaturg may easily fall on the designer in contemporary dance productions with a trustful artistic milieu for joint creation yet limited resources. Without any intent to challenge the actual trained professionals in dramaturgy, costume designers appear available for wider observation and, in Hansen's words,

> offering descriptions of what she experiences when watching. This input is not given with authority, or even as a representation of what a spectator might experience, but rather is based in a skillful ability to bracket, select, and articulate those aspects of her perception

that can be useful in the context of the choreographers' individual creative processes.

Hansen 2015: 5

As Article 3 notes, such a wide contribution is also identified among designers and explicitly articulated by, for example, the seasoned Australian designer, Stephen Curtis, in his essay '*Designer: Decorator or dramaturg?*' (2016). To comment on such in this thesis is to render visible the less known developments that emerge from mutual and committed collaborations in contemporary dance, behind the scenes, and to further emphasize how designing costumes indeed goes beyond designing the 'surface' (Curtis 2016: 4–5).

Theories and concepts *informing* the research

3

This chapter begins by introducing the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this study. Thereafter, it presents the specific theoretical framings for each article. In these framings, by drawing from dance scholarship, not exclusively studies in costume, I aspire to highlight the interrelations between the two body-centred fields (Bugg 2014: 68, 2020: 353; Hann 2019: 47; von Rosen 2020), costume and dance, to propose the benefits of their entwinement. Further scholarship that informs the theoretical and conceptual frames of this thesis arises from related areas of performing arts. While selected works of performance practice and theory are present in the theoretical frame (Figure 25), other works from scenography and dance/performance dramaturgy ground and enrich the arguments in specific articles. Selected works in philosophy and social sciences complete the theoretical frame towards the end of the research, as indicated in Figure 28. This choice highlights a personal ambition to connect this thesis with broader discursive contexts; the rationale for each theory is explained in Section 3.2 and in the articles (Appendices 1–4). Following the principles of a data-driven thesis, the theoretical frame has been shaped during the process and based on the insights arising from the research materials. This is also visualized throughout this chapter.
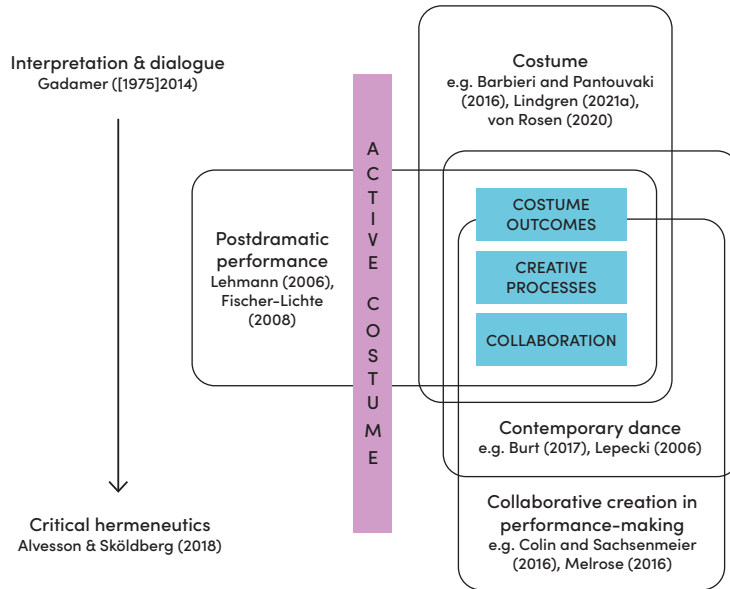
Figure 25. This study addresses its three key themes – costume outcomes, creative processes, and collaboration – with a dialogical-critical approach through the 'active costume' analytical lens at the intersection of studies in costume, contemporary dance, collaborative creation, and postdramatic performance practice.

3.1 Conceptual and theoretical framing

The main drivers for this investigation are interpretation and understanding. This thesis is therefore based on hermeneutics as the 'background theory' and the epistemological frame for approaching the topic (Flick 2007: 21). The dialogical approach arises from Gadamer's hermeneutics ([1975] 2014). Although dialogue is central to all hermeneutics, it is particularly highlighted in Gadamer's 'philosophical hermeneutics' (Vessey 2016: 415). Following Gadamer, this study seeks to expand current understanding through dialogue that takes place between humans and other humans as well as between humans and non-humans, the latter meaning, between the researcher and the research materials. Furthermore, a connection between dialogue, 'community', and 'goodwill' is claimed to be vital

in Gadamer's hermeneutics (Vessey 2016: 415). This I interlink with collaboration and my objective to increase awareness of how artistic partners may support their common undertaking in the making of contemporary dance performance through reciprocity and respect. During the research process, this Gadamerian avenue develops to a critical hermeneutics viewpoint as explained in Section 4.1 (see also Figure 25). Furthermore, deriving from the interview materials, the selection of theories is rooted in approaching costume design as a collaborative practice, a practice understood as 'shared embodied know-how' (Schatzki 2001: 12). Against such a theoretical backdrop, the main frame for investigating the key themes – costume outcomes, creative processes, and collaboration – builds on previous research in costume, contemporary dance, collaborative creation in performance-making, and probes elements of postdramatic performance to enrich the analysis.

Postdramatic performance practice was delineated by Hans-Thies Lehmann in German in 1999 and translated later into English as *Postdramatic Theatre* (Lehmann 2006). I combine Lehmann's historicized theory with select viewpoints from theatre scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte (2008) who similarly emphasizes the shift from understanding (an art object) to experiencing (a performative event). Notwithstanding the critique towards the vagueness and scope of the term postdramatic as summarized in Boyle, Cornish and Woolf (2019), I am drawn to this theory because the congruences between postdramatic performance practice and the practices of dance have already been identified in research on dance (Kukkonen 2014: 11; Hansen 2015: 6). A logical continuation therefore is to discuss the combined relationship between postdramatic performance and dance with costume. In this context, postdramatic is a decided choice over postmodernism as the research frame. Although the two terms share certain key features as Kukkonen indicates (2014: 28), debating postmodernisms internationally and in Finland is a specialized thread in dance research (Kukkonen 2014). The term 'postmodern dance' bears a different meaning in Finland than it does in Anglo-Saxon dance research. Since the 1980s, as discussed by Kukkonen (2014: 35, 157), its definition has been widely contested even where it was first coined, in North America. In Finland, despite its personal influence on dance artists, postmodern dance never gained ground as a genre (Hallikainen and Pentti

2018: 9); it also fails to find congruence as a period term (Kukkonen 2014: 37).

In analysing the development of theatre and performance since the 1960s and 1970s, both Lehmann and Fischer-Lichte provide significant insight into the 'aesthetic logic' (Lehmann 2006: ix) of performances. In essence, they both highlight materiality (i.e., body/corporeality, space/spatiality, sound/tonality), time and temporality, experience, and the performer-spectator-relationship as aspects that form 'a new, singular reality [...] for all participants of the performance' (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 16). Such an approach aligns with how costume in dance performance is understood as an interrelational entity and collaborative practice in this study. With the Gadamerian background, I view the effects of dialogue at work in this: the formation of the prism of a 'new, singular reality' (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 16) through costume and its collaborative process. Select themes from postdramatic performance theory are thus applied for two reasons: first, in relation to the 'active costume' analytical lens and to enrich the investigation into the meaning-making potential of costume (Research Question 2), and second, to prompt insights into the connections between costume, dance, and collaboration. However, postdramatic performance is not applied as a total theory or categorizing tool here, nor to explicate the designer's intention. Similarly, this thesis refrains from proposing the postdramatic frame as a single frame for the perception of costume in these performances. In contrast, it is applied in parallel with understandings from other areas of scholarship, as indicated in Figures 25 and 28.

The key themes that I draw from Lehmann are part of his 'panorama of postdramatic theatre' (2006: 68). This means select points from his 'stylistic traits of postdramatic theatre' or 'the ways it uses theatrical signifiers' and thus 'proposes criteria and categories of description' (2006: 82) together with 'aspects' across the entities text, space, body, time, and media (2006: 145). These include refraining from synthesis and signification (2006: 82, 84) as the central 'traits' supporting his proposal to understand postdramatic theatre differently from dramatic theatre (2006: 85). The whole list of aspects parallels with tendencies connected in this study with what is understood as contemporary dance performance. In particular, the aspects of non-hierarchy, simultaneity, the excess and scarcity of signs, as well as the scenography and visual dramaturgy echo the ways that

costume design may appear in these performances. I attend to the notion of 'not understanding immediately' (Lehmann 2006: 145) as a slogan-like encapsulation of what is at stake in considering costume in postdramatic terms.

My understanding of the interrelationality of costume in performance also aligns with Lehmann's remark about the active role of the spectator in postdramatic theatre.[20] He states:

> The task of the spectators is no longer the neutral reconstruction, the re-creation and patient retracing of the fixed image but rather the mobilization of their own ability to react and experience in order to realize their participation in the process that is offered to them.
> Lehmann 2006: 134–35

Applying Lehmann's work as the backbone for understanding costume and its practices in this thesis is thus intended to render visible the larger contexts to which they belong. By indicating how costume design in contemporary dance 'uses theatrical signifiers' in Lehmann's words (2006: 68), or applying the vernacular of this thesis, the way that expression is created as costume emerges with an active role in performance, I demonstrate the conceptual thought embedded in costume design. This supports my objective to make explicit costume decisions in performance even when they appear visually latent. Moreover, beyond offering 'stylistic traits', the spirit in which both Lehmann and Fischer-Lichte approach performance is decisive. While they discuss the interrelationality between performance and spectators, my intention is to extend this to recognize interrelationality in the process of making such events, this meaning the collaboration between the members of the artistic team. Therefore, when enquiring into costume in this thesis, a guiding principle is that 'we are dealing with an event that involves everybody – albeit to different degrees and in different capacities' (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 18).

20. Active spectatorship, however, is not limited to postdramatic performance but has been equally present in, for example, the late twentieth century US-based postmodern or UK-based new dance, as well as in Finland (e.g., Hallikainen and Pentti 2018). Furthermore, Lepecki discusses spectatorship versus 'audience as witness' in the twenty-first-century dance performance where the more 'active' audience member is the latter (2016: 175).

Analytical perspective: 'active costume'

The terms 'active costume' and 'agential costume' in this thesis are applied as synonyms; I also use their derivatives such as 'costume as an active agent', 'the active role of costume', 'the agential capacities of costume', and 'costume agency'. This approach intersects with recent costume scholarship that addresses the concept of 'costume agency' (Pantouvaki and Příhodová 2021). As a broad umbrella term that highlights costume as 'an active agent for performance-making on stage, screen and beyond' that 'embodies ideas shaped through complex networks of collaboration, creativity and artistic work' (Pantouvaki and McNeil 2021: 1), costume agency has so far invited a range of research across theoretical framings and practical interests. In the *Costume Agency* research project (2018–2021), costume agency was approached as an exploration into 'how costume can be a central part of performance' (Lindgren 2021b: 202).[21] As examples of their research focus, Lindgren describes 'costume-generated performances' and other types of processes where either costume or the costume designer acts as the instigator for the performance (2021b: 201).

However, examining costume agency does not limit itself to one approach but embraces a multitude of scholarly responses.[22] Recent research has proliferated to consider not only costume in performance-making but also its material interplay and 'entanglements' (Barbieri and Crawley 2019; Pantouvaki, Fossheim, and Suurla 2021) and its connections to professionals beyond designers, for example, the costume makers in Taylor (2021a). In this wave of research, new materialist theories have informed studies by a range of scholars. In addition to Barbieri and Crawley (2019) and Pantouvaki, Fossheim, and Suurla (2021), such scholars include Gurnos-Davies (2021), Marshall (2021), von Rosen (2021), and Taylor (2021b). Ethical underpinnings have also gained substantial ground (von Rosen 2020; *Critical Costume 2018 Conference* n.d.; Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2020;

21. The description of this artistic research project can be found on the website https://costumeagency.khio.no; it is also summarized in Pantouvaki and Příhodová (2021: 144).

22. The online video library of the international *Critical Costume 2020 Conference* gives a glimpse into such a spectrum (https://costumeagency.com/critical–costume–2020–conference/).

Pantouvaki, Barbieri, and Isaac 2020). Thus, if the first wave of research into costume agency focused on the agential role of costume in performance often emphasizing costume-led or costume-generated performance, and the assumed second wave focuses on relational and interrelational aspects of costume from various viewpoints, then this latter lineage of research on costume agency also appears as the context for 'active costume'. Reflecting on the developments of the study of costume in 'recent years' prior to 2021, Pantouvaki and McNeil assert that costume 'is now viewed as an area of dynamic social significance and not simply as a passive reflector [...] Nor [...] as being "in service of" performance in a subordinate role, but rather as a central contributor' (2021: 1). This thesis builds on that statement, joining the study of costume agency from the perspective of the interrelations between contemporary costume design and dance performance, and the role of collaboration.

The analytical lens of 'active costume' in this thesis involves the ways that costume in interaction with other performance elements has its own 'voice' and thereby becomes decisive for the whole performance experience (Article 2: 25). It also highlights the active and responsive role of costume throughout the production process. Such analysis of costumes thus provides a focused contribution to the current line of enquiry that challenges what costume in dance performance can 'do' (e.g., Lindgren 2021b; Pantouvaki, Fossheim, and Suurla 2021: 204; von Rosen 2021). In this study, the 'doing' of costume integrally highlights the designer's active role as a 'doer'. 'Active costume' hence spurs alertness in two directions in my reflective interpretation, towards both the costume and its designer. Furthermore, a critical, social theory–oriented undercurrent steers the attention to the pragmatic side of such 'doing', meaning the practical terms and conditions of the designers' work – most prominently, the aspects of collaboration. As stated above, such a research perspective connects this study with the 'practice turn' (Schatzki, Knorr Cetina, von Savigny 2001), a 'turn' that refers to an intensified focus on practices, understood in broad terms as 'arrays of human activity' (Schatzki 2001: 11) across disciplines. Two previous scholarly works pertaining to collaborating costume professionals have already positioned themselves in this 'turn', namely Osmond (2021), on costume fittings, and Taylor (2021a), on costume workshops. Both highlight the value of better

understanding activities in costume practice for the sake of their 'generation, maintenance, and transformation' (Schatzki 2001: 21).

Creative processes

This thesis views creative processes from an open-ended and curious perspective as singular 'ways of doing': personal, interpersonally influenced, and changeable strategies for implementing one's inventive work. Central here are the processes that result in costumes with an active role before, during, or after the performance. However, in practice, creative processes may also result in concepts with less active qualities. Here, the 'active costume' notion has guided the identification of the processes deemed relevant for this study, aiming at variation in their ways of demonstrating the agential capacities of costume. Such processes are investigated as sources to unearth and articulate ways of practice-based 'costume thinking' (Pantouvaki 2020, 2021: 324) – processes of thinking, interpreting, and communicating the designer's work through costume – rather than as evidence of or extensions to any extant design process models.[23] Central to the evolving understanding of creative processes in this thesis is the embedded interplay between individual and interrelational exchange and decision-making: collaboration, logistics, and practicalities that steer and channel the designer's artistry (Taylor 2021a: 267). Such a framing makes it explicit that decisions for costume design are made on both the artistic and extra-artistic grounds, both by the designer and their collaborative group.[24] This aligns with costume designer and scholar Johanna Oksanen-Lyytikäinen's list of aspects, derived from the making of independent collaborative opera productions, that influence the

23. Osmond provides a brief overview to models of creative process in other more established design professions (2021: 280). She also suggests the fitting room 'embodied conversations' as a crucial part of costume designer's creative process (2021: esp. 280–81).

24. Weckman discusses previously identified conditions for the costume designer's work, summarizing them as 'concrete resources and immaterial practices, ideals, and values' (2015: 227–31, translation added) and reflects them against costume designer Liisi Tandefelt's narration (2015: 231–38).

costume designer's creative processes: personalities and temperaments, artistic and personal aims, art form, timetables, and operability of the social organization in the production (2015: 36, 138–39, translation added).

In contemporary dance productions, interrelations and logistics intertwine at the outset of each project. The main frame for the designer's creative process is set when defining the 'place' or 'contributive role' of costume, that is, choosing when and with what kind of a briefing the costume designer factually begins their labour. Further factors that influence the costume designer's creative process in dance performance include the production model (i.e., independent or institutional), team size and structure (i.e., a solo or group work, who choreographs the movement), invited collaborators and related logistics (e.g., who else is invited to work on the project, when and for how long, with full artistic freedom or in the role of a 'supplier', in which venue), and resources for the costume development (namely, time and money).[25] Some of these factors frame the practicalities for the designer and inform their process in a clear-cut manner; some are tacit, indicative, or in flux; and some are significantly co-dependent between the team members and denote collaboration.

This thesis assumes the interconnection between creative processes and collaboration. Therefore, it claims that the two merit being viewed together. Combined with the more clear-cut logistics, these together form the basis for the designer's work that results in the costume outcomes. Costume designer Hammond (2019) argues for the connection between the creative process and collaboration through her creative collaborative process with a choreographer. Hammond notes the influence of a new type of work, the 'scenographic context' of an immersive dance theatre performance (Hammond 2019: 243) to their artistic co-creation and specifically, her agential role through costume that she terms as 'translator' rather than as a softer 'interpreter' (Hammond 2019: 261). A similar entanglement between processes, outcomes, and collaboration is reflected by Connolly (2017) in her investigation into the work of choreographer

25. More detailed lists of such logistics are commonly included in textbooks about costume design in dance; see Hopgood (2016); Pollatsek (2021).

Lea Anderson in the United Kingdom. Connolly's analysis identifies the ways in which collaborative exchange informs the processes of costume and choreography. As she argues, collaboration can be turned into co-creation through circulating ideas, logistics can be integrated into the artistic expression, and the process always influences the outcome. Drawing from such investigations, this study asserts that each creative process that arises from a particular artistic environment, as a combination of the above-mentioned factors, allows the designer a varying amount of expressive freedom. Moreover, each process influences the designer's leeway differently in decision-making and exchange. These aspects of the designer's creative processes are highlighted in the sub-theme 'process-based costume design' (Article 1).

Costume outcomes

A costume outcome is 'a tangible form of creative ideas' (Pantouvaki 2019: 50). It is concrete evidence of dance performance: a felt and lived experience for both performers and spectators, a 'dynamic entity' (Lindgren 2021a: 307) for different stakeholders, and a testimony that informs performance history (Barbieri 2013; Pantouvaki 2013: 110, 2019: 48; von Rosen 2020: 33). In more exact terms, following the postdramatic performance theory, this thesis views costume as a processual combination of 'body, garment, action and context' (Lindgren 2021a: 307), without a 'fixed [...] identity' (Lehmann 2006: 82). Although 'garments' are easily associated with cloth, other fibres and materials can form a 'garment' in costume, ranging from paper, metal, clay, light, haze, to living organisms.[26] Similarly, cloth and fabrics can be tools to create wearable forms beyond recognizable garments. However, the costume outcomes analysed in this research mainly rely on identifiable garments, garment shapes, and soft materials. Notwithstanding such a focused range of examples, the case studies in this thesis manifest multiple ways that costume in performance not only 'embodies histories, states of being, and previously unimagined futures' but

26. For examples, see Pantouvaki (2015, 2018).

also can 'guide movement' and define 'social interaction, individuality, and inner conflict' (Barbieri 2017: xxii). As von Rosen proposes, such costumes are also able to create 'the scenographing body' that helps to 'craft an affective atmosphere', one to be 'felt [...], rather than only seen' (von Rosen 2021: 41).

In alignment with 'the scenographing body' (von Rosen 2021: 41), examining Lindgren's definition in more detail (2021a: 307) prompts the remark that costume is not only what is on the body but also how it is on the body, in the space and action, and in which context. With such an approach to the outcome, costume becomes a partially subjective experience. Moreover, in the postdramatic spirit, costume unfolds as an interrelational event rather than as a definitively interpretable object (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 16–17, 18). In this study, I apply the postdramatic framing together with the analytical lens of 'active costume' to identify variation in the ways that costumes are 'agent[s] for performance-making' (Pantouvaki and McNeil 2021: 1), notwithstanding the scale of their shape or form. This motivates my enquiries into various costume outcomes that have a formative role in the performance experience (Figures 26–27). Such motivation gives rise to two sub-themes that are investigated in the context of the performance: the signature style of a costume designer (in Article 4) and everyday garments as costumes (in Articles 2 and 3). To date, this latter type of costume resides as a sidebar in research into 'agential' costume, and therefore, its potential deserves a more focused articulation. In this study, everyday garments as costume serve as a foundation for the assertion that 'performance turns clothing into costume' (Barbieri 2017: xxi). This enquiry also clarifies the conceptual thought embedded in designing costume outcomes (Pantouvaki 2020) and emphasizes theatre and dance scholar Rachel Fensham's definition of a dance costume as a 'constellation of materials with ideas' (2014: 45; further analysed in Article 2: 15).

Figures 26–27. Two examples of costume as an active and interrelational agent of performance that makes use of everyday garments: in *Mothertongue* (2013, choreography Carl Knif, costume design Erika Turunen), through jointly animating the black box with audio, space, time, and choreography, and in *Whirls* (2011, choreography Alpo Aaltokoski, costume design Marja Uusitalo), through balancing the visual abundance in the preceding material.

Figure 26. Photo Yoshi Omori/Carl Knif Company, in the image (from left)
Jonna Aaltonen and Carl Knif.

Figure 27. Photo Marko Mäkinen, in the image Emmi Väisänen (in the middle).

Collaboration

This thesis approaches collaboration as self-chosen artistic allyships, specifically between costume designers and choreographers (see also Article 3: 68). This differs from other broader definitions of collaboration, such as 'teamwork', 'strategic form[s] of cooperation' and 'complicity', as introduced by Ziemer (2014: 237–39), or 'a managerial strategy' (Murray 2016: 28) as more institutionally prescribed approaches to working together. Such an understanding reflects the Gadamerian orientation to dialogue as collaboration between the partners in conversation in which 'goodwill' and willingness to work with others play a role (Vessey 2016: 415, 418). It aligns not only with Törmi's empathetic approach (2016, introduced in Section 2.2) but also with scenographer Liisa Ikonen's phenomenology-driven doctoral thesis (2006). While both investigate social constructs as members of artistic teams, through notions of dialogue and collaboration, a thematic kinship arises between this study and Ikonen's thesis (2006). She terms her co-creative artistic work as 'dialogic scenography' (see also Article 3: 68, endnote 2). However, at the intersection of costume, dance, collaboration, and postdramatic performance, the need for further theories on rewarding collaboration has developed. The theme of collaboration in my study proceeds from identification (in Article 1) and definition (in Articles 1 and 3) to an examination of aspects that support its dynamic and rewarding role in artistic companionships and consequently create space for the costume designer's agency (in Articles 3 and 4). I use positive psychology that aims at 'the fulfilled individual and the thriving community' (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000: 5) as a central theoretical frame to facilitate my research into this type of collaboration (Figure 28) and the notion of 'artistic affinities' (Melrose 2016: 240) as a basis for collaboration. Specifically, I advance this area of interest in the sub-theme 'collaboration as professional friendship' (Article 3), as explained in the following section. Such a development reflects the ways in which Research Questions 1–4 approach the aspects of collaboration.
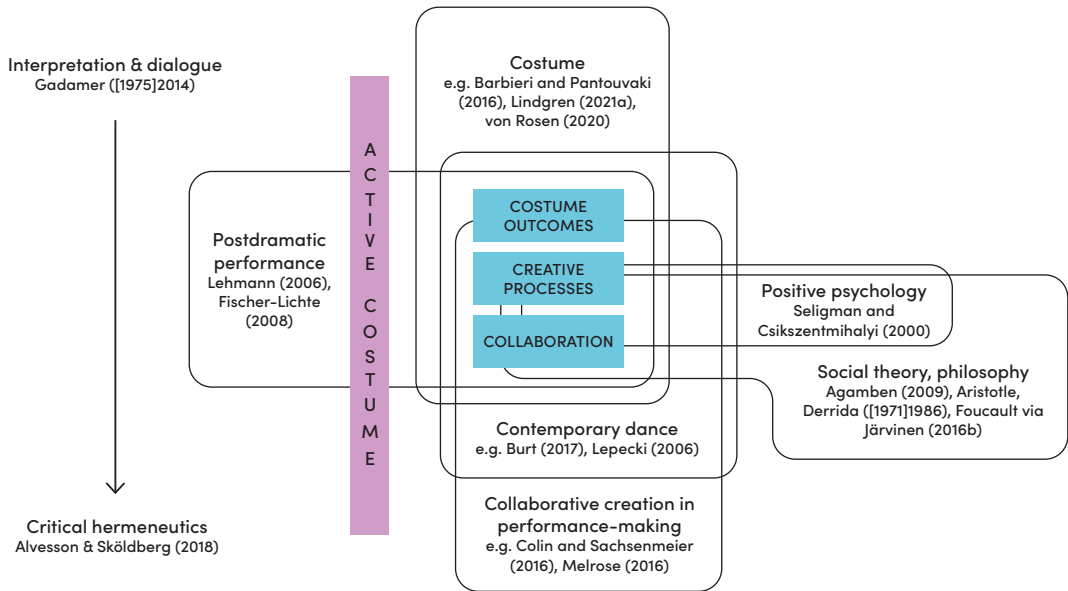
Figure 28. The full theoretical frame for this study has developed alongside the research process; layers of theory ground previous phases of the enquiry, become integral, and add depth to the analysis of the key themes.

3.2 Theoretical frames and key references per article

Developed from the existing understanding of costume outcomes, creative processes, and collaboration, the four articles of this thesis contribute to the whole through their singular theoretical frames for investigation. This supports the aim to investigate the works and processes of each designer on their own terms, arising from the interview materials. As Figure 29 indicates, the amount of theoretical input varies between the articles, and they are positioned differently in the theoretical frame.
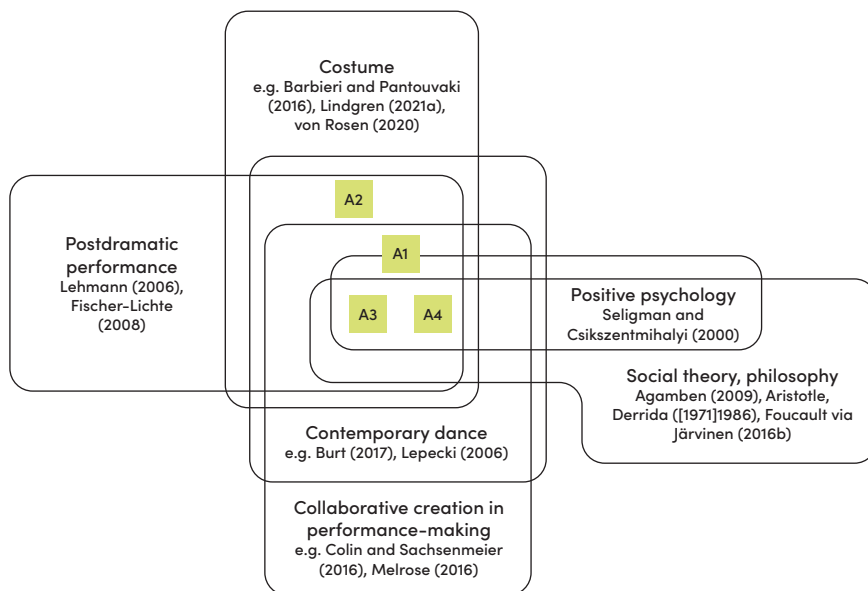
Figure 29. Overlapping rectangles indicate the intensification of the use of theory, developing from the fully data-driven Articles 1 and 2 to Articles 3 and 4 that make use of theoretical lenses from social theory and philosophy.

Drawing from the analysis of the interviews, fully data-driven Article 1 probes the term 'process-based costume design' to make sense of the intense, mutual collaboration in the designer's work. The need to apply theories of co-creation is assumed with reference to dramaturg and scholar Katalin Trencsényi's summary of 'process-led dramaturgical production practices' and her remark that such working methods 'are often the result of a collaborative theatre-making process' (Trencsényi 2015: 163). Further references to collaboration range from practitioners' views to dance performance in an international, US-based textbook (Hopgood 2016) to the making of experimental theatre in Finland by a scenographer (Ikonen 2006), and a specific, research-oriented dancer-designer relationship (Bugg 2014). Such references shape the pathway towards understanding the vast versatility of the term 'collaboration' and provide tentative findings through this article. Article 1 paves the way for later enquiries and is

thus placed at the intersection of costume, contemporary dance, collaborative making, and postdramatic performance.

Due to its focus on costume outcomes, data-driven Article 2 is situated at the intersection of costume, contemporary dance, and postdramatic performance. This enquiry is further placed in a research frame of 'political dance performance', with political here meaning performances that explicitly stage societal flaws: issues of ethnicity, economic welfare and regional policy, as well as climate change. In the discussion of the aesthetic properties of costumes within such performances, Article 2 understands 'aesthetic' in relation to the senses in broad and inclusive terms as presented by Di Benedetto (2010). In the wider scope of this thesis, Di Benedetto's approach aligns with what Fischer-Lichte terms as 'the specific materiality of the performance' (2008: 76). To further emphasize costume as a holistic practice and multisensorial entity where aesthetic choices denote material, intellectual, and collaborative processes, Article 2 refers to Weckman's related work in Finland (2009, 2014, 2015).[27] To highlight the variety and nuances in the use of mundane or everyday garments as costume and the ways that, in Barbieri's words, costume provides 'projected "authenticity"' and 'a reframing in the here-and-now of the performance' (2017: 167), Article 2 presents a combined use of costume and dance literature as an analytical approach. This means that select terms and concepts from Howard (2009) and Norgren (2003), from scenography and costume design, are juxtaposed with counterparts from dance. These are tools for composition (Monni 2015), strategies for performing the everyday (Burt 2006), and disrupting conventional expressions of the everyday (Cooper Albright 1997). In parallel, I draw from the notions of 'real' and 'wrong' bodies by Monks (2015b) who indicates the potential of costume to

27. In later research, Lindgren has reported her practical need to differentiate costume from a view that prioritizes 'aesthetics, i.e., value judgments connecting material, form and techniques' and to articulate it as 'a complex, dynamic entity consisting of four components: body, garment, action and context' (2021a: 307). However, Lindgren's 'complex, dynamic entity' does not need to exclude aesthetics, when 'aesthetics' is viewed from a broader perspective as Weckman does (2015: 14, footnote 8).

simultaneously display a body that is the body of the performance character, the imagined 'other', and a body that assumes the performer's private self.[28]

Benefiting from the process of writing Article 2 and absorbing the findings from Article 1 on collaboration, Article 3 narrows the focus on the costume designer's collaboration as a 'mutually rewarding joint creation' (Article 3: 68). It adds a layer of positive psychology as outlined by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) to the theoretical frame. The elements of this approach help articulate the goal of this study to draw from positive examples of costume outcomes and collaborative processes. They provide evidence for gaining results through promoting 'positive change' in structures, the 'shaping of hopeful organizations', and cultivating sustainable practices in human interrelations (Avital et al. 2006: 519). In Article 3, positive psychology grounds the analysis of artistic partners' support for their joint creation. Such a research frame is based on a review of previous literature and draws from McLaine and McCabe (2013), Pollatsek (2019), and Bugg (2020) on collaboration between costume designers and choreographers, and wider theatre-making practices relevant to this article, namely the ensemble tradition (Britton 2013; Radosavljević 2013), 'collective creation' (Syssoyeva and Proudfit 2013), and their various interpretations in contemporary performance-making (Colin and Sachsenmaier 2016). To analyse a costume designer and a choreographer's artistic allyship and develop theses about 'supportive' collaboration, Article 3 probes Aristotle's views about friendship together with contemporary social theorist Giorgio Agamben's contribution to the same topic (2009) as the theoretical lenses. Central to these sources are the overall appreciation of a 'friend' in the process – in conflict, too – and a benevolent, reciprocal aim between the 'friends' towards a common good. Combining these with performance scholar Susan Melrose's (2016: 240) notion about collaboration as 'artistic affinity' shapes the understanding of collaboration in Article 3, and further in this study, as a respectful professional relationship.

28. Beyond costume studies, Fischer-Lichte provides a similar analysis of 'real' bodies (2008: 34–35).

As a substantial consequence, the analysis of the collaboration between the artistic partners in Article 3 highlights the costume designer's versatile, co-creative role in the making of a dance performance. Having briefly consulted literature on contemporary performance dramaturgy in Article 1, here, to complement the paucity of research into the collaborative role of costume designer in contemporary dance productions, I turn to literature on the collaborative role of dance dramaturgs by Bleeker (2003), Cvejić (2010), Hansen and Callison (2015), and Profeta (2015).[29] Article 3 makes use of such scholarship dating from the early 2000s as a source for providing significant insights into artistic practices, processes, and prerequisites, for co-creators within contemporary dance. However, in terms of costume analysis, Article 3 continues the discussion about everyday garments as costume. To analyse costume that is 'minimal', it refers to Barbieri (2017) while also illustrating in this context the 'physical significance' of costume as defined by Kjellmer (2016: 158). The interlinked analysis of nudity as a costume choice again draws from Monks (2010), together with a reference to Tomić-Vajagić's analysis of 'simple' costumes (2014). Article 3 thus arises from the full intersection of studies in costume, contemporary dance, collaborative creation, postdramatic performance, positive psychology, and social theory and philosophy (Figure 29).

In a similar manner to Article 2, Article 4 applies costume outcomes as the trigger for the analysis (Figure 24 in Section 1.2). However, this article investigates the collaboration between another costume designer and a choreographer, characterized by their recognizable styles and relative independence in joint creation; the approach to costume here is based on highly tailored, sculpted forms and garment creations. To better understand the costume designer's singular contribution to the line of collaborations with the same choreographer, Article 4 combines Melrose's (2007, 2009) and poststructuralist/postmodern

29. To highlight, even the term agency appears central to the development of both fields. Following Hansen (2015: 1), in dance dramaturgy, 'discussion starts with the dramaturg as an agent and then evolves into reflections upon dramaturgical agency. Then it suggests that dramaturgical agency is located both in the possibilities that arise between collaborators and in the dancers' enactment of task–based improvisation systems.'

philosopher Jacques Derrida's ([1971] 1986) pronunciations of a 'signature style'. Expanding upon the current understanding of contemporary artistic alliances in performance-making as presented in Colin and Sachsenmaier (2016), this leads to discussing both the collaborative model in the light of 'co-authoring' (Barbieri 2017: xxii) as well as dance historian Hanna Järvinen's analysis of authorship drawing from Foucault's writing on the author in relation to dance history (2016b), which also calls for the recognition of various authors within a dance performance. In so doing, Article 4 returns to Article 1 in also mentioning the authors of the performance and the role of the costume designer in such dynamics (Article 1: 157). Article 4 is situated at the intersection of costume, contemporary dance, collaborative making, postdramatic performance, positive psychology, and social theory and philosophy.

This chapter has presented the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this thesis. As Figures 25, 28, and 29 have illustrated, in this cyclical, data-driven process, the layers of theory have been built in dialogue with the research frames for the articles and the key concepts. The full theoretical frame applies understanding of costume, contemporary dance, and collaborative creation at its core and is informed by selected themes from postdramatic performance theory. This combination is enriched with positive psychology, philosophy, and social theory as specific viewpoints. Together, such frames entwine with the research methodology, introduced in Chapter 4, and thus pave the way to providing the results concerning interrelations, the assumed agential roles of costume and costume designers within contemporary dance, artistically rewarding design processes, and the experienced challenges in implementing such work.

Research *methodology* and *implementation* of the study

4

This chapter introduces the methodological choices and implementation of this study in four sections. The first section introduces a dialogical approach as the pivotal tool to shape and structure this thesis. It also presents ethical considerations pertaining to this study. The second section focuses on the main method, interviewing. The third section presents the forms of data and methods of analysis, continuing the previous section with the goal of complementing the delineation of the methodological aspects provided in the articles. Finally, the fourth section illustrates how the dialogical approach envelopes the select methodology as it is applied with an article-based thesis format. Figure 30 summarizes the research methodology; the cyclical movement between its components is illustrated in Figure 32 (Section 4.4).

	Aim	Main material	Main method of analysis	Complementary material	Complementary method of analysis
review of the research area	Overview, making sense	literature magazines Finnish Dance Database	charting reviewing light content analysis	Zodiak online archive enquiries from the field	
Article 1	Sub-theme 1 RQ1	interview material/ CD 1	content analysis	performance materials	thick description
Article 2	Sub-theme 2 RQ2	performance materials	content analysis	enquiries from the field interview material/C 1 performance materials	thick description
Article 3	Sub-theme 3 RQ1&4	interview material/ CD 2	content analysis term 'friendship'	interview material/C 2 performance materials theory input	thick description
Article 4	Sub-theme 4 RQ1&3	interview material/ CD 3	content analysis terms 'signature', 'author'	performance materials theory input	thick description
Thesis compilation	Results for RQs 1–4 conclusions	Articles 1–4	cross analysis critical hermeneutics	research materials from the process	

RQ=Research question   Sub-theme 1: process-based costume design
CD=Costume designer   Sub-theme 2: everyday garments as costume
C=Choreographer   Sub-theme 3: collaboration as professional friendship
                         Sub-theme 4: costume designer's signature style

Figure 30. Summary of the research methodology with key aims, materials, and methods. In practice, these elements followed a hermeneutic circle–inspired model for knowledge production as presented in Figures 4 (Section 1.1) and 32 (Section 4.4).

4.1 Research design

As the theoretical framing in Chapter 3 suggests, this study is designed to interpret and critically elaborate upon lived, contemporary experiences. Therefore, the research methodology is based on a Gadamerian, hermeneutic circle–inspired approach, termed here as a 'dialogical approach'.[30] Drawing from the hermeneutic spiral model for building knowledge, the dialogical approach guides the research gradually towards a more profound understanding of the topic (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 116). It acknowledges the role of the pre-existing layers of knowledge and encourages an attentive and iterative move – Gadamerian dialogue and exchange – between research materials and research questions, research methods and theories, and terms and thought patterns.

Dialogical approach

In the dialogical approach, interpretation is deemed to be a tool to produce knowledge both from the designers' accounts and the related performance materials of various types. The iteration in 'basic hermeneutic circles' is based on dialogue between the whole and parts of the research, and pre-understanding, and understanding (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 131; Grondin 2016b). This interpretation directs the investigation into the interrelations between costume designers and the artistic team, i.e., collaboration, as well as the specific understanding of costume, i.e., costume with agential capacities. The dialogical approach guides my application of postdramatic performance theory. Together, they allow investigation of costume as a situated and active entity, costume design as decision-making and exchange, the designer's creative processes as

30. My understanding of Gadamer is based on *Truth and Method* ([1975] 2014) and secondary sources shedding light on Gadamer's work (Grondin 2016a), approach to the hermeneutic circle (Grondin 2016b; Römer 2016: esp. 136–37; Chapter 4 in Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018), and to dialogue (Vessey 2016).

largely interrelational and collaborative endeavours, and collaboration as rooted in sharing and communication.

My dialogical approach follows Alvesson and Sköldberg's delineation of hermeneutic interpretation as they state, '[c]entral hermeneutic features are [...] the dialectics between interpretation as part and whole' and 'the particular outlook of the interpreter (neither dominance or prostration) as well as the special character of the matter interpreted' (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 125). Therefore, I have aimed at a balance between analysis of costume outcome and design processes, sub-themes and the full topic, as well as singular cases and the context from which they emerge. I have pursued clarity and transparency in employing that which is mined from the material, the specificity of that material as a source, my stance towards both the source and the finding, and my use of that finding. Such a process largely resembles the interviewer/interviewee relationship where the characteristics of both parties are recognized and acknowledged as part of the whole (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 38).

From the perspective of the key themes of this research, the dialogical interplay between parts and the whole was also present in the oral materials, i.e., interview recordings and transcripts. In their accounts, the designers shared specific parts of the whole as they rarely spoke of the costume outcomes but intuitively outlined their experiences of the creative process and aspects of collaboration. In extension, costume outcomes as the inevitable result of such a creative process present another part of the whole; it is also the entity that anyone external to the process perceives and that which informs the later history of the performance. While insights into the process significantly extend the understanding of the outcomes, the outcomes form a part of the designer's experience. To pursue the whole that is a synthesized understanding of creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration, this thesis combines the designer's account and my experience of their work as the researcher. These two perspectives provide partial views that build the whole; they are complementary and of equal value.

During this research, the dialogical approach unfolds as a dialogical process that feeds the collection of evidence for the research questions and objectives set for this study. A dialogical process is more likely to come into existence among a small crowd than a mass of agents. This research thus applies a case study

technique as an approach that supports the overall methodology; it reflects the research interest in providing in-depth information about a limited number of individual experiences (Tight 2017). In such an application, the case study approach renders the core of this research more feasible. First, it strengthened my understanding of the validity of single or select cases as sources of relevant information when the research is not only 'in-depth, detailed and particular' but also 'holistic' (Tight 2017: 29). This is possible when the case study is clearly defined (Tight 2017: 29). Second, drawing from the actual term 'case study', it helps to structure the presentation of this thesis as variant 'cases' that arise from the research process, rather than as a comparison between the designers. This means that each article of this thesis is an in-depth study of its target. Although rooted in the overall framing of this thesis, these articles are independently designed to support the enquiry into the discrete characteristics. Due to such particularity, each case study, i.e., article here, under the same topic contributes to the understanding of the whole, aiming at an eventual balance between significant findings due to their 'unusual nature' on one hand, and their recurrence – generalisability – on the other (Tight 2017: 29, 31). Following Tight (2017: 30), my aim has been to implement these case studies with rigour, to root them in a relevant research frame, and to establish their validity and reliability through triangulation. With such grounding, the assimilation of a case study approach in this thesis solidifies my perception of a methodology worth pursuing, i.e., one that is multimodal and designed to allow for flexibility around individual case studies (articles) yet also is cohesive.

Along with an overview of the central research themes, a further critical area of investigation was developed during the process. Arising from the interviews, the conditions for work relating to money, time, and interpersonal relationships pushed their interpretation as not only pivotal components of creative processes, collaboration, and costume outcomes but also as areas that benefit from tools for improvement. According to Alvesson and Sköldberg's model of the accumulation of phases of interpretation in research, such evolving interest denotes a 'triple hermeneutics' interpretation. The three iterative cycles of the interpretation here are the interviewee's interpretation of their experience; my first interpretation of the interview material as the researcher; and my further interpretations of

the same material with an increasing attention to its elements (2018: 218, 331). In Alvesson and Sköldberg's social science-informed words, 'triple hermeneutics' carries a

> shift in focus, so that the balance between what appears self-evident, natural and unproblematic on the one hand, and what can be interpreted as the freezing of social life, irrational and changeable on the other, moves in favour of the second, thus enabling it to become the object of further scrutiny.
>
> Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 218

As is evident in the development of the themes in Articles 1–4, critical hermeneutics both arises from and results in further circles of interpretation. In essence, 'triple' or critical hermeneutics in my study indicates thoroughness in the dialogical, interpretive process. Therefore, if a critical stance is considered as a benefit for this research, the gradual surfacing of a critical hermeneutics approach signals the strength of the dialogical process in the research methodology.

Ethical imperatives

Among the objectives of this study is the bolstering of the creative, collaborative practice of costume designers. Such an objective envelopes a broader ethical imperative that has guided this thesis: it has aimed at discretion, honesty, and respect throughout the project. This has been necessary for the interactions with the people who have volunteered to support my research at various points. One such heterogeneous group of costume designers and dance artists provided insightful complementary data, particularly during the first years (Appendix 7). However, as this data has supported the background research, it remains partially anonymous and may therefore raise questions among those who dedicated their time to the collection. Pursuing results that support the creative, collaborative practice of the costume designers in contemporary dance is thus my attempt to give something back to the field – and show respect for the participants who have facilitated the research in myriad ways (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 89).

The second group of informants presents itself with a clear and unquestionable contribution: the interviewed costume designers. For them, the quest for ethics

is particularly pressing as they have dedicated the most time and effort to this study. In addition to being bound to the interview sessions, Uusitalo, Koiso-Kanttila, and Turunen have been at the service of this study since 2014 by providing clarifications, missing details, additional information, and time for reading extracts of the article manuscripts. Such a relationship comes with 'ethical obligations' for the researcher (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 7). Therefore, following Rubin and Rubin, I have aimed to approach the interviewees as 'partners in the research' whose responses also influence the course of the exchange (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 38). In our dialogues, I have promoted a 'supportive, nonconfrontational, and gentle manner' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 38). However, a significant change in research ethics has occurred, involving a general shift towards providing more open data. This means that when I began this study, the full protection of the informants by restricting the use of data to singular projects was commonplace. During the process, the tendency in research shifted towards making data increasingly more available. Hence, while in my first interview consents I had limited the use of the materials solely to this study and teaching purposes, these consents were renegotiated with the main interviewees to allow for a wider use of the data with their permission. With new consents, a large part of these original materials is in the process of being stored and available for future research in the Theatre Museum Archive in Helsinki.

4.2 Research through interviewing

This thesis assumes that the type of knowledge it seeks resides with people who engage with costume design processes in contemporary dance on a regular basis. Hence, costume designers possess information that is worth pursuing and analysing. As a method of accessing such information, interviewing provides an avenue to gain first-hand insights into the work of costume designers, as also expressed by Weckman (2021a: 141).[31] New knowledge is thus produced from

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31. Costume designers for performing arts are also interviewed by Merz (2017) and Pollatsek (2016), among others.

the ways in which the designers 'perceive their worlds and how they interpret their experiences' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 3). As an indicator of its potency in accessing costume designers' tacit and unarticulated knowledge in regulated and pre-planned dialogues for scholarly development, interviewing connects most of the few dissertations that exist on costume in Finland.[32] In these, Juntunen (2010) conducted six themed interviews with costume designer Maija Pekkanen, and Weckman (2015) seven themed interviews with costume designer Liisi Tandefelt. Ikonen (2018) applied themed oral and literary interviews to collect data from a large group of informants in her investigation into the characters of Sofi Oksanen's novel/play *Purge* through costumes in its stage and film adaptations in Finland. Kalmakurki (2021) in turn collected data in fourteen semi-structured in-depth interviews from which she analysed eight in her thesis on digital character costume design in computer-animated films. Interviews were also applied in Oksanen-Lyytikäinen's multiple case study about costume design in three independent contemporary opera productions in Finland (2015). Similarly, interviewing appears as a central method for collecting data internationally. In *Performance Costume* by Pantouvaki and McNeil (2021), interviewing hovers in the background of several chapters and is also openly credited for its general usefulness (Nadoolman Landis 2021; Stutesman 2021). Notably, in the same book, two authors contribute to the development of this method in costume studies by showing its impact on their research into the history of the costume design profession in Finland (Weckman 2021a) and, as an anthropological study, in Hindi film costume production (Wilkinson 2021). Such work is continued in my thesis as it engages with Weckman's remarks (2015, 2021a) arising from her experience in oral histories in general and with her doctoral thesis project, in particular (Weckman 2015, 2021a: 143).

Given the aim of this study to understand collaboration in artistic co-creation from the perspective of the costume designers, interviewing allows for revisiting and re-assessing past experiences for improvement. Articulating, analysing, and

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32. For the use of interviewing to shape the understanding of costume history in Finland even beyond academic research, see Weckman (2021a: 142).

making available the designer's experiences renders them more recognizable for collaborators, present and future (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 4). Such knowledge also benefits colleagues in the same expert field. Overall, by combining the experiences of several designers and thus viewing the rich entity that is the topic of this study from multiple angles, interviewing appears as a method to shape 'more thoughtful and nuanced conclusions' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 4). With a scant past body of research into costume within contemporary dance, either in Finland or internationally, interviewing as a method definitely 'fill[s] in gaps in formal histories based on written records' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 4).

The choice to engage with a small number of costume designers with considerable expertise in the field as the main informants connects with the epistemo-methodological aim in this study to pursue in-depth insights. As explained in Section 4.1, valuing individual experiences over a generalization of masses as a source of information is also typical for the case study approach. To gain data at the desired depth, I apply a semi-structured interviewing technique informed by a style termed 'responsive interviewing' by Rubin and Rubin (2012), in the tradition of qualitative in-depth interviewing. This means that the interviews begin with a pre-planned set of topics (Appendix 5) that guide but do not restrict the interchange. In such a process, the researcher is supposed to 'gather narratives, descriptions, and interpretations from an array of conversational partners and put them together in a reasoned way [...] that participants would recognize as real' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 7). To do so, I have followed Rubin and Rubin's principles for analysing interviews (2012: 190) and complemented their pattern to summarize the process of interviewing in this study. Such a process includes the following steps: careful planning; engaging with the interviews, recording them, and making notes by hand; transcribing and summarizing the recordings; finding and defining in the transcripts relevant terms, events, examples, and concepts ('coding'); sorting, comparing, and grouping the recurring codes across the interview transcripts; reviewing and re-sorting such groupings; combining the outcomes of such a process for the use of the study; testing; and gathering new materials when necessary.

For the preparation of the interviews and the following analysis of the transcribed oral data, my approach aligns with the 'renewed' views of interviewing

as an interactional and dynamic practice where 'narrativity' also plays a role (Gubrium and Holstein 2012: 27). Such aspects, i.e., narrativity, the relationality of interview material, and subtleties in its acquisition, are previously brought to the context of costume by Weckman (2021a) as she analyses the use of oral histories in and beyond her costume research projects. Understanding such aspects, narrativity and interviews as 'versions of opinion, persons, events, and the world at large' (Gubrium and Holstein 2012: 32), provided me with the certainty to trust in the data – that it is not as straightforward as right or wrong but, in any event, a telling testimony of the interviewee's perspective towards their work. However, acknowledging that interview material can thus be relational, subjective, and even erroneous highlights the necessity for the data collection triangulation and critical hermeneutics approach selected for this study as a means to elaborate on the analysis beyond the first-level interpretation of the narration. In other words, I have aspired to gain more profound insights rooted, but not stubbornly remaining, in the interview materials.

With their delineation of the social and interpersonal aspects of interviewing, Johnson and Rowlands provide a theoretical backbone for analysing the setting of the first interviews; I am, as the researcher in these sessions, both a novice interviewer and a junior designer (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 102; for a similar setting, see also Weckman 2021a: 143). In initiating a 'trusting relationship' for the benefits of the data collection, such a novice role – a person who 'want[s] to learn' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 75) – helped overcome the role of being a mere 'stranger' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 6–7) for the interviewees in our early encounters. Similarly emphasizing the interpersonal aspects of interviewing, trustful relationships and flexibility in particular, Rubin and Rubin's 'responsive interviewing model' (2012: 36) complements my approach based on Johnson and Rowlands' (2012) insights into interviewing. Together, they help grasp the sequential aspects of interviewing as another organic part of the dialogical process. This means that a fruitful interview often involves the 'interviewer's self' (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 99), that the respect for the interviewee's singular preferences is a tool to facilitate the exchange (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 9–10), and that the interviews may significantly differ from and still complement each other in a generative manner.

The importance of interpersonal skills and reflexivity in interviewing was evident as I encountered interviewees possessing varying amounts of background knowledge about their careers as designers.[33] A key lesson was that balancing the missing data in the interview session required a greater interactive effort to support the pre-planned questions; Rubin and Rubin propose the use of 'probes' as 'standard expressions that encourage interviewees to keep on talking on the subject, providing examples and details' (2012: 6, 118). As indicated in retrospect by the recordings, while I lacked knowledge of the designer's career, if not the use of probes, even giving some time or space for the interviewee would have benefitted the discussion. By contrast, interviewing with as much detailed information as possible about the interviewee provides the situation with a certain relaxedness. It also helps one grasp inconsistencies or frictions that could prove useful later in the process. On one hand, being aware of the topic in such a manner may equip the interviewer with a more solid position to respectfully request more information in the form of 'follow-up questions' in the session (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 6). On the other hand, it may also result in neglecting weak signals as a chance to gain more detail from the interviewee, should the interviewer assume they already 'know' the story. Therefore, from a positive perspective, interviewing with limited pre-knowledge may also prompt more detailed narration and urge the interviewee to offer details that might otherwise be omitted, should the interviewer have been more familiar with the particular area or topic. Either way, this reminds one of the basics of interviewing – to tolerate silence and be alive, sensitive, and present in the moment. The skill of listening seems at least as useful as the ability to generate further questions in situ.

In addition to aiming at skill and respect in the interviews, a consideration of ethics has guided the collection of oral materials in broader terms. This has been vital as this research directly arises from the experiences of the selected designers. Providing full anonymity for the main interviewees was never on the

33. Rubin and Rubin provide further discussion about the pros and cons of the interviewee's role as an 'insider' or 'outsider' under the heading 'Crossing Cultural Divides' (2012: 74–77). Further, Kalmakurki (2021: 79–80) and Weckman (2021a: 143, 151) articulate the benefits of conducting interviews with costume designers as costume designers themselves.

agenda. Rather, I offered 'loyalty and protection' in return for the interviewee's time, effort, and willingness to participate in this study. I have concretized this through acts such as switching off the recorder if asked or continued recording of sensitive topics with a promise not to write about those parts (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 38, 85). In my only telephone interview, I sent the typed notes from the interview for the interviewee's approval; this led to a few useful additional remarks. Otherwise, I have not shared the full interview transcripts with the interviewees (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 60). However, when writing the articles, I have always shown the extracts in which I quote them, directly or indirectly, to make sure that these parts correctly present their thinking. Furthermore, I have sent them copies of the published articles that feature their words and experiences (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 85, 86).

At the time of the interviews for this project, each of the selected costume designers worked actively in their profession and with dance projects. Artists who steadily interact with the interview topic are likely to respond differently in interviews compared with those who reflect on their actions in the past, as presumably would juniors envisioning aspects of their future career (see also Weckman 2015: 201). Active designers may regulate their comments if they have a certain reputation they wish to uphold, existing partnerships they wish to secure, or antipathies or setbacks about which they wish to remain silent. Rubin and Rubin term these as 'slants' (2012: 65). In this research, such aspects influencing the interviewees' narration are part of the story, meaning that they are valuable for the content that propels this research. Therefore, emphasis, alteration, and silence equally shape the articulation of the designers' lived experiences (Weckman 2021a: 144). Respectively, in line with Weckman's observations (2021a: 141), such conscious and subconscious acts of narration – in her words, 'explicit and implicit narratives' – further shape the 'image' of these designers for future research (see also Miettunen cited in Weckman 2021a: 146). Their narration is 'true' in the context of how they have recalled and articulated their experiences in these specific sessions (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 7, 19).

As Weckman points out, the focus or category of an interview – such as the life history or production focus – may significantly influence the interviewee's narration (Weckman 2021a: 148). Therefore, addressing experiences of 'designing

for dance' as the first broad category with sub-themes for this study allows space for the interviewee (Appendix 5). The interviews are thematic but non-chronological: the designers could associate one theme or instance to another without a chronological approach. Such an approach also provided time for the focus to develop from one interview to another, thus, gradually shifting the emphasis towards more specific themes in later sessions. In such a vein, the costume designers' experiences of specific artistic processes sparked the theoretical elaboration and analysis of the themes that I deemed to be relevant to this investigation: aspects of collaboration and the relationship between costume processes and outcomes. Following the hermeneutic circle–inspired approach, in the process of interviewing, the gaps and discoveries prompted new questions, sometimes for a different interviewee. For example, the pilot interview structure was built around five main themes, yet the questions varied and were revised depending on my pre-knowledge of each designer, insights arising from the previous interviews, and an evolving understanding of the research focus.

In previous research, further tools to prompt narration have been proposed. One such tool includes using images as stimuli for detailed narration (in the context of costume, Pantouvaki 2014, 112–3, 2019: 53; Weckman 2015: 40, 201, 2021a: 149–51; Kalmakurki 2021: 87). In my research, due to the aim and scope of interviewing active designers about their relatively recent works, I bypassed the consistent use of images or other types of materials to evoke discussion as I determined they were unnecessary. Instead, first, I aspired to let the costume designers speak as freely as possible based on the pre-planned themes and without my interference with images or other materials. Second, in the later interviews, following the gradual development of this study, I aimed for obtaining material about the collaborative aspects rather than, for example, the material or technical details of the costumes. However, one particular interviewee tended to actively refer to visual and other materials, mainly online and in digital format. Accordingly, I interpret this as a self-activated tool to focus on different themes, productions, and collaborations. Furthermore, in retrospect, such wandering to – or behind – her electronic device to search for details of the discussed productions, for example, may indicate a spontaneous means of regulating the interview situation. In Article 3 (p. 77), I depict how the mundane task of

lacing shoes appears as a hiding place for the performer. Similarly, referring to electronic content in the twenty-first century has become a socially accepted way to momentarily withdraw from a situation. As such, this act bears neutral connotations; at most, I interpret it as a subtle sign of possibly organizing the interviewee's thoughts or taking a moment to consider the way in which to progress in the narration. Overall, smooth access to images could have been beneficial for the narration in some interviews. Yet, in all such instances, the lack of access to ad hoc or pre-planned comprehensive visual materials was solved through verbal communication.

The verbal explanations of the costume designers' work processes also provided instances for their personal characteristics as narrators to surface. For example, while Koiso-Kanttila in her spontaneous accounts often drew examples from her most recent projects, both Uusitalo and Turunen seemed to have one or several 'crystallized' memories from the past, to apply Weckman's wording (2021a: 146), i.e., projects that they had already recalled in other contexts and easily revisited in the interview sessions (see also Weckman 2015: 201). For Uusitalo, two of the productions we discussed in the interviews had been or were in the process of being described by her in written format: an essay about the making of *Sahara* (Uusitalo 2005) and a shorter reflection about *Whirls* (Uusitalo 2016b).[34] Comparing the interview materials with these publications shows evident similarities. With more nuanced research skills or deeper knowledge of the productions, specifically *Sahara*, I could have teased out more detail from Uusitalo's accounts during our interviews. Similarly, Turunen initiated themes that she had discussed earlier in interviews for magazines (e.g., Tawast 2006). However, with Turunen in particular, I believe our encounters for the purposes of this research provided her with an opportunity to develop some of these themes to a greater extent. Beyond simple repetition, the recurrence

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34. These were published in a yearbook of theatre and dance in Finland (Korhonen and Tanskanen 2005), also translated into English (Korhonen and Tanskanen 2006), and in a book about the independent Finnish production association for freelance dance, Nomadi Productions, that was active in Finland 1996–2007 (Ahlroos 2016).

here also signals the value of those productions for the designers as they were willing to bring them into our conversations despite the previous articulations. Eventually, a certain amount of replication of themes in the interviews with one interviewee on one hand, or across all interviews on the other hand, indicated that the material was sufficient for the scope of this study.

In Article 3, the analysis of the interviews with Koiso-Kanttila resulted in the decision to complement the designer's narration with that of the choreographer, Carl Knif, in the examined collaboration. This choice does not challenge the material provided by the first interviewee but provides a second viewpoint that offers insights and details possibly omitted in the narration by the first, thus enriching the analysis (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 69). This choice underlines the capacity of two voices to shed light on distinct aspects of one or several themes due to their singular personal and professional viewpoints. Although through the process I experienced similar benefits from various complementary elements, materials, and methods alike, the 'second voice' as a discernible input is a reminder of the value of plurality in research. Therefore, to include a close collaborator's voice through complementary interviews was a particularly efficient tool for enriching the data under examination. Indeed, following the initial aspirations of this thesis to support research into costume with existing research into dance, an even more thorough entwinement of the two could serve holistic findings about collaboration in future studies. Encouraging examples beyond this thesis are already provided by Törmi (2016) and Pantouvaki (2019). They both describe how the inclusion of the close collaborator in the making of dance performance furthers understanding of the topic under investigation. Pantouvaki indicates, from a retrospective viewpoint and as a researcher, the value the research materials gain in such a process (2019: 50, 53–54). According to Törmi (2016: 88, 150), from her practitioner-researcher's embodied and autoethnographic hands-on position, the open and unprejudiced encounter with co-performers proposes a working process that should extend to the artistic team members as well.

4.3 Triangulation of the research materials and methods

Interviews with several people provide multiple perspectives on the investigation and enhance its plurality (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 4). However, to provide the findings with a solid and transparent grounding – as also suggested by Tight (2017: 30), presented in Section 3.1 – I apply triangulation both in the sources of information and the methods of analysis to ensure both quality and diversity of the research (Flick 2007: 43–44). My analysis makes use of three types of data as sources of information: interviews, performances and/or their documentations and related materials, and theoretical input.[35] The following sections introduce these materials together with the research methods for this thesis; these methods relate to the collection and analysis of the data.

The central body of original materials in this study consists of two interviews with Uusitalo (2014, 2016a), three with Koiso-Kanttila (2014, 2017a, b), and three with Turunen (2014, 2017, 2018).[36] Each of these approximately 90-minute interviews forms a rich source for analysis, and at different points in the process, they have provided the researcher with new insights. Such insights include direct interconnections between the series of recollections and an added amount of detail about productions, collaborations, and even moments from their life histories. Layers of narration also peeled away with time in a more indirect manner. This highlights the value of revisiting both transcripts and recordings of the interviews at various points during the research as a tool to ensure 'thoroughness' in the analysis (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 62). For example, numerous

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35. Within a similar setting about dance costume, Pantouvaki has applied a 'multimodal' research orientation – multimodal meaning 'a way of characterising communicative situations (considered very broadly) which rely upon combinations of different "forms" of communication to be effective' (Bateman et al 2017: 7). She proposes that multimodal research 'can be translated for the field of costume and be revisited through images, objects, and language (oral and written records) when these sources are approached as "communicative resources" and examined in an integrated way for the study of costume' (Pantouvaki 2019: 42).

36. These were enriched with background information and details (Uusitalo 2017a; Turunen 2021a, b) and integral interviews with selected dance artists, Lindfors (2017) and Knif (2021a, b); see Appendix 6.

micro pauses that passed unnoticed in the interview situations appeared telling in the recordings. Grasping implicit meaning in one interviewee's deceptively direct communication required active yet rewarding work between materials and the researcher's evolving knowledge about the interviewee and the topic. In the process, I also collected data in alternative interview settings. For practical reasons, I conducted the interview with Lindfors (2017) via telephone. Due to the global pandemic from March 2020 onwards, I used video calls to continue the semi-structured interviews with contributors such as Carl Knif (2020a, b) and Erika Turunen (2021a, b). Even if these types of exchanges are often described via their hindrances, such as a weaker 'conversational mode' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 177), the materials collected were valuable for the data in this study.

A second set of interviews pertains to integral communications with costume designers and dance artists (Appendix 7). These are grouped with e-mail enquiries (Appendix 8) and entitled 'enquiries from the field' (Figures 4–5, 32). When pertaining to materials provided by dance artists, the aim of collecting such data was congruent with using previous research in dance, described in Section 2.1: to remain alert to perspectives in and from this fellow discipline.

In addition to interviews and enquiries from the field, a second significant form of data for this research consists of what is termed here as performance materials. This means various existing materials around the analysed designers' work in general and also from select performances. Investigating costume in performance and creative processes within a particular collaborative frame, each article combines the content analysis of the designer's narration with the thick description of the costume based on my perception of diverse formats of materials. These range from videos, press and stage photographs, and reviews to other written descriptions, such as the choreographer's or artistic team's narration in, for example, programmes and webpages, exhibited costumes, and in some cases, costume sketches, mood boards, or snapshots from the design process by the costume designer (Figure 30). As the choices for the analysed productions largely arose from the designer's narration and were integrally focusing on various aspects of collaboration, I deemed it appropriate to accept variation in the selection of materials. As an advantage when compared with a predetermined and stable selection of materials for each costume analysis, this

variation allows for an evaluation of the influence of background material on the description of the costume. Complete lists of materials used in this study are presented in Appendix 9.

A personal experience of the costumes in performance as a spectator informs my analysis primarily in Articles 3 and 4, and the value of this experience is explained in Article 4 (p. 28). However, the main medium used to access the productions is their video documentations. Video documentations provide the means to take notes and analyse while watching, i.e., to rewind, pause, and compare. Therefore, despite the difficulty of video to transmit subtle details of costume, such as feel or sound, and a general loss of 'dimensions and dynamics' in video-recorded events (McKinney and Iball 2011: 118), they serve as a practical tool for investigating costume within performance. For the purposes of this study, I also suggest that costume sustains such mediatedness in the 'distorted and cropped versions of the past live performance' (von Rosen 2021: 33).

In an even more exhaustive manner than videos, still images as research material have served this study at various points. Still images were central in the initial investigation to familiarize me with the costume choices and the respective decision-makers, costume designers, or others (Article 2: 18) in Finnish dance productions that premiered between 2000–2015. Out of this vast, uncurated group of images, visually referred to in Section 1.2, a select number continued as sources of information for the case studies presented in the articles of this thesis. Further on, once published as part of this study, the selected images become visual depictions of the productions for the reader. Yet, one single image inevitably provides a partial and limited view of the performance and its costumes (Helve 2020: 37; Pantouvaki 2014: 112–13). Therefore, this study engages with a multiplicity of conjoined sources and a thorough verbalization, that is, multimodality. Through various leads and their simultaneity in understanding costume and its 'aesthetic logic' (Lehmann 2006: ix) in performance, even the postdramatic approach is at work. Furthermore, to present costume through multiple rather than single images, Article 4 features two images of one costume design by Turunen in two different stagings of the same production, *Wavelengths* in 2000 and 2004, thus documenting the early life of these costumes in a repertoire choreography.[37] Furthermore, Article 4 and this compilation provide images

of Saarinen's *Georgia* in 2003 (Figure 23) and 2007, and Article 4 discusses the series of images available for *Vox Balaenae* (2011, Figure 31). More images are also featured in this compilation from the productions *Borrowed Light*, *Noir?*, *Red*, *Sahara*, *The Earth Song*, *VORTEX*, and *Whirls*.

37. Such image-informed tracing of costume life cycles in dance performance in Finland appears as a nearly untouched research area. However, the time is opportune for such projects pertaining to recent history as the designers, choreographers, and dancers are still able to personally provide materials and narration.

Fig. 31

Figure 31. Turunen's costume for *Vox Balaenae* (2011, choreography Tero Saarinen) was developed in three main iterations to provide the desired expression (Article 4). The two-piece suit pictured here was deemed too literal for the performance (Turunen 2014). Photo Sami Kulju/Tero Saarinen Company, in the image Tero Saarinen.

In dance productions, images are produced at different points of the process. The first promotional images, pre-premiere stage photographs, and photographs from each performance differ from each other (Kukkonen 2014: 18). The first such stage photographs taken before the premiere sometimes show unfinished costumes. More often, promotional and pre-premiere photographs are produced for marketing and publicity rather than for an accurate archiving of the performance (McKinney and Iball 2011: 117). In essence, performance images are interpretations of the performance by select members of the artistic team who brief the photographer on their task, documenting the performance with their singular artistic touch, and respectively, interpretations by that photographer (Helavuori et al 1997: 7–8; Helve 2020: 37–38). Choreographer Carl Knif – Koiso-Kanttila's frequent collaborator – verbalizes his ideal example of this, depicting a trusted photographer's contribution to the company's 'visual language' through how it 'crystallises and gains new dimensions in the images' (Knif cited in Carl Knif Company 2022). Regarding the promotional photos, Knif explains his method of consciously applying them as a central tool to communicate 'all the knowledge' of the new work to colleagues and audiences alike, at an early stage of the artistic process (Knif cited in Carl Knif Company 2022). In such instances, both the promotional and stage photographs reflect the intentions of the artistic team or its select members.

As the articles of this thesis further indicate, a costume may change from press images to performance, and even during the performance life cycle (Article 4: 44; see also Helve 2020: 33). In this research, I acknowledge such histories of each photograph and deem all images to be intrinsically profitable in transmitting the atmosphere and development of the performance. Images as research material in this study are thus understood as valuable information about the processual aspects inherent in the design practice (Figure 31). In other words, I

consider photographs to be representative of a temporary state at the particular moment when the photograph was taken by a particular photographer, rather than as exact evidence of the performance or its costumes. This approach to information conveyed through images is possible as this study does not engage with direct semiotic analysis of costume.

The process of viewing the photographs from the studied productions has revealed the sparsity and fragmentation of still images of past performances in early twenty-first century Finland.[38] Multiple images of one performance or one costume are usually available only in the archives of the dance companies, through a series of images assumed to document the production at several points (Pantouvaki 2019: 51).[39] Factually, this is not always the case. Even the archives of dance companies seem quite narrow in their focus as to the images that are readily available; more materials exist scattered in multiple locations. Similarly, the costume designers themselves seem to maintain limited archives of their work. Therefore, access to several images documenting the life cycle of one costume are currently hard to obtain in Finland. However, dedicated archiving or other types of documenting could ensure the survival of the images, along with other materials related to these performances.[40]

The principles of thematic content analysis guide this study as its main method for analysis. Thematic content analysis provides a disciplined way to discern and group repeating themes in the research material (Boyatzis 1998). Hence,

38. Choreographers and dance companies archive a selected number of images. Photographers themselves usually save an even more limited number, if any of the photographs (Koivisto 2022); snapshots from processes are casually taken and saved by artistic team members and may be easily lost. For example, Uusitalo referred to the theft of her tablet and the loss of unsaved images together with the device (Uusitalo 2022).

39. Pantouvaki has reported on her task of organizing a dance company's archive in retrospect (2019). Based on this, I expect similar conditions of various materials with several other companies internationally. For independent dance companies, the lack of archiving is a matter of funding.

40. Koiso-Kanttila's work gained visibility in the Carl Knif Company's 10th anniversary exhibition at Dance House Helsinki, 3–7 May 2022, and in the related publication (Pyykönen 2022). Furthermore, this thesis has promoted the donation of the photographs discovered during this process for the Theatre Museum Archive (Koivisto 2022).

the same method applies to analysing the oral and transcribed material from the semi-structured interview sessions with the designers as well as the visual, audio-visual, and written materials. Although strict procedures for qualitative content analysis exist,[41] my approach to the method is informed by the dialogical process and appears as a less rigid one. After the initial unintentional use of the method, I then put it into practice with an analytical aim when identifying repeating themes from the first rounds of interviews (Hartl 2014; Koiso-Kanttila 2014; Relander 2014; Turunen 2014; Uusitalo 2014; see also Helve 2015a). Second, when working with the recorded and transcribed oral material for the analyses leading towards each article, I applied a second 'circle' of content analysis of each interview, in the context of each case study. Third, thematic content analysis remained crucial in approaching costume designs via video documentations and other performance materials.

As part of the examination of the various types of materials, I also apply thick description as a tool to transform the data to a more stable and accessible format for content analysis (Gaskell 2006: 39; Article 3: 150). Thick description is a term derived from the social sciences and in particular, cultural anthropology. It was coined by Gilbert Ryle and developed by Clifford Geertz as a differentiation from 'thin description', which is a description of only the surface level. Thick description aims to provide the contextual layers for any simple everyday act to gain deeper understanding of the 'whole enterprise', to understand its meaning (Geertz 1973: 7; Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 161). Drawing from Ryle, Geertz illustrates thick description with an example of how it recognizes the 'socially established code' that enables the reading of the difference between a twitch of eyelids, a wink, and a parody of a wink (Geertz 1973: 6). 'Thick description' in a more general sense thus aims to provide rich and detailed – 'extraordinarily "thick"' (Geertz 1973: 9) – narration as the basis of the analysis. In this study, the analyses of the selected costumes are based on their thick description; glimpses of such descriptions appear in the articles. In Articles 2 and 3, this

41. For such procedures, see Krippendorff (2013) or Weckman (2021a: 147–48) for a 'narrative structure analysis' as an application of this within costume research.

technique extends to the description of the performance documentations as vital for understanding the costumes.

4.4 Research process

The following sections present how the dialogical approach was set in motion, developing the research in iterative cycles towards the articles as both self-sustaining whole elements and central formative parts of this thesis.

Between the pre-knowledge and pilot interviews

In the dialogical process, the research begins with making sense of the research area in a dialogue between pre-knowledge and extant visual and written materials (Figure 32). In addition to the literature in the field (Article 1: 151) and previous research (Section 2.1), aligned contextualizing reading includes reviewing Finnish contemporary dance as represented in magazines *Tanssi* 2000–2011, *Teatteri&Tanssi+Sirkus* 2012–2015, and *Finnish Dance in Focus* 2000–2015. This review, i.e., the absorption of large quantities of materials to establish a perspective for the research topic, engages with images and written accounts presented in these sources by various stakeholders, including dance artists and companies as well as related practitioners, researchers, journalists, and critics. It also draws from private and/or open Internet archives by dance artists, companies, production centres, and regional centres for dance, together with statistics and production information available through Tanka – Finnish Dance Database.[42] In a comparison between such diffuse materials (Järvinen 2018: 210–11), this review hinted at a narrative where some artists, methods, or practices were better represented than others. Although this did not develop into a research

42. Sources that remained relevant in writing the research are included in the article references: in addition to Tanka – Finnish Dance Database, materials have been drawn from the archives of the Alpo Aaltokoski Company, the Carl Knif Company, the Tero Saarinen Company, the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, as well as Zodiak – Center for New Dance.

theme, in mapping the field, such an observation suggested alertness towards patterns of celebration and omission and a pondering of which parts of such narrative might relate to costume design and why.
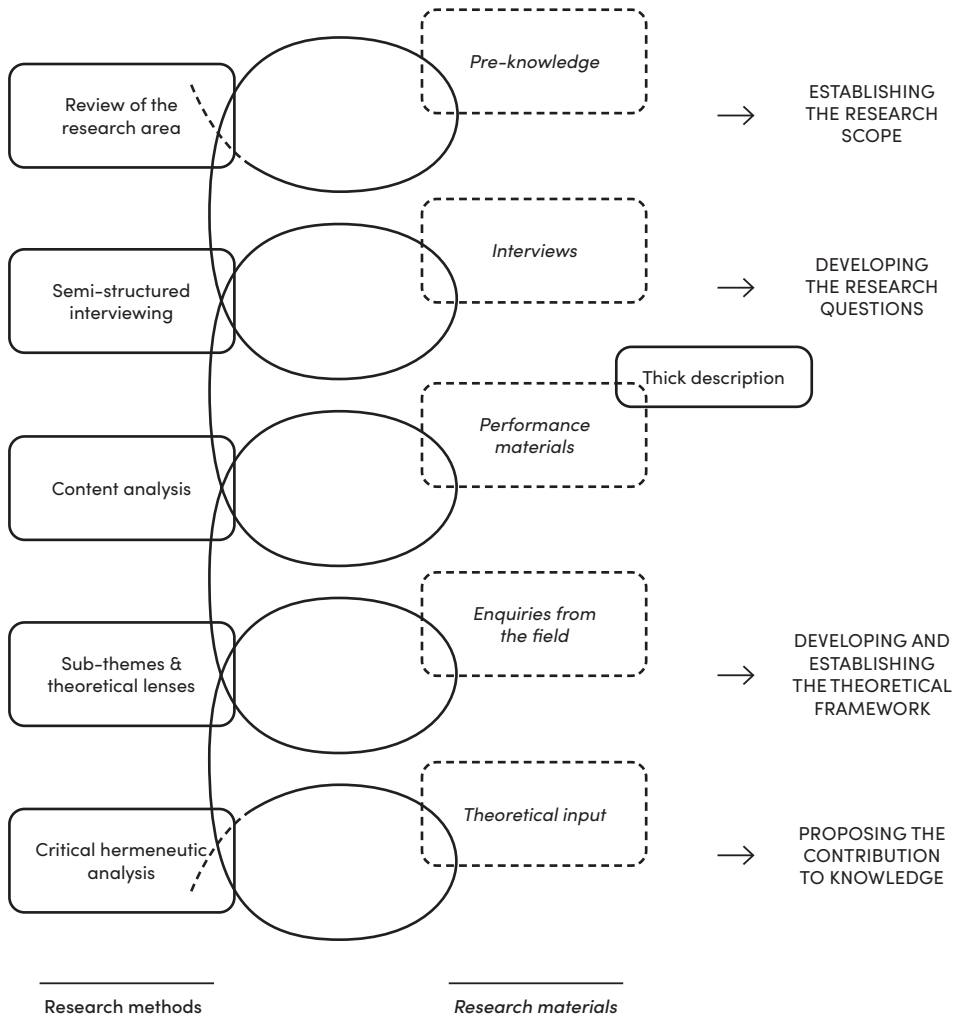
Figure 32. A dialogical approach guides the process as a cyclical movement between research components, here, between the research methods and materials, through the phases of research.

The initial dialogue between my pre-knowledge and the research field resulted in confirming the pilot interviewees and other interviewees and shaping the first set of interview themes and questions (Figures 4–5; Appendix 5). These were accumulated in the body of the original interview material that I gathered and analysed in 2014–2021.

Between the pilot interviews and establishing the research direction

The first pilot interviews in 2014 were with costume designers Monika Hartl and Taina Relander. Hartl arose from my review of the research area as an emerging, prolific designer within contemporary choreography from 2007 onwards.[43] Relander, on the other hand, appeared among the few credited costume designers within dance performance already in the late 1980s who is still active in the 2000s. Specifically, I became aware of her contribution through the pioneering artist-led production centre in Finland, Zodiak – Center for New Dance.[44] The selection of these designers served the purpose of gaining insights from two distinct voices describing their views, approaches, and experiences in the context of Finnish contemporary dance productions in the 2000s. Furthermore, conducting these interviews helped establish five main topics for the entire pilot interview series (Appendix 5). Although questions pertaining to each topic were modified or revised from one interview to another according to the evolving areas of interest and my previous knowledge of each designer (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 10), five interviews were planned in order to follow this basic pattern of five topics. In

43. The main data here is the list of dance productions at Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Helsinki, 2000–2015, with updated information about costume designers, held at the author's private archive (Helve 2016).

44. To understand the artistic philosophy of Zodiak – Center for New Dance and its value for Finnish independent dance since 1986, see Ojala and Takala (2007); Kukkonen (2014, esp. Chapter 3); Moisio (2022: 35–36); Article 2: 16; Zodiak – Center for New Dance (2022); to contextualise the early years of Zodiak, see artists' essays by Pentti, Turunen, Monni, Tudeer, Pasanen-Willberg, Lahdenperä, Tuovinen, and Kekäläinen in Hallikainen and Pentti (2018).

this process, I also allowed the omission and addition of questions depending on the interview situation.

With the aim of gaining knowledge from each of the costume designers, the first topic for the questions addressed their background and current work within dance. These questions were designed to facilitate a smooth opening for the interview and to prompt a lengthy account from the interviewee to directly indicate potential themes for my follow-up questions. Hence the pilot interviews began with the following pair of questions: What was your first costume design work for contemporary dance? How did your work with dance develop from that? Subsequently, the second group of questions was designed to learn about the costume designers' experiences and approach to design processes. These questions were largely customized based on the review of the research area, the background study of each costume designer, and their existing partnerships. To continue, the third topic was targeted towards contextualizing views about various 'styles' and approaches to costume, or means of creating costume expression and the role of the designer in doing so. In this set of questions, my verbalization of the question tended to differ greatly from the initial wording in the list of research questions, thus implying the reflexivity in interviews understood as 'conversational partnerships' (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 7). The fourth topic in the pilot interviews reflected my general interest in aspects of costume design within dance that I considered insufficiently covered in current scholarship. These questions were then aimed at mapping the relationship between costume and politics in performance – the ways that costume may express politics or be a political practice itself – and thereby support a presentation under the conference title *Dress and Politics* (Helve 2014). This also included questions related to the use of nudity as a costume choice. The fifth and final topic arose in the middle stage of the pilot interviews as a tool to both prompt narration about the potential of costume design within contemporary dance and provide further space for the designers to verbalize their artistic practice and visions for the future. Some of the retrospective questions were specifically designed for Uusitalo and Turunen to gain from their reflection on their long careers. Therefore, the topic was the designer's personal development and outlook on future practices.

Arising from the first, second, and third topics for the interviews, both Hartl and Relander provided central leads for the subsequent interviews and development of the research themes. By providing examples of their creative processes and specific co-creative relationships with choreographers, they described a general collaborative ethos in their work within contemporary dance productions. In my interpretation, this occurred in a frank and free-spirited manner. However, at the time of these interviews, both Hartl and Relander had limited activity with contemporary dance productions. In contrast, the following interviews with costume designers Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, Marja Uusitalo, and Erika Turunen confirmed them as designers with a steady, continuing practice in this specific genre. Therefore, the analysis of data from these five interviews with Hartl, Relander, Koiso-Kanttila, Uusitalo, and Turunen, and consideration of the selection criteria for the main informants of this study, solidified the latter three as relevant informants for further rounds of interviews. Most decisive were their continuing careers and expertise in dance performance, wide perspective on the field, and mutual variation in design approaches.

Altogether, the combination of the five first encounters provided this study with its key themes: the centrality of the design process; collaboration with choreographers, other artistic team members, and costume makers; and aspects of the costume designer's everyday reality within productions of contemporary dance in early twenty-first-century Finland. Furthermore, the analysis of the pilot interview sessions led me to discuss Marja Uusitalo's work in the first article. This was due to Uusitalo's vivid narration about themes that, for a researcher, felt incomplete after the first interview session, thus directly generating a second interview to elaborate on thoughts and topics related to her characteristic approach to design and collaboration. In particular, I was drawn to processes she had described with the greatest enthusiasm. Such motivation was accompanied by the fact that, out of the select designers, Uusitalo's extensive body of work was the least familiar to me. To continue the research, I felt obliged to close such a gap. Consequently, the selection of materials for the first article helped to unearth terms and themes that steered this study further: the insights that derived from our exchange signalled points of divergence between the designers' approaches and thus inspired new questions for the subsequent interviews. Later

in the process, in the writing of a cohesive thesis and with the evolving critical interest (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2018: 218), the early synthesis also paved the way for including complementary views and arguments in the remaining articles.

Between oral materials and key productions: merging the main research materials

Following the open-ended pathway of the dialogical approach, the interviews with Uusitalo, Turunen, and Koiso-Kanttila led to productions for further investigation. In their narration, each designer referred to certain collaborations with more intensity. Such indications served as organic points for developing the dialogue in directions that seemed meaningful for the interviewee. Out of the productions that arose in this manner, I selected examples to best support the overall development of the argumentation. Pertinent productions would offer insights into a specific mode of collaboration and include costume concepts of relevance. They should not only serve to clarify and reflect on my notion of 'active costume' but also highlight variation in its scope. In other words, each selected production is viewed as integral to the development of the research theme of the individual case study. Such a choice put into effect the dialogue between the whole and the parts of this work by moderating the balance between the designer's experience, my researcher's view, and the selection of suitable case studies for the thesis as a whole.

In this vein, Articles 1, 3, and 4 develop a characteristic theme arising from the interviews with each designer, further illustrated with one or more accompanying productions. In contrast, Article 2 forms an exception to this logic: it arises from the findings of Article 1 and reverses its process. It does so by investigating how a costume in performance guides a researcher to deduce its design strategy. Here, I chose to complement the array of productions proposed by the commentary of the key designers. The pursuit for Article 2 was therefore to employ costume designs that I find emblematic of the research period, 2000–2015, beyond approaches covered by the work of Uusitalo, Turunen, and Koiso-Kanttila. In this specific article, the primary source is the production, not the person. In conclusion, the four articles of this thesis engage with fifteen productions.

Seven of them are analysed in detail: *Sahara*, *Being is Everything*, and *Whirls* in Article 1; *AmazinGRace*, *Noir?*, and *The Earth Song* in Article 2; and *Red* in Article 3. In Article 4, the analysis of several productions was formative to the argumentation of Turunen's design style yet, out of her vast professional work, only *Wavelengths*, *HUNT*, *Georgia*, *Borrowed Light*, *Vox Balaenae*, *VORTEX*, *Kullervo*, and *Third Practice* are mentioned in the article as poignant examples. The full list of productions mentioned in this thesis, 47 in total, appears in Appendix 10. Out of the total number of first premieres in Finland per year, this is a fraction of the productions.[45]

Between lenses for prompting insight and contribution to knowledge

Through the move between pre-knowledge and accumulating understanding of the key themes in this study on one hand and the overarching 'whole' of the project on the other, the cycles of elaboration have brought to the fore related terms and concepts from previous scholarship. In Articles 2, 3, and 4, I apply such terms and concepts as research tools to support the investigation, as explained in Section 3.2. In brief, in Article 2 this means merging and expanding on costume scholar Monks' notions on nudity (2010) and 'right' and 'wrong' bodies (2015b) in dialogue with dance scholars, namely with Monni's remarks about compositional tools (2015), Burt's discussion of performing the everyday (2006), and Cooper Albright's views about disrupting conventional expressions of the everyday (1997). The role of 'costume aesthetics' is also discussed with reference to previous research (e.g., Di Benedetto 2010; Weckman 2009, 2014, 2015). In Article 3, informed by a positive psychology perspective as outlined by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000), I build on Melrose's 'artistic affinities' (2016: 240) and elaborate on the seminal Aristotelian concepts of 'friendship'

45. The yearly average between 2000 and 2015 was 181 first premieres in all types of professional dance in Finland. The range was between 117 first premieres in 2001 and 223 in 2011 (Theatre Info Finland n.d.).

and 'friend' (Aristotle n.d.; Agamben 2009), towards a conceptualization of elements of 'professional friendship', as coined in this article. In Article 4, I draw from theories of signature (Derrida [1971] 1986; Melrose 2007, 2009) and the author/co-author discussion in dance (Foucault via Järvinen 2016b) and in costume (Barbieri 2017). The overall aim of such theory lenses was to steer the articles and trigger analysis beyond the first or second rounds of interpretation of the interviewees' commentary and other materials. Methodologically, it denotes development from data-driven, investigatory Articles 1 and 2 towards theory-informed Articles 3 and 4.

The confirmation of the theory lenses for the articles that also concluded the formation of the theoretical framework for this study ends the phase focusing on the analysis of the research area. This phase has been discussed in this chapter from the perspective of the research methodology by introducing the research design, materials, methods, and implementation. The elements for the research have been presented; their effect will be evaluated in the articles (Appendices 1–4) as well as the subsequent chapters, Results (Chapter 5) and Conclusions and discussion (Chapter 6).

Results

5

This chapter presents the results of this study in relation to the four research questions, previous research, and the theoretical framing (Figure 33). The first sections of this chapter summarize the main findings, article by article. Thereafter, a cross-analysis section elaborates on the findings presented in the articles and their summaries. Following the aim and objectives set for this study, the elaboration of the findings is provided to better understand costume and its active role in the creation of dance performances and to identify and articulate approaches that enable favourable circumstances for such an undertaking. As part of this discussion, implications for the field are proposed in Section 5.5.
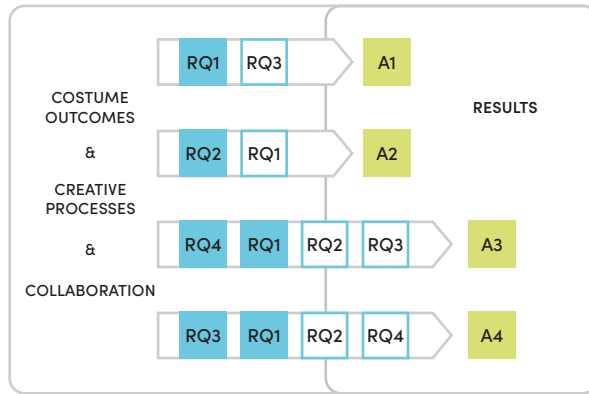
Figure 33. The three key themes are investigated through Research Questions 1–4 with varying foci and weighting; they provide results through Articles 1–4.

5.1 Article 1: 'Sharing "Untamed Ideas": Process-based costume design in Finnish contemporary dance through the work of Marja Uusitalo'

As its focused contribution for this thesis project, Article 1 addresses Research Question 1 querying the relationship between design process, costume outcome, and collaboration, through research interviews with costume designer Marja Uusitalo. It views the three key themes through Uusitalo's collaboration with choreographer Alpo Aaltokoski; this choice and the selected three productions arise from two interviews with the designer. To complement the oral testimonies, Article 1 engages with still images, video documentations, and written documents of the selected dance performances: *Sahara* (2002), *Being is Everything* (2009), and *Whirls* (2011),[46] to identify how costume outcomes result from their specific creative processes.

In response to Research Question 1, two main findings arise from the analysis. First, Article 1 demonstrates the integral connection between the costume outcomes and their design processes. In the three processes analysed, this occurs through adding traces of the artistic team members' shared travel into

the costumes. Although in the design process of *Sahara*, the journey that deeply influenced the costumes was a real one, travel also becomes a metaphor for any 'shared experiences' during the process with the artistic team. In *Being is Everything*, such experience was the shared crocheting of the costumes, and in *Whirls*, in more abstract terms, the experience of 'sharing' was shaped through being attentive to the process and responding with specific design qualities to the frame of the co-creation. In addition, Article 1 confirms the different roles the costume designer as a collaborator can adopt in different production processes, varying from leading to supportive to wholly integrated. Consequently, it argues that distinct roles or approaches in the production enmesh with what is being created as well as the level of the active agency of the designer. This indicates an entwinement of processes, outcomes, and collaboration.

Against this backdrop, as the second main finding, Article 1 renders visible aspects of collaboration that significantly shape the costume designer's work. Such aspects include the influence of the team on the collaborative process, the ethics of the designer in choosing her collaborations, and a high level of commitment to such collaborations. Part of such commitment for Uusitalo is remaining attentive to the team: she highlights the importance of active listening as part of a successful collaboration prior to establishing direct communication and creating a mutual language. In response to Research Question 4, central positive elements supporting costume designer Uusitalo's innovation in process-based costume design include achieving a desired state of trust, embracing the team members' creative input, and sharing experiences with them. Article 1 also mentions peace, equality, and alertness as aspects that support rewarding collaboration. With such aspects, this article initiates investigation into a deep-

46. Costume design in *Sahara* (Figure 37) consists of two types of costumes: the heavy cloaks that are used in various ways in the beginning of the performance, and the selection of blue everyday-garment-type costumes, worn underneath the cloaks and until the end of the performance. Both are covered in the article. *Being is Everything* consists of crocheted costumes, two sets for each dancer; the analysis focuses on the process of their creation, not on the costumes themselves. *Whirls* (Figures 27 and 38) is a choreography in three parts; costumes are changed in each part, and Article 1 engages with the costume design for the middle part.

seated artistic companionship, which is complemented and further developed in Articles 3 and 4.

In response to Research Question 3 about the influence of artistic environments and collaborative milieus, this enquiry into Uusitalo's process-based approach to costume design in independent freelance productions highlights the strenuous aspects of such work. These include the physical and emotional stress caused by last-minute changes in the plan, tight schedules, and the fact that in independent productions, the designer lacks support from a permanent costume workshop. In all circumstances, the designer alone ensures that the costumes are ready in time. However, shared experiences are identified to balance a lack of resources: strong collegial bonds support processes with limited time or money. Furthermore, Uusitalo benefits from an alert, heightened, even 'unconditional' (Article 1: 165) openness as a principle in her work that extends from communication to making use of creative input from various collaborators, including costume makers and fellow designers. She uses this principle as a tool to strategically support the implementation of costumes, making the workload of a production more sustainable for her.

Considering Article 1 as the foundation for the subsequent articles, its design was entirely data-driven and preceded the formation of the theoretical frame for this study. Therefore, identifying the designer's warm recollection of specific collaborative partnerships, it steered the way towards approaching collaboration as rewarding co-creation based on 'artistic affinities' (Melrose 2016: 240) as I later described in Article 3. However, a significant contribution of Article 1 emerged from its display of the meaning-making potential of costumes, hence contributing to the discussion on the agency of costume. In retrospect, presenting costumes that were so formative for their performances on one hand informed the selection of previous costume scholarship for this study, and on the other, solidified notions arising from such literature. For example, in the production *Sahara*, this occurred through the multipurpose cloaks that were a central costume item (Figure 37 in Section 5.5). Through organically changing how they clothe the bodies and occupy the space, the cloaks functioned against a 'fixed conceptual identity' (Lehmann 2006: 82) and demonstrated Lindgren's 'body, garment, action and context' characterization (2021a: 307). In so doing,

they also made use of the 'scenographing body', as the interrelation between the performing body and the surrounding scenographic materialities and sensations (von Rosen 2021: 32). With the cloaks in movement, the costumed scenographing body in *Sahara* creates moments in which, in von Rosen's terms, 'an affective atmosphere' is to be 'felt [...], rather than only seen' (2021: 41). In contrast, the costumes from the middle part of *Whirls* appeared active through the postdramatic traits of extreme excess and artificial materiality (Figure 38 in Section 5.5). In the production *Being is Everything*, the contrasting handmade materiality presented yet another way for costume to have an active role as it aroused an emotional response through a bodily recognition of the act of crocheting or the anticipated feel of those costumes.

In sum, data-driven Article 1 presents characteristics of the process-based approach to costume design within contemporary dance. Drawing from Uusitalo's experiences, it identifies the centrality of collaboration to this approach. Therein, it deems trust, openness, and the sharing of experiences as central elements of the collaboration between the designer and the artistic team, particularly with the choreographer. It also remarks on challenges in using such vocabulary and the need to make explicit what is meant by collaboration and related terms. Therefore, to avoid ambiguity and support the co-creation, Article 1 suggests the team members specify the intended meanings of key terms in their joint creation. These findings were formative for the thesis development and are advanced in the subsequent articles with distinct research frames.

5.2 Article 2: 'Political by Design: Costume design strategies within the Finnish contemporary dance productions *AmazinGRace, Noir?* and *The Earth Song*'

Article 2 addresses the second research question that seeks to identify the meaning-making potential of costume in contemporary dance performance. It investigates three productions in which such 'meaning' refers to issues concerning political flaws and costume expression based on everyday garments as costume. These productions are *AmazinGRace* (2010), designed by Soile Savela; *Noir?* (2013), designed by Sanna Levo; and *The Earth Song* (2013), designed by Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila. By introducing works by two other designers beyond the ones focused on in this thesis, Article 2 shows diversity in employing everyday garments as costume. Moreover, it contributes to this thesis's emphasis on contemporary freelancer productions, thus adding to Article 1's understanding of this milieu as a specific context for the costume practices and also contributing to Research Question 3.

As its main finding, Article 2 presents the multifaceted type of costume that is based on the expressive use of everyday garments. While so doing, it attends to Lindgren's 'body, garment, action and context' approach (2021a: 307) and confirms that in the context of performance, viewing the bodies and garments in 'action' is a central way of examining the creation of meaning they provide. In other words, the expression of costume begins to propose meaning and agency in the overall aesthetic and thematic ambit of the performance, together with other performance elements. Both findings are demonstrated through three analysed performances as instances of three distinct strategies in the use of everyday garments as costume, each with a distinct strategy to 'mediate the relationship' between the performers and the audience (Monks 2010: 9). Here, the application of Monks' notions of 'real' and 'wrong' bodies (2015b) shows how the shifting references between 'real' performers in 'real' or 'wrong' costume and stage personas or characters and their 'real' or 'wrong' costumes materialize as an effective tool for expression in the performances. To a varying degree in these examples, meaning, connotation, or simply feeling through the costume arises from 'density without a fixed conceptual identity',

in Lehmann's words (2006: 82), through the multisensorial qualities of the costume in the performance context.

In the analysed performances, costume decisions render visible traits of postdramatic theatre. The aspects of non-hierarchy and simultaneity of elements, i.e., costume elements and the costumed bodies on the stage as well as the notions of excess and scarcity urge the spectator to consider the play with synaesthesia and signification (Lehmann 2006: 82, 84). However, concrete and 'dramatic' traits, in Lehmann's terms, and even representation are applied in these designs. Identifying the agential capacity of the costumes, due to their being based on everyday garments and connected with the connotation of 'real' people on the stage (Monks 2015b; Fischer-Lichte 2008: 35, 36), requires not only a micro-level deconstruction of their composition, by which I mean choices pertaining to material and design elements (Norgren 2003; Monni 2015), but also their macro-level contextualization in terms of sartorial and dance history. This extends the role of 'context' in Lindgren's 'body, garment, action and context' (Lindgren 2021a: 307) entity.

First, in the analysis of the production *AmazinGRace*, applying dance scholars' writings to connect the costumes to examples from dance history indicates how costume may also function through significant intertextual references within the genre. Second, in the analysis of *Noir?*, representation is deemed the main tool to elicit political meaning; *Noir?* does so through disturbance. Here, the costume-bodies shift between connotations of 'real' and 'wrong' bodies as enunciated by Monks (2015b). The selected bodies (four Black and later, one white) wear garments with density and extreme meaning (Lehmann 2006: 89, 90) within the performance action and context in the predominantly white Finnish dance field. This event of dance is crafted to not be a 'fixed image', so it challenges the spectator, depending on their background, to become aware of 'their own ability to react and experience' (Lehmann 2006: 134–35). Following the explanation of choreographer Lindfors (2017), the costume also becomes 'a tool for [...] emancipation and self-exploration' (Pantouvaki and McNeil 2021: 3) for the performers. Third, in the analysis of *The Earth Song*, performers are again deemed to be 'people'; a sartorial reading suggests them so precisely contemporary in the Finnish surrounding that the costumes are freed from any

particular meaning. Drawing from Lehmann (2006: 86), such placidity allows their paratactical presence, meaning their contribution to a non-hierarchy of the performance elements.

In Article 2, the theoretical positioning at the intersection of costume design, contemporary dance, and postdramatic performance prompts the note that in performance-making, the fields of practice-based expert knowledge also must intersect. With such a remark, Article 2 responds to Research Question 3 about the influence of artistic environments and collaborative milieus by identifying the intellectual environment of the performance that also influences the costume designer's work. Understanding the diversity of everyday garments as costume, the designer and artistic team's shared and distributed knowledge and background research into the theme of the performance lead the way to outcomes with agency. Through drawing parallel examples from the history and theory of dance, this article implicitly suggests that creating costume not only benefits from the designer's mastery of the tools and approaches in costume design including research into the theme of the performance, but also from their insight into the dance genre. Such expertise supports the designer's innovation in creative processes as is demonstrated here with the use of everyday or mundane garments as costumes. It also expands Osmond's delineation of the designer's professional expertise and the ways in which this knowledge is communicated as part of the ongoing design process (2021: 278). On these grounds, as the third main finding, Article 2 deems a clear conceptual thought to be the main medium for designing costumes that provide action and meaning in contemporary dance performance. This perspective is enriched and further analysed in Article 3.

As its related fourth finding, Article 2 argues that garments employed in performance unequivocally denote costume, notwithstanding the professional status or background of the decision-maker, the selected trope of costumes, or perceived lack of aesthetic innovation therein. Such a statement acknowledges the existence of costume design in several contemporary performances in which the artistic teams have worked without a named or professionally trained costume designer. It makes explicit that the mere simplicity of costume as in *AmazinGRace* or the use of familiar garment types as costume as in *Noir?* or *The Earth Song* do not erase the creative input of their design concept. Both

instances are viewed as evidence of costume and against such a concept as 'no costume', even if they appeared 'non-extant' to some eyes.[47]

To conclude, Article 2 demonstrates three distinct strategies for applying everyday garments as expressive and interrelational elements in performance. Costume design based on the use of everyday garments with a solid rationale is presented as a vital and multifaceted tool to create meaning in dance performance.

5.3 Article 3: 'Time, being, discourse: Elements of professional friendship in the collaboration between a costume designer and a choreographer'

The aim of Article 3 was to research collaboration that is experienced as particularly rewarding by the costume designer. Based on the investigation into the artistic allyship between costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila and choreographer Carl Knif through the making of the solo performance *Red* (2014) and various related materials, including interviews with both the designer and the choreographer and guided by the theoretical lens of 'friendship', the main contribution of Article 3 emerges from Research Questions 1 and 4.[48] This means addressing the ingrained thematics of the processes, outcomes, and collaboration, as well as aspects that may support their development in the costume designer's work. Further, more findings arise in relation to Research Questions 2 and 3.

First, Article 3 presents a concise review of varied interpretations of the notion of 'collaboration' in the performing arts in the West since the 1960s. It focuses on examples of balanced joint creation and is informed by theoretical strands of positive psychology (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000). In this frame, it establishes the terms 'friend' and 'friendship' as delineated by Aristotle (n.d.)

47. 'No costume' refers to dance artist Yvonne Rainer's *No Manifesto* (1965 [2012]), as explained in Article 2 (p. 26).

48. This article fully focuses on the costume concept in *Red* (Figure 36) and thus analyses its combinations of a few costume parts as well as the acts of undressing and dressing.

and later discussed by Agamben (2009) as the lenses to analyse collaboration. With an aim to identify elements that support joint creation, it signals the critical hermeneutics approach as explained by Alvesson and Sköldberg (2018: 218) and in Section 4.1, and builds on theatre and performance scholar Susan Melrose's notion of 'artistic affinities' (2016: 240). Thus, operating at the intersection of costume, contemporary dance, collaborative creation, and philosophy, Article 3 draws from the findings about the key terms related to collaboration highlighted in Article 1 – trust, sharing, and openness – and elaborates on these as the aspects of sharing time, being together, and exchanging ideas and communication, in the artistic partnership based on artistic affinity (Melrose 2016: 240). Furthermore, in the allyship between Koiso-Kanttila and Knif, it identifies the elements of reciprocity and continuity as further resources for collaboration. It proposes this selection of concrete acts as tools for joint creation in artistic teams. As its first finding, Article 3 thus reveals an ethical stance towards the collaborative pursuits as an asset that may support collaboration in various types of settings and across a range of artistic environments, each with their specific complications for work. An ethical stance may benefit from considerate use of time, previous allyship, and communication as resources in performance-making. It also yields the articulation of the possible hierarchies – for example, who the ultimate decision-maker in the production is – and the expectations and limitations for each team member's contribution.

Second, through the analysis of the costume from *Red*, Article 3 demonstrates yet another instance in which the costume outcome fully aligns with its collaborative process of creation. Thereby it complements Article 2 by further revealing how a design concept based on everyday garments appears as a minimalistic yet meaningful outcome with an active role in performance. Here, the costume is identified as minimal (Barbieri 2017: 210); it provides the absolute minimum of information to accompany the auditory and choreographic expression, to resonate with the performance based on the choreographer's autobiographical material. In this sense, to build on Pantouvaki and McNeil (2021: 1), the costume in *Red* is '"in service of" performance'. However, it appears not 'in a subordinate role' but as a 'central contributor' to the performance, despite its material scarcity. Such scarcity of costume elements extends to the

use of nudity as costume as part of the performance dramaturgy. Again, by its reading, provided in the article, nudity demonstrates the variety in design choices that elicit multisensorial experiences, intellectual thought, and deep emotions in the performance. Furthermore, as also stated by Pantouvaki and McNeil (2021: 1), such costume can gain a central role in the artistic team's 'collective practice' (Pantouvaki and McNeil 2021: 1). The examination of the creative process of the *Red* costume through the friendship lens indicates exactly this: the costume designer's contribution to the overall performance experience is not only through the costume design but also as a trusted co-creator who is invited to share her views beyond costume. Therefore, to extend the common understanding of the costume designer's tasks and responsibilities, this article remarks on and draws further conclusions from the likeness of this action to the role of a dance dramaturg, as expounded by Profeta (2015), among others. This further emphasizes the entanglement between processes and collaboration on one hand and the impact of the artistic milieu on the other.

As a direct response to Research Question 3, the third main finding of Article 3 is insights into working as a freelancer and the economic aspects that coincide with the designer's artistic dedication. These include how funding and arranging the work can influence the costume designer's profession, specifically the elements of collaboration therein. Furthermore, it identifies challenges in existing production structures and funding channels, which are experienced as insufficient and unpredictable. While discourse on such effects of the neo-liberal age and freelance life appears in literature on collaborative creation by, for example, choreographers and dramaturgs in Central Europe (Kunst 2015) and in the United Kingdom (Colin and Sachsenmeier 2016), this article adds the costume designer's voice to the discussion. Respectively, to equip the designers to better overcome such challenges, Article 3 introduces the term 'professional friendship', thus connecting the above elements, i.e., sharing time, being together, exchanging ideas and communication, trust, and reciprocity, as a set of actions functioning as tools to support the costume designer's collaborative processes.

In conclusion, Article 3 illustrates a full entanglement of creative process, collaboration, and costume outcomes. Furthermore, it argues that costume designers may both contribute to and gain from the ethical and sustainable

modes of artistic co-creation in dance productions. Emphasizing the value of a supportive milieu for work, it proposes a link between the mutually rewarding collaborative artistic environment and the profound contribution of the costume designer, a focal theme in Article 4.

5.4 Article 4: 'The costume designer as co-author of contemporary dance performance: Erika Turunen's signature style'

The aim of Article 4 was to investigate the creative authorship of the designer as a co-creative yet influential practice. This was achieved through a case study that combines the thick description of a large number of designs with the content analysis of the interviews with costume designer Erika Turunen.[49] With such materials, methods, and the term 'signature' – defined by Jacques Derrida ([1971] 1986) – as an analytical lens, it presents costume design that is not only distinctively agential in visual and multisensorial terms but also recognizably characteristic of its designer. Here, Turunen's style is introduced as an evolving re-working and personal interpretation of two pervasive core elements: a material-structural experimentation and a body-conscious approach. In parallel, it identifies elements in the collaboration between Turunen and choreographer Tero Saarinen that invite this kind of input from the designer.

In Article 4, the analysis of Turunen's highly tailored and often sculptural creations complements the findings from Article 2 about the meaning-making potential and active contribution of costume in dance performance. In contrast to the other articles, the interpretation of Turunen's design style is rooted in the lived experiences of the costumes in performances. As Article 4 argues, the reflective interpretative lens shapes the researcher's understanding: even without an ethnographic analytical position, the tacit knowledge gained by the

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49. I have analysed Turunen's designs in twelve productions; eight of these, created for Saarinen's choreographies, remain in this article. My experience as a spectator of a much greater number of performances with her costumes lies in the background.

events informs the approach to costume outcomes. Operating in choreographies that thematically draw from human life but express it in a manner that, in postdramatic terms, promotes 'more manifestation than signification, more energetic impulse than information' (Lehmann 2006: 85), Turunen's costumes as the 'body, garment, action and context' entity (Lindgren 2021a: 307) provide agency through their spatiality and refined body-costume-movement union. They echo the postdramatic prioritization of senses and sensing – a theme analysed in Article 2. If realistic everyday garments as costume are at risk of being 'looked through' due to their mundane quality, as warned by Monks (2010: 10) and Hann (2017: 8), Turunen's costumes as innovative garment creations are so present and tailored that they cannot be dismissed or 'looked through'. Beyond their intensely multisensorial qualities, Turunen's costumes connote her 'having-been present', in Derridean terms ([1971] 1986: 328): the signature quality her costume concepts carry reflects her preceding work with that costume before its staging. However, through Turunen's attention to the moving body and understanding of materials and structures, I argue these costumes are not objects for 'fetishizing' either, to apply the wording by Monks (2010: 11). By this word Monks refers to the attention paid to the surface of the costume alone and the ignorance of its other agential qualities: the 'what' rather than the 'how' the costume is in performance, in Lindgren's terms (2021a: 307). Turunen's creations are often opulent, yet designed to be costume-bodies (von Rosen 2021) that organically enmesh with other performance elements. They operate, not simply 'are' in performance.

As its first main finding, Article 4 highlights the 'signature' style of a designer as an artistic element that is desirable in the creation of a dance performance. However, signature as a '*named way of working*' (Melrose 2009, original emphasis) envelopes both the process and outcome, thus harking back to key themes of this study. In terms of both the performance aesthetics and interpersonal relationships, Turunen's style seems to align with that of Saarinen, her trusted collaborator. Studying this artistic companionship illuminates a mode of being a significant co-author of dance performance with relative independence. In Article 4, this means a designer who deviates from a total, shared, or group-led creation can still form rewarding, long-term collaborations with deep, collegial

intimacy developed over time. Juxtaposing the term collaboration as it is viewed in 'ensemble' practices (Britton 2013; Radosavlejić 2013) – focal in Article 3 – with practices with single or shared authorship, as explained in previous scholarship in dance (Järvinen 2016b), costume (e.g., Barbieri 2017), and performing arts (Colin and Sachsenmeier 2016), provides further insight into the alignment of collaboration and the costume designer's authorship. This responds to Research Question 1 about the relationship between processes, outcomes, and collaboration and also caters to Research Questions 3 and 4, about artistic environments, collaborative milieus, and aspects that support the costume designer's work.

As this article proposes, central to the favourable alliance of two relatively independent artists, Turunen and Saarinen, is the mutual feeling of a connected co-creation, a deep motivation to work towards a shared goal in the performance-making, and the viewing of such a shared goal as supportive ground for the costume designer to develop her concepts with a sense of ownership yet with awareness of her co-creative team. Derived from the interviews with Turunen, further aspects that equip the costume designer towards collaboration include a readiness for being disciplined, reliable, proactive, even pragmatic; being open to new productions and able to grasp clues from scant communication; or developing a bespoke way of communicating that is fruitful for the specific collaboration. Turunen's style is characterized by an ability to tolerate change in the creative processes. This identifies her as an artist who fluently combines self-government with collaboration, palpable in her 'signature' practice. Hence, drawing from Turunen's 'way of working', this article extends the current scholarship, including Articles 1 and 3, that emphasize shared time in/during the rehearsals as vital to a 'successful' collaboration and design. In contrast, however, this article demonstrates that 'sharing time' in rehearsals can be reduced when a trusting artistic allyship has already been established through the designer's proactivity and skill at grasping clues. Among its main findings, Article 4 therefore continues to expand the understanding of communication as an integral part of the collaboration and how it is understood to function across artistic partnership. It also proposes that the designer's effortless and effective communication relates to one's strong professional self-knowledge and sense of co-authorship.

To summarize, results from this article extend the existing findings and articulate further integral aspects about collaboration. These include further affirmation for trust, sharing time and experiences, mutual confidence, loyalty, and commitment, as central aspects of collaboration. As a new facet, this article identifies the perspective of open-mindedness as a tool to add resilience in the face of unexpected change. This supports the previous findings about applying aspects of ethical collaboration as additional resources in the work, such as the Aristotelian reciprocal respect and volition to be together or the development of sustainable practices with a 'thriving community' as their goal (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000: 5) in positive psychology, both identified as tools to overcome challenges in Articles 1 and 3. Second, in terms of costume choices, having discussed 'minimal' costume in Article 3, use of everyday garments as costume in Article 2, and the crafting of costume as part of the design process in Article 1, the analysis of Turunen's work acts as a counterbalance to the previous cases, which discussed design that aims at reduction, minimalism, or a more rugged expression.

5.5 Cross-analysis and discussion of the findings

The general aim of this thesis is to make explicit the active role of costume in the creation of dance performances with a focus on the various dimensions of human interrelations, specifically between costume designers and choreographers. In four original research articles, this was approached with multiple foci on three key themes: creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. Furthermore, the articles established four sub-themes to support the enquiry: the dynamics of process-based costume design in Article 1, everyday garments as costume in Article 2, professional friendship as collaboration in Article 3, and the signature style of the costume designer in Article 4. However, the key themes and sub-themes characteristically overlap and intersect across the articles, thus indicating their intrinsic relation. The results from the articles are combined here and further developed in relation to the research questions.

Entwinements of collaboration, creative processes, and costume outcomes

The results reveal how the three key areas – creative processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration – are enmeshed aspects of the costume designer's professional practice. As a response to Research Question 1 pertaining to their interrelations, collaboration coincides and is entangled with creative processes and its aspects are equally entangled with costume outcomes. Therefore, in Articles 1, 3, and 4, the influence of aspects of collaboration on the designer's creative process and the costume outcomes is present in vivid and concrete terms. In Article 1, the analysis of Uusitalo's work connects the centrality of collaboration with a process-based design approach. However, the research following in Articles 3 and 4 suggests that the central elements of collaboration are equally manifest in various co-creative approaches. Notwithstanding their singular approaches to collaboration, the focal costume designers in this study share an aim for committed co-creation and the innate integration of the elements that arise from the centrality of the process to the outcome.

The ways that collaborative processes entangle with the designs are rooted in the unique approaches of each designer. Yet, despite the variation in the costume designer's singular approaches as indicated by Articles 1, 3, and 4, long-lasting and trustworthy partnerships provide each with an artistic space that supports the creation of costumes and a rewarding experience of being formative to the performance-making. In each partnership, the communication, trust, reciprocity, and shared time all emerge from and shape the process of co-creation. Hence, the co-creative space for the costume designer is influenced by the past and the present. Past productions compose the fabric from which present processes emerge – the team, theme, and overall frame of the production at hand lay the groundwork for the costume designer's contribution. Therefore, the choice to engage with the terms 'friend' and 'friendship' as defined by Aristotle (n.d.) and Agamben (2009) as the analytical lenses in Article 3, and their rise as an aspect in the theoretical framing respectively, was formative to such key findings. Placing rewarding collaboration at the centre of the investigation extends previous research and provides a frame for considering artistic companionships in the field.

Meaning-making potential as agency of costume

By making explicit the versatile meaning-making potential that costume holds in the performance, the findings of this study's four articles serve as direct evidence for Research Question 2. In so doing, they provide both detail and breadth in understanding the agency of various types of costume in contemporary dance performance. Here, I highlight one central pattern of costume possessing an active role in each examined performance. In this manner, the range of how costumes can be agential varies in the investigated works: in Article 1, costumes by Marja Uusitalo range from a thematically meaningful, even existential, agency in *Being is Everything*, to being spatially active in *Sahara*, and to providing a commissioned artistic innovation in *Whirls*. In Article 2, which examined performances that work with themes perceived as 'political', *AmazinGRace* provides identification through costume, even a certain loyalty to dance history, as well as material responses to 'authenticity' as discussed by Lehmann (2006: 32) or Barbieri (2017: 167). In the same article, the production *Noir?* disturbs the meaning-making process and exhausting representational traits through costume;[50] and *The Earth Song* allows a postdramatic paratactical presence of costume (Figure 34). Interconnected with the aims of each performance, these ways of being active evoke and advance either the spectator's identification, predetermined meaning, or association. In Article 3, which engages with Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila's work, the costume in *Red* appears as one that is minimal in terms of the material input. However, again, the active role of costume arises from its intrinsic interconnection with the overall thematic concerns and aesthetic aspirations of the performance. Furthermore, in Article 4 on Turunen's work, the agential capacity emerges from a lineage of costumes by the same designer with elaborate, recognizable, multisensorial qualities, and at their core, in Turunen's words, 'danceability' (2017; Article 4: 37). In addition, this article argues for the capacity of such costumes to contribute to the visual identity of a dance company.

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50. Lepecki's *Exhausting Dance: Performance and the politics of movement* (2006) appeared among widely cited publications in dance scholarship during my research, hence the verb choice; exhaustion also appears in Lehmann's description of postdramatic performance (2006: 145–74).

Fig. 34

Figure 34. Costume in performance is assumed to address the spectator. In *The Earth Song* (2013, choreography Sari Palmgren, costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila), in Article 2, this was analysed to occur through association and, in postdramatic terms, the paratactical presence of the performance elements. Photo Uupi Tirronen/Zodiak – Center for New Dance, in the image Lotta Suomi (in the front), Jukka Tarvainen.

Agential capacities in everyday garments as costume

A significant and conscious thread in discussing costume agency in this study has been to promote mundane, even simple garments that obtain powerful expressive capacity in performance (Figure 34). This is against a certain 'invisibility' attributed to such costumes both by scholars and spectators, interlinked to their sometimes realistic and thus 'not designed' appearance (Cook 1996: 52 cited in Hann 2017: 8), or to the learned tendency to perceive costume as surface: 'clothes of the character' hiding a meaning assumed to be found 'beyond the surface', as Monks argued about costume in theatre (Monks 2010: 10). In addition, a connection deriving from Hollywood film practice has been drawn between a 'good costume' being an invisible one (Nadoolman Landis 2012 cited in Hann 2017: 8). As this thesis argues, such 'invisibility' is debatable if it results in interpreting costume as secondary to other performance elements; the same has been stated by Pantouvaki and McNeil (2021: 1). In contemporary dance, the choice of contemporary everyday garments as costume interlinks equally with embodied and aesthetic reasons (Bugg 2020: 355–59; Turunen 2014; Koiso-Kanttila 2014, 2017a); enquiries from the field also referred to the economic reasons for such choices. However, following the initial definition of costume in this study, costume is understood as 'preparation of the performer specifically for performance' (Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2016: 4), an inevitable element of performance as I argue in Article 2 (p. 26), even when it appears realistic, 'not designed', or otherwise visually latent. With such a foundation, this thesis claims that mundane garments as costume may not be visually striking but when the concept is well founded, might evoke more internal processes of transformation. Therefore, everyday garments as costume possess a potential equal to that of

any other style, or approach to costume, as revealed here through analysing costume as 'active'.

To summarize, this thesis has demonstrated that the use of everyday garments as costume appears pervasive in dance performance yet underexamined in research. While the examples in this study continue the discussion about 'real' bodies, performers, events, and even authenticity, as well as by making use of performing the act of dressing/undressing, everyday garments hold an incontestable position in manifesting issues related to body politics, gender, identity, and human relations: simply, human existence and everyday life.[51] Therefore, everyday garments as costume, which have been established here as a central and multifaceted means in contemporary dance performance, also merit recognition in future research. Such discussion may also inform the perception and appreciation of conceptual thought in the design of everyday garments as costume in other fields, for example, in film and theatre, where the 'invisibility' of realistic or contemporary present-time everyday garments as costume has been reported (Hann 2017: 8; Monks 2010: 10).

51. In fashion studies, *The Fashioned Body. Fashion, Dress and Modern Social Theory* by Joanne Entwistle (2000) is a seminal work that discusses body and dress in everyday life from a sociological perspective.

Figures 35–36. In *Noir?* (2013, choreography Sonya Lindfors, costume design Sanna Levo), analysed in Article 2, and *Red* (2014, choreography Carl Knif, costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila), analysed in Article 3, everyday garments as costume provide effective expression through distinct strategies.

Figure 35. Photo Uupi Tirronen/Zodiak – Centre for New Dance, in the image (from left) Sonya Lindfors, Ima Iduozee, Esete Sutinen, Deogracias Masomi.

Figure 36. Photo Yoshi Omori/Carl Knif Company, in the image Carl Knif.

Diverse creators of costume

The singular approaches of the designers to create costume that prompts meaning and agency illustrates the variably rich array of costume designs in twenty-first-century Finland. Concurrently, they demonstrate variation in the design approaches. This extends the findings related to Research Question 2. Notably, the designers' approaches are not exclusive to one another; here, too, a designer may fluently transition between them depending on the needs of the performance and the development of their career. The combined knowledge drawn from the diverse artistic and collaborative processes analysed in this thesis offers insights into the instances of costume agency across the various contexts in which costume performs.

Marja Uusitalo's approach as a costume designer indicates her skill in adapting from one project to another, thus showing her professional diversity through the mastery of various design styles. Her characteristics include innovation through trial and error and flinging herself into hands-on experiments and crafting so that her 'fingers are always part of that mess' (Uusitalo 2014). With such an approach to design, she seeks animate costumes, curiosities, and surprises in which the thematic content of the performance actively informs the process (Uusitalo 2014; Figures 37–38). I term such a design approach 'crafting'. In contrast, Article 4 frames Turunen as a designer with an altogether different position and approach. Her expertise emanates from the potential for a specific and visually recognizable contribution, a specialization in the elaboration of fine material and detail that grants her collaborators a certain predictability in the resulting costume concept. Evincing this, Turunen's commentary demonstrates her attention to innovation and detail from the perspective of moulding soft materials into sculptural forms. Such structures and forms in her work arise from vivid mental association and inspiration from mundane objects, such as star fruits (Figure 39), paper decorations (Figure 19), or memories, including a grandmother's duvet in *Borrowed Light* (Turunen 2014). Such an approach, characteristic in Turunen's line of work, I term 'tailoring' (Figure 40). Last, innate aspects of Koiso-Kanttila's design through the interviews and analysed performances include her holistic attunement to 'ensemble' creation and solid scenographic compositions. Such an integrated approach to performance-

making materializes in innovation that draws from existing garment shapes from decades, even centuries, of sartorial history as a 'trademark' medium (Figures 6, 20, and 41–42). This approach, based on altering and combining, is also visible in the costume designs for the cases in Article 2, in addition to Koiso-Kanttila, by costume designers Soile Savela and Sanna Levo (Figure 35).

Figures 37–38. Marja Uusitalo enjoys hands-on work, as when adding stitches by hand to the multipurpose cloak-costumes in *Sahara* (2002, choreography Alpo Aaltokoski), in Figure 37, or crafting 'an overdose' for the spectators through the *Whirls* costumes (Uusitalo 2016a; Article 1: 165), in Figure 38.

Figure 37. Photo Ninna Lindström/Alpo Aaltokoski Company, in the image Melissa Monteros.

Fig. 37

Fig. 38

Figure 38. Photo Marko Mäkinen/Alpo Aaltokoski Company, in the image Johanna Ikola.

Figures 39–40. Seemingly impossible yet 'danceable' structure in Turunen's costume design for Kenneth Kvarnström's choreographies: spikey pants for *YOUMAKEME* (2011), in Figure 39, arose from the designer's association with the form and aesthetic of a star fruit.

Figure 39. Photo Sakari Viika/Helsinki Dance Company, in the image Helsinki Dance Company dancers.

Fig. 39

Figure 40. *Hohto/Shine* (2009), photo Sakari Viika/Finnish National Opera and Ballet Archives, in the image (from left) Samuli Poutanen, Frans Valkama, Antti Keinänen.

Figures 41–42. Koiso-Kanttila characteristically makes use of extant garment shapes; especially in collaboration with choreographer Kivelä, allusions often evoke a timeless nostalgia, for example in *Diano Marina* (2006), in Figure 41. However, the variety of such costume springs forth from Koiso-Kanttila's ensemble-based collaborations with different choreographers – for example in *My Imaginary Friend Is with Me* (2007, choreography Jyrki Karttunen), in Figure 42.

Figure 41. Photo Marko Mäkinen, in the image Anne Hiekkaranta.

Fig. 41

Fig. 42

Figure 42. Photo Marko Mäkinen, in the image Jyrki Karttunen and Friend.

Aspects of artistic environments and collaborative milieus

Research Question 3 addressed the impact of the various artistic environments and collaborative milieus on the designers. Respectively, process-based costume design, ensemble creation, and a more independent approach were investigated as contexts for joint creation. Across such approaches, the quality of human interrelations was deemed central. In essence, differences in artistic environments and collaborative milieus and their influence on the core of the costume designer's work were not experienced based on the size, scale, structures, or resources of the production. In this selected data, the main difference arose from the experiences of feeling satisfied with one's own work, collaboration with the artistic team, and the relationship with the choreographer. As the articles demonstrate, collaboration is ultimately an agreement between the involved parties. Therefore, the implications of collaboration on the designer's work may significantly vary from one example to another. In the best scenarios, the team members' assumed understanding or aspired modes of collaboration match; at worse, they clash. It is in these diverse milieus for artistic co-creation that human interrelations influence the designer's leeway and the role of costume in the production process.

In response to Research Question 4 on the aspects that support costume designers' collaboration and processes, this study derived the following three findings. First, to avoid unnecessary friction, this thesis shows the significance of the artistic teams more openly verbalizing and sharing their views about the terms and conditions that apply to the current mode of collaboration, depending on the setting for the work. As identified in Articles 1 and 3, it demonstrates the value of communicating the key vocabulary – trust, openness, sharing – with proper meanings at the outset of each project. Terms, when translated into concrete actions, may guide the collaboration in positive ways, as confirmed in Article 3. Second, to build a supportive collaboration, this study has identified the need to accommodate contrasting views and disagreements. In a supportive milieu, reciprocity, mutual trust, and bespoke communication, among others, appear

as means to navigate such negotiations in the creative process in a constructive manner. Third, the articles provide a comprehensive list of elements of sustainable collaboration. Each of these can be applied as a tool to foster joint creation: alertness, appreciation, choice of people, commitment, communication, ethics, exchange, openness, proactivity, respect, self-discipline, sharing, and trust.

Notably, all interviewed costume designers expressed their enjoyment in the collaborative creation. This habitually results in a costume designer's commitment to engage in future collaborations. Preceding collaborations are hence identified as a promising ground for co-creation and the development of bespoke communication in long-term companionships. In the most rewarding experiences across the various contexts for work, the designers felt trust, openness, sharing of time and experiences, exchanging ideas and communication, and reciprocity when working in a mutually respectful atmosphere. Occasionally, such experiences may develop into a highly rewarding artistic companionship, in which the ground for co-creation appears solid.

Shaping the circumstances for supportive collaboration

This study argues that the sustainable practices derived from the long-term collaborations may help to shape more continuous and predictable work conditions for costume designers, specifically in independent productions. Such changes would help to minimize the challenges of the current 'project-driven' (Colin 2016: 110) and exhaustive culture of creation in performing arts in the twenty-first century. Although the article findings arise from collaborations that already possessed a 'professional friendship' – applying the term from Article 3 – this thesis asserts they are relevant and applicable to emerging allyships, or for a reconsideration of existing partnerships as well.

Among the implications for practice, this thesis argues for inviting the costume designer to join the project at an early phase. While previous research has highlighted the same aspect from the perspective of the early integration of the costume, this perspective underscores the designer's extended time frame to habituate to the project. Naturally, these two need not be mutually exclusive. While the active time for concretely advancing the costume in exchange with

the artistic team may be limited, the in-between time, i.e., time of awareness of the upcoming production or time between rehearsal periods, can be equally productive. Such proposed spare time would even support creating the intellectual artistic environment discovered in Article 2 as a site to enrich the designer's knowledge of dance, when necessary, especially for designers with little previous experience of the genre.
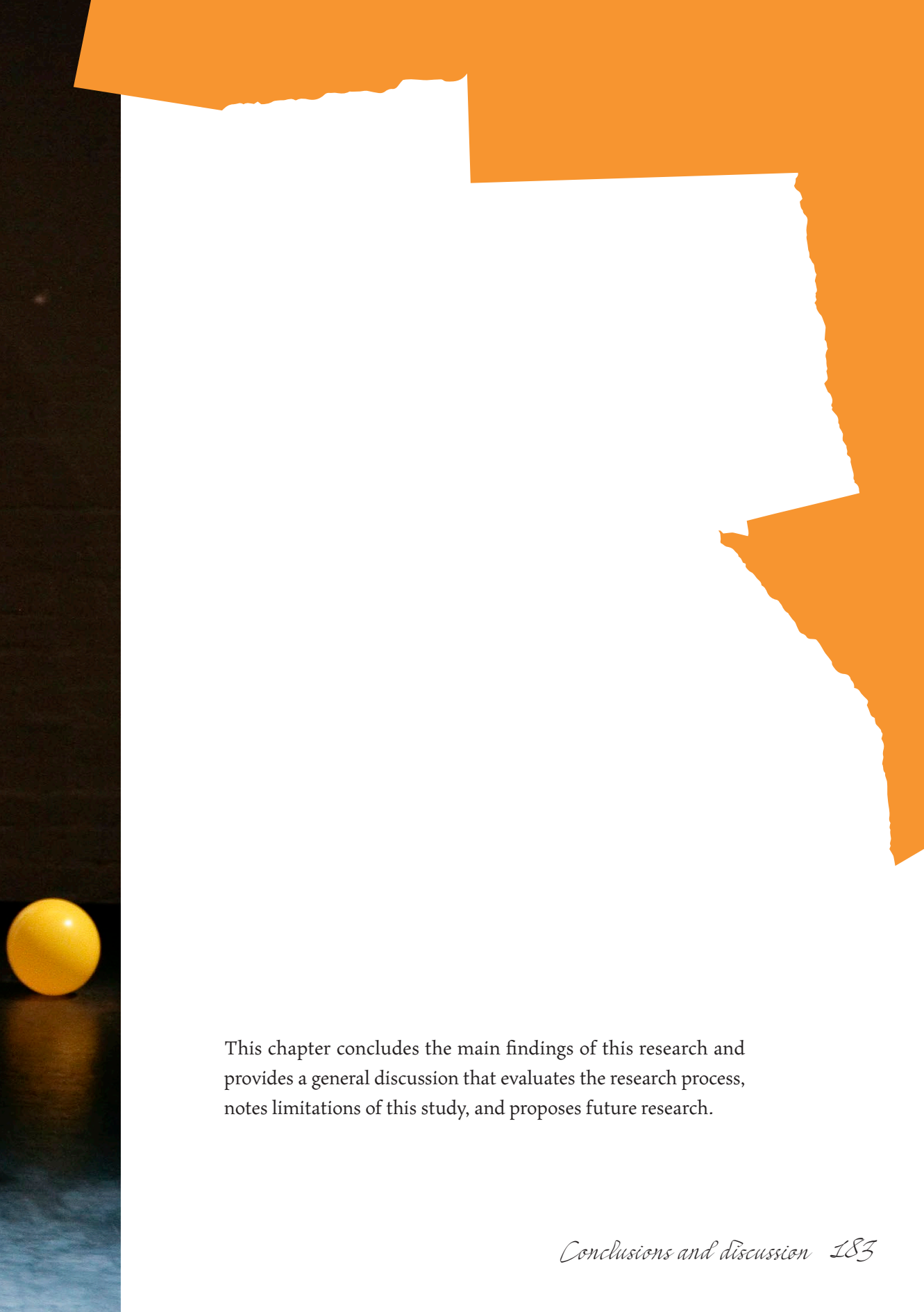
Furthermore, as part of the presentation of various artistic environments, this thesis has indicated several instances where a supportive collaborative frame has provided the designer with an opportunity to perform their profession in a particularly fulfilling manner. Such instances have illustrated the spectrum of the creative pathways that an open-minded artistic collaboration may provide, ranging from various sorts of inspiring and unexpected design tasks to tasks across artistic areas. However, this thesis suggests that any such fluidity in professional roles should be discussed among the team members: Is there a desire to extend one's artistic practice, from either part? Does such an action fit the intended mode of work or not, and what would be the desired influence gained from moving across professional boundaries? Who else possibly aspires to a similar position? Here, too, open communication will enhance trust and mutual understanding, thus helping to create or sustain the respectful collaborative partnership.

As the possible reverse side of such fluidity in professional roles and new responsibilities, even when experienced as gratifying, an extended artistic practice may add to the workload of the costume designer. Therefore, in the spirit of positive psychology and safeguarding collaborative relationships, this thesis proposes greater vigilance for the designer when they encounter a new remit. Vigilance here implies identification, articulation, planning, and being credited for any such additional assignment, should it be distributed to the costume designer. Recognizing this promotes fairer conditions for this profession: to clarify and strengthen the work circumstances for costume designers.

Conclusions
and discussion

6

This chapter concludes the main findings of this research and provides a general discussion that evaluates the research process, notes limitations of this study, and proposes future research.

6.1 Conclusions and contribution to knowledge

The aim of this thesis has been to present the relevance of collaborative practice of costume design in contemporary dance, not only due to the necessity of collaboration, but also because it offers the designers a chance to thrive. Therefore, with human interrelations at the nexus, this thesis has provided joint analysis of creative processes and costume outcomes. It is in these two main areas, collaborative processes and costume outcomes in contemporary dance performance, that this thesis offers its contribution to the field.

The findings derived from four articles, fifteen productions, and three Finnish costume designers have made explicit the wide range of parallel and overlapping modes of being a designer, collaborator, and author of costume that carries agency. The main conclusions of this study are two-fold. First, as this thesis has presented, paramount to costumes in dance performance is the firm bond between conceptual thought and performance frame. As such, agential costume does not limit itself to abundance, extravaganza, or abstraction: simplicity and mundane garments as a costume can achieve significant expressive potential in dance performance, especially when connoting 'real' people. In parallel, through a selection of productions and costume designers with varied avenues in their expression, this study has highlighted the artistic diversity of costume design in twenty-first-century contemporary dance in Finland. As a result, it has built on the disparate understandings of Finnish performing arts through costume, specifically contemporary choreography from 2000–2015.

Second, this thesis has argued that the creation of costume is not only the creation of a physical garment, but also the creation of performance. By analysing choreographer-led productions and the designer's creative process, this work has extended previous scholarship in which the impact of costume on the performance has been presented from the perspective of costume-generated performances, both by designer-researchers (e.g., Lindgren 2020; Barbieri 2021: 207; Lane 2019) and dance artists (e.g., Smith 2018). This study's analysis of the design processes has exposed the designer's anticipation of the performance to come and the 'way of doing' developed in exchanges between people and their artistic visions. It has asserted that processes aiming at sustainable collaboration

also tolerate a broad range of pathways for the development of the costume outcome, including creative collisions, and that risk and fortuity may find space in and benefit the artistic process within a milieu of trust and communication. Moreover, it has identified that such a milieu may emerge as an opportunity to extend the designer's creative process, scale of expression, and expertise. As a result, this thesis has argued that to support costume design is to bolster the relationships between people: to promote sustainable milieus for collaborative work benefits the making of performance.

6.2 General discussion and concluding remarks

The principle research method used in this study was interviewing and the interpretation of these interviews. In the beginning of the research, uncertainties surrounded how I should justify the choice of the interviewees, decide whether a small sample could offer valid findings, and find the focus and perspective on the topic of costume design within contemporary dance in twenty-first-century Finland. Although I assumed a hermeneutic circle–based approach would serve this study well, entering the circle was a struggle. Had I thrown myself in earlier into both the interviews and the actual 'doing', instead of mapping the ground and planning, I could have arrived faster at some of the missing answers. In other words, a Gadamerian trust in pre-knowledge would have been appropriate for this part (Grondin 2016b: 404). However, once conducting the research, the dialogical approach sustained the process well. It both supported the entwinement of various types of materials in the analysis in a productive manner and allowed for several entry points into the topic while still establishing the approach to it.

The dialogical approach enabled me to gradually adopt theories and theorists to my research 'universe' even without first making active, explicit connections between them. This materialized the view of '[k]nowledge as a process, a temporary state' (Eisner 1997). Importantly, while the back-and-forth movement in the dialogical process at times hindered the sight lines to the aims and induced tangential trajectories, the frame kept me connected with the core of my research.

Ultimately, establishing the theoretical frame allowed several intuitive choices to coalesce; however, their earlier integration would have strengthened the research in the process.

While several connections between this study and previous research on costume, dance, and collaboration emerged, it appeared more vexatious to interlink this work with the postdramatic performance theory. Although Lehmann's main thesis, which is based on heterogeneity, parataxis, and cancellation of meaning (e.g., Lehmann 2006: 82), interlinks with contemporary dance performance in the twenty-first century, it also applies to dance performances prior to the time frame of his investigation. Consequently, it lacks some of the accuracy it has in the analysis of theatre. Drawing from this theory in the study of costume further blurred the lines: it was evident that costume and choreography could at times reflect the postdramatic theory to different degrees. This I deemed acceptable within my research frame. However, I was curious to note that Lehmann's emphasis on the rejection of synthesis and signification seemed, at times, at odds with my central definition of costume from costume studies, that is, Lindgren's 'body, garment, action and context' entity (Lindgren 2021a: 307). Lindgren's notion, although arising from the same postdramatic frame (Pantouvaki and Příhodová 2021: 145), essentially appears as a tool to provide an understanding of costume – understanding thus appearing in contrast with Lehmann's approach. Postdramatic performance also delivered few leads for deepening the investigation into collaboration that had formed part of my motivation for the application of this theory. Therefore, the key benefit of postdramatic performance was the enriched analysis of the active role of costume from the perspective of costume outcomes that it provided in certain analysed productions.

Offering the first scholarly analysis of costume design within contemporary dance performance in Finland also came with responsibility for the choice of introduced designers and productions. As historians acknowledge, selection is also about exclusion (Järvinen 2017: 212–13). The choice of interviewees, although based on a review of the research area as explained in Sections 1.1 and 3.4, was initially highly intuitive, possibly implying a view of an 'expert-spectator' therein (Melrose 2007). However, in hindsight, the selection fulfilled

the criteria set for 'assuring quality' in interviewing, in Rubin and Rubin's words (2012: 60). Aspiring to a broad yet varied outlook on the topic with interviewees who complement, even contrast with one another as participants (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 60), the chosen costume designers were indeed individuals who had significant experience in the field, varied and complementary perspectives on it, and the skill to verbalize their experiences of it (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 65). I deemed three perspectives to be a manageable number. To comply with the selected case study approach with the aim of performing thorough research on a limited number of cases, the scope of the productions also had to be rather narrow. Although I defend the choice of these designers and productions, this remains a limited view of the topic and should yield more research in the future.

Related to the researcher's position and interviewing, I was discreet in contacting the interviewees and speculating about when might be a suitable moment to ask for comments or further details. Respectively, it was at times challenging to determine whether a particular piece of information can be asked directly of the interviewee or if it should be accessed by other means (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 86). With this notion, although I experienced a warm and rewarding relationship with each of the interviewees, due to such modesty, I may have lacked access to some materials. Yet, in alignment with the principles of this method, such is the nature of interviewing. Specific relationships shape the tone and content of the interviewees' narration and the derived findings (see also Weckman 2015: 213). I deem the final materials to be sufficient yet note a possible gap; such a recognition contributes to the transparency of this research.

In the process, extending from articulation and documentation to critical reflection upon the costume designers' multifaceted artistic practice paved the way for assimilating a critical hermeneutics perspective to the dialogical approach. This was a meaningful way to integrate my general interest in critical social theory into this thesis. Overall, the progressively developed critical hermeneutics–driven dialogical approach, together with the triangulation of the select methods and materials, has provided a supportive frame for the cyclical development of this data-driven and article-based dissertation. The types of research materials I have applied are familiar and established, although I have aspired to provide a fresh angle through their combined use and purpose for the analysis. With

equal importance, I have aimed at richness and vividness in their collection, rather than at 'thoroughness' in terms of systematic sameness as an indicator of the validity of the research (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 16). Interviewing and content analysis as the main research methods are well established across the humanities and in costume studies as well: they have provided this study with a stable and reliable base.

The article-based format for reporting the results has had its benefits and disadvantages. As an asset, it has provided mandatory middle points for evaluation and re-orientation, thus granting structure for the otherwise flexible research practice. By contrast, it has also proved the ruthlessness of such a format: once published, the articles remain as they are, inevitably presenting a rawer version of the research in earlier articles than in later ones. Yet, the developed understanding of the topic may help to clarify points from the early articles in this compilation. Enriching, further updating, and theorizing beyond the analysis of the case studies in the articles has been my intention and approach when writing this connecting summary for the work as a whole.

As I propose, the research design for this thesis has allowed for extending the findings based on the analysis of each costume designer's private experiences of their professional processes – and of mine as the researcher relating to the experienced costume outcomes in performance – towards a greater understanding that furthers the field more broadly. However, this thesis identifies a lack of shared methods/frameworks for analysing costume in performance beyond semiotic analysis. Therefore, I propose the value of thick description as a technique to acknowledge and promote costume as a holistic multisensory entity. I also propose further evaluation and adaptation of Lehmann's theory of postdramatic performance to the needs of costume research.

Limitations of the study

In research in the performing arts, well-documented productions tend to dominate others. In some cases, this can be attributed to the influence of 'enduring visual records' (McKinney and Iball 2011: 132) or research based on previous research (Järvinen 2016b: 52). Alternatively, certain works may become

emblematic of an era through coincidental turns, or as dance artist Lindfors argues (2018: 281), through systematic, structurally biased prioritization. With this in mind, I have openly explained how the selection of costume designs for this thesis combines the narration from the personal interviews, my research interests, and the evaluation of not only aesthetics but also the characteristics that reflect my understanding of relevant approaches in this specific context. My rationale for the selection of such well-established costume designers is based on their solid experience in the field – with collaborative processes and artistic approaches of relevance for international communities as well. Hence, despite the limited number of referenced performances and the even smaller number of examined processes, this thesis serves as a starting point to understand and shape theory based on insights, changes, and recurring elements during this era of contemporary dance in Finland. In this manner, presenting these select cases serves as a step towards an enriched critical discussion about the costume designer's profession.

Further topical matters in addressing the limitations of this thesis include issues of diversity, increasingly crucial not only in the time frame of this study but also during this research process. First, I was concerned about the potential gendered slant of this study as the three selected women designers effectively described their collaborations with men choreographers. Although all the designers had eminent and similarly rewarding experiences with women choreographers, in their narration they spontaneously provided the researcher with more in-depth information about their collaborations with men. As I was able to identify this pattern early in the process, to allow the designers to centre on those collaborations that I deemed to be most meaningful for them, for Article 2, I intentionally chose three women choreographers. Such choices were deemed relevant and valid as the costume design profession in Finland has been dominated by women (Weckman 2015: 14, 251) and the relatively late emergence of the field into scholarly attention in the West has been connected to the assumed femininity of costume practice (Monks 2010: 10; von Rosen 2021: 41). In contrast, the prominence of men as reputed performers and choreographers in comparison to their women colleagues has been the subject of a debate in dance (Järvinen 2016b: 41–42). Second, although this thesis has touched upon

issues of variety and inclusion, their elaboration remains narrow and deserves to be better ingrained and enlarged in future research.

There is also an opportunity to explore in greater detail than this study has, the use of everyday garments as costume in dance performances that do not present performers as 'people'. By this, I mean choreography that works with 'scenographing costume-bodies' (von Rosen 2021), that is, bodies in choreographed time and space as the event of dance with no textual communication attached to the performance or its related materials to suggest signification of 'people', despite the use of everyday garments as costume. In the search for productions to complement the array of performances based on the designers' accounts, I was entirely unaware of my tendency to opt for productions in which mundane garments connote 'real' people. In hindsight, my selection, which was based on still images and video trailers, production descriptions, and lived experiences failed to connect with the agential capacities of everyday garments in such performances: choreography that fully relies on the study of movement and steers away from providing cues for its interpretation, in Lehmann's terms, rejects synthesis and signification (2006: 82). This indicates the need for a nuanced approach to everyday garments as costumes in their various contexts, in performance and beyond: in the process, press and photography, archives, exhibitions, and so on.

Concluding remarks and future research

The selection of productions in this thesis invites further research into the concurrent performance projects from the same period. Moreover, productions from both before 2000 and after 2015 require studies of their own, and so do the costume designer's other collaborative partnerships, for example, with dancers or other designers. As anticipated above, enquiries into the agential role and various appearances of everyday garments as costume are by no means exhausted by this study. A set of questions for future research remains: in which ways does the combination of everyday or mundane garments as a costume and choreography without reference to performers as 'people' leave an imprint

on the performance and its production? In which terms would the 'traits' of postdramatic performance (Lehmann 2006) apply, or what kind of an avenue would the theories of postmodern dress provide here?

The benefit of research through the lens of costume emerges from its dual perspective on performances: the knowledge provides advances in both costume and dance and more broadly in the field of performing arts. Thus, among its aims, this study has sought to present an academic contribution to the written history of these fields in Finland. With a focus on human interrelationships, modes of collaboration, and artistic processes, in addition to its core area of costume design and dance, this study may also extend to inform other areas of expertise within the performing arts such as lighting, sound, and set design, even performing and choreographing/directing. In the broadest scenario, insights about collaboration in this study are translatable to the ends of a wide range of professions where sustainable, positive psychology–rooted principles for teamwork are sought. In such a scenario, to continue to benefit societies on a larger scale, the development of these and new findings would gain from interdisciplinary teams and research projects.

Specific to studies in costume, the artistic milieus and settings for collaboration and creative processes during this research have undergone further changes on a global scale. The Covid-19 pandemic had a direct impact on the performing arts including contemporary dance performance. Where live events of finalized productions were turned into streamed performances, costume was displayed apart from its planned medium and at times, exposed its specificity as being designed for a live experience. Creative processes and collaboration between people had to be urgently redefined for upcoming productions during the pandemic. Existing practices were revised and new ones innovated: the growing body of analysis of such work will continue to have its impact on the field.

In Finland, a salient change is the professional milieu in which costume designers enter the industry. Even if trained elsewhere, costume designers can enjoy the direct and indirect influences of the existence of a higher education programme dedicated to costume design in the country since 2003. Notably, such designers perform their profession with an increasing awareness of co-creation and collaborative skills. This indicates a potential perspective for further

studies about dance performance as a specific context for the designer's work. Moreover, deriving from the results of this research and further connecting with insight arising from the pandemic's repercussions, sociologically and practice theory–informed scholarly approaches would benefit the field by yielding more understanding of the transformation of the costume designer's labour in contemporary performance.

To conclude, a prism of specialized themes as well as viewpoints are embedded in the ecology of costume design in the twenty-first century. Future research on the topic of this study assumes the consideration of a terrain in flux. Such themes and viewpoints include the simultaneity of existing design approaches, backgrounds, and practices as alternative milieus for creating costumes. In such settings, creative processes are influenced by flickering and expanding notions of costume, scenography, and dance. Simultaneously, increasing concerns regarding the ecological aspects, environmental and human sustainability, inclusion and diversity across the arts and societies, and various global contemporary settings for costume design as labour appear as far-reaching aspects to be carefully scrutinized in such scholarship.

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Sharing 'untamed ideas': Process-based costume design in Finnish contemporary dance through the work of Marja Uusitalo

ABSTRACT

When designing for contemporary dance, Finnish costume designer Marja Uusitalo integrates herself into the process of each production, allowing the costumes to emerge from collaboration. Starting from the costume designer's 'chase of untamed ideas' and continuing with the production team's 'shared experiences', Uusitalo's design work is the outcome of a process led by trust, dialogue, creative exchange and experimentation. The collaborative nature of performance design has been discussed by both practitioners and scholars; yet, an in-depth investigation of the central-ity of collaboration in process-based costume design would enhance a profounder understanding of process-led design in the specific field. Through Uusitalo's work, this article examines the relationship between costume design process and costume outcomes in the context of Finnish contemporary dance in the twenty-first century. This article discusses the frame of Uusitalo's work and analyses three of her designs as case studies. The analysis not only reveals the ways in which the design process informs the final costumes for the performance, but also brings to the forefront

elements of process-based costume design that, as this article argues, result in an explicit understanding of collaboration as well as of the agency of the costume designer. Furthermore, by proposing ways to consider alternative working methods in costume design, this article contributes to an ongoing discourse on processes and hierarchical structures in the creative fields more broadly.

INTRODUCTION

The spell of the costume in dance lies in its connection to the dancing body (Bugg 2014b; Malka Yellin 2014). As a costume holds the potential of conveying a direct response to motion, as well as generating movement (Bugg 2014b; Markstein 2016; Pantouvaki 2014; Uusitalo 2005, 2006[1]), or, as Lez Brotherston expressed it, 'motivating movement' (Monks 2015a: 103), it includes the ability to extend the expression of a dance production. Materializing this potential has been central to the costume designer's profession in the field of western modern dance and its offspring since the turn of the twentieth century. However, this close relationship between dance and costume is still under-represented and under-articulated in the existing literature.

This article forms part of a doctoral research project that aims at contributing to understanding the agency of costume design for contemporary dance. The project is informed by a philosophical hermeneutic approach: it strives to understand human experiences as they arise. The overall project provides insights into the design choices, processes and outcomes of contemporary dance productions in Finland in the twenty-first century. The examples from Finland serve as a case study for bringing to the forefront ideas and processes, which, although largely unpublished, are globally well known among professionals in the field. The objective is to reveal the manifoldness of contemporary costume design as a cultural and artistic practice. This allows the project to recognize the impact of costume decisions on performance making and to raise the awareness of the artists involved in the dance productions about this vital influence, beyond the specific field of costume. Moreover, the project proposes new approaches to investigating costume as a reference point in the discourse on changes in wider cultural phenomena in contemporary western societies.

The objective of this article is to examine collaboration practices as well as the ways and moments in which decisive choices are made in designing costumes for contemporary dance. This is achieved through an enquiry into selected twenty-first century productions from the contemporary dance scene in Finland, productions designed by the same artist. To provide insight regarding how the design process informs and potentially intensifies the costume outcomes, the research material for this study is driven by 'thick description' (Gaskell 2006: 39) and analysis of interviews with costume designers who have had major contributions to contemporary dance productions in Finland. This article draws material mainly from analysis of the work and processes of a significant Finnish costume designer, Marja Uusitalo, whose design practices exemplify the collaborative method this article investigates. Uusitalo's work can be defined as 'process-based costume design'. Her approach is characterized by a high degree of openness and sharing among the artistic team. In examining three specific case studies from Uusitalo's work, this article analyses the ways in which a direct yet distinctive connection between the costume design process and the costume outcome becomes evident.

In the emergent discipline of costume studies (Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2016), attempts to reveal the role of costume in dance productions[2] are still limited. Traditionally, theatre and performance theorists and historians have contributed to the study of dance costume with enquiries into past histories, exploring costumes as a window to canonized characters in the history of dance (Laver 1964; de Marly 1982; Rasche 2014; Malka Yellin 2014). Other examples include the study of costumes as artefacts (Barbieri 2012b; Fensham 2011, 2014; Mida 2016; Tomic-Vajagevic 2014). Such an approach focuses on tangible objects, extending from specified material aspects as mediators of information to the curation and archiving of costumes. Elements from these two approaches are also employed in explorations to the relationship between dress fashions, costume and dance (Steele 2014). Recently, a line of enquiry has developed from a scholarly approach combined with a solid background in design practice. In this vein, Donatella Barbieri's (2012a, 2012b) research for various projects on costume, including costume design for dance, is inherently informed by her practice as a costume designer. Another approach has been proposed by Sally E. Dean (2011, 2014, 2016), who has contributed to design for contemporary dance by reflecting upon her personal, body-led approach, resulting to what she defines as 'somatic costumes'; whereas Jessica Bugg (2011, 2013, 2014a, 2014b) employs an interdisciplinary methodology that focuses on designing new garments born through contemporary dance movement. Further review of the literature points towards contemporary costume designers discussing their work for dance (Bicât 2012; Hammond 2012; Norgren 2003; Uusitalo 2005, 2006); yet, the number of such studies is limited. Characteristically, this last approach addresses themes, such as design principles, design elements or design processes, in a comprehensive, yet less scholarly manner. However, a considerable amount of material resides with the costume designers themselves, and remains unwritten.

Similarly, literature investigating costume associated with dance in the specific context of Finland, both popular and scholarly, proves to be scarce, yet on the increase. Major sources for research have included historical overviews of dance companies and dance artists (Helavuori et al. 1997; Maukola 2006; Kukkonen 2003; Laakkonen 2007; Laakkonen and Suhonen 2012; Pauniaho 1999; Saari 2009; Ahlroos 2016), with reliance on the images provided by these sources. This type of literature tends to include single references to costume, or, in rare cases, one chapter dedicated to the theme (e.g. Takala 2006). Similarly, monographs about costume designers include references to their work for dance (Hirvikoski 2009; Salmela and Vanhatalo 2004). In the non-academic publication *Teatteri & tanssi + sirkus* (*Theatre & Dance + Circus*), Finnish costume designers are presented infrequently. A recent issue (2016), including articles on costume design, features a spread on costume for dance, written in a poetic, diary-like manner (Uusitalo 2016a). A similar platform that includes artists' talks and interviews is the professional magazine of the cultural organization and Trade Union for Theatre and Media Finland, *Meteli*.[3] Overall, the history of costume design for dance in Finland found in the literature appears limited in its focus, indicating the need for more scholarly investigation focusing on the entire twentieth century.

The intention of this study is to generate an accurate synthesis from this widely dispersed and largely undocumented material that utilizes the designers' experience in conceptualizing their practice. Although similar written designers' accounts may exist in other cultures, for instance in France and Germany, this present study focuses on the contributions made by Finnish

2. Here, the term dance production refers to performance, not ritual and social dance forms.

3. Costume design for dance also appears in Finland in the subjects chosen by costume – and sometimes, fashion – students for their master's theses (Helve 2008; Renvall 2016).

designers. The article begins with a summary of the interview method utilized in this study. To provide the context of this investigation, the study first discusses the role of costume in contemporary dance as well as the current status of contemporary dance, costume and design processes in Finland. The main body of the article introduces the Finnish costume designer Marja Uusitalo and examines costume in three dance productions entitled *Sahara* (2002), *Being is Everything* (2009) and *Whirls* (2011). These three case studies illustrate the costume designer's chase for 'untamed ideas' (Uusitalo 2014) under varying, yet highly collaborative artistic circumstances. The findings derived from the analysis of these three case studies indicate that the costume designer is engaged with the process rather than the outcome: the final costume is inherently informed by the intentions of the production and fully relies on the process. The article concludes by pointing out the ways in which open, collaborative processes among the artistic teams enhance costume outcomes that are organically integrated into the making of the production. This article suggests that the aforementioned elements lie at the core of design for contemporary dance in Finland and argues that process-based work enriches the agency of costume in contemporary dance performance. Furthermore, discussing the design processes and offering ways to consider alternative working methods in the context of Finnish contemporary dance, this article contributes to an ongoing, unresolved discourse on hierarchical structures in collaborative creative fields more broadly.

METHOD: INTERVIEWS WITH THE COSTUME DESIGNERS

The main data shaping the key arguments of this article was collected in semi-structured interview sessions with Finnish costume designers whose professional practice focuses on contemporary dance. Interviews were held with a select number of costume designers whose career spans at least over a decade of design work, and who are still active today, hence directly connected to the current development of the field. The emphasis on a long-standing career was expected to result in the chosen designers' ability to verbalize and compare their own experiences in the field of contemporary dance, gained through repetition in their everyday work. In addition, these criteria support the access to interview material that is more likely to contain examples of patterns of design work methods and collaborative artistic processes. Therefore, the costume designer Marja Uusitalo, a Finnish costume designer with considerable artistic practice in Finnish contemporary dance, was interviewed for this article. The materials provided by Uusitalo are complemented by preliminary interviews with two more Finnish costume designers who work in the field of contemporary dance: Erika Turunen and Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila. Uusitalo's professional experience and artistic merits provide insights into the variation of creative design processes in one designer's career and evidence the value of engagement in each individual collaborative process.

The interview settings for this research were between experts and a novice (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 102). The common passion for costume and dance helped to create a connection and to overcome the possible hierarchical positions between the interviewer and the interviewees in the interview sessions. This joint interest had additional positive aspects: the beneficial state of a mutually trustworthy, cooperative collaboration with the informant, which was assessed through sharing and reciprocity (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 104). This led to higher motivation on behalf of the interviewees and

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assured the interviewer's understanding as well as sensitivity towards the discussion (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 100–01).

In the interview sessions with Marja Uusitalo, images were utilized as tools to amplify the verbal description of the costume details or to accurately connect a costume to the verbal account. Notably, in the digital age, this material was available on a portable device: previously, similar connections would have required the interview to occur at the costume designer's workspace. Now, the two sessions were held at the same public location, creating a sense of continuity in interviewing. Between the sessions, the interviewer and the interviewee exchanged infrequent e-mails, initiated by the interviewer to clarify what was recorded during the interviews. The two also met by chance at costume-related events. On behalf of the interviewer, the approach undertaken commits to the interactive nature of interviewing (Johnson and Rowlands 2012: 99). Furthermore, the interviewer's subjective experience suggests that, in this interaction, the unwritten history of costume design within the field of dance from the expert to the novice is being transmitted wider than for the purposes of this article only.

OUTLINING THE CONTEXT: CONTEMPORARY DANCE AND CONTEMPORARY COSTUME IN FINLAND

Contemporary dance has evolved from the tradition of theatrical dance expression in the West (Cohen 2006). It comprises the variety, blend, and development of the elements and approaches of movement with their roots in modern dance.[4] The birth of modern dance at the turn of the twentieth century is quintessential for this study as it facilitated the wider acceptance of liberating not only the movement and the structure but also the set and the costume from the ideals of classical ballet (Anderson 1986; Steele 2014). In this shift, the reformers turned to costumes they believed would best support the emotions of their movement (Anderson 1986; Rasche 2014). This freedom of choice has remained at the core of the non-balletic tradition of dance, hence in the practices of contemporary dance alike. Its components, i. e. the movement and other artistic entities, are guided by the artistic frame of the production. Contrary to conforming to a given tradition, such as that of classical ballet, contemporary dance is free and open to different formats of expression. Therefore, costume in contemporary dance can vary from a physical garment to a projected one, from seemingly simple solutions to loudly extravagant creations. In the cases where set design is minimal or virtually absent, costume and light design are emphasized visual cues for the spectators. Ultimately, a costume has its spatial reach and characteristics. It responds both to the moving body and to the choreographic approach; it can play with or against the movement.

Interestingly, in Finland – in a republic without its own court ballet tradition (Suhonen 2011) – during the early twentieth century, the international development of new dance forms enhanced simultaneously the progress of modern dance and classical ballet. Subsequently, contemporary dance established its position as an artform towards the end of that same century (Kukkonen 2014: 47). To provide a view of the current activity in the field, during 2014, a total of 171 new productions and over 3000 performances in all forms of dance were given in Finland (Dance Info Finland 2015b), a country with a population of 5.4 million.[5] Consequently, from the perspective of dance artists, the current state in Finland is pluralist and free yet fragmentary (Monni

4. For the definition of contemporary dance, see Bank of Finnish Terminology for Arts and Sciences (2015); Laakkonen (2007: 427); Lepecki (2006); Strauss 2012: 'Introduction'.

5. In the same year, 152 performances created by Finnish artists were given abroad by 36 companies or choreographers primarily in Sweden and Germany, as well as in Norway, Russia, France and other countries.

6. In the theatre and performance context, the concept 'total work of art', *Gesamtkunstwerk* in German, often refers to Wagner's (1813–83) concept of integrated performance work/synthesis of the arts. However, at the end of the nineteenth century, this concept changed design thinking more broadly, being central in, for example, *Art Nouveau* and *Jugend*.

7. The Finnish performance designer Reija Hirvikoski (2016: 60) discusses the dance work *Kalevala* (1985, choreography Jorma Uotinen) in which she worked as a scenographer and co-designed the costumes with the choreographer: in her text, the space and the light are in the centre of the discourse whereas costumes remain unmentioned.

8. Study programmes for lighting and sound design started at the Theatre Academy, Helsinki as early as in 1986, whereas the study programme in costume design begun at the Aalto University School of Arts (formerly University of Art and Design Helsinki) in 2003.

2011). Kinaesthetics and corporeality have risen as meaningful starting points for extending the choreographic possibilities (Monni 2011). 'Performative' and 'conceptual choreographies', as Monni (2011: 12; see also Cvejić 2015) introduces them, are performances based on the study and organization of a certain concept or experience, whether it reflects a concrete and lived one or a more existential one, such as time or rhythm. Either way, the choreographer is bound by these techniques to articulate the theme. Conversely, in movement-centred composition, the verbal communication of specific themes towards the artistic team may be very scarce (Turunen 2014). With regard to the designers, the professional reality of a designer comprises a wider range of starting points, which are rarely too strictly defined. Moreover, globalization and digitalization – strands that have had impact on the worldwide dance community (Strauss 2012) – have similarly influenced contemporary dance in Finland (Monni 2011). Finnish choreographers have been exploring, for instance, social choreography (Jyrkkä 2011; Monni 2011), holistic humanity (Jyrkkä 2011), and performativity (Jyrkkä 2011; Monni 2011; Rauhamaa 2015); they expand their enquiries into worlds that are external to the dance professionals themselves, varying from amateurs and ordinary people to animals, urban spaces, social events, and organizations (Monni 2011), to name but a few. From these ingredients, they create both universal and individual manifestations. To determine the governing logic of each performance among the variety of contemporary choreographies, Monni (2011: 12) remarks that the spectator ought to adopt an active role. From the costume perspective, this array of approaches offers a wide range of dynamic options for designers.

In Finland, the role of costume in contemporary dance has gradually gained more attention. The productions of contemporary dance in Finland around the turn of the millennium were characterized by skilful light and video design (Hirvikoski 2009: 53; Laakkonen 2007: 429), but without specific mention to costume. During that time, the term 'total work of art'[6] arose in Finnish dance. The term refers to dance, music and 'visual elements from set to light design' (Laakkonen 2007: 429). Yet, in this definition, the role of costume remains unarticulated. As one of the interviewed costume designers, Erika Turunen (2014), ponders: 'If it was asked ten, fifteen years ago, I don't think we would have believed that the contemporary choreographers want to create visually as powerful productions as they nowadays do. Visually complete works'.

Turunen further comments that discourse on costume was previously restricted mainly to practicalities: 'the most important aspects would have been that the costume is not too tight and that it appears more or less stylish' (2014). As she proposes, in the development where components of a dance performance form a total work of art, in many cases the substance of costume design was brought to the fore a few years later than light and video design.[7] This may be connected to, first, education in the respective fields[8], and second, to the approach of dance artists in Finland, not always collaborating with a costume designer.

A review of the contemporary choreographic works and their costumes in Finland indicates that the means for encompassing visuality are often found in or connected to the concreteness of daily reality rather than to 'fantastic expressionistic worlds' (Strauss 2012: 119). What is distinctive in Finland is a great variety among the professional productions and their costumes. As Turunen suggests, this is perhaps thanks to the lack of the 'burden' of having an established tradition in costuming or choreographing only one style

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(2014, 2015). Therefore, the Finnish approach in presenting contemporary dance nowadays could be described as a transition towards a new 'tradition of complete visuality' (Turunen 2014). Turunen (2014) also refers to a certain 'unforced strangeness' that could be understood as the Finnish capability, or tendency, of presenting the dancing body through the costume in unconventional ways: mundane, unglamorous and alienated rather than idealized. In Finland, the costume approach that highlights the trained, aesthetic body is mostly observed in the visiting rather than in the locally created performances.

In contrast with a body-adorning approach, the use of contemporary everyday and training clothing as costumes appears strong in Finland. These types of garments are utilized as much for compositional purposes as for creating a resemblance to real life and less for the reason of comfort (Turunen 2014). This approach prominently features, for example, in the work of costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, who creates powerful worlds with the seemingly simple choice of so-called 'normal clothing'. This 'normal clothing' in the performance context, of course, is far from 'normal': the clothing has been designed, modified, manipulated or structured and sewn from the beginning for the production. Koiso-Kanttila describes her approach: 'I enjoy […] to be part of ensembles where visual entities matter and are a shared goal. I want audiences to enjoy what we have done, to get a feast for the eyes' (2014). The quote echoes Turunen's proposal for the Finnish new 'tradition of complete visuality'. It also highlights the priority of thorough design work in each production. The realm of the production sets the foundation for costume design: it drives the overall conceptual approach, sets the resources and suggests the means. Accordingly, the will and intention of the costume designer support the process towards the intended 'complete visuality'. Hence, the aesthetic features expressed in the costumes for Finnish contemporary dance seem to bloom as a result of an ambitious strive for visually complete works, through an emphasis on collaboration. The collaborative process is another major characteristic in Finnish contemporary dance, as discussed in the following section.

VARIATION IN DESIGN PROCESSES

The majority of Finnish costume designers work with dance as freelancers; permanent positions for resident designers in Finland are very rare.[9] As freelancers, the costume designers contribute to productions inside institutions as well as to independent productions with varying frames, resources and approaches towards the design work. Within an institution, the advantage lies in the existing structures that are provided to the production, often including a space for rehearsals, technical equipment and wardrobe support, as well as marketing. In independent productions, the artistic team organizes the necessary conditions for new performance works, either from scratch fully independently or with the administrative support of a company.

Hopgood (2016: 166) argues that 'the costume designer has to collaborate with more individuals […] than many of the designers on the production team'. Therefore, processes that frame the collaboration deserve closer investigation. Dance productions in institutional theatres are often associated with linear processes. In a linear costume design process, in principle, the costume designer collaborates with the choreographer, thus receiving the artistic and thematic information that shapes the costume design from the choreographer's point of view. Based on the artistic views of the choreographer and the

9. Costume designer Erika Turunen is based at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet as the resident designer; costume and set designer Elina Kolehmainen and scenographer Sari Salmela work at Helsinki City Theatre contributing to the dance productions of the institution. Costume designer Katja Maunula is the permanent designer for the dance group Rimpparemmi. Anna Kontek, who works as a set designer at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, has designed costumes for several ballets during her three decade long career in the same institution. These constitute the few examples of permanent collaboration with the Finnish contemporary dance context.

10. Collaborative practices in the field of theatre and performance are discussed in for example Ikonen (2006); Oddey (2007); White (2009); Trencsényi (2015). Ikonen (2006: especially 52–60) has analysed the paradox of individual and collective in the theatre practice. She expresses a poetic understanding of the nature of collaboration in the field of scenography (Ikonen 2006: 384), an understanding that in Ikonen's case, however, did not always change the practices of the studied performance group (2006: 385). For the scenographer's point of view, see Gröndahl (2012: 1).

11. Weckman provides analysis of how the collaborative approach developed in Finland during the career of the pioneering actor-costume designer Liisi Tandefelt (see 2015: 251–312, Chapter 3.3).

12. Testimonies on variations in collaboration and authorship in the field of dance, see for example Ahlroos (2016: 64, 78); Butterworth and Wildschut (2009: 381–2).

other members of the artistic team, the costume designer develops a concept and shares it with the team; the team members depend on the production and on the nature of the collaboration. In institution-supported productions, the performers are introduced to the costume designer at a later stage. Following this, the costume designer relays information and guidelines to the head of the costume department, who subsequently organizes the work of the wardrobe and the makers of costumes, shoes, hats, and other special parts of costume. Although the costume designer's presence in the rehearsals is highly beneficial, in this type of institutional collaboration, the information from the rehearsals is sometimes unobtainable because the designer is expected to submit costume drawings well in advance of the rehearsal period. Therefore, within this frame, the costume designer may be required to produce concepts without the input of the creative work that happens during the rehearsals and is, instead, often based on materials about which the choreographer only has approximate conception.

In Finland, only one contemporary dance group is situated within an institution, that of Helsinki City Theatre (HDC Helsinki Dance Company 2016), while most of the dance artists and groups are independent freelancers (Dance Info Finland 2015a). Contrary to institutionally supported productions, a common process for contemporary dance projects builds upon an individual or agreed instigation to create a performance. The needs of the production suggest the number and fields of the artistic team members: the life cycles of the teams vary from single collaborations to long-lasting partnerships. Depending on the team, these freestanding productions may employ a linear process or may flexibly shift its stages. Flexibility and collaboration are central in, for instance, process-based or process-led (Trencsényi 2015: 164) and ensemble, or collective (Hopgood 2016: 16), working methods.[10] In process-based or process-led approaches, the costume designer, along with other artistic team members, is more openly involved in the creation of the performance. The starting point and end result of the designer's own work are born through the process as suggested by the terms 'process-based' and 'process-led'. In these collaborative, dialogical processes, instead of – or in addition to – the verbal communication, the costume designer assesses the frame of the production through actively participating in the rehearsals. Therefore, these frames inherently build upon what the process brings: performance making, and consequently, costume designing, benefit from bringing together these creative minds. As these productions are seldom commissioned, and thereby, steered by fixed frames or structures, the driving force is the artists' urge to create a performance. Hence, full input is required from every team member. Ideally, the sense of having a common goal intensifies a motivation towards reaching it.

According to the preliminary findings of this research project, the process-based design approach is a prominent characteristic in the Finnish contemporary dance field (Helavuori 2009; Hirvikoski 2009; Levo 2009).[11] Collaboration here is regarded as mutual respect, a resource that radiates in all directions, not just between designers and choreographer, designers and performers or designers and makers, but also equally between all members of the production team.[12] Although the benefits of this working method have been noticed in performance-related literature (Ahlroos 2016; Bugg 2014b; Ikonen 2006), references to alternative costume processes – process-centred and ensemble working methods – remain largely marginalized within written sources. An exception is provided in Donatella Barbieri's work, who proposes methods for performance making and design that 'prioritise the visually engaging and

expressive body of the performer through costume' (2012a: 149). Existing literary references refer to hierarchical design processes: for instance, both scenographer Pamela Howard ([2002] 2009: 165), in her seminal work, *What is Scenography?*, as well as theatre scholar Aoife Monks (2014: 176) in her manifesto on costume offer a clear division between the costume professionals as designers and makers. A strict structural hierarchy becomes visible in the assumption that both of these professions, costume designers and makers, are inferior – or, at least, complementary – to the 'author', the director or choreographer. However, contemporary practice integrates the costume designer into the team creating a new performance (Markstein 2016). What ought to be acknowledged as well is the asset of a skilful maker for the designer: here, trust and commitment equally shape the outcome. As Marja Uusitalo (2016b) declares, her work shows respect to talented and meticulous makers. She, as designer, is often deeply involved with the crafting herself. Because of her insight on the value of making, she often praises those makers who with their open-mindedness contribute to the shaping of concepts.

The linear, process-based and process-led working methods offer contrasting frames for the designers. None of these methods is categorically superior to another, nor is one model mechanically tied to a given group or institution: people create, conduct and change between practices. Furthermore, although elements of process-centred approaches are identified and communicated, a deeper analysis of their characteristics for the field of costume would better articulate the direct connection between the process and the outcome. To provide a concrete example, the following section of this article focuses on the process-based work of Marja Uusitalo. The subsequent examples not only disclose the even relationship between the costume designer and the choreographer, but also expose other forms of collaboration in the process. The analysis of the interviews with this distinguished Finnish costume designer provides a direct insight into three separate cases – three cases in which the process is unique and, thereby, visible in the outcomes. By revealing the material correlations between process and outcome, this article outlines the possibilities of the process-based method in costume design and indicates the ways in which the costume designer's agency matters.

MARJA UUSITALO: DESIGN WORK AS A JOINT EFFORT

Costume designer Marja Uusitalo has enjoyed an active career from year 1979 to the present day with more than 70 productions in the field of contemporary dance. Furthermore, Uusitalo has made an eminent contribution to the education of the younger generation of costume designers at the University of Art and Design in Helsinki (2004–10), and later at Aalto University School of Art and Design (2010–11), as well as having worked as a costume designer for film and other performing arts beyond dance. In her costume design work for contemporary dance, she is interested in peculiarities, unexpected revelations sizable or small, shifting or transforming the character without a factual costume change, 'the slants and silliness' in costume, as she notes (Uusitalo 2016b). She defines herself as a process-based designer, admitting that people with whom she collaborates always influence the making and the production (Ruuskanen and Tawast 2012). In many ways, costume designer Marja Uusitalo seems to immerse herself in the moment, leaving the documentation of her work to others. From the independent or small-scale productions she has worked with in her career, especially during the era of manual cameras and film, scant photographs of her costumes are available.

13. Visual designers included video director Tapani Launonen, cinematographer J.-P. Passi and set and light designer Tarja Ervasti.

In her essay, 'Costume for dance – vision and concreteness' (2005), Uusitalo comments on her own work by highlighting the significance of active listening. At an early stage of a new collaboration, listening is for her a way to investigate whether or not a suggested production seems, or feels, promising – is it worth continuing with? (Uusitalo 2005: 72; 2006: 97). This implies an ethical consideration of a spontaneous, yet committed designer. Considering the process-based working method in which, as Uusitalo notes, the process is reflected in the outcome, the professional commitment is consequential. As Uusitalo herself underlines (2016b), the deference comes naturally. This engagement centres on the collaboration process within an artistic team to the extent that personal artistic visions are totally open for new interpretations – and even to remarkable changes – guided by the personal encounters that are an integral part of the collaborative process.

Uusitalo's long list of collaborations includes two choreographers that loom large: Finnish choreographers Alpo Aaltokoski and Ulla Koivisto. In her collaboration with Aaltokoski and his company, a team well-known in Finland for their pedagogic and solidarity projects (Ahlroos 2016; Alpo Aaltokoski Company 2015b), Uusitalo has created costumes for numerous productions. Many of them can be considered large in the number of dancers yet rooted in human-centred subjects. In addition, in the collaboration with Koivisto, a contemporary dance pioneer, Uusitalo has contributed to an array of solos and smaller scale productions. Their partnership illustrates Uusitalo's interest in 'clever simple' discoveries in costume design, celebrating innovative design that is realized with minimal means (Uusitalo 2005: 76). Indeed, Uusitalo presents herself as 'not a big-stage person': 'I don't mean that I'm modest or anything, but to work with great fulfilment, I don't need to make it extensive', Uusitalo declares (2014). In both collaborations, she highlights mutual trust.

THREE CASES OF MARJA UUSITALO'S PROCESS-BASED COSTUME DESIGN FOR CONTEMPORARY DANCE

This section explores Marja Uusitalo's costume design work for contemporary dance through three examples of her work that stand at the core of the process-based practice. This serves to examine the themes and patterns of the process-based approach in the field of performance design for contemporary dance in Finland. The productions of *Sahara* (2002), *Being is Everything* (2009) and *Whirls* (2011), all choreographed by Alpo Aaltokoski, reveal different ways in which process-based design work emerges and is echoed in the costume outcomes. The objective of analysing *Sahara* is to bring to the fore the ways in which shared experience feeds the collaboration, process and actual outcome of the costumes. This pattern is also traced, for example, in Uusitalo's solo work collaborations (Uusitalo 2005: 76). *Being is Everything* is investigated as a demonstration for collaborative equality and alert openness as well as an organic bridging between professional boundaries. *Whirls* reminds of the unexpectedness factor in design work: it is examined as a case of unpredicted process.

Sahara (2002)

Uusitalo mentions the making of *Sahara* as her all-time favourite design process (Ahlroos 2016: 82; Uusitalo 2014, 2005). This production started with a rare opportunity for the choreographer and the visual designers[13] to travel

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to the Sahara desert together. The main purpose of the trip was to shoot film material for the performance (Uusitalo 2005: 73, 2006: 99). In addition to the footage from the desert being shot and becoming a distinctive part of the performance, the experience rewarded the team in more profound ways: as Uusitalo remarks, this trip was overall insightful, even essential for the collaboration between her and the choreographer from that point on. According to Uusitalo:

> It was about understanding it, and finding a mutual language. I think that it happened during that piece, and it has also directed our communication later on as well. With Alpo [Aaltokoski] it had never been difficult, but this production made the communication even more wonderful.
>
> (Uusitalo 2014)

The trip to the Sahara desert also had a visual impact on the costumes. Uusitalo has referred to this production in her 2005 essay, in which she explains that the choreographer had aspired to gain more insights from the desert experience, beyond merely projecting the film material from the desert. This aspiration was intended for the light and set designer of the production, but Uusitalo took it as an impulse also for her own work in designing the costumes (Uusitalo 2005: 73, 2006: 100). For Uusitalo, the colours, shapes, lights and shadows of the Sahara tinged the themes of the production – memory, man and landscape. She envisioned a stream of people, mankind wandering through times and cultures (Uusitalo 2005: 74, 2006: 100–01). For her, it was essential to capture the lights and the shades of the dunes in the costumes. Equally, the costume designer wanted to deliver the sense of 'blueness' that she experienced in the environment and in Tunisian people's dresses. These ideas evolved and were crystallized
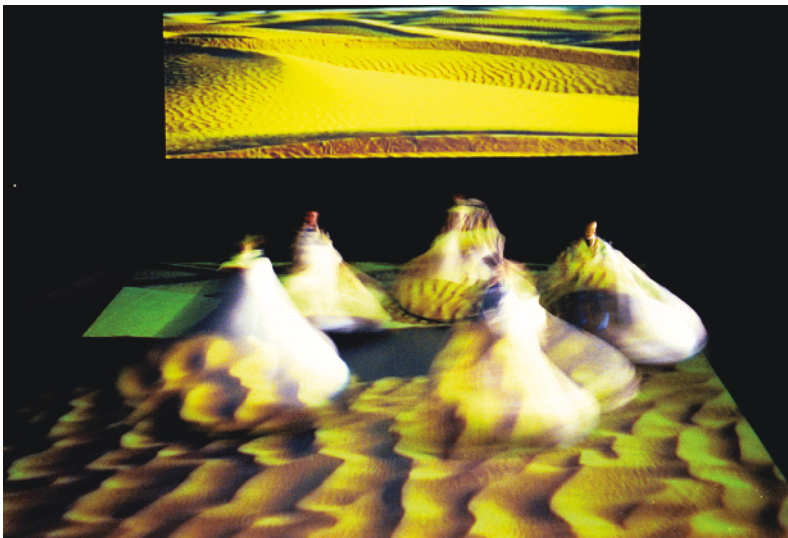

Figure 1: In Sahara *(2002), the costume designer's experience of dunes materializes in the heavy cloaks that shape the scenographic landscape. Photograph courtesy of Ninna Lindström, Alpo Aaltokoski Company.*

in costuming the dancers in cloaks that could be altered during the performance: one side referred to daylight and the other side to night (Uusitalo 2016b). In addition to the play with colours, the costumes served several functions. They could be transformed from capes to surfaces for projecting the film material from the Sahara, and to trains and skirts. Uusitalo communicated her vision of designing sturdy cloaks to the choreographer, and a prototype was fabricated for the rehearsal period. The idea seemed to work well, leading in a dialogue between the heavy capes and the movement. The cloaks influenced the movement, and the movement influenced the final shape of the cloaks (Uusitalo 2005: 74, 2006: 101), resulting in a form that actively occupied the space when worn by the six dancers.[14] Hence, the costume designer's experience of dunes shaped a scenographic landscape (Figure 1).

After developing the cloaks as the costume used in the opening scene of the *Sahara* production, the 'blueness' still occupied Uusitalo's mind. In a personal interview (Uusitalo 2016b), she refers to a Finnish proverb, 'risk shows the chance'. In this case, she means that on the stage, there is a risk of mixing characters if the resemblance is overdone. Uusitalo decided to benefit from this thought, turning the risk into a chance. Therefore, she devised her vision of streams of people into a deep blue flood where the individual could not be traced anymore. She actualized this concept through piles of blue everyday garments, such as skirts, pants and T-shirts, which the dancers could wear before every new entry to the stage. The adoption of different garments in a variation of cuts all in blue hues provided fine, organic changes in the overall view, intentionally distracting the spectators away from identifying the individual dancers (Uusitalo 2016b, 2005: 74) (Figure 2).

Feelings that Uusitalo later associates with the process of this production, described as 'laborious yet somehow very lucky' (Uusitalo 2014), imply that the strong bonds that grew within the artistic team during and after the

Figure 2: After the opening scene, danced in the cloaks, Sahara *reveals the costume designer's interpretation of 'blueness' from Tunis in arrays of blue garments. Photograph courtesy of Ninna Lindström, Alpo Aaltokoski Company.*

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trip to the Sahara helped to overcome difficulties and possible setbacks. A shared experience, such as the one Uusitalo had with her choreographer and the visual team members, can thus be defined as an additional resource for a production. As it indeed seems to have been, Uusitalo terms the trip 'a smart investment in the production' (Uusitalo 2016b). The *Sahara* case provides proof on how sharing can balance financial and other shortages that often characterize contemporary productions.

Being is Everything (2009)

The joint understanding created through a shared experience and nurtured through effective communication both on a professional and a personal level (Uusitalo 2014) has informed the later long-lasting collaboration between the choreographer, Alpo Aaltokoski, and the costume designer, Marja Uusitalo. Since the *Sahara* production, between them, grasping and casting ideas has been free, direct and unhierarchical.

Another production, *Being is Everything*, provides a concrete example of capturing an idea from a surprising source. In this case, the choreographer and costume designer had discussed their feelings on the upcoming production over an unofficial meeting right before the costume designer's three-week absence abroad. Aaltokoski, a choreographer who usually carefully selects and develops the theme of each production (Uusitalo 2014), had suggested to Uusitalo that in this case, he was only interested in researching the simple statement that 'being is everything' (Uusitalo 2014). Uusitalo narrates that she had happily agreed and added to their discussion her longing for 'just being and crocheting'[15] (Uusitalo 2014).

During Uusitalo's absence, a graphic design student approached the choreographer with the wish of making a poster for this dance production.

Figure 3: Being is Everything *(2009) exemplifies a process that allowed the components of the production to develop and intertwine in an organic collaboration. The posters, created by graphic designer Kirsti Maula, and costume outcomes, designed by Marja Uusitalo, capture the exchange of ideas. Photograph courtesy of Kirsti Maula.*

15. The craft of crocheting is traditional in Finland, often associated with domesticity and the older generation. However, in recent years, it has become extremely popular among the fashionably conscious urban people as a quiet and relaxing hobby. In addition to statements manifested in the act of crocheting itself – opposing the hectic, technical and technological everyday (Railla 2006: 10), crocheting holds a linkage to craftivism, political activities undertaken through crafts (Buszek 2011).

Aaltokoski communicated the costume designer's roughly expressed interest in crocheting to the student. When Uusitalo eventually saw the two versions of the posters directly responding to her initial concept of relating crocheting to this production, she expressed her amazement. Uusitalo (2014) verbalizes the emotion perceived through the posters as 'this peculiar joy in seeing them'. In her own words, '[t]here were two of these posters that were *so gorgeous* [emphasis original in interview], and I was like, I can't take it, these are so wonderful' (Figure 3).

The posters embodied the ambience of crocheting and the theme of 'just being' so aptly that the crafts of crocheting and knitting became central to the whole design and performance making process. The costume designer taught crocheting to almost the entire artistic team, including the eight dancers, and the team jointly produced the full costumes for the dancers by crocheting collectively. Crocheting became a new shared experience, enhanced by the free, collaborative approach of all the team members. As crocheting developed to be the theme and the method for composing the costumes, it revolutionized the conventional way and the hierarchy of working. Here, Uusitalo highlights the free flow of ideas exchanged between the team:

> So it's again like a chain reaction, where does the impulse come from? The idea of the costumes and the poster, they existed before any movement. Alpo [the choreographer] used it. The impulse can come from anywhere. I had never met the graphic designer before. Alpo had only casted that sometimes it 'just is'.
>
> (Uusitalo 2014)

Respectively, when the graphic designer visited the rehearsals at a later phase, she realized that not only was the spirit from the posters transmitted

Figure 4: Being is Everything *(2009), costume design Marja Uusitalo, choreography Alpo Aaltokoski. Photograph courtesy of Ninna Lindström, Alpo Aaltokoski Company.*

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to Uusitalo's costumes in colours and inspiration, but also the choreographer had created movement that matched the postures depicted in the posters (Uusitalo 2014) (Figure 4).

This example refers to the importance of spontaneity and mutual, sometimes intuitional understanding of the nature of a production. Between Uusitalo and Aaltokoski, an understanding had already been developed and maintained throughout their earlier collaboration. In this case, the addition of a new member to the artistic team, the graphic designer, quite literally tied together the threads between the costumes, their materiality and the movement. This underlines the importance of being open to grasp and support ideas emanating from a team, at any point of the process. A rough idea expressed by the costume designer was communicated to the choreographer, following, to the graphic designer, only to be returned to the costume designer in an evolved version that was developed even further, engaging the entire artistic team.

Whirls (2011)

The example of the dance production *Whirls* exemplifies how a 'change in the horizon' (Gadamer 2014) may interfere in the once-finalized design work, hence extending the process of the costume designer. Uusitalo recalls *Whirls* as a production of many encumbrances starting from the funding-related delays at the start of the project. As she sardonically notes in one of the research interviews (Uusitalo 2016b), these turns befit the history of *Whirls*: this ballet score, inspired by the Finnish epic, *Kalevala*, became a life-time project for its composer Uuno Klami (1900–61) who was never able to finish the work.[16] In addition to the impetus of the Finnish epic poem, the origins of the *Whirls* score are uniquely related to design, given that the composer was deeply influenced by the work of set and costume designer Regina Backberg in the 1940s. Hence it was apt that in the contemporary production that Marja Uusitalo was invited to design, the costume designer maintained a central role. In their early meetings, Uusitalo and Aaltokoski agreed that the middle part of the score would be dedicated to a series of extravagant costumes, and the choreographic work would be created on the conditions set by these costumes. In the first and the third part, the costume design would be steered by the choreographic content (Uusitalo 2016b). Stemming from interpreting the Finnish epic, *Kalevala*, and the forging of the mythical Sampo – the magical mill that would bring wealth and fortune to its owner – with contemporary themes, such as criticism of consumerism, Uusitalo felt eager to develop all her hyperbolic ideas.

The production was put together under a tight timeframe, 'during a hot summer' (Uusitalo 2014). In the case of *Whirls*, the resources and restrictions that define the designer's 'playground' (Monks 2015b), ended up playing a noteworthy role, in a way that was not known when the design process started. The preliminary information available to Uusitalo referred to only five performances that would be presented at one location. This suggested a rather simple frame that did not involve any severe restrictions related to costume maintenance, storage or transportation. Based on this, Uusitalo quite rightly charted herself a 'playground' that allowed her to play with the theme without worrying about practicalities, such as the volume or pliancy of the costumes. She could swell up her design and express criticism through a sophisticated 'hypertrophy', in Barthes terms ([1955] 1972), creating

16. The history of *Whirls* is unique: in the 1940s, the composer Uuno Klami was introduced to a ballet libretto and its preliminary costume and set designs by Regina Backberg. The designs decisively changed the course of the composer's work, who continued to develop his *oeuvre* originally started in the 1930s. In the 1950s and 1960s, there were several attempts to stage the ballet score, yet the composition remained unfinished. In 1961, the composer died, and the work was largely forgotten until 1985; revivals with a newly composed third part by Kalevi Aho were planned throughout the 1990s and 2000s, but the line of unforeseen obstacles did not break. These led into a concert version that premiered in 2001. Ten years later, in 2011, the full ballet score version choreographed by Aaltokoski was finally staged for the first time (Aho n.d.).

Figure 5: Costume designer Marja Uusitalo 'chases untamed ideas' in her process-based approach within contemporary dance productions. These ideas entwine with the process, resulting in costumes that range from 'simple and clever' to colourful and grandiose. Whirls (2011), costume design Marja Uusitalo, choregraphy Alpo Aaltokoski. Photograph courtesy of Marko Mäkinen, Alpo Aaltokoski Company.

oversized costumes that comprised numerous individual parts as emblems of the modern day craze for possessions. Her design resulted in a set of costumes for each of the three parts of the choreography, ranging from skin-toned leotards to massive headgear and voluptuous bottoms, some of them composed with found and donated plastic objects, some with huge panniers up to 3.5 metres of diameter, reminiscent of period dress, all constructed in fine detail (Figure 5).

Against the original plan, after staging the five scheduled performances it was decided that *Whirls* would tour. Subsequent changes in the team of dancers led not only to minor adjustments but also to modification in the choreography and thereby, in the costumes: the design work that had been influenced and enabled by the short-livedness of this production had to be adjusted to the novel circumstances. Alongside the negotiation of resources and actual capacity of the costumes, the prolonged process provoked stress to the whole production team. Yet, the changes in the costumes required disproportionate labour that was undertaken in its whole extent by the costume designer alone (Uusitalo 2016b). As Uusitalo admits, these costumes have been 'tacked and patched, cried over and raved for' (Uusitalo 2014). The result, however, was spectacular: the costume forms included cultural references to the follies of past centuries, while the choice of materials reflected the awe of the present-day masses of plastic junk. The cold, lifeless objects excessively combined with synthetic materials in an explosion of colours extended and challenged the human presence through bodily empathy. In contrast to the physical and emotional load caused by this unpredicted process, the costume design outcome was presented, and eventually shortlisted, for the Gold medal award in costume design at World Stage Design (WSD) 2013.[17]

FINDINGS: TRUST, OPENNESS AND SHARED EXPERIENCES AS KEY ELEMENTS IN PROCESS-BASED COSTUME DESIGN

As analysed in the three dance productions designed by Marja Uusitalo, the elements of a desired state of trust, openness towards creative input by others and sharing of experiences can be powerful tools in creating cohesive yet stimulating and active costumes for contemporary dance. In each aforementioned case, the process has deeply influenced the costume outcomes. Hence, it is the process, the collaboration and the production itself that shape the ways in which the emotive and narrative aspects are manifested through the costumes.

In *Sahara*, the shared experience within the artistic team was explicitly translated into form and colour, as well as in the ways the costumes were used on the stage. Tracing this connection between encounter and outcome in a fairly commonplace process exemplifies the importance of a strong, shared experience as a wide and rich resource for the production. In Uusitalo's professional work, the act of sharing experiences indicates that trust and openness are essential elements in the collaboration leading to affective and effective costumes – design work that varies from 'clever simple' to splendidly 'slant', to use Uusitalo's wordings. The notion of sharing rises as a key component for process-based design work.

The case of *Being is Everything* highlights the costume designer's unconditional openness towards the process and its possibilities. Although a similarly open, engaging approach has flickered in Uusitalo's earlier works, this specific production exemplifies the result of involving the team members in the costume work in an organic manner: the trait of inviting collaborators to a new role, as co-creators in crocheting the costumes, once again invited to a shared experience, yet in a more strategic approach. Remarkably, in *Being is Everything*, the shared experience – the act of producing the costumes together – actually lessened the workload of the costume designer, thus adding another concrete advantage to the collaboration and revealing the fact that for the designers, the daily work usually continues after the rehearsals. This favourable ambience is hand-crafted in the costumes: as crocheting is a technique widely known in Finland used in craftwork for objects that are often exchanged as presents, the costumes' visual character might have evoked personal memories of love and care to the spectators. The visuality of these garments also transmits a bodily understanding of their feel. The fact that the costumes were produced collectively by the artistic team was innovative, democratic and anarchistic. Instead of appearing as a curiosity, the groundbreaking working method contributed to the theme of the production, the concept of 'just being', as well as to the philosophy of the Aaltokoski Company, which focuses on 'solidarity and joint responsibility' (2015b). Yet, the nature of the process was enabled through the costume designer's agency: it was the costume designer who guided the final whole.

Analysing Uusitalo's narration of *Whirls* indicates that mutual trust and unconditional openness were the most essential elements in this collaboration between the choreographer and the costume designer while they discussed the course and resources of the process. At different phases, the openness as an approach was affected by unpredicted turns, yet, these challenges were not revealed to the spectators in the final costumes. In the case of *Whirls*, the aesthetics of the central part of the performance offers to the spectator 'an overdose' (Uusitalo 2016b) of stimuli, creating an almost disturbingly rich and

juicy composition on the stage. Thereby, *Whirls* can be considered an example of process-based costume design that reveals another fascinating variation of the ways in which the costume outcome relies on the process. Furthermore, this case with its holistic design contributes to the discussion on the role of costume in Finnish performances as it confirms that costume is an active and integral part of the whole. Appealing as a visually complete work, this performance has been referred to as a 'total work of art' (Ahlroos 2016: 40, 42); in this case, with costume being included in the definition.

The aforementioned key findings pinpoint equivalences in the collaboration with Koivisto, the second partnership of importance that Uusitalo raises both in her essay (2005) and when interviewed (2014). Through her contribution to a series of solo work by Koivisto, Uusitalo experienced peace, trust, and equality – in her own words – across the artistic team, as with the Aaltokoski Company (Uusitalo 2014). Uusitalo's work encourages, and is deeply inspired by, a sense of non-hierarchical relationships. All in all, the spirit in Uusitalo's work seems to be inviting, applicable 'ad hoc', notwithstanding of the artistic team or production in question (2005). This is related to what is considered common in the productions of contemporary dance in Finland (see also Koiso-Kanttila 2014): a unique, close, often very unhierarchical collaboration.

CONCLUSIONS

This article introduced the term 'process-based costume design' to signal a highly collaborative, committed and open working method: an approach powerfully present in the working ethos of costume designer Marja Uusitalo. Three of her collaborations with the choreographer Alpo Aaltokoski were analysed as insightful variations of process-based costume design: *Sahara*, *Being is Everything* and *Whirls*. This analysis proved the direct connection between process and outcome. This was manifested in multiple ways: in a travel log, in a feeling of ease in engaging collaborators, in responding to circumstances, in an overall urge to celebrate the art of costume in its extreme. Second, these cases revealed that process-based design is an approach that highlights the potential of openness in collaborating and in true commitment to each production. This dedication to the process and full openness towards new methods of collaboration may lead into breaking boundaries of professions. Alertness and sharing emerged as additional qualities of this approach. In the case of Uusitalo, the process-based design work also avoids 'solemnity': in each analysed example, despite the moments of despair and doubt, a certain playfulness permeates the process. Finally, the cases of *Sahara*, *Being is Everything* and *Whirls* confirm that each design work is first and foremost informed by the premises, and contribute to understanding the ways in which the role of the costume designer materializes in the production. In different productions, the costume designer can 'lead' a process or 'listen to' it, even 'be immersed' in its universe: these approaches constitute different creative roles and define the designer's agency in a production.

This analysis results to additional remarks on vocabulary. Many of the terms utilized in contemporary productions, where professionals from distinct fields meet, do not appear explicit. Therefore, to ensure that principles such as 'openness', 'sharing' and 'collaboration' factually enhance the creation of the performance, specifying the form, content and extent of each term, in each production, is necessary. For example, practitioners widely recognize 'collaboration' as a point of departure, yet with controversial conceptions of

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its meaning it may cause confusion, even disappointment. Similarly, 'sharing' occupies no content as such, unless the team defines it: through articulation, the term materializes into activities. The term 'openness', as analysed in the work of Uusitalo, can be understood as a stimulus in and towards collaboration: it refers to an approach that, instead of being aimless or vague, emerges as agile and aware. The most explicit of the terms envisaged in this research, 'trust', may be ambiguous in other ways: it is hard to prove 'trust' in collaboration without interviewing everyone involved, that indeed trust adhered. Therefore, the desired state of 'trust' in this study reflects the experience of the costume designer.

The research outlined in this article indicates possibilities in developing an understanding of costume design both in practice and scholarship. Process-based design work can be approached as a loose pattern with no hierarchies rather than as a strict method. Its elements are applicable, for example, in the study programmes in the field, in Finland.[18] Uusitalo, too, longs for more tools for the costume students on how to approach the special nature of dance (Uusitalo 2014). Collaborative practices suggest to designers the balance, place and purpose of each costume, enhancing mutual understanding about its role in the production, e.g. as instigator of movement and choreographic elements. This approach is nowadays widely acknowledged in the Finnish field of contemporary dance. However, as remarked earlier in this article, scholarly references still mainly imply to design processes with hierarchies. This raises the question whether the existing body of literature reflects the current practices in the field. This article suggests that the approaches mapped in Finland extend to well beyond the borders of a country and indicates yet another ground for further examination.

In conclusion, it is not solely the rich and diverse contemporary dance scene with its cultural characteristics that empowers the costume designers to create expressive and meaningful costume outcomes for the productions. The outcome is shaped with and through the process and approach of a designer. For each design work the ideas are 'untamed but able to be encountered', as Uusitalo vividly observes (2014). At the core of the most rewarding productions lies an organic and collaborative design process: rewarding extends from the appreciation of the artistic team to the performer and, in many cases, to the spectator. This article proposes process-based costume design as an instigator of these rewarding moments: it allows the costume outcomes to take unexpected, innovative forms in scale from seemingly minimalistic to boldly big and loud, guided by the needs of the production and the theme of the performance. Suggesting rather than dictating, the costume partakes the lived experience of a performance. Thereby a process-based approach actively advances the cohesion of all artistic parts: untamed ideas create new shared experiences.

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18. This is evident particularly in the case of the course 'Dance as a Total Form of Art' which takes place every two years as a collaboration between the MA Degree programmes in Choreography, Scenography, Costume Design, Sound Design, Lighting Design and the BA in Dance from the Theatre Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki and Aalto University.

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1

Article 2

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Political by Design: Costume Design Strategies within the Finnish Contemporary Dance Productions AmazinGRace, Noir? and The Earth Song

Tua Helve

ABSTRACT

This article examines costume design within three Finnish contemporary dance productions in the 2010s, *AmazinGRace, Noir? and The Earth Song,* by respective costume designers Soile Savela, Sanna Levo and Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, to identify the ways in which costume works within performances with political themes through cases that make use of 'everyday' garments as costumes. Here, everyday garments as *costume* refers to identifiable forms, silhouettes and connotations, as opposed to fantasy or 'abstract' costumes. Political, as defined by the themes of these performances, means subject to power relations: societal inequality, ethnicity and otherness and climate change. Despite having shared ground in employing everyday, real-life costume components, all three designs operate with a distinct strategy. Hence, this article discusses three strategies for materializing political aesthetics through costume: one that is *inclusive* in its use of 'ordinary' clothes as costume; one that builds itself through *ready-made* connotation and representation in costume; and one that is *associative* in its approach towards the capacity of costume. This investigation, from the perspective of a costume researcher and designer, not only argues for the potential of costume to communicate political meaning through its aesthetic choices but also reveals the versatility embedded in this under-researched area of everyday garments as costume within contemporary dance performance.

Keywords: costume, costume design, dance, performance, aesthetic, political

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä artikkelissa tutkin tapoja, joilla esiintymispuku toimii nykytanssiteoksille keskeisenä elementtinä. Keskityn pukusuunnitteluun kolmessa suomalaisessa nykytanssiteoksessa 2010-luvulla: teokset ovat *AmazinGRace, Noir?, ja The Earth Song,* joiden puvut ovat suunnitelleet Soile Savela, Sanna Levo sekä Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila. Teosten pukuilmaisu perustuu olemassa olevista vaatteista ammentavaan, muotojen, siluettien ja merkitysten kautta tunnistettavaan suunnitteluun, ei mielikuvituksellisiin tai 'abstrakteihin' pukuihin. Lisäksi teokset käsittelevät poliittisia, valtasuhteisiin liittyviä teemoja: yhteiskunnallisia kysymyksiä, etnisyyttä ja toiseutta sekä ilmastonmuutosta. Huolimatta teoksia yhdistävästä ratkaisusta käyttää realistista vaatetta esiintymispukuna, teosten puvut toimivat teoskonteksteissa toisistaan poikkeavin keinoin. Käsittelen tutkimuksessani näitä pukuilmaisun kolmea erilaista strategiaa tuottaa poliittista estetiikkaa: *inklusiivista,* arkipäiväisyyden avulla luokse päästävää; *valmiina käytettävää,* visuaalista tunnistettavuutta hyödyntävää; sekä *assosiatiivista,* vapaisiin mielleyhtymiin pyrkivää strategiaa. Tutkimukseni pääasiallinen menetelmä on esitystallenteisiin perustuva sisällönanalyysi. Analyysin myötä tarjoan näkökulmia puvun moninaisiin mahdollisuuksiin kommunikoida poliittisia merkityksiä estetiikkaan liittyvien valintojen kautta. Samalla avaan ikkunan laajasti käytettyyn, mutta aiemmin vähän tutkittuun ilmiöön: pukusuunnitteluun, joka perustuu 'arkivaatteiden' käyttöön tanssiteoksissa.

Political by Design: Costume Design Strategies within the Finnish Contemporary Dance Productions AmazinGRace, Noir? and The Earth Song

Tua Helve

Introduction

In combination with choreography and the overall artistic creation, the component of *costume* shapes the experience of a contemporary dance performance. Theatre and dance scholar Rachel Fensham summarises the concept of a dance costume as 'a radical constellation of materials with ideas' (2014, 45). Here, 'materials' indicate the concrete and 'ideas' the conceptual aspects of a designer's work. Merging these two aspects forms a 'constellation': the conscious and constructed choices of how to dress the body in the context of a performance. 'Radical' refers to the centrality of costume to choreography. As dance scholar Preston-Dunlop stated, 'what a dancer looks like influences how the movement performed will be perceived' (1998, 72). Thus, decisions made in costume design impact performance and, to a certain extent, have a concrete effect on the expression of ideas, beyond visual, and emotion to the audience.

This article investigates aesthetic choices in costume within dance productions that possess political themes. In this context, *political* refers to a specific stance towards dance that aims to comment on the global, local and intercultural economic, ecological and humanitarian landscape. I chose political dance performance as a specific context for analysing the ways in which costume conveys meaning in relation to a theme that, first, has been clearly articulated, and second, suggests societal importance. In particular, I was eager to examine the use of 'everyday' garments as costume for these ends. Within dance performance, design practice that makes use of everyday garments as costume is a well-established tradition. However,

this tradition remains under-researched in terms of its versatility. While early court dances in Europe often included everyday fashions, in the course of the twentieth century, costume choice came to signify several distinct artistic aims. In 1960s USA, specific works by artist-designer Robert Rauschenberg with choreographer Merce Cunningham (e.g. *Story* 1963) and artists at the Judson Dance Theater exemplified contrasting approaches to costume: one in which costume, although mundane, was a design element, versus one in which low-key costumes were mainly used out of necessity. In present-day Finland, both approaches to the use of everyday garments exist. Here, I discuss cases that indicate in distinct ways the substance of these costumes for dance making.

To provide context for the analysis of various strategies in the use of everyday garments as costume, as a means of creating a political aesthetic, I examined three Finnish contemporary dance productions from the 2010s. I selected the performances for their engagement with overtly political themes, as open-ended examples for this investigation; another selection criterion was that the performances comprised free-standing productions, as this is the prevalent mode of dance making in Finland.[1] Hence, *AmazinGRace* by Kirsi Törmi (2010) addresses regional and national societal issues (Zodiak 2011), such as state savings, in dialogue with reflections of life and happiness; *Noir?* by Sonya Lindfors (2013) debates 'race' and otherness (Zodiak 2013a); and *The Earth Song* by Sari Palmgren (2013) contests climate concerns (Zodiak 2013b). As professionals, these choreographers entered the field at various points in time: Törmi graduated in 1999,

Palmgren in 2004, and Lindfors in 2013. However, an ethos which comments on our contemporary society characterises their artistic approaches.[2]

Context for the cases

AmazinGRace, Noir? and *The Earth Song* were performed within *Zodiak–Center for New Dance* in Helsinki, Finland. *Zodiak* is a production house and dance organisation that has played a central role in the independent Finnish contemporary dance scene since the late 1980s.[3] It was founded by a group of self-sustaining dance artists to promote dance as a noteworthy free-standing art form and to establish an arena for cutting-edge expressions of the period, based on a variety of approaches (Zodiak 2017). Under these circumstances, political thought was involved in many of the *Zodiak* choreographers' artistic philosophies as well as in the themes for formulating movement (Ojala and Takala 2007, 15, 35). Since the launch of the national network of Regional Centers for Dance in 2004, *Zodiak* has also functioned as one of seven regional centres for dance in Finland. To allow for diversity within their criteria for advancing artistic excellence and innovation, performances are selected based on open applications (Zodiak 2017).[4] *Noir?* and *The Earth Song* were produced as part of *Zodiak*'s seasonal programme, whereas *AmazinGRace* premiered in Kajaani and opened in *Zodiak* in autumn 2011.

Hence, the three productions selected for analysis fulfil 'normative expectations about theatre dance' (Burt 2017, 5). They are performed in a theatrical space, engage with light, sound and costume design, and create a division between performers and spectators. Although they invite spectators to action, these overtures are subtle rather than disruptive. Regarding performers, the productions include non-dancers, either live or on video, as an integral part of the whole; notably, a pregnant professional dancer and mother is included in *The Earth Song* (2013).

The dancers in *Noir?* are of African ancestry, calling into question the Finnish canon of dance, which is predominantly, if not exclusively, 'white' (Lindfors 2017). Hence, the performances join the discussion about which bodies are accepted to dance.

The political aesthetics of costume choice

The ways in which political concerns are performed both involve and emphasise decision making about aesthetic qualities. Here, *aesthetic* refers to features that are perceivable by the senses; accordingly, elements with tactile, aural, visual and even olfactory properties in relation to space and time within a given context are chosen to contribute to the aesthetics of a performance (Di Benedetto 2010). At times, performance may replicate pre-existing aesthetics, or it may propose a singular approach, deviating from any identifiable aesthetics. Viewing performance in relation to these choices and their variants helps the spectator better understand aesthetic qualities. Furthermore, an aesthetic choice achieves its substance in relation to the contribution of elements within the overall context, not just the performance itself but also the social, historical and cultural environment (Banes and Lepecki 2007); in another context, the meaning changes. Notably, in decisions made about these elements in choreography, aesthetic qualities are deemed critical for creating movement and costume for a dance work. Although the means they use are distinctive, both bodily comportment and costume constitute material responses to the frame of a performance.

Costume scholar Joanna Weckman has examined the varying connotations of aesthetics within performance contexts through research on reviews and scholarly texts about stage costumes in Finland. In her view, critics most often relate costume to visual aesthetics and, particularly, in a limited manner, to ideals of beauty (2014, 56; 2009, 172). Although these notions arise beyond contemporary

(dance) performance, they deserve to be addressed more deeply in this context. Connecting the role of costume with pleasing audiences and with sensual, mainly visual stimuli dismisses several central aspects within costume. First, such an approach overlooks not only the material input of a costume for performers and spectators, but also the manifold skills required in designing costumes. Second, it seems to neglect the joint creation of aesthetic experience in performance, shaped by and for thematic concerns. In fact, Weckman alluded to 'costume aesthetics' (2015, 14, footnote 8) as a concept that covers the implementation of intellectual and practical processes related to costume design and making (see also Barbieri 2017, xxii–xxiii). Here, I elaborate on Weckman's work by articulating the ways in which costume aesthetics function as a reflexive part of the overall aesthetics in contemporary dance, specifically while aspiring to a contemporary expression. My choice of cases also expands on prior research by indicating the capacity of costume within political performance.

A close reading of costume within dance indicates distinct strategies to contribute to political aesthetics, always in relation to other artistic elements. This occurs regardless of the scale of the production in question. Thus, within a broader concept of everyday garments as costume, each example analysed in the main part of this article includes one specific strategy for design: inclusive, ready-made or associative. While it is true that institutional or other well-supported productions enjoy access to broader resources, this article maintains that resources influence the process more at the practical, and less on the conceptual, level. This means that the intended aesthetics stem from the artistic team, rather than from the scale of the production. Thus, I propose the applicability of these strategies for contemporary dance of all scales. Through their articulation, this investigation intends to enrich the discussion of aesthetics and politics in the making of dance performance.

Analytical approach

My analysis makes use of visual and audio-visual material, such as photographs and video recordings, to consider the costume design outcomes of the selected works. To complement information available via videos, I use sources from promotional material, provided by *Zodiak*, as well as the artists' own websites, programmes and articles. This means analysing costume design in live dance performances via documentation, not the visual material of costumes or performances as representations. For this purpose, I apply a content analysis method for 'recognizing meanings' (Krippendorff 2012, 27) from various texts not only in the literal sense but also as a reference for other forms of information. Content analysis supports the aims of this research to better understand the strategies used to design political aesthetics with costume from what is perceivable through design outcomes and to better comprehend costume choices within each specific political frame, as well as their direct connection with the active role of other artistic elements.

Informed by the first-hand knowledge I possess as a costume researcher and designer, I discuss the research material against the backdrop of *design tools* in general, as examples of choices that costume designers make in their own creative processes; tools refer to means of expression and together comprise a toolkit from which artists choose the means for a particular work. Here, I work with aspects such as colour, rhythm and balance, use and misuse, and scarcity and excess of elements.[5] Identifying these choices in each example reveals conceptual thinking pertinent to each strategy and its interrelationship with the achieved aesthetics. To identify further contrasts between the cases as three distinct strategies for design, I employ theatre scholar Aoife Monks' notion of 'wrong' bodies, which describes the interplay between a performer's 'real' body and imaginary bodies that a costume creates for the spectator (2015, 105). Overall, this allows me to probe the 'direct connection' between

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the costume design process and its outcome (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016, 166) with a focus on the use of design tools as part of the overall process.

Costume design: Its process and implications for the performance

The costume design process begins the moment anyone on the artistic team proposes the first costume idea. Costume ideas often develop in ways intimately interconnected with the performance context and inform the choice of design philosophy and principles (Norgren 2003). These, in turn, materialize in the concrete design tools with which a costume is created within the frame and resources of the current production (Uusitalo 2006; Bicât 2012; Hopgood 2016). In independent contemporary productions in Finland, the above conceptual and material choices do not always involve a clearly articulated costume designer. Costume design may begin collaboratively, with or without a professional designer, as is evident in the programmes and material collected from Finnish choreographers.[6] Yet, these design-related explicit or implicit choices are central to performance making, since they define the foundation for costume aesthetics as an integral part of the overall aesthetics. The analysis of political implications through costume extends to the settings where the costume process begins, since these implications influence the costume frame to develop a political aesthetic.

As this article suggests, a vital way for costume to produce meaning in performance is to both apply and disturb learned behaviour on dress and clothing, since costume negotiates the ways in which we read appearances based on lived experiences in a contemporary society.[7] This is the case for both costume in general and for everyday garments used as costume in particular. Thus, costume helps not only to add everyday attributes to performance but also to materialize flaws,

The low-key expression in AmazinGRace *(2010) exemplifies an aspiration towards inclusion through costume within contemporary choreography. Costume designer Soile Savela, choreographer Kirsi Törmi. Photo: Irja Samoil/Zodiak–Center for New Dance.*

taboos or platitudes of society and the self (see also Barbieri 2017, 167) by, for example, being worn by a 'wrong' body to indicate an incongruous combination of costume and the costumed body, be it in relation to gender, stereotyped imagery or the overall aesthetics of a performance (Monks 2015, 105, 127). In this vein, as my analysis intends to show, costume may function according to or against its habitual identity, through scarcity or excess, creating the backdrop that allows for dance to comment on culturally bound configurations.[8]

Political by design

All the selected performances credit the input of a costume designer: Soile Savela (*AmazinGRace*), Sanna Levo (*Noir?*)[9] and Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila (*The Earth Song*). In their designs, they rely on variations of seemingly everyday garments. A close, contextualised reading of these variations, as well as an examination of their design tools, render visible the ways in which politics materialize in distinct aesthetic choices for costume. This suggests a distinct design strategy in each case: inclusive in *AmazinGRace*, ready-made in *Noir?* and associative in *The Earth Song*.

AmazinGRace

In *AmazinGRace* (2010), choreographer Kirsi Törmi utilises material she collected for the performance via video-recorded interviews with 51 people in Kainuu, a northern Finnish region along the Russian border with fewer than 80,000 inhabitants. In addition to spoken language interaction, she encouraged the interviewees, aged 4–74,[10] to provide corporeal responses to her questions (Törmi 2016, 91-2). To support her aim of respecting this collected material, the choreographer chose to invite Heikki Törmi, a non-professional dancer, as the second performer. A lack of training in dance would befit the expression of corporeal responses (Törmi 2016, 88, 93, 94).

In the performance, the interview material guides parts of the scripted frame story as well as forming the core of the expression of physical movement. While the frame story literally shouts out a political critique concerning such national and regional issues as state savings, the poverty line, innovation hype and the condition of the national personification of the 'Finnish Maiden,'[11] the movements convey a soothing atmosphere. Here, the two performers aim at authentic transmission of physical movement by the local people. The performers take turns repeating the corporeal material with projected extracts from the video-recordings, without speech. This layered presence of the local people in the performance, with their views on life, society and being in the world (Törmi 2016, 91), connects any (vague) notions of this region with individual narratives.

By sharing these singularities, the performance suggests a commonality amongst the local people and between the local people and outsiders, despite a surface impression of Kainuu as a juxtaposition of pristine nature, with clear waters and taiga forests, with a serious unemployment rate in the region. In this way, Savela's costumes seem to work towards a similar 'authenticity' as the performers do, with overlapping implications for a specifically 'real' and adequately 'universal'—that is, an identifiable–person. In so doing, the costume outcomes imply the principle of remaining in dialogue with the political aesthetics in the performance.

Thus, the dancing duo in *AmazinGRace* wear seemingly generic everyday garments: hoodies with sturdy pants of woven material for the female, and jogging pants for the male performer; both wear a dull red t-shirt underneath their hoodies, and neither wear shoes or socks (Figure 1). While the costume aesthetics seemingly bring forth the 'authentic' aspect of the training/street-style clothes tradition in dance, often associated with random choice, a breakdown reveals instead a carefully constructed composition. An illusion of a carefree everyday is created through systematic choices in the design: one

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In both movement and costume, Noir? *(2013) materializes political meaning, and thus creates political aesthetics, by borrowing and twisting clichéd imagery related to blackness. Costume designer Sanna Levo, choreographer Sonya Lindfors. Photo: Uupi Tirronen/Zodiak–Center for New Dance.*

performer wears fern green on the bottom, while the other wears the same colour on the top. As a second colour, and with a similar intensity, in the opposite garments, a grey mélange appears in variations. A similar balance is employed in the lines, shapes and volumes of the garments. The costumes are loose enough to enable movement yet remain faithful to the corporeal interview material: The costumes do not act as instigators for new choreographical qualities. Similarly, the costume neither hides nor emphasises sex. Yet this choice towards gender neutrality does not seem to signal additions to the thematic concerns of the performance.

Hence, costume design for *AmazinGRace* reflects a common choice: embodying political meaning in everyday clothing that aspires to low-key expression. While costume choices communicate the political through the moods of the everyday, they also exemplify means of expression through design tools, such as the choice of colour, material and other compositional decisions.[12] Through these decisions, the design for *AmazinGRace* relies on mutual resemblance and uniformity of the costume elements as well as the characters/bodies, instead of oppositions or contrasts. Although such costumes form a style of everyday that is roughly suited to a time span of nearly 40 decades, verbal accounts put the performance in the 2010s. Following this temporal focus, the overtly commonplace costume–enhanced by the overall naturalistic aesthetics–allows the spectators to perceive consistency, if not a correlation between the performing and the performed bodies. This suggests, following Monks, costume making's use of 'right' bodies, with the performing bodies becoming synonymous with the 'real' bodies of the performers.

In terms of design tools, this indication of 'real' bodies proposes the use of costume in alignment with its everyday attributes. Thus, in this performance, rooted in Kainuu, the costume design subtly makes tangible an authenticity within the specific context. Such a lineage of costume design responds to political themes derived from various subordinate positions within the power relations of everyday life, caused by, for example,

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Bourdieusian forms of 'capital'. To disrupt this, a commonplace costume works towards the inclusion of all people. Through a respectful identification of people and garments, it suggests a community for 'ordinary' people, one that offers freedom from the prevailing order as the capitalist standard is pushed aside and other values predominate. In this community, a plain costume suggests equality. Along these lines, it harkens back to such predecessors as artist Reijo Kela in Finland[13] and the Judson Dance Theater in the United States as canonical examples of the aesthetics of 'ordinary' with political connotations in their ethos.

Noir?

Borrowing a distinct strategy from *AmazinGRace*, Sanna Levo's design for *Noir?* (2013) appears rich and eclectic in its various constellations (Figure 2), with the costumes ranging from casual clothing to fringe, fur and bow ties, among others. Following the title,[14] the performance relies mainly on the colour black, underlining the thematic statement of the performance, which examines questions of black[15] identity in contemporary Finland as experienced by four black Finnish artists (Zodiak 2013a). *Noir?* was advertised in relation to contemporary social change in Finnish society, with statements such as 'a new generation of young Finns with a multicultural background is growing up' (Zodiak 2013a). Within this frame, choreographer-performer Lindfors stages select caricatures from the past, embodying the repression of minors, and sets them in dialogue with the 'real' young contemporary performers. This is not performed literally but rather in the sequence of scenes, and with the support of costume.

During the first half of the performance, the performers, three professional dancers and one professional musician, introduce themselves to the spectators with brief histories of who they are and where they come from. This is performed in a manner that implies the 'authenticity' of these stories;

nonetheless, true or false, as expressed in *Noir?*, the stories indicate the commonplace misreadings still prominent in encounters with a dominant 'white' Finnish society. In costume decisions, this materializes in black, casual, street-style garments as the costumes for the contemporary 'real' people. The impression is further highlighted with natural hair and make-up, in contrast with scenes that underline the theme of otherness through the use of wigs. Throughout the performance, two styles of wig appear, equally artificial-looking: one blond, with straight, strong but silky hair; and the other black, curly, so-called 'Afro' hair. In Monks' terms, both are equally 'wrong' for the performers, thus indicating not only one but two bodies that the 'real' performing bodies are not. In this vein, the wigs are first applied in the transition from the opening scene to Lindfors' history. In this transition, in darkness, Lindfors adds to her contemporary costume the wigs–blonde beneath, Afro on top. She walks downstage and rhythmically starts a verbal, English-language propagation. Soon, after removing the wigs but remaining in the black everyday costume, she starts the 'true' story, as the spectators are encouraged to believe, about her background, now in her native Finnish language instead of English.

In the following scene, theatrical lighting reveals the singing actor-musician Deogracias Masomi wearing a black, embroidered Western shirt, a black cowboy hat, and the same black pants Masomi, the contemporary, wore earlier. This costume, juxtaposed with the musical adaptation, mistakenly steered me to interpret the song as a cowboy song. In fact, it has little to do with cowboys. The song, called *Strange Fruit*, was famously recorded by Billie Holiday in the 1930s and has a strong political message against racism (Blair 2012). From the song, the performance continues to a full Western film soundscape. Making cinematic movements, the black cowboy moves forward from the back and shoots his co-performers in their everyday contemporary costumes, then shoots

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them again, and again. After one final shooting at the audience, he smoothly shifts to dance movement, the Congolese *ndombolo*, as Masomi, without the hat and in plain lighting, returns from the caricature to his contemporary self, which is explained as part of his life story.

As the black body temporarily adopts the iconic cowboy outfit, this costume choice marks a new emphasis within the performance on using a design tool that selects garments against their stereotypical usage. Underlining whitewashed Hollywood representations, it materializes the controversy of a black body inhabiting an exclusively white character, the American cowboy. Furthermore, as choreographer Lindfors (2017) explains, the costume has its roots in Congolese (post)colonial history, where the Western style was adopted from American cowboy films as a sign of modern masculinity (Pype 2007, 264). In addition, wearing Western fashion in general refers to *sapeurs*: advocates of style and manners within the subculture of *la sape (Societe des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Elegante)*, from the early twentieth century onwards (Gondola 1999, 26). For *sapeurs*, their refined style also became a central means for resistance (Fletcher 2002, 104). With this knowledge, Masomi's costume embodies a double meaning as it is being worn by both a 'wrong' and 'right' body (Monks), with a heightened theatricality. However, the costume elements, the trousers, the shirt and the hat adapt equally well to all roles, from static singer to cool-headed cowboy to history-reflecting Finn. Only the trouser legs need to be adjusted to the tensed quadriceps in lower *ndombolo* positions.

This mechanism of intertwining stereotypes with personal histories continues in the costume and performance of the following acts. These feature, for example, Josephine Baker by Esete Sutinen, wearing a 1920s flapper dress, indicative of the Jazz Age, when Baker first performed in Paris, together with a black Afro wig that covers the dancer's face. Similarly, the spectators meet a Black Panther Party protagonist, by Ima Iduozee, from the US-based revolutionary social movement of the 1960s, wearing a black fur vest, perhaps as an interpretation of a black leather jacket, and a black beret hat, peculiarly enough with a little black moustache. This character, however, acts in contrast to his threatening looks. Instead of any harsh gestures one might anticipate from the costume, Iduozee presents an insecure character pleading to please the spectators. Again, the spectator is given a moment to acknowledge any stereotypical connotations related to a specific costumed body. Furthermore, these scenes indirectly, and others more explicitly, equip *Noir?* to comment on minstrel shows.[16] References to this US-based tradition, popular since the early nineteenth century, remind the present-time spectators to view any remnants of this tradition, present also in Finnish society, through a critical lens.

Twice during the performance, the light designer Erno Aaltonen is choreographed to enter the stage as 'himself'. This young Finnish artist, not black but white, wears a black shirt, a black baseball cap, and black jeans or workwear trousers with the legs rolled to the ankle, revealing black socks in black shoes. The shirt has white buttons in the front as well as a white breast pocket, and the cap features a white logo. This combination highlights the effect that such a costume philosophy creates: While the performance steers the spectator to read costumes as representations with specific connotations, simple white details become an additional pointer that demands explanation. Here, the details indeed refer to the black/white discussion (Lindfors 2017); costume and choreography work towards the same end. Materializing a second body, after Masomi, that can be read as either 'right' or 'wrong' (Monks), Aaltonen becomes an even more apparent tool for representing this false polarisation.

As the above examples of *Noir?* indicate, through its overall aesthetics, the political meaning becomes evident. Kilumanga (2016, 7) reported an intended

'wit and humour' in treating the theme and thereby in the costume. Some of the elements indeed create playfulness, even humour, in the movement. However, the humour caused by the excessive use of elements in costume seems to function as a mirror for the spectators. The excess can be received as awkwardly 'wrong' and thereby as a critical approach in the use of these elements: For instance, the unduly exhaustive fringes whipping in the Josephine Baker flapper dress, and the curly hair trembling in the wigs with a smile on the dancers' faces, both as a minstrel-style disguise and as a natural, relaxed expression. Thus, the visual material highlights the use and misuse, together with the lavishness of the elements, as a central means of expression. This, together with the shifts from one scene to another, as well as from 'true'/'right' performers to 'wrong' bodies inside the scenes, repeatedly indicate the theatrical mechanism in the performance. Costume is used to produce stereotypes and, respectively, through staged, theatrical changes, to erase them (Monks 2015, 104).

However, as each caricature in a new costume, in my reading, refers to a specific history,[17] the challenge in these costume decisions appears in their representative natures, the ways in which they replace a rough sense of familiarity via identification with the intention to read them *correctly*. From this viewpoint, the impression of costumes as full stories, instead of allusions to them, urges the spectator to know black history in order to join the narrative. Preoccupied with single accounts, with my background, I failed to read these restrictively normative heroes, exoticized entertainers, and incorrectly encountered individuals as either broader categories or sites for emancipation. Hence, the question arises, as the performance also toured youth festivals, as to what extent this information, these events paraded in costume, are familiar to spectators of different age groups, backgrounds and geographical coordinates, in Finland and abroad?[18] Is the performance equally designed for those who cannot

read the cultural references, and does the costume play a role in inviting the spectators to learn? Would it suffice with fewer references through costume?

Finnish costume designer Milja Amita Kilumanga, who shares a similar, multi-ethnic background with Lindfors (Kilumanga 2016, 6), determined in her analysis of *Noir?* challenges in designing for a performance that explores black identity and associated stereotypes in Finland in the 2010s, asking if the choice of costume based on the concept of 'a "borrowed" black image' supports the development of the subject matter (Kilumanga 2016, 8, 9). As the performance-makers' rationale for these choices, Lindfors (2017) first mentions empowerment through the 'borrowed' characters. This includes aspects of agency and playfulness. Second, she articulates the aim to underscore the lack of socio-political knowledge about the roots of black (popular) culture, a deficiency she also faced during her own choreography education in Finland. Notably, what is 'known' through the 'borrowed image' partly arises from the cultural knowledge of each spectator. My reading no doubt differs from one with a wider personal or other perspective on, for example, Congolese subcultures. Thus, costume shows its capacity for not only inclusion but also exclusion.

As *Noir?* exemplifies, costume holds a central role in conveying political meaning with ready-made connotations and representations as its tools. This surely demonstrates one aspect of the expressive potential within costume. However, in this case, the voice of costume is tied to what is already known. Due to limited contextualised understanding of black heritage in Finland, these costumes are presented with the task of communicating predetermined, or extra-choreographic, information (see also Fischer-Lichte 2008, 139; Renvall 2016, 80). This tendency of reading the *Noir?* costumes with a consistent intensity related to black dance history might be contrasted with moments that allow the spectator a lighter reading and

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a freer interpretation. Yet, what may remain beyond the reading of an average spectator may be vital for the performing bodies and the logic of the performance as they have conceived it. The costumes, in spite of prior knowledge, transmit political meaning through layers of (globalised) cultural representation, identity, and agency, as Lindfors (2017) stressed, which indicates the capacity in costume to influence performance on multiple levels.

The Earth Song

Similar to *Noir?*, *The Earth Song* (2013) by costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila (Figure 3) creates expressions with variations of mainly black garments and also offers a wealth of visual cues. The design for this performance, the theme of which focuses on the 'human relationship to the environment, to the circulation and use of energy' (Sari Palmgren 2017), draws from increasingly global cultural references, from streetwise subculture to sumptuous pop, in a highly finished manner. In doing so, the aesthetics deliberately avoid any easy connotations of its theme, such as earth tones, sustainable (looking) fibres or an artsy hippie-style. Yet, in line with sustainability and recycling as concrete actions that guide the process of making *The Earth Song*, all sourcing for the costumes was based on reuse, including materials, ready-made garments and accessories (Koiso-Kanttila 2014; Manninen 2015, 10).

In the opening scene, pregnant performer Maria Saivosalmi sings in a dazzling, short-sleeved, knee-length sequin dress. Understanding the title, *The Earth Song,* in a literal sense, she could be Mother Earth, and thereby the splendid costume could be a reference to the diversity, as well as pricelessness, of our planet. Leaving minimal chance for this musing, the performance swiftly unfolds into the semblance of a rock concert: Four dancers appear, performing fast, intense repetitive movements at the back of the stage. Due to costumes that draw from youth street fashion

indicative of the 2010s, with shorts over leggings, vests, t-shirts with bold front prints and black jeans, together with sports/casual wear details, such as zippers (instead of buttons) and recognisable, mid-market brands, including Adidas, Converse and Nike (instead of Michael Kors or Versace, or no visible logo at all), it is as if the dancers are at an underground night-club. The dancers move to the front and then dissolve, except the female dancer, Lotta Suomi, wearing grey-scale-patterned leggings and shorts, and a black, sequined, bomber-style jacket, who begins a monologue. After a prolonged moment, her contemplation reveals the subject matter of climate change.

Throughout the performance, all costume parts fit the bodies and serve the movement. Due to this, in tandem with stylistic and aesthetic aspects, the costume appears 'right' to the performers, proposing a 'here and now' within the theatrical event. With seemingly little connection to the political content as such, the design employs a variety of chosen garments, a refined mix of patterns, tones, textures, shapes and weights, and several parts of each costume. It plays with these diverse qualities, such as sequined materials that appear and re-appear on stage. Similarly, by adding or removing items, other minimal changes in the costumes create a vivid temporality. As to the strategy, these costumes function similarly to the artists who chose to 'be themselves' to convey meaning, instead of to 'become, metaphorically' what they were to comment on, or to 'express an ideal metaphorically', as Burt explained in the context of the Judson Dance Theater (2006, 17).[19] By not depicting a solution to its thematic question, but instead creating an urban event as a meeting point for individuals addressing the same theme, the design foils a predetermined, or metaphoric, meaning. In contrast, it allows an airy space for multiple interpretations, for perceiving both its aesthetics and political stakes.

With such a strategy, the rock-style aesthetics of *The Earth Song* refuse to repeat familiar patterns related to political concerns over climate change.

In The Earth Song *(2013), ecopolitical implications appear in costume in and through the aesthetics of the design. Costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, choreographer Sari Palmgren. Photo: Uupi Tirronen/ Zodiak–Center for New Dance.*

By contrast, the costumes persuade the spectator to imagine more, to create fresh associations within the performance. The cohesion varies only in the closing scene. Here, the male dancers Jukka Peltola and Jukka Tarvainen enter, place themselves in the empty front stage, sit down cross-legged, and wear furry hats. The ascending light reveals that the hats have ears and muzzles, as if representing a bear and a wolf. The dancers sit still and sing a song; the light goes out, and the performance ends. The wild animal hats and cross-legged seating posture create an animal-like image, yet the ambiance is closer to a bedtime storybook illustration of humanised, stable and controlled characters rather than actual restless, unpredictable wildlife. In this disquieting scene, the costume seems to make a clearer statement on the human domination of and dependency on the planet Earth, as well as on human frailty and the survival of other mammals in an eco-catastrophe. In one reading, this could connect to the singing Mother Earth in the beginning. Yet, as such headgear frequently appears among individual youths in the crowds of wintery Nordic cities, the design choices could equally well continue the same logic that

holds no fixed connection to a predetermined reading. The dancers can be viewed either as a continuation or as an expansion of the prevailing aesthetics.

Based on *The Earth Song,* I derived the third strategy for designing political aesthetics, the last one within this article, in choosing to trust the associative power of costume–associative in the sense that the design avoids illustrating, or representing, the obvious. Here, costume belongs to the whole yet simultaneously appears independent enough to have its own 'voice' to address the spectators. This approach has previously been noted in terms of film costume (e.g. Bruzzi 1997, xiii) as well as in theatre and scenography (e.g. Goebbels in Lehmann 2006, 86; McKinney and Butterworth 2009, 83). However, a clear pattern for designing such an experience remains unarticulated. Presumably, this strategy also works through subjective experience, more prominently than the two parallel

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strategies: inclusive and ready-made. To me, the key in *The Earth Song* appears in the joy of life permeating the pressing theme. This means the choice not to force a political implication in the costume, but to contribute to the overall aesthetics by cherishing the presence of the performing bodies. Despite their fine-tuned individuality, these bodies appear as a random sample of a Western population: they could be children, the elderly or people of various backgrounds. By grasping this notion through the costume, an overarching equality that applies when encountering climate change, despite the ultimate individuality of our times, I am willing to adhere to the political subtext concerning the performance.

Conclusions

The analysis of these three cases reveals three distinct strategies for making design decisions in costume within overtly political dance performances. These strategies include multiple aesthetic choices that work towards the aspired overall aesthetics. *AmazinGRace* relies on resemblance to the everyday, to the casual look that allows identification via everyday simplicity. This strategy refers to predecessors who steer the focus to the performers, with less drama and spectacular settings; who apply the functionality of costume through looser silhouettes and flexible materials; or who benefit from the movement that the everyday garments as costume anticipates–for example, what a pair of jeans enables a performer to do. While this strategy in contemporary performance may be useful in questioning structures in dance, for costume, it appears problematic if the strategy includes a fake impression of 'no' costume,[20] meaning there has been no design for the costume. As this article argues, 'no' costume is a paradox: Thinking about what to wear in a performative context indicates costume. Therefore, costume should not be dismissed, even where it makes use of existing, ready-made and, to some eyes, barely considered garments. By contrast, such a design indicates equal conceptual

thinking, which results in using select design tools for creating expression. The 'intensity', as well as quality, of costume is an inherent part of creating (political) aesthetics in performance.

In contrast with the above example, the political aesthetics in *Noir?* rely on dialogue with ready-made connotations. That is, the performance draws from historical examples, recognisable from their visual representations. These are brought to the spectators to both question the flaws that still influence contemporary Finnish society and to diversify the field of contemporary dance in Finland. In this process, costume appears as a vehicle. First, through stereotypes, it allows the spectator to identify characters. Second, through the play of 'wrong' and 'right' bodies, as well as through the change between roles (Monks), it equally disrupts the previous meaning. This role for costume may support a political theme in performance, as it does in *Noir?*, yet it does so by framing the domain of costume and limiting its ability to communicate beyond predetermined content.

In the third example, the tool for political aesthetics in *The Earth Song* appears in association. Through nuanced yet adequately independent design, costume supports the performing bodies to depart from generic 'anybodies' as well as to resist being specified body/character representations. This strategy permits the spectator to choose which cues to follow. It suggests meaning, not through symbols and signs, but through the logic that it creates within the chosen context, without pushing interpretation. It allows the application of the full capacity of costume, including its intricate social, cultural, emotional as well as aesthetic aspects–or a tailored mix of these. For the spectator, the connotations may be derived with intuition or intellect.

Discussing costume design within contemporary dance with a political theme has resulted in the identification of strategies for incorporating political aesthetics within contemporary dance. These strategies are derived from the aspirational aesthetics of each

performance, aligned with their political themes. From these different approaches, those of identification, ready-made and association, within the use of everyday clothing as costume, I propose a pervasive understanding of costume design as an active practice or, paraphrasing Lepecki (2006, 5), an 'open and dynamic system of exchange'.[21] Furthermore, the strategies that this article investigated only involved cases in which costume design was based on everyday garments. Rather than creating a false hierarchy between various strategies, I seek to articulate the variations of potential. Thus, by unfolding the variety of design decisions through a select number of performances, this article has pinpointed the creative capacity embedded in costume. Further strategies for political aesthetics reside within designs that create imaginative, unforeseen costumes.

Endnotes

1   For the structure of the field, as well as share of government and other subsidies, see Dance Info Finland (2018).

2   Törmi explains this turn in her career in her doctoral dissertation (2016).

3   *Zodiak Presents* prospered from 1986 until the introduction of *Zodiak–Center for New Dance* in 1997.

4   In recent years (2013–2016), the yearly *Zodiak* programme has consisted of roughly 25 productions with approximately 190 performances, with an average of 100 spectators (Zodiak 2018).

5   Among designers, similar aspects as 'tools' are well known and have previously been theorised by, among others, scenographer and professor emerita Pamela Howard (2009) and costume designer and professor Caroline F. Norgren (2003).

6   Email communications with choreographers Anna Mustonen, Tomi Paasonen, Masi Tiitta and Taneli Törmä, among others, in November 2017.

7   See, for example, Entwistle (2015) and Kaiser (2012) in the field of sociology/fashion studies.

8   Within dance, Cooper Albright (1997, xiv) traced mechanisms to read a categorisation of cultural identity—for example, gender and race. As examples of means for disrupting impressions of performers onstage, 'configurations of social identity', she names consistency/resistance and reinforcement/refusal.

9   In the *Noir?* programmes, due to funding issues, Levo is credited as a costume consultant. However, in a personal communication on the dialogic process of *Noir?*, Lindfors articulates Levo's role as the designer (Lindfors 2017).

10   The video recording of *AmazinGRace* refers to an age range of 3–74, while Törmi's dissertation (2016, 92) mentions the 4–74 range. The latter is correct (Törmi 2017).

11   The 'Finnish Maiden' refers to the shape of Finland on a map and thereby, in the arts, to a young woman as a symbol of the country.

12   For similar aspects of composition and its 'constructional elements' in dance, see Monni (2015).

13   The connection to Kela appears twofold: not only in relation to costume, but also due to Kela's roots and his enduring work, *Ilmari's Ploughed Field* (1988), in the Kainuu region (see Kukkonen 2016).

14   In the French language, *noir* means black.

15   Following the title of *Noir?*, as well as the vocabulary present in various promotional materials for the performance, I use the term 'black' in my analysis. For further discussion on this terminology, see e.g., DeFrantz (2002, 4).

16   For a summary of minstrelsy, see Gonzalez (2014); for the use of costumes in minstrelsy, see Monks (2010, 80; 2015).

17   Lindfors (2017) names these as the 'ghosts of the past'.

18   For similar discussions within dance, see e.g., Hammergren and Foster (2016, 291-3); Törmi (2016, 99).

19   Burt applies Phelan's terms *metaphor* and *metonym* (1993), in the context of costume design/scenography, Renvall refers to this discussion in his Master's thesis (2016).

20   Here I allude to Yvonne Rainer's *No Manifesto* (1965).

21   With these words, Lepecki refers to the dancer's body.

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Acknowledgements

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BIOGRAPHY

Tua Helve, MA, is a costume designer and a doctoral candidate. Her thesis project at Aalto University, Department of Film, Television and Scenography, investigates costume design within dance through contemporary Finnish examples. Within this project, her latest credits include the article, "Sharing 'Untamed Ideas': Process-based Costume Design in Finnish Contemporary Dance through the Work of Marja Uusitalo" (2016). Beyond her thesis, she lectures in Finland and abroad on costume choices and design decisions within dance.

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Appendix 2

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Appendix 3
Article 3

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Time, being, discourse: Elements of professional friendship in the collaboration between a costume designer and a choreographer

Abstract

This article examines joint creation in contemporary performance making by analysing the collaboration between two prominent Finnish artists – costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila and choreographer Carl Knif. Using personal interviews along with performance analysis framed in relation to the Aristotelian term 'friendship' as components of this case study, the author draws conclusions from the process of a solo performance and its costume that foregrounds elements of friendship: sharing time, being and discourse. Viewing this relational understanding between parties as an asset, this study introduces elements of a positive approach and tools to achieve such in the making of dance performance.

Appendix 3

Tua Helve

Introduction

The choice of a 'freelance lifestyle' (Colin 2016: 110) in performing arts in the West was once a statement against the prevailing constructs; however, it has morphed into an imposed frame for creation rather than a chosen one (e.g. part I in Colin and Sachsenmeier 2016). In this climate, notwithstanding the reasons that bring co-creators together, a quest for balanced joint creation remains a pressing issue. Witnessing unwelcome anxieties in various collaborative projects has led me to wonder – as a costume practitioner, researcher and pedagogue with a special interest in productions of contemporary choreography – how to support artistic creation with full respect for the individuals. Which aspects arise from a collaborative relationship that is experienced as a rewarding one? Although previous research (e.g. McLaine and McCabe 2013; Helve and Pantouvaki 2016; Pollatsek 2019; Bugg 2020) has identified elements such as communication and trust as central to contemporary costume design processes within dance, the actual means to implement them warrant further analysis. Hence, with the above questions and the term *friendship* as the analytical lens, my case study examines the collaboration between Finnish freelancer costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila (born 1973) and choreographer Carl Knif (born 1976), specifically in the process-based making of Knif's solo performance *Red* (2014).[1] This collaboration was selected based on its artistic quality and the established position of the designer in Finland, as well as how her narration highlights aspects of mutually rewarding joint creation in Knif's teams.

In this research, *collaboration* refers to co-creation with exchange of views, a respect towards co-creators' expertise and a process of 'coming together' rather than 'putting together'.[2] It builds on Susan Melrose's articulation of collaboration as 'professional co-working […] [that] set[s] out from a sense of *artistic affinity*' (2016: 240, emphasis added), referring to partnerships that spark from a feeling of kinship, by coupling 'artistic affinity' with a supportive ambience in collaborative practice. This approach is rooted in my belief that balanced joint creation during the process supports the individual, the team and the outcome, and it can be pursued with awareness and conscious acts. It parallels various social and behavioural science research that derives from 'positive psychology' (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000), where affirmative approach and positive engagement are decisive (e.g. Donaldson et al. 2014).

In examining acts that support positive moments in collaborations, I apply the term friendship. The term arises from the philosophy of Aristotle as expounded in Books 8 and 9 of *Nicomachean Ethics* (hereafter *NE8*, *NE9*) and is here considered as fertile ground for gaining insight into the negotiation of structures that shape contemporary collaborations. Within dance research, friendship as an analytical tool has appeared intermittently. In *6M1L* (*6 Months 1 Location*, 2008), Le Roy and Cvejić (2009) apply the term as a model for inviting collaborators in their project. Ziemer (2011) uses friendship, teamwork, networks and alliances to shape theory about collaboration as 'complicity'.

Furthermore, the term has been introduced in connection with dramaturgy, similar to my research, for examining the partnership between dramaturg and choreographer or director, and the impacts of this relationship on the performance (e.g. Bleeker 2003; Cvejić 2010). More implicitly, the elements of friendship are present in research into performance design with a focus on human interrelations (e.g. White 2009). However, although costume and choreography both work with the performer's body, the field lacks investigation into the dynamics of friendship in this intrinsic interrelation.

With the focus on the positive elements of Koiso-Kanttila and Knif's collaborative practice through the friendship lens, my research identifies ways to endorse such work milieus through *respectful* joint creation that constructively sustains the process. I use respectful in parallel with *balanced* and *supportive*; by these qualities, I refer to a work style that does not recoil from contrasting views but seeks productive negotiations within the artistic process. By analysing such elements instead of defining a mode of working per se, my research expands the body of literature viewing artistic companionships as ensembles (Britton 2013; Radosavljević 2013) or, more loosely, under the rubric 'collective creation' (Syssoyeva 2013). Specifically, it shares the recent interest in 'problematizing processes of co-labouring' (Colin and Sachsenmaier 2016: 1) where displacement, plurality and transformation are deemed central. Furthermore, collaboration as the key umbrella term signals my aim to serve the vast variety of co-creation, from pragmatic cooperation to an affinity-based approach as in the examined case. However, the research may be of particular benefit when the nuances of the co-creation are yet to be defined, be it emerging an allyship, a single-production project or a new team member entering an existing frame of collaboration.

As ethics is engrained both in this case study and the research design, my study links with the 'third wave' of collaboration within performing arts in the West. This period spans the early 1980s to the present, characterized by a search for an ethical stance towards collaboration as outlined by Syssoyeva (2013: 8). Applying the friendship lens, first, allows a respectful analysis supporting a sensitivity towards each unique collaboration. Second, it supports the discovery of tools to overcome or reduce the downsides of the profession – or any creative freelancer work in the contemporary era – that are mentioned in this article and may impair collaboration, such as increased stress, challenging schedules and disappointment when team members' artistic visions fail to align. Respectively, with the will to adopt techniques to foster collaboration, a positive approach extends beyond prompting general well-being among the performance makers (see also Richards cited in Britton 2013: 11). This approach also has the potential to protect co-creators from the challenges that Melrose raises: failures in collaborative processes interlinked with the risk of losing artistic esteem, as well as material support for subsequent projects (Melrose 2016: 240). Notably, I argue that the concrete acts that support respectful joint creation, the *tools* deriving from the approach that I later coin *professional friendship*, seem applicable not only across the modes of collaboration but also beyond specific professional roles within a production. Furthermore, as my insights derive from the artistic practice

of costume, the research provides a twofold narrative where views into the examined collaboration engage with a deeper understanding of what a costume designer in contemporary dance performance does[3] – beyond the primary task of designing.

Grounds for the practice of joint creation

In twenty-first-century dance productions in Finland, the majority of professionals are freelancers (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 155). Here, costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, a prolific professional with broad expertise in contemporary dance performances since 2000, makes no exception. Consistent with current approaches (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016), she employs collaborative practices and process-based working methods. This often means several overlapping, ongoing productions and less-than-ideal planning when engaged with productions by different teams.

Designers' limited opportunities to negotiate timetables underline the need to shape the remaining conditions of their work favourably. As designer and scholar Jessica Bugg (2020: 362) remarks, 'funding and lack of time impact the way collaborations are developed, and subsequently how costume is approached'. Identifying and using tools introduced by this research may, therefore, prevent an unintentional imbalance in a collaboration triggered by, for example, the fact that team members enter production processes at different time points, depending on their role. This means a structural, often invisible and unintended asymmetry prevails from the outset. Yet, more problematic than asymmetry is a lack of its articulation: a false impression of equal grounds for creation when the reality proves the opposite. In response to such challenging moments, this article argues for the benefits of a supportive environment for an artistic creation.

Shaping the theory from the designer's perspective

The core of this article derives from personal interviews with Koiso-Kanttila, undertaken in 2014–19. Key to Koiso-Kanttila's artistic process is to develop the work as a collaborative dialogue: at an early phase, she enjoys proposing a colour scheme for the work to be used as a tool for the entire team (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a). While noting the influence of her education as a scenographer to this approach, Koiso-Kanttila (2017a) highlights equally the vitality of openness and communication among the artists who contribute to the creation of the space within contemporary dance performance. She states that the performance design is 'always' created together. Furthermore, she places herself in the generation of scenographers trained in establishing a close relationship with directors and choreographers,[4] while remarking that directors and choreographers do have the final say in their productions.

In my interactions with Koiso-Kanttila, the passing of time has created a relaxed continuity. Thus, the semi-structured interviewing technique, based on pre-planned themes and topics, has allowed conversations with a natural flow. As well, analyses of previous sessions have shaped the focus in subsequent interviews (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 31). Central to further investigation was identifying Koiso-Kanttila as a designer with an 'ensemble' member approach (Koiso-Kanttila 2014, 2017a; Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 155).[5] Although striving for constructive collaboration connects various Finnish designers,[6] I identify her self-interpretation as being supportive for the chosen frame. Koiso-Kanttila's holistic approach towards entire teams helps solidify Syssoyeva's 'ethical imperatives' (Colin and Sachsenmeier 2016: 2) of inclusiveness and respect.

My key term *friendship* arises from Aristotle and its interpretation from Giorgio Agamben's essay 'The friend' (2009), together with the Aristotelian notion of a friend. These sources are vital to how I theorize the ramifications of the friend as the 'other self' (*NE9*; Agamben 2009: 34), 'like oneself although separate' (Kosman 2014: 158): the intimacy between friends and the mirrored consciousness of oneself and each other (Kosman 2014: 160). These aspects form the understanding of friendship in this article and guide the following examination of this case study. First, in combination with Koiso-Kanttila's and Knif's accounts, I analyse how friendship based on valuing the friend *how* they are, not *what* they are, translates from Agamben's essay (2009: 34–35) to aspects of artistic creation. Second, I probe friendship as togetherness that builds on *benevolent actions* and a certain sensed '*sameness*' that derives from being the '*other self*'. Third, I examine the costume in the 40-minute solo performance *Red* and conclude with remarks on the artistic process. Throughout the analysis, I comment on the characteristics of *communication* and *trust* as essential to both friendship and Koiso-Kanttila's work.

Further integral sources of this analysis regarding collaboration and the performance *Red* (Figure 1) include various types of materials, such as my lived experience of the performance, its video recording (Carl Knif Company, hereafter CKC, 2014), the choreographer's narration (Knif 2020a, b), promotional materials and reviews and performance texts (Knif 2014). Choosing *Red* versus other Koiso-Kanttila/Knif collaborations allows me to operate with a seemingly straightforward costume concept. This highlights the identification of both the versatile agency of a costume designer as well as supporting elements therein. My analysis of these materials follows a critical engagement of how they resonate with the designer's account through the friendship lens. Additionally, it helps illuminate the link between the designer's articulated experience of the process and an outsider's – here, the researcher-spectator or the reader – perception of the outcome of these processes.

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Figure 1: In Red *(2014), the colour was the initial starting point for devising the performance.* Red *choreography and performance Carl Knif (in the picture), costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila, visual and lighting design Jukka Huitila, sound design Janne Hast. Photo: Carl Knif Company/Yoshi Omori.*

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Friendship as a tool to investigate creative collaboration

In the interviews, Koiso-Kanttila indirectly refers to Knif's holistic view of the performance-to-come, a staging of visions that rises prominently from the choreographer (Koiso-Kanttila 2017b). However, the designer's description reflects a balanced understanding of this approach. While she underlines the choreographer's role as author and prime mover in, for example, *Red* and many of their collaborations, it appears equally clear that these performances epitomize the interlinked forces of the entire creative team.

Grounds for the friendship: Shared time, being and discourse

Not every costume design within contemporary dance becomes a signpost of friendship in the creative collaboration. The distinctive elements that friendship brings forth within collaboration appear both in unstated and intentional acts. First, friendship necessitates a supportive environment. Such a milieu, in principle, should be available through the artistic team's choices based on 'artistic affinity' (Melrose 2016), as defined by the convenor of the performance – here the choreographer. Knif's extant artistic affinities are made explicit on the company's website with reference to its 'people' – people that the choreographer (Knif 2020a) abundantly credits for a 'shared', distributed and 'embodied knowledge'. When asked about the influence of his early collaborators on leading his own company, Knif (2020a) refers to fellow Finnish choreographers Tero Saarinen and Jyrki Karttunen as exemplars of cherishing the immediacy of communication, generating a 'sort of friendship' that is grounded in being together around a theme and in sharing of joy and inspiration that emerge from the state of flow. From these experiences arises his aim to surround the company members with artistic freedom: to support their full being as who they are, to let them 'be wholesome' and to ground 'full communication' as their avenue in negotiating the performance-to-come (Knif 2020a).

With *Red*, the choreographer and the costume designer have shared a history of joint productions since 2007, as well as several productions from the early 2000s when Knif was a dancer and Koiso-Kanttila the costume designer. This indicates familiarity and a continuum for being together in the context of performance making. Furthermore, as Koiso-Kanttila emphasizes, the whole *Red* team, including lighting and sound designers Jukka Huitila and Janne Hast, is already a close-knit group, having first collaborated in Knif's choreography *Hologram Walls* (2010). Thus, when joining *Red* in 2014, team members had a sense of each other's styles and preferences: Koiso-Kanttila describes their collaboration as 'close and confidential' (2017a). For Knif (2020b), *Red* was a chance to concentrate fully on his artistry after two commissioned and co-produced works. Therefore, the choreographer was even more emphatic about the importance of previous co-creations: 'I wanted exactly these people because I know them and I feel safe with them and […] I knew we could gain ground in a short time'. This project thus originates from a shared history and being together, 'continuity' that

forms a 'common ground' and a resource for the creation (Knif 2020a). Drawing from Aristotle, both time (*NE8*) and being together (*NE9*) underpin the development of friendships.

Following the necessity of being together, communication appears as a second characteristic of friendship (see also von Heyking and Avramenko 2008: 8). The costume designer and the choreographer both discuss the concept of enjoying a common vocabulary in their conversations. Koiso-Kanttila (2017a) connects this with the team, all a similar age, benefiting from a shared background and common aesthetic experiences. However, Knif (2020b) views this as a conscious part of each process, 'creating the language with the team' as well as the shared history and a gradual development of communication over time. Overall, Koiso-Kanttila determines this exchange as paramount. In her words, 'to develop your work, the trust alone won't help much if you're totally alone […] [you need] dialogue' (Koiso-Kanttila 2017b). Through dialogue, shared concepts evolve.

As another aspect of communication, Koiso-Kanttila (2017a) and Knif (2020a, b) both allude to the detailed, cross-over conversations about the performance among the artistic team, enabled again by trust. However, these discussions depend on the process (Koiso-Kanttila 2017b): the need and chance for communication varies from one production to another. Although the choreographer verbalizes an explicit aim for open discussions in each process among the team (Knif 2020b), from the point of view of costume, these still seem to lack a systematic facilitation of when, how and with whom to exchange information. The costume designer reports conversations with the lighting designer early on to 'avoid catastrophe' (Koiso-Kanttila 2017b), meaning a need to share views on colours and textures to enable both parts to continue. Respectively, costume becomes topical with the whole artistic team when, for example, Koiso-Kanttila brings to the rehearsals costume parts for testing. Within these moments, she underlines the overall freedom of the team to comment across artistic areas. Ideas offered from one artistic team member to another are embraced with equal openness: all are 'equally valuable'. Yet, she admits that most – and characteristically the first – conversations on costume occur between her and Knif. Hence, one collaborative team seems to involve varying levels and structures of communication, even when there is a conscious attempt to promote and foster open dialogue.

As for the third Aristotelian element that supports friendship, I return to the readiness in appreciating a companion, which is primarily through how they are, instead of their possessed qualities, *what* they are (*NE8.3*) – a point already shown in Knif's (2020a) statement to foster a 'full being' of his collaborators. Although professional knowledge remains central, it appears as one filament amongst others. Similarly, following Agamben (2009: 31), '[t]o recognize someone as a friend means not being able to recognize him as "something". […] [W]e need to distinguish between a friendship based on utility or on pleasure and virtuous friendship, where the friend is loved as such'. Loving a friend 'as such' harks back to the interaction where rewarding joint creation may take place: through respect towards the friend, embracing both utility and pleasure, the collaborator's full talent and zeal may

flourish. As Koiso-Kanttila (2017b) states, 'in the best collaborations, all parts give their thoughts for the common use'. This is a chance to discover something unexpected from the artistic partner, a skill beyond the partner's chief role in the production. Furthermore, such appreciation and 'friendship' in collaboration presumably develop over time.

The previous notion of talent and zeal may deviate from what might be a standard understanding of what a costume designer does. To illuminate, the interviews demonstrate how the contribution of Koiso-Kanttila appears vital to *Red* beyond her core expertise in costume (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a). She reports her 'sort of invisible input', the sharing of her view and discussing alternatives for the performance – for example, rhythm and other dramaturgical choices – during the process of 'watching the rehearsals and […] building the performance' (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a). For the joint creation of *Red*, Knif (2020a) names the three designers, carriers and cultivators of the company's artistic methods as his 'key persons', further declaring how profoundly Koiso-Kanttila influences the overall creation when residing figuratively 'inside' the process. Notably, Knif has collaborated with Koiso-Kanttila in nine of nineteen choreographies developed in 2002–20.[7]

Although both Knif and Koiso-Kanttila refer to *Red* as a co-creation, the context for the designer's contribution is provided by the choreographer. Yet, 'reciprocity' (*NE8*) adheres to the being together between Knif and Koiso-Kanttila. A reciprocal interrelation is also evident in the traits of a non-utilitarian appreciation by the designer. Despite the unstable working environment in which costume designers often perform, a chain of overlapping projects that are initiated then delayed (see also Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 163), Koiso-Kanttila (2017b) reports her commitment to future collaborations with Knif. Here, this technically non-binding agreement seems to comprise a personally greater bond: it demonstrates the will to reciprocate beyond material terms. The volition to provide time and being together before any certainty of concrete circumstances suggests a non-instrumental approach aligned with the esteem of absolute value, togetherness within friendship, for the designer. Koiso-Kanttila helps pinpoint the difference between economic and other motivators (see also Eikhof and Haunschild 2007; Cnossen et al. 2019) for work. Her collaboration with Knif and a few choreographers seems to follow the logic of friendship. It avoids utilitarian motives but brings forth a joint undertaking for the common good. With a similar ethos, Knif articulates his self-chosen role to lead a company with a tacit promise of continuity for its members. For him, this arises from a craving to develop the independent field (Knif 2020a).

Although it is a privilege to choose jobs based on affinities, the downside of committing time to undefined productions is the unpredictability of their materializing. Koiso-Kanttila (2014) illustrates this by describing a collaboration with another choreographer, when a hectic period led the designer to appoint more duties to her trusted seamstress, including contributing to the design. Eventually, the choreographer rejected the costumes close to the premiere – in retrospect, because of a lack of communication and shared discourse. Through a conflict, not unlike projects where team members

fail to communicate due to either no shared history or simply mismatching vocabularies (see also McLaine and McCabe 2013: 141), the collaborators learned the limit of necessary communication. Had this collaboration been based on a greater 'artistic affinity', perhaps it would have included more elements of friendship to protect the process. However, this example highlights the importance of tools for handling collaborations, particularly when deadlines are beyond one's control and schedules are challenging. To balance the lack of time, frequent and direct communication must support the process.

The dialogue between costume and choreography in *Red* (2014)

In what follows, I provide a reading of *Red* based on its video recording (CKC 2014). This highlights the interdependence between costume and choreography – not only the choreography as the context for understanding the costume but also vice versa. While this analysis benefits from remarks by Knif and Koiso-Kanttila, the performance breakdown rests solely on my interpretation.

Red sparked from a dialogue between Knif and Huitila, initially planned as an abstract study of the colour that is both highly connotative across the times and cultures, and somewhat rare and 'difficult' as a lighting tool (Knif 2020a). However, as Knif explains, while starting with this theme for movement in the studio, he experienced a total emptiness. This led him to recall personal memories and perform autobiographical material with the use of speech. Such an approach was new to him and prompted a chain of 'uncertainties and question marks' that, eventually, shaped the whole performance (Knif 2020a). Hence, the colour red in the performance, following Knif, is treated as a symbol of 'willpower, authority and courage. And this is why […] I want to bring up themes that feel sore' (CKC n.d.).

For this personal performance, Knif wanted the costume not only to enable his body to 'relax' but also to 'allow movement… movement of emotions' (Knif 2020a). In its principal configuration, the *Red* costume consists of a T-shirt and plain trousers in shades of nude and beige. According to Koiso-Kanttila (2017a), the colours draw on their likeness to the skin to highlight the persona. The choice of mundane, everyday garments directly interlinks with the theme: 'It would feel awkward to abstract the costumes while he speaks of his life', the designer expounds. The accessories that sustain the scenes – a cap, a backpack and a pair of shoes – are all from the choreographer-performer's personal trove (Knif 2020a). As another tool, the performance also uses nudity as a costume choice in one scene. Here, the audience witnesses not only a male who quite perfunctorily undresses in the performance but also a naked body in intense movement. This could insinuate, according to theatre scholar Aoife Monks (2010: 104, 109), a reading of the body as funny or 'real' in a worrying sense. In *Red*, the body resists these connotations, although it undergoes a loss of status along with the 'loss' of the clothes (Monks 2010: 109). In contrast to Monks' examples, the 'loss' here, through

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its context, proposes bareness as 'honesty' (2010: 110). As these qualities appear in costume that uses 'simplicity' as its tool (Bull cited in Tomic-Vajagic 2014: 102), then here the nude appears as the 'simplest' of all costumes. From the reading of 'honesty', in terms of dramaturgy, the scene transmits an intimate, personal feeling.

Red begins by Knif calmly calling his family members. The lighting design prevents the spectator from seeing the costume, and the performer appears naked (Figure 2). Soon, the change in lighting reveals the deception of nudity created by skin-toned garments and rolled-up trouser legs (Figure 3). Knif continues the narration in movement. Here, the costume allows an unobstructed dance vocabulary: bending of limbs, large arcs, angles, jumps, low postures and use of the floor. In the development of the choreography with movement, verbal storytelling and a variable soundscape, the movement gradually overtakes the utterance and the tempo intensifies. Perspiration starts to penetrate Knif's lightweight linen T-shirt.

In the next scene, Knif dances, the lighting turns red and a recorded voice propagates random words and sentences. These evolve into an intrusive ambience. Here, Knif takes off his T-shirt, then the trousers and soon his black bikini briefs worn underneath. He turns to the audience in nude, walks to his laptop and seats himself (Figure 4). A new soundscape emanates from the machine. Knif stares at the content, then lifts his chin as if in connection with the audience yet remaining in an isolated stimulation caused by the laptop stream. He stands up, steps over the laptop and continues movement varying from tense and angular to relaxed and tender. Although the emotional register of this scene reaches textures of obsessive lust and interconnecting fear, it spins back to the start where, for a few seconds, Knif appeared as if in the nude, calling for his family members in the dark. With this in-performance reference, it generates primarily a feeling of utter vulnerability.

Once rendered to a more public self through the movement quality, Knif dresses in the same black underpants and accompanies them with new costume elements suggesting teenage years: an orange-red cap worn backwards and a black backpack. In this costume, with words, Knif introduces a friend from early adolescence, someone 'lonely' whose life was 'short and miserable'. He continues the account in movement, then rests and takes off the cap and backpack. Against this, while Knif starts to dress in trousers, from the previous scenes, together with another new costume element, a pair of dark, ordinary male shoes, the routine task of dressing sets a balancing frame for the desolate story, thus putting into practice the 'physical significance' of costume (Kjellmer 2016: 158). Lacing the shoes appears as a hiding place for the performer, a counterforce and a reflection point for the verbal expression.

Following a physical move to his T-shirt left on the stage earlier, Knif transits towards adulthood in the spoken material. He talks about the unexpected death of the previously introduced friend and states, 'I think of you sometimes'. He adds the T-shirt to his costume, oscillates between verbal and corporeal expression and finally shifts to a dynamic dance vocabulary, characteristic of his

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Figure 2: Knif in the Red *costume appearing in candlelight as if he was nude. Photo: Still image from the video (CKC 2014).*

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Figure 3: Knif in the same costume after the lighting change. Photo: Carl Knif Company/Yoshi Omori.

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Figure 4: In Red, *using naked skin as costume transmits an intimate, personal feeling. Photo: Carl Knif Company/Yoshi Omori.*

choreography. He concludes the school friend story and enters a new movement-based scene. Here, dancing in his trousers, T-shirt and ordinary black shoes, Knif embodies an adult grief and a resolution of the contrasting feelings brought about by the previous scene. The shoes, compared to bare feet, suggest adulthood: men walk with shoes, boys barefoot. This sorrowful dance is danced by a mature man reviewing his life, arousing a feeling of loss and tragedy.

In this adult costume, Knif performs the third of four main text-based scenes of *Red*, a succinct episode portraying an intimate account of the performer's sexual identity, the quest for romantic love and hopes for future where he continuously returns to a rather ambivalent assurance, 'so that you will understand I'm not afraid'. The T-shirt, trousers and shoes remain for the rest of *Red*, with Knif's last costume alteration when he returns to the theme of death in the last text-based scene, now through a cursory reference to an elderly lady. Without a feeling of woe, the scene changes to the final one where Knif concludes the performance with liberated, flowing, even joyful qualities in his dance, as well as a short verbal reference to the beginning of *Red*.

The process of Red *through the friendship lens*

As Koiso-Kanttila describes the process of making *Red*, the artistic team maintained a pivotal role in encouraging the choreographer in the integral choices of the performance: decisions on scene creation, vocal expression and text, use of the choreographer's mother tongue[8] and being 'so honest' – meaning the choreographer-performer's relentless truthfulness with the personal material (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a). As Knif (2020a) points out, the 'dialogue between adornment and nudity' functions as the impetus for the dramaturgy of the solo through costume: the gradual disclosure of the body and the backtracking to full costume. Here, the 'full' costume appears as 'minimal', one that 'ensures the foregrounding of gesture' (Barbieri 2017: 210). While such a choice generates the aesthetics that draw on 'real' life, it obstructs the designer from embedding a variety of connotations in the design (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a). In so doing, it shows the ability of the designer to disengage from ideas and elements: a sensitivity for the course of action. In *Red*, all attention was to focus on the performer with the fewest possible costume-related cues: various elements were sifted out during the process towards an absolute nakedness or the staging of 'an autopsy', to apply Koiso-Kanttila's (2017a) wording. Hence, a single garment or combination, such as underpants or the plain T-shirt and trousers, carries all the bonds and associations chosen for the performance context. Similarly, when Knif performs nude, the rationale is solid. For Knif (2020a), first, to fully expose himself is a trade-off for using autobiographical material. Second, being 'bare' serves as a vehicle for staging the related emotions.

In this production, the costume designer acted as the 'other self' – the 'friend' – for the choreographer. According to Koiso-Kanttila (2017a), '[i]t's a wonderful safe working environment, we all

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involve ourselves. […] The guys [Hast and Huitila] are behind their desks and Calle [the chore-ographer] […] is on the stage so they need eyes, a spectator for it'. This account implies a deep mutual understanding among the artistic team members. Although a sense of care and apprecia-tion emanates from the content, it is also evident when Koiso-Kanttila alludes to 'they', meaning her attention encompasses various parts of the artistic creation. This aligns with, for example, the seasoned performance designer Stephen Curtis (2016) who provides a detailed description of his role in shifting between an insider–outsider viewer for performance making. Such a traverse indi-cates a milieu of openness and appreciation.

An open ambience leads into elements that further support the joint creation. Allowing a fluid traverse between creative roles suggests that the artists are not only respected for their full talent but also 'loved as such'. As in friendship, this appreciation derives from existence prior to 'posses-sions': how they are instead of *what* they are (*NE8.3*). This means that the team brings in uplifting elements beyond their professional expertise, such as the 'safe' environment highlighted by both Koiso-Kanttila (2017a) and Knif (2020b). This denotes a holistic approach where Koiso-Kanttila, for example, has been regarded as the Aristotelian 'other self' when invited into a dialogue concern-ing the performance as a whole. Her role as a professional whose insight has proved essential to performance making has been amplified to a trusted person whose presence alone can be viewed as a supportive element for the process. This role, resembling that of a dance dramaturg (e.g. Hansen and Callison 2015), requires not only time and being together but also trust from the choreographer. Loyalty to such a position indicates benevolence – a will to do so, as opposed to clinging onto the chief area of expertise, that of costume.

If a benevolent ambience enables an organic contribution of the co-creators to the overall perfor-mance, then sameness – another word for being the 'other self' – can be argued as a rationale for these acts. Drawing from Aristotle (*NE9*), sameness here deviates from the everyday understanding as a likeness or uniformity and refers to the complementary ways people may meet in friendship for 'sharing in discussion and thought'. In collaboration, it translates as a capability for each part to learn not only from the 'other' but also from oneself, through an 'interdisciplinary identity' (Colin and Sachsenmaier 2016: 13). Hence, sameness multiplies the creative talent and the chance to nurture the performance-to-come. However, and notably, it also goes beyond 'niceness' (Britton 2013: 10) by embracing creative conflict. The necessity for this term, sameness, to incorporate the potential of creative questioning and critique is inscribed in the experience of dance dramaturg Katherine Profeta (2015: xv–xvi). As she states, a collaborative relationship requires 'both a similarity and a contrast' as grounds for useful dialogue, meaning a combination of 'sufficient harmony' and disparity up to a degree where, in her experienced collaboration, 'a certain kind of disagreement could be a crucible for the work' (Profeta 2015: xvi). As indicated, friends can argue their views to enrich, not to ruin the

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oeuvre or their friendship. Thus, friendship encompasses not only complying with each other but also challenging each other.

The benefits of a sensed sameness are also evident when the costume designer grasps the choreographer's impulses for further development. Although either part reports friction in the process of *Red*, personal experiences and interpretations of shared elements may vary. For example, the choreographer introduced a Mark Rothko painting to the team as a source of inspiration. Although the choreographer himself proceeded away from this source, it remained useful for the costume designer. While the choreographer in the interview states, 'aaaah… […] I had totally forgotten about this. No, I don't recognize it anymore [from the choreography]' (Knif 2020b), the costume designer reports the influence of this painting and its ambience to her design (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a). Her interpretation of the colour palette of this minimalist painting merges with the shared direction to clothe Knif in skin-toned garments, resulting in the choice of such adaptive colours in the main costume: the T-shirt and the trousers. Moreover, with lighting, the skin-toned colours could fluctuate from one impression to another (Koiso-Kanttila 2017a), not only in line with Rothko's warm tones but also to contrasting cold shades. The few colours provided by the painting, dark greyish brown, light grey and red-orange, then adopted by the designer, were thus definitive not only for her work with the costume but also for the lighting design and the overall ambience of *Red*. Contrastingly, the matching tone of the 'teenager' red-orange cap appears to be, colour-wise, by chance (Knif 2020b). Knif brought it to the rehearsals as a test item, yet the cap claimed its place through its real-life contribution to the performance (Knif 2020a). However, perhaps Koiso-Kanttila wished the cap to remain because of her internalized colour palette from the Rothko painting.

Koiso-Kanttila's approach towards collaboration pinpoints how artistic team members support each other to acquire a fuller understanding of the needs set by the performance. Approaching a colleague as 'another self' (*NE9.9*), the 'other self' heightens the individual's understanding. In this interrelationship, they not only experience but also professionally gain from this 'joint sensation, […] with the existence of the friend' (Agamben 2009: 34). Through being 'another self', they complete each other and support, even 'tolerate and alleviate' (Hilfinger-Pardo 2013: 229) the process of shaping the performance. However, this process appears in the context of work: I suggest viewing it as a *professional friendship*. Here, professional marks the alteration of friendship from its private life sovereignty. Adding this adjective allows a conscious adoption of positive acts from the site of the spontaneous and rewarding being together that is friendship. It also designates the area where this kind of friendship is meant to function. With these premises, professional friendship indicates intimacy that is created over time. It means trust, respect and responsibility towards the colleague in joint creation and beyond: acknowledging and adhering to these features forms a positive and active approach towards collaboration. Moreover, it allows for meaningful co-creation across varying settings, including those that may differ from safe, 'already-known' surroundings.

Appendix 3

Tua Helve

Conclusions

While previous research has identified communication and trust as the core elements of collaboration between costume designers and choreographers, Agamben (2009) has introduced communication, sameness and benevolence in connection with Aristotle, these being central to the Aristotelian understanding of friendship (*NE8*, *NE9*). In this research, I have merged the two by applying the terms friend and friendship as my critical lens to better understand collaboration within contemporary dance production from the perspective of the costume designer. As a case study, I have analysed the work of freelancer costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila in her collaboration with choreographer Carl Knif for the production *Red* (2014). Through my investigation into the above concepts – communication, sameness and benevolence – in this context, I have outlined elements that promote respectful and supportive collaboration. This approach, coined here as 'professional friendship', includes the following acts as tools to be employed in performance making: sharing time, being together and exchanging ideas and communication. Furthermore, while the element of trust identified in previous research is relevant to this case, this investigation also finds a tool used in a rewarding collaboration: reciprocity. Last, in the case of Koiso-Kanttila and Knif, the use of these aspects of professional friendship as intentional and intuitive acts extends to a non-instrumental commitment to future collaborations, thereby enhancing a sense of continuity in both artistic and material terms. Thus, I introduce these means to be tested, mixed and modified according to varying needs and conditions by other collaborators.

As my research indicates, through the aspects of friendship, the collaborative approach in the costume designer's profession, specifically in contemporary choreography, extends beyond developing shared concepts on costume and the design of an object. Instead of a facilitator and a supplier, the costume designer – when invited and willing – becomes an active agent with multiple creative roles and responsibilities within a production. In other words, the costume designer forms a many-sided artistic companion for performance making. Yet, in this case study, alongside many others within contemporary choreography, the costume designer consciously 'supports' the choreography. This could easily be considered a restriction and thus cause unease or disappointment in the co-creation. However, as my research implies, with an understanding of working together with the aspects of professional friendship, the costume designer and the choreographer both have experienced the atmosphere as open, supportive and rewarding. Thus, I propose that the positive approach outlined here, first, shapes the agency of the costume designer. This means a heightened awareness of collaboration enriched with the elements of friendship. Second, it supports the process also in conflict through gaining from the 'enlargened experience' (Kosman 2014) between the professional friends. Third, it allows contemporary choreography to fully mesh with costume design. In broader terms, professional friendship as an approach lends itself to wider use across various expert roles: to collaborations that aspire balanced joint creation.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. *Red* was shortlisted for the Total Theatre award at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2016 and to date performed 40 times in nine countries (Pyykönen 2020).

2. This aligns with Ikonen (2006: 381–87) who refers to co-creation as a site for open-ended encounters or fixed/pre-planned implementation. However, varying connotations and applications according to different values are evident; see, for example, Colin and Sachsenmaier (2016: 17–18) with reference to historical examples, such as Cunningham (with Rauschenberg and Johns) and Bausch (with Borzik and Cito).

3. For insights into the potential of costume design in dance, see, for example, Barbieri (2017), Connolly (2017) and Dean (2016).

4. Koiso-Kanttila graduated from the University of Art and Design Helsinki (now Aalto University), Design for Theatre, Film and Television, scenography major in 2003; the pilot programme for costume design was effective in 2000–02, and the costume design major was established in 2003.

5. Koiso-Kanttila describes 'ensemble' as a mode of long-lasting (2017a), close (2017a, b) and confidential (2017a) collective work where one experiences free and open exchange (2014, 2017a) in a safe (2017b) environment while maintaining a sense of independency and self-determination (2017a).

6. This investigation is part of my doctoral thesis project on costume design within Finnish contemporary dance in the twenty-first century; here I refer to several interviews I have conducted as part of this project, especially with Monika Hartl, Taina Relander, Erika Turunen and Marja Uusitalo.

7. Knif has created eleven of these in the frame of CKC, founded in 2012, where eight productions credit a costume designer, and in five of them, this designer is Koiso-Kanttila.

8. *Red* exists both in the choreographer's mother tongue Swedish and English.

Appendix 3

Article 4

Helve, Tua (2022), 'The costume designer as co-author of contemporary dance performance: Erika Turunen's signature style', *Studies in Costume & Performance*, 7:1, pp. 27–53.

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'Figure 10' in the text on page 34 refers to Figure 11.
'Figure 11' in the text on page 43 refers to Figure 12.
'Figure 12' in the text on page 37 refers to Figure 13.
'Figure 13' in the text on pages 37 and 44 refers to Figure 10 (*Vox Balaenae*).
'Figures 10–12' in the text on page 45 refer to Figures 11–13 (*Third Practice*).

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The costume designer as co-author of contemporary dance performance: Erika Turunen's signature style

ABSTRACT

With the aim of contributing to the scholarship on costume designers' agential collaboration within contemporary dance, this article centres on the creative authorship of the designer. Using the notions of 'signature style' and 'authorship' as the key research lenses, it investigates the work of Finnish costume designer Erika Turunen within contemporary dance, specifically her collaboration with choreographer Tero Saarinen. Drawing from in-person interviews with the designer and materials related to her costumes, this article addresses the issues of re-invention versus repetition, and process and outcome as two interlinked steps in the creation of Turunen's signature style.

INTRODUCTION

This study investigates a practice that is highly collaborative on one hand and able to create concepts of profound personal agency on the other: the costume designer's creative input within the co-creation of a contemporary dance performance. It introduces the work of Finnish costume designer Erika Turunen who is an influential collaborator with a recognizable design style.[1]

1. The use of the term 'style' in this research denotes qualities of both something concrete and perceptible, the 'outcome' and the less tangible 'way of doing', the process.

Although Turunen's professional practice ranges from designing for various types of live performance to television, this article focuses on her designs for dance. Within the Finnish context, Turunen occupies a unique standpoint for a costume designer. First, she entered the field by starting her career in 1995 as a resident costume supervisor and later a designer at the Finnish National Opera and Ballet (FNOB).[2] Enjoying such a rare fulltime contracted position, meaning secure employment, among designers in twenty-first-century dance in Finland has offered Turunen a certain stable continuum in her career (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 155). In such a position, she could both regularly contribute to diverse forms of dance at FNOB and, thanks to the employer's support (Turunen 2017, 2018), connect with the more turbulent yet innovative field of independent productions with various artistic teams. Second, her recognizably distinctive design style renders Turunen a case of interest – her creations within contemporary choreography have been promoted by dance companies as 'characteristically rich in detail' with 'innovative constructions' (Tero Saarinen Company 2021a: n.pag.) and reviewed by critics as showing 'gorgeous originality' (Citron 2006: n.pag.). Such descriptions depict Turunen's design as inventive for its time in the early 2000s and, more broadly, emblematic of a more varied aesthetic lineage – in terms of elaboration and detail – that concurrently arose in the Finnish dance scene (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 154–55). I connect Turunen's design style within contemporary dance to two main elements: a refined complexity of design and a celebration of the moving body. Characteristically, her designs experiment with three-dimensional form of costume through innovative combinations of shape, structure and material, creating shifting sensual experiences of both the body and costume in movement.

Central to this enquiry is the relationship between Turunen's designs and her ways of working. While analysis of costumes in performance tends to focus the research frame on the end result of the design process, this enquiry is centred on the processes that lead to a recognizable design style and particular working methods. Therefore, to investigate Turunen's distinctive authorship in the frame of co-creation, I centre on her collaboration with choreographer Tero Saarinen. This notable artistic partnership arose from an early acquaintanceship at FNOB in the mid-1990s (Turunen 2014; Jyrkkä 2020: 181). In Saarinen – then an acclaimed soloist[3] and a choreographer with his own company, the Tero Saarinen Company (TSC) since 1996 – Turunen found an artistic companion with whom she shared creative and aesthetic visions (Figures 1 and 2). Continuing to the present, this allyship has consisted of more than fifteen collaborations, often with the contribution of the Bessie Award–winning lighting designer Mikki Kunttu, Saarinen's other seminal collaborator since 1993.

To facilitate my investigation of Turunen's work, I engaged with both semi-structured interviews conducted with the designer from 2014 to 2021 and a range of her costume designs from 2000 to 2020 via various visual and audio-visual sources. These primarily included documentation of the finished works as video recordings and still images, enriched with Turunen's costume sketches and occasional work-in-progress snapshots. In addition, this analysis entwines with my personal experiences and tacit knowledge gained as a spectator of her work in dance performances in the last two decades. Although such spectatorship did not implement an ethnographic analytical position, e.g. by taking field notes in the performances, my spectatorship is stressed to acknowledge the specificity of dance costume designed for live experience.

Figures 1 and 2: Turunen's first collaboration with choreographer Saarinen was Wavelengths *(2000), opened at FNOB and performed by Nina Hyvärinen and Kimmo Sandell (Figure 1, left). Photograph by FNOB/Sakari Viika 2000. In Figure 2, right, the performers are Saarinen's close collaborators Henrikki Heikkilä and Sini Länsivuori. Photograph by TSC/Sakari Viika 2004.*

In so doing, I point out the actuality of such 'material' as tacit knowledge that supports the discussion, as also noted by Barbieri (2017: xxii–xxiii; from the perspective of scenography, see also McKinney and Palmer 2017: 8). While Turunen's designs evoke diverse multisensorial and corporeal sensations, my personal perception prioritizes emotional response as a trigger for the analysis in this article. Following Melrose, any such 'spectating-informed' knowledge position requires alertness and sensitivity to the potential bias of deriving subjective connotations and treating them as if they 'were "already there", rather than brought […] to "the work"' (2005: n.pag.), by the spectator. As 'spectating' here is understood in alignment with post-dramatic theatre and performance practices (Lehmann 2006) and thus denotes a holistic and active approach to experiencing Turunen's body of work (Fischer-Lichte 2008: 32–33; Kjellmer 2021: 134), subjectivity therein is actual, even necessary. Hence, the knowledge position from which I write intends to exceed a unilateral standpoint by combining a multifaceted and informed practitioner–researcher–spectator's view with the practitioner's perspective obtained from the interviews with Turunen.

This article applies a research frame founded from my combination of the key terms 'signature' from Jacques Derrida ([1971] 1986) and Susan Melrose (2007, 2009), together with 'author' from Hanna Järvinen's reading of Foucault's conception of artistic authorship, in which she argues for multiple 'authors' of a dance work (2016: 39) and the respective 'change [in] how "a work" is defined' (2016: 42). Such a frame is prompted by recent scholarship on the agency of costume (Hann 2017; Costume Agency 2020; Barbieri and Pantouvaki 2020; Lindgren 2021; Pantouvaki and Příhodová

4. Impactful costume
design in contemporary
dance performance
does not limit to
professional costume
designers, see Helve
(2018: 18).

5. For a discussion from
the perspective of
hierarchies, see Hann
(2019: 46–49).

2021; Taylor 2021; von Rosen 2021: 40–41), which proposes an extended capacity for performance costume in both production and reception. Several practitioner–researchers have also investigated costume as the instigator of performance (Barbieri 2012, 2016: 206; Smith 2018; Lane 2019; Summerlin 2019). In these studies, a reference to the physical costume as the 'author' of movement has been proposed. However, my examination stresses the role of the designer as the creative professional who has infused such potential in costume.[4] Hence, Barbieri's question about 'the extent to which it [costume] co-authors the performance with the performer' (2017: xxii) stimulates this investigation into the ways in which the costume designer is an invisible yet influential agent and co-author of performance. Although processes of these creative professionals remain largely unseen in the event proper, they are 'present' and formative to the experiences that the spectator perceives through costume in the performance as multisensorial outcomes that display their agency. Therefore, this investigation centres on the creative authorship of the designer (Barbieri et al. 2020: 146–47), with the aim of contributing to the scholarship on costume designers' agential collaboration within contemporary dance.[5] By addressing the disparities between repetition and re-invention, I provide insights into a recognizable style, a style that remains as *one* and thus different from designs by chameleon-like designers whose expertise emerges as an array of styles. In my investigation, Melrose's (2007) understanding of 'signature' as a relational and time-based, evolving practice, a way to work, is fundamental. It supports the amalgam of my core themes, first the delineation of Turunen as an author with a *'named way of working'* (Melrose 2009: n.pag., original emphasis) that gives rise to her distinctive style of being an artist and artistic partner, that is, her characteristic way to provide agency through costume design. Second, this notion of a 'signature' as a practice supports an examination of the ways in which this authorship aligns with collaboration; third, the new aspects of co-creation and the designer's agency within contemporary dance performance that this framework helps to articulate.

SIGNATURE STYLE AND AUTHORSHIP IN COSTUME DESIGN

A 'signature' style has evolved into a concept denoting expression in nearly any format that is identifiable with its author: an expression that both embeds recognizable traits and conveys their origin. In the context of written/spoken language, Derrida provides a seminal yet brief definition of 'signature' in 'Signature event context'. He states:

> By definition, a written signature implies the actual or empirical nonpresence of the signer. But, […] it also marks and retains his having-been present in a past now, which will remain a future now, and therefore in a now in general, in the transcendental form of nowness (*maintenance*). This general *maintenance* is somehow inscribed, stapled to present punctuality, always evident and always singular, in the form of the signature. This is the enigmatic originality of every paraph. […] In order to function, that is, in order to be legible, a signature must have a repeatable, iterable, imitable form; it must be able to detach itself from the present and singular intention of its production. It is its sameness which, in altering its identity and singularity, divides the seal.
>
> (Derrida [1971] 1986: 328–29, original emphasis)

Derrida here depicts a fluctuating 'having-been' presence of the signer in their imprint that is the 'signature', in an eternal now. The signer is evidently not present, yet their trait is strong enough to indicate the 'having-been', to show this matter 'belongs' to a certain author. As Melrose expresses, in the context of performing arts:

> 'Wooster', or 'Mnouchkine', as signature, triggers in me an anticipation – that what I am about to see will be im-pressed [*sic*] with a mark that calls back, through the new, to what I have retained from a past engage-ment with signature practice.
>
> (2007: n.pag.)

With reference to such renowned, well-established ensembles – the New York-based The Wooster Group and the Parisian Théâtre du Soleil – Melrose implicitly connects the notion of 'signature' with elements of continuum and professionalism, arguably even with innovation, as both theatre compa-nies have been known for their experimental approach. As Melrose puts it, signature 'identifies and is identified as *an expert and named way of work-ing*' (Melrose 2009: n.pag., original emphasis). Thus, a signature practice is connected to expertise and, remarkably, its recognition and labelling based on how the present demonstration reverts to past ones, inviting an 'anticipation'. A signature practice perspective has been similarly applied in scenography in connection with the director and multidisciplinary artist Robert Lepage's 'scenographic dramaturgy' (Poll 2018), as well as in analysing famed architects, such as Jacques Herzog and Frank Gehry, as scenographers (Brejzek 2017: 76). However, within current costume research, although the topic is widely known,[6] the field still lacks a thorough investigation of the notion of 'signa-ture style' in costume design. Hence, by recognizing a continuum in Turunen's 'way of working', both in her approach and central elements in the design, I apply the 'signature' lens in the context of costume design. Therein, follow-ing Melrose (2009) and building on previous research (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016), I stress the interrelatedness of process and outcome.

As the 'signature' lens already implies the agency of the costume designer, respectively, it leads the way for a second term of interest, the 'author'. In this respect, dance historian Hanna Järvinen applies Foucault's 1969 essay 'Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur?' ('What is an author?') to the context of dance, to make sense of the author function in this field of practice, 'where the crea-tion of a "work" usually involves several individuals, [and] where the identity of a "work" may significantly change over time' (Järvinen 2016: 39–40, 47) due to various, often organic changes. This quote indicates the primary difference between the costumes by Turunen and, for example, dance (choreography) by Saarinen as the context for Turunen's work. Turunen belongs to those 'several individuals' who create a staged dance work, and the identity of her work within a specific dance production, when viewed through the signature lens, actually remains less changeable, thus demonstrating her as the author of such work. In this manner, it is 'Turunen's work' in costume and it resides inside another work, the dance performance; she provides authorship of costume within the authorship of the dance performance. While her input firmly rests in the collaboration, an affair of 'several individuals' (Järvinen 2016: 40), it forms a singular and identifiable work-within-the-work, as I will argue in the following sections. I am noting this distinction to clarify the case of costume: although created within a collaboration of artists and other

art elements, in instances where reference to a 'signature' style feels meaningful, it brings to the performance a unique contribution, a fundamental element that reverts to its 'author'. Such instances – exemplified here with the work of Turunen – contribute to the identification of versatile agencies among costume designers and the holistic influence of these processes to the performance.

Figure 3: A 'signature' work for both Turunen and choreographer Saarinen (in the picture): HUNT *(2002). Photograph by TSC/Sakari Viika.*

Appendix 4

The second main theme in my approach identifies elements of Turunen's signature style, which offer an avenue to understand individual input as part of joint creation in the study of contemporary collaboration within the performing arts through the lens of costume. It contributes to current lines of enquiry where modes of ensemble working have gained a significant amount of scholarly attention. In this body of work, it has been argued that as a specific 'group relationship' in the contemporary era, 'ensemble' working methods function '[a]gainst the culture of the individual', they foster the 'group action, group ownership and group generation of meaning' and are 'encouraged to last as long as possible, in time and across space' (Krumholz 2013: 219–20). Such aspiration harks back to models of collective creation, 'collective authorship' (Colin and Sachsenmaier 2016: 10) or 'shared authorship' (Kolb 2016: 71), popular in the 1960s and onwards, where the decentralization of authority and egalitarian pursuits were of concern. Related notions such as 'collaborative authorship' (Colin 2016: 120) and 'expanded authorship' (Roberts cited in Colin 2016: 121) have been coined to better understand modes of contemporary collaboration and the role of the individual author therein. Similarly, the notion of authorship applied in my research can be useful to further identify and credit practices when they risk remaining overshadowed by the whole. More broadly, 'collaborative authorship' necessitates the recognition of individual authorships across creative disciplines. Drawing from Järvinen (2016) to acknowledge various authors in joint creation of dance performance, this article seeks to dispel any shrouding of the artistic contribution of the co-creator that is the costume designer.

Although this study specifically refers to Turunen as an 'author', in relation to the term 'work-within-the-work' it maintains that Turunen as an individual and author with distinctive input powerfully connects her with a larger group – her co-creators – through a shared goal in performance-making. As Turunen's collaboration with TSC already spans more than twenty years, her expressive account of their artistic partnerships in the interviews delivers a strong sense of felt, affective intimacy developed over time. Turunen appears as a significant co-author of dance performance, yet one who veers from a total, shared, group-led or 'ensemble' creation, frequently considered synonymous for a contribution that is accentuated as being organic, immersive and dialogical (Hammond 2019: 247; Helve and Pantouvaki 2016). While this implies a fair amount of independence in Turunen's work, it manifests as the independence of the artist, not the art form, as part of the overall creation. More evidence of this follows in the subsequent analysis of Turunen's work as a designer and collaborator.

ERIKA TURUNEN AS COSTUME DESIGNER, AUTHOR AND 'SIGNER'

Although trained in fashion,[7] Turunen started her professional career explicitly as a costume designer. Through designing for opera productions at the Sibelius Academy while a student, and subsequently, her first ballet production, *Cinderella* for Helsinki Dance Institute in 1994 (Turunen 2017), Turunen learned the art of costume design for opera and dance through practice. In the interviews carried out as part of this research, she acknowledges the opportunity to learn by doing while engaged with her early projects. She describes a deep motivation and full commitment together with being independent, disciplined and proactive as aspects that helped her gain new projects as a junior designer (Turunen 2017). These in turn allowed for her continual professional

7. Turunen studied fashion design at the University of Art and Design Helsinki in 1988–93; although exceptional in her study environment, she was drawn to productions of performing arts due to her interest in music and fine arts since childhood.

8. Outside FNOB, at
Ateljee Hurma, founded
by Turunen and Pirjo
Liiri-Majava in Helsinki
2010, Turunen has
regularly employed
five costume makers
and several extras over
the years. Currently
(May 2022), Taru Hahle,
Ilkka Salakari and
Johanna Vehmas are
common key players
who have not only
brought their expertise
but also learned from
the work there. For
example, Turunen
invited a seasoned tutu
maker from the Opera,
Sinikka Hämäläinen,
to share her skills
before her retirement,
thus expanding the
knowledge of Hurma's
regular makers.

development, regularly designing for dance since the late 1990s. From 2000 to 2020, this comprised eight evening-long ballets and over 50 contemporary productions including classical ballet, contemporary choreography and flamenco by leading Finnish and international choreographers. In addition to this, she frequently designed for opera, drama and musical theatre. Seasoned by such pace, abundance of overlapping projects and institutional production structure, according to Turunen (2014, 2018), she habitually designs costumes with very little information of the performance to come. Furthermore, as her processes even for dance rarely include presence at the rehearsals, independence, a skill for grasping clues and capability for proactive work remain as the designer's core strengths to support the co-creation (Turunen 2014, 2018; Tawast 2006: 10). These projects also benefit from Turunen's dynamic, effortless sketching and vibrant costume drawings (Figure 10). When time permits her contribution to independent productions, she opts for collaborations where she feels reciprocal trust. In such collaborations with a full commitment and loyalty to the team, she can ensure her utmost input (Turunen 2018; Tawast 2006).

Starting from her early opera productions and leading to the subsequent positions at FNOB, Turunen has faced the need for and enjoyed access to professional costume workshops with material resources and the know-how of skilful makers in the artistic trades. She acknowledges this privilege and praises her trusted makers both in and outside FNOB (Turunen 2017, 2018).[8] Furthermore, assimilating the various and diverse professional techniques of a costume department for the performing arts has loomed large in Turunen's style as a designer. This includes her deep understanding of elaborate patterns, varying materials and their manipulation, perceptible in her distinctive way of designing, for example the use of layers, holes, transparency and asymmetrical features. The use of power net in costumes for classical ballet is routine, whereas its adoption in design for contemporary choreography in Finland has been particularly prominent in Turunen's works. Shown in performances and their documentation, power net currently appears in other designers' works, as also noted by Turunen (2014). As the designer explicitly states, the cross-fertilization between design for classical ballet and contemporary dance is an essential springboard for her innovation (Turunen 2014, 2018), as she freely shifts elements from one genre to another.

While reflecting upon her career within dance in our interview (2017), Turunen verbalizes the combination of changing elements and more stable elements in her design. In line with Melrose (2009), she refers to enduring characteristics that are common to all artists as 'some sort of an underlying, intrinsic artistry, […] the trademark' that can be found in the line of their works (Turunen 2017: n.pag.). Such enduring characteristics in Turunen's work include the way she approaches costume as a structure. In the interview, she exemplified this by working with her hands on a sheet of white A4 paper:

> I have this sheet of paper here, let's say it's a piece of organza. It doesn't interest me much as it is. It needs to be dyed at least, and very soon I start to imagine that if I did this, sew it and connect these like this… it becomes a structure. I enjoy it to be 'danceable' and airy and [I enjoy] how the light functions [with it]. Even a voluminous costume but [one where] the dancer remains visible, the movement beams through.
>
> (Turunen 2017: n.pag.)

Furthermore, Turunen relates this approach to her interest in sculpting and the 'three-dimensional, translucent and thick form' (Turunen 2017: n.pag.).[9] Such remarks indicate the designer's connectedness with the spatiality of costume and the union of body, costume and movement. Both the tendency towards regarding costume as a structure and her approach to material, which are arguably identifiable with Turunen's designs, are intuitive to her, as she states: 'I don't intentionally think that this [way of doing] is my trademark. They [the same elements] just attract me over and over again' (Turunen 2017: n.pag.).

Turunen's intrinsic way of working with structures and other experiments in costume is rooted in imagining it in motion. As she affirms, the three-dimensional form comes into existence through dancing bodies (2014). For example, she enjoys how movement allows the spectators to experience costume from all angles. For her, this means that displaying the 'inside' as well as the 'outside' of the costume boosts a design of equal vitality for viewing in front facing and reverse sides. In Turunen's words, designing for dance thus invites the creation of 'all sorts of fun and intriguing three-dimensional things' (Turunen 2014: n.pag.). She describes her approach to form and structure:

> I enjoy making things that look like that they can't be danced in, and very well they can. I hear it very often when I go to a group that I haven't collaborated with before, that 'but you can't dance with these,' and I just say, 'oh you'll see!'
>
> (Turunen 2014: n.pag.)

Turunen at times seeks an outcome that is neither a garment nor a costume, but rather a 'creature'. In her own words, she aspires to create 'a contemporary dance creature' where costume parts organically 'grow' from the performer, hence crafting an illusion of a solid costume-body (Turunen 2014, 2017, 2018; Karteeva 2013). Such a narrative implies that for Turunen, the endless pool of ideas is the three-dimensional form where its reworking, such as innovative folding, allows for an endless re-inventing of the artistic self of the designer. Multisensorial three-dimensionality appears as a broad enough premise for designs where Derrida's paradoxical 'sameness' and 'nowness' ([1971] 1986: 328) intuitively enmesh in costume. Following Derrida, through such 'same' source of inspiration, Turunen alters the identity of each costume that she creates from this underlying inspiration and thus continues to provide experiences of singular design concepts. This implies an approach with enduring curiosity, a passion to follow one's artistry and Derridean singularity – evident yet original – in a continuum that supports the identification of signature style.

The imaginative, even ambitious approach to designing as exemplified above bridge the core elements of Turunen's costumes: their refined complexity and balance with the performing body. While Turunen avoids commonplace design tropes, such as skin-tight Lycra garments at varying lengths as tools to accentuate bodies in motion, the complexity designed by Turunen takes a balanced form through a detailed investigation into techniques that allow an impossible form or structure to become, using her term, 'danceable'. Prioritizing the dancing body, Turunen consciously works to surpass the pitfalls of many highly tailored creations, the impression of a magnificent stage costume being imposed on the dancing body. This is necessary for the context of TSC as the choreographer is put off by 'fancy-looking external illusions' (Saarinen cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 87, translation added). In dance, the complexity of the costume alone can be problematic if it overrules the

9. These attributes seem meaningful to Turunen as variations of this expression are featured in, for example, a magazine interview (Tawast 2005, 2006: 14) and the Finnish title of the 2016 exhibition about her work at FNOB, *Tuuheaa ja läpikuultavaa* (for the report of making this exhibition, see Turunen [2016]).

Figure 4: Characteristically, Turunen's costumes are three-dimensional yet 'danceable', as in Georgia *(2003). Choreography by Tero Saarinen, commissioned and performed by FNOB. Photograph by FNOB/ Sakari Viika.*

10. For 'imposed' costumes, see Bugg (2020: 354, 357), Hammond (2012: 180), also Helve (2020).

11. This is also noted by Bartelme and Jung in Pollatsek (2021: 185), Pollatsek (2021: 20), Pekkanen cited in Juntunen (2010: 255) and Weckman (2021: 143).

performing body unless designed so (see examples in Pantouvaki 2018).[10] In Turunen's work, the refined complexity and balance with the performing body entwine and support each other: one would fail to succeed without the other. With a mastery of cloth, fabric and form, she interweaves the outer-bodily materials with the body, thus co-authoring integral experiences of costume in movement.

These previous delineations start to shape Turunen as an author and 'signer'. As both Derrida and Melrose indicate, central for defining signature is, in Melrose's words, the 'curious combination of the reiterable and the singular, or the paradoxical relationship between originality and repetition' (2007). I return here to Melrose's remark on the relational nature of the signature style and its emergence from judgements by others. What may seem repetitive for one can be regarded as 'signature' for the second; an attentive 'expert-spectator' (Melrose 2007) may recognize 'signature' in recurring elements, such as the development of a theme or technique, or constitutive choices – even collaborators (Melrose 2009) – that have developed a recognizable approach to performance-making. Subtly, these intertwine with what Melrose terms the 'professional life as an artist' (2009: n.pag.), meaning past and current influences for the author's singularity.[11]

In Turunen's case, influences for her singular style include her interest in sculpture since youth, her training in fashion, her absorption of the specific material and knowledge resources within costume workshops, and the production structure at FNOB, together with the profound artistic

companionship she shares with Saarinen and other choreographers. Traces of such a career trajectory inform both the signature lens and the constitutive choices in Turunen's '*named way of working*' (Melrose 2009: n.pag., original emphasis). I claim that the four foundations of her style are: designing the costume from scratch rather than sourcing and altering existing garments; innovating shapes through patternmaking, draping and moulding on mannequins, or even paper-folding; using specific, new and not-recycled materials; applying full professional expertise through close collaboration with skilful makers for a refined look.[12] With these foundations, the key features present in her work include varying structures, volume and weights; holes and transparencies; layers and asymmetry; a broad approach to, or non-normative use of costume shapes as cultural signifiers and space for the negotiation of gender roles. As I argue, these foundations and features within Turunen's signature style appear strong enough to uphold her design concepts even when experienced in a continuum across different productions or within a single performance. Hence, the interweaving of a felt 'sameness' and 'enigmatic originality' in Turunen's recurring elements underlines the designer's competence for Derridean iteration and change.

The above characteristics have materialized in Turunen's co-authorship of dance performance since the outset of her career. For example, within her design for TSC, the combination of varying volume and weight, transparency and skin exposure, and layers and asymmetry was first presented in the *Wavelengths* duo (Saarinen 2000, Figures 1 and 2).[13] This creation can be viewed on a continuum with the heavy, layered costumes with their covert/exposed and rigour/sensuality interplay in *Borrowed Light* (Saarinen 2004b, Figure 9) and the airier expression in *VORTEX* (Saarinen 2014b, Figure 6). Designs for these productions include recognizable elements that embrace the large groups of performing bodies: holes on the backsides of skin-tight bodices, transparency, asymmetry and layers of fabrics, material variation from sheer see-throughs to sturdy opaques, and the potential of costume to shape the space in stillness and in movement. Following *Wavelengths*, the solo *HUNT* (Saarinen 2002b, Figure 3) introduced an austere but elaborate sculpted form and Turunen's non-normative approach. Although the costume from *HUNT* stands as an extreme example of its kind, its key element – the painstaking detail that evokes a powerful yet surprising simpleness of a rather rigid form – appears in a range of later works. Even *Vox Balaenae* (Saarinen 2011, Figure 13), another solo work, can be considered to continue the lineage, with a similar austerity – although in a conventional form – and a new take on transparency. Finally, the audacious richness of detail for a large group of dancers as its core was presented in *Georgia* (Saarinen 2003, Figure 5). Subsequent monochrome and refined echoes of such joyful excess can be grasped in, for example, Turunen's costume design for *Kullervo* (Saarinen 2015, Figure 7) and *Third Practice* (Saarinen 2019, Figure 12). On these grounds, the Derridean/Melrosian 'singular' in Turunen's work appears in her repeated yet altered elaboration, re-invention of the three-dimensionality of costume without compromising what she regards as its 'danceability' (Turunen 2017). Thus, viewing Turunen's body of work in the 2000s shows a varying aggregation of designs with a reiteration of the above original characteristics. Particularly when perceived as a continuum, these works 'anticipate' Turunen's designs beyond any other Finnish designer. As I argue, they recognizably demonstrate her 'signature style'.

12. To provide context, there is a tendency for costume designers who design for contemporary dance in Finland to occasionally aim at a more cumbersome or deconstructed handmade look.

13. The references indicate the premiere date and performing company. However, several commissioned TSC productions also belong to the company's repertoire, for example, *Wavelengths*. Full performance histories are presented in the company website.

Figures 5 and 6: Although distinct in their colour schemes and elaboration, Georgia *(2003) and* VORTEX *(2014) both play with Turunen's recurring design elements. Figure 5, top,* Georgia, *choreography by Tero Saarinen, performed by GöteborgsOperans Danskompani. Photograph by GöteborgsOperans Danskompani/ Ingmar Jernberg 2007. Figure 6, bottom,* VORTEX, *choreography by Tero Saarinen, commissioned and performed by National Dance Company of Korea. Photograph by TSC/PARK Hyun-keun.*
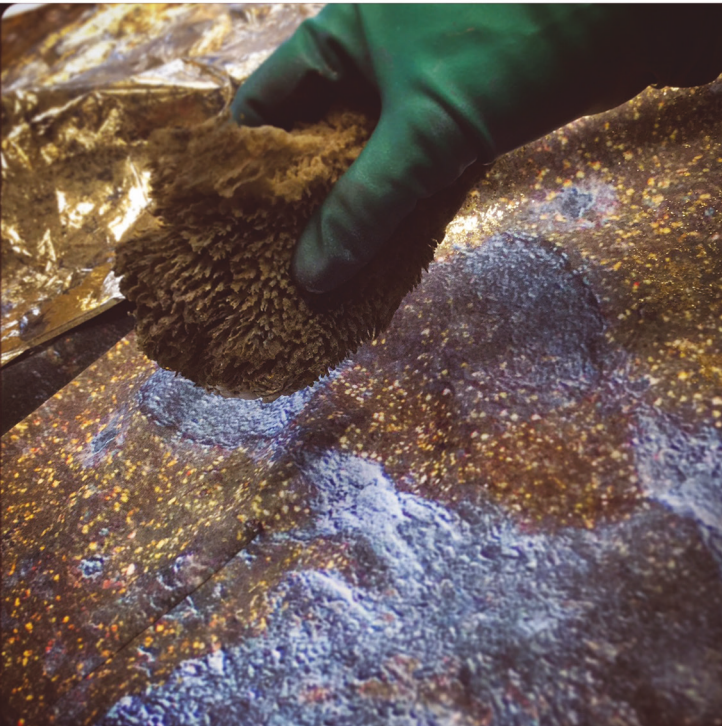
Figures 7 and 8: Turunen designed nearly 100 costumes for Saarinen's Kullervo *(2015), commissioned by FNOB. Figure 7, top, in the front, dancers Pekka Louhio and Johanna Nuutinen. Photograph by TSC/Mikki Kunttu; Figure 8, bottom, elaboration of detail through fabric manipulation. Photograph by TSC/Erika Turunen.*

14. Following Suhonen (2009), Jyrkkä (2020: 54, 113) introduces Saarinen in a lineage with Carolyn Carlson (b. 1943) and Finnish Jorma Uotinen (b. 1950). Both choreographers are renowned for a holistic approach to the making of their multisensory engaging performances – in Carlson's case, with traces from her background in the company of the American Alwin Nikolais. The careers of Carlson, Uotinen and Saarinen interconnect in several ways: they have danced in each other's choreographies and collaborated with the same artists.

15. This connects profoundly with Saarinen's movement vocabulary that, beyond training in jazz and classical ballet, is rooted in his study of dance in Japan and Nepal.

Turunen's approach, read as Derridean/Melrosian singular re-invention rather than commonplace repetition, is further illustrated in the ways that she critically reviews her own artistic practice. Turunen (2017) articulates how during a specific period as a student, she aimed to identify and evade fixed mannerism in her work by acting against the ideas that first occurred to her. She noted that similar phases may surface during a professional career yet in a less all-encompassing manner. However, if certain characteristics over time have developed into an acknowledged part of her singularity as an artist, she now ponders whether she should design costumes with less recognizable elements. By this, she means design by discarding some of her characteristics, such as striking shapes or upscale materials. She continues to mull over whether she should more consciously draw from the 'fountainheads' and tone down the volume of her contribution through costume. Yet, exactly the adherence to the key interests that have become the identifiable elements in her design, the altering 'sameness', supports the definition of Turunen as the 'signer' in Derridean/Melrosian terms and 'author' in those of Foucault. In the following sections, I continue developing this analysis, first, by further illustrating Turunen's style and approach with a focus on her contribution in the context of TSC, and second, by specifying examples of her self-reflexive practices as a costume designer.

ERIKA TURUNEN'S SIGNATURE STYLE AS THE STYLE OF TSC

Pondering the approaches of various choreographer-collaborators, Turunen (2014) names Saarinen as a choreographer with open-mindedness and understanding towards costume and a sense for visuality. Saarinen's flair for visual and fine arts is further illustrated in a recent biography (Jyrkkä 2020: 26–29, 182).[14] In tandem with relishing the spectacular, a certain minimalism or striving towards a pure 'form that resonates without excessive decoration' remains central for Saarinen (Jyrkkä 2020: 155, translation added).[15] As dance scholar Johanna Laakkonen (2007: 432, translation added) has summarized, Saarinen in his choreography does not seek a traditional 'harmony' but rather investigates movement through 'torsion, unbalance, relaxedness and tension'. Concurrently, when Turunen sculpts the body with her design, similar definitions apply. She works with the signature style as her foundation and impetus: with asymmetry, juxtaposition and other abovementioned characteristics, Turunen's means to create abstracted, timeless expression include subtle and unforced combinations of twist, spin, constriction/softness and skin/cloth exposure. Such capability for the apposition of contrasting elements has also been acknowledged in international reviews. For example, her costumes in *Borrowed Light* have been noted to 'conceal and reveal through multiple layers and textures' (Foyer 2005: 43), be '[h]eavily looking […] [yet] light in full flight' (Clarke 2008: 18) and 'stunningly new and old at the same time' (Shennan 2008: n.pag.). Aligned with Saarinen's vision, Turunen's contribution appears rich and varied yet avoids the impression of being ornate.

Merged with Saarinen's style as a choreographer, Turunen's signature style co-authors the experiences both in and of the performances of TSC. In these performances, the themes arise from emotions and human experiences (Saarinen cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 103; Jyrkkä 2020: 167). Although these themes are often worked with an abstraction that inhibits reading the performances as 'unambiguously narrative' (Freundlich cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 83, translation added), the costumes anchor them in the human realm; yet again, the full

visual presentation is elevated and beyond naturalistic, everyday, street style or pedestrian. In this vein, across the line of TSC productions, the interconnectedness of compelling choreography, elaborately costumed dancers[16] and intensely dramatic lighting that shape the space form particular aesthetics for the company. Although rooted in the early years of Saarinen as a choreographer, even before TSC – then, primarily, informed by visions of Saarinen and lighting designer Kunttu (Jyrkkä 2020: 90, 102, 124) – the TSC aesthetic is a collective project.

Over time, TSC has collaborated with several costume designers other than Turunen, for artistic but also practical reasons (Mikkonen 2021). These include designs by Rachel Quarmby-Spadaccini (Saarinen 1999b, 2001, 2002a, 2004a; Carlson 2000), Keren Nissim (Saarinen 1997, 1999a) and Teemu Muurimäki (Saarinen 2014a, 2014c, 2018, 2020), as well as a few more visiting designers. However, Turunen is not only the longest-lasting creative co-author of performance experiences of TSC but also the designer of costumes for a majority of the productions, including many of the company's 'key productions' (Tero Saarinen Company 2021a), for example, *HUNT* (Saarinen 2002b, Figure 3) and *Borrowed Light* (Saarinen 2004b, Figure 9).[17] Hence, I suggest that out of that group of costume designers, Turunen has above all others contributed to the strong, evolving yet established continuum in visual representation based on the collaboration between choreography, light and costume associated with TSC. In tandem, Turunen's signature style within this continuum has repercussions. First, I argue that Turunen's 'way of working' with, for example, the use of asymmetry, skin/cloth juxtaposition, three-dimensionality and a dash of gender-fluidity, seems to inform the designs even without Turunen, perhaps as a backdrop for individual input to contribute to the company's style (e.g. Saarinen 2014a, 2020). Second, Turunen's signature style as co-authorship suggests an independent-interdependent role for costume in performance. Unfolding as an artistic concept that is both strong and self-sustaining yet concurrently, profoundly rooted in the shared whole, Turunen's designs can be considered to exemplify the term 'work-within-the-work'. Therefore, I suggest that through her intrinsic interrelation with the company, developed over time, Turunen plays a key role in the overall signature style of a TSC production: with the 'work-within-the-work' characteristic and the Derridean 'imitable' form quality, her signature style in collaboration with other artistic elements affords it a conscious or unconscious influence beyond her own work.

In addition to the overall aesthetic alignment of Turunen and Saarinen, the 'signature' style of each collaborative approach seems to also align. While Turunen discusses her professional 'persistence' as one of her fundamental working characteristics (2014, 2018), that same quality is recognized in Saarinen (Kuusela cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 59; Saarinen cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 84). Yet, Saarinen's highly intuitive approach to making work is balanced with Turunen's pragmatism in their collaborations. Furthermore, Saarinen's priorities include a quest for sensitivity (Jyrkkä 2020: 161) together with trust and confidence with the team (Jyrkkä 2020: 12, 97; Kunttu cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 124). Similarly, Turunen (2014, 2018) pinpoints her strong commitment to projects and high-level loyalty towards co-creators. Her words, both implicitly and explicitly transmit a sense of her being a pragmatic, reliable, responsible artistic partner.[18] The series of interviews carried out for this project regularly revealed her open attitude towards productions, understood as not only open-mindedness, but also as resiliency for change and uncertainty. As Turunen (2017)

16. A discussion of TSC dancers lies outside the scope of this article; however, they warrant mention as having been integral in founding the company (Jyrkkä 2020: 92, 104) and contributing to the success of TSC with their commanding personalities as performers, far from being generic aestheticized dancers.

17. The TSC webpage features 24 performances (Tero Saarinen Company 2021d). Two of these are solos for Saarinen by Carolyn Carlson; one is a guest performance that highlights the company's activity in hosting international groups in Finland; 21 are choreographies by Saarinen. Turunen has designed costumes for twelve of these performances and for six more productions by the company, not presented on the TSC webpage (*Sini* 2001, *Georgia* 2003, *Frail Line* 2006, *Next of Kin* 2008, *Double Lives* 2010, *Absent Presence* 2011).

18. Due to the surprising paucity of research into Turunen's work, current understanding of her way of working as a collaborator, beyond her own testimony, largely rests on what is implicitly said in Jyrkkä (2020: 181–83). My investigation that draws from the experiences of the designer shared in my interviews with her is also supported by a range of unpublished data, including e-mail correspondence with a colleague (Quarmby-Spadaccini 2021), two student theses (Helve 2008; Turunen 2016: 9, 43–44), a student internship report (Ovtchinnikova 2014) and the unrecorded oral testimony of that student (Ovtchinnikova 2021).

Figure 9: A project dear to Turunen's heart, Borrowed Light *(2004b), has gained numerous mentions to design in the international press, including commendation of her signature elements. Choreography by Tero Saarinen, in the picture (from left), Maria Nurmela, Tero Saarinen, Satu Halttunen, Ninu Lindfors. Photograph by TSC/Jonas Lundqvist.*

acknowledges, such receptivity derives from Saarinen.[19] This manifests as an approach that allows changes in the costume beyond points where the design would typically be regarded as 'final'. According to Jyrkkä (2020: 67), Saarinen seeks change and welcomes challenges and contrasting opinions as a positive force for creation. Hence, an overarching openness shapes the artistic process within TSC, both before and after the premiere. Indeed, to endure, even be inspired by uncertainty signals trust and reciprocity in such long-term collaboration (Helve 2021).

COLLABORATION FOR THE COSTUME AS 'WORK-WITHIN-THE-WORK'

The above similarities between Turunen and Saarinen may be useful to recognize as a backdrop for their collaboration within the TSC productions. However, to ground the notion of 'work-within-the-work', I propose the two authors independently uphold, in Derridean terms, their singular styles. Merging the work of two authors implies interpretations of one theme by two seasoned professionals, complemented by the element of unpredictability. Key collaborative works throughout their long partnership illustrate this tendency.

Appendix 4

Turunen and Saarinen's collaboration started in 1999, with *Wavelengths*, following Turunen's previous assisting roles, for example, in *Daydreampeople* [*sic*] (Saarinen 1996; Turunen 2018; Jyrkkä 2020: 181).[20] Turunen (2014) refers to Saarinen's extreme verbal reticence in the early works; yet already here, she notes her ability to glean sufficient input for her own process from such communication. Similarly, she refers to music or composers as entry points to the upcoming work; both Turunen and Saarinen draw inspiration from music (Jyrkkä 2020: 41, 182; Turunen 2014, 2017). Overall, as she remarks, the collaboration rests on a somewhat loose dialogue (Turunen 2014, 2018; see also Jyrkkä 2020: 182). In their matured partnership, often due to practicalities (Turunen 2021; Jyrkkä 2020: 182), Turunen and Saarinen share a sufficient, but not necessarily extensive amount of dialogue in their joint process. This outlines a collaborative approach that forges ahead in a mode of parallel singular creation. Yet, this model is rooted in plentiful, profound trust (Turunen 2018) gained in the shared time and close exchange developed during the previous projects (Turunen 2018; Turunen cited in Jyrkkä 2020: 183). For example, Turunen recalls with affection the making of *Borrowed Light*, in which the company also held a residency in Italy, researching and fostering the key themes, community and sense of communality (Turunen 2014, 2017, 2018; Jyrkkä 2020: 153–54). The creative process of the specific production extended for several years (see also Tero Saarinen Company 2021c), thus offering 'time' and 'space' (Krumholz 2013: 220) for collaborative creation. Having experienced their value for performance-making, long processes have become the preferred way for the company to work (Jyrkkä 2020: 22–23).

Beyond residencies, commissioned works that require joint travel provide a second site for fostering the partnership within TSC (Turunen 2018). For Turunen, whose day-to-day work typically consists of several ongoing projects, residencies and travels provide her the 'luxury' of single-minded devotion to the work at hand (Turunen 2018), both artistically and socially. Such 'shared experiences' (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 165–66) have established a particular artistic terrain for Turunen and Saarinen's firmly entrenched, long-term artistic partnership, identified as a friendship (Jyrkkä 2020: 181–82); a partnership that extends a 'commonplace work relationship' and is, possibly, also a matter of being with 'the right person' (Turunen 2018: n.pag.). This shared ground has aided their finding suitable tools for their current dialogue, be this an exchange of images, choreographer's wordy e-mails (Jyrkkä 2020: 182) or a quick exchange of costume sketches or short videos from costume fittings on smartphone instant message apps (Figure 11) when the collaborators are physically apart (Turunen 2021). Furthermore, as I argue, such artistic terrain both supports and benefits from Turunen's characteristically independent – yet connected, trustworthy and proactive – mode of artistic creation. With her signature style, '*expert and named way of working*' (Melrose 2009: n.pag., original emphasis) that differs from ensemble-like 'group action, group ownership and group generation of meaning' (Krumholz 2013: 219), Turunen authors the design of costumes, hence exemplifying the notion of 'work-within-the-work'.

To function as a supportive frame for co-creation, the 'work-within-the-work' model necessitates a mutual confidence that is present in the allyship between Saarinen and Turunen. Following Derrida's delineation of repeatability, Turunen's signature style appears with sufficient reliability that its essence will remain. Drawing from Melrose (2009), this 'way of working' caters to the performance with both the signature artistic process and the signature outcome that rests on a shared understanding of aesthetic preferences. Based

20. Turunen mentions *Daydreampeople* as their first, although unofficial collaboration.

on such collaboration between equal expert authors, the 'work-within-the-work' is apparent in Turunen and Saarinen's allied search for renewal through re-iterations of their singularly recognizable styles. Hence, it helps to offer insights into the mechanisms and illustrate the effects of such a profound collaborative relationship based on relative independence of the co-authors of performance experiences. With the 'work-within-the-work' notion, this analysis thus expands the existing discourse in costume research on the importance of the designer's presence in rehearsals and related exchanges. In these studies, such design processes have been promoted as ensuring a dialogical, mutually supportive co-creation (Helve and Pantouvaki 2016: 159, 161, 165–66; Pollatsek 2021), often for embodied and phenomenological reasons (Barbieri 2012: 149; Bugg 2020; Smith 2018: 192). However, when the designer and the choreographer have established effective modes of communication and feel mutual trust and a strong artistic kinship, the process may flourish with less physical togetherness and shared presence in the rehearsals. Physical space can be replaced with a shared artistic terrain as a supportive ground for creation.

RE-INVENTING THE ARTISTIC SELF

The examination of Turunen's style within TSC productions brings to the fore aspects of recognizable originality and the techniques to cherish such signature style, the Derridean 'repeatable, iterable, imitable form', through re-invention. Recognizable originality is indeed what productions aspire to when they invite Turunen to collaborate in an artistic team. She is invited to productions as the author of a specific style (Turunen 2014, 2017) and thus anticipated to offer a combination of her characteristic process and outcomes connected with certain artistic means including, for example, sculpting on the body with material and form. The designer is well aware of her reputed style, humorously commenting that she might create confusion if she would propose 'just skin-toned undergarments for everyone' (Turunen 2017).

Turunen's ability to re-invent her artistry is also at stake in her portrayal of the previously mentioned, noticeable artistic openness within TSC. Here, re-invention appears parallel with shedding light on Turunen's 'way of working' in the design process. She depicts an inspiring opportunity to conclude the work organically, to hold the potential to add a finishing touch even after the premiere, if necessary (Turunen 2017). As an example, she refers to the process of *Vox Balaenae* (2011) where the choreographer-performer's request was a costume that at first would appear as regular clothing, but consequently, along with the choreography, would transform into a second skin and alter the performer into a creature-like apparition (Turunen 2014, 2017). The quest for making the *Vox Balaenae* costume 'right' materialized in three successive versions: first, a concept that was based on nude-coloured trousers and a T-shirt with an origami-like hole in the front; thereafter, a grey male suit; finally, the transparent plastic suit (Figure 13). Among a range of promotional images with the plastic costume, one contrastingly features Saarinen in grey trousers. This image stands as proof of the layered process of the costume – one in which Turunen stresses the insignificance of the premiere as the crux of a process by stating she cannot even recall if the *current final* costume was ready before or after the opening night (Turunen 2017).[21] With again a playful tone, she articulates the commonplace approach in performance-making that works towards the premiere as its ultimate goal, instead of the aim of actually *feeling* satisfied

Figure 10: Re-invention characterizes Turunen's work, also in Saarinen's solo Vox Balaenae *(2011). Photograph by TSC/Sakari Viika.*

with the outcome: '[O]nce the premiere is behind, all failures are preserved there'(Turunen 2017: n.pag.). She acknowledges the invested resources that may feel 'wasted', but praises the chance to make changes or continue with the costumes if they feel 'wrong'. A similar process applies to *Third Practice* (2019), where new costumes premiered in Helsinki in 2021 (Figures 10–12).[22]

The above examples indicate how change and re-invention appear as significant aspects in Turunen's established signature style. As Turunen's '*named way*

Figures 11–13: From the process of Saarinen's Third Practice *(2019): from sketches for the development of the costumes after the premiere via costume fitting with dancer Pekka Louhio to revised costumes in the streamed performance (2021). Figures 11 and 12, top, courtesy of Erika Turunen, © Erika Turunen; Figure 13, bottom, photograph by TSC/Kai Kuusisto. In the picture: Pekka Louhio, Annika Hyvärinen, Natasha Lommi (in the front), Eero Vesterinen, Jenna Broas.*

of working' (Melrose 2009: n.pag., original emphasis), an expanded understanding of the design process allows the costume outcome to develop to its 'proper' state – proper as an intentionally ambiguous word choice to support multiple

interpretations – at times, in several iterations. Although iterative ideation is an inherent part of the design professions (Turunen 2018; Osmond 2021: 277, 278), in Turunen's signature style it seems to have a greater role. She masters re-inventing not only in the line of her works, but also within one production. In tandem with a demand for a continuous exploration from the choreographer's side – Saarinen, for example, consciously works against mannerisms (Jyrkkä 2020: 159) – such an approach functions, first, as a clear framework for the design; second, as a fruitful, interrelational loop between the co-creators; third, a binding agreement to guarantee the aspired quality of the performance, thus harking back to reliability as part of Turunen's signature style. Alternatively, re-invention of a recognizable idea can appear as an underlying characteristic in the designer's approach. For Turunen, such re-invention forms an essential part of her signature style: 'There's no production where I had achieved perfection with my idea. […] The same idea, I repeatedly attune to it and generate from it' (Turunen 2018: n.pag.). The 'idea' she refers to can be understood as a larger concept: an overarching principle that informs her signature style as a co-author of performance events, entwined with an overall determination and ambition she previously underlined as core to her designer identity.

CONCLUSIONS

In this article, I introduced Finnish costume designer Erika Turunen through her substantial contribution to the contemporary choreographic work by Tero Saarinen. With the key terms 'signature' (Derrida and Melrose) and 'author' (Järvinen's reading of Foucault), I analysed her characteristic means of addressing and celebrating the dancing body, often with a mastery of materials and structure, a richness of detail and an elaborate balance of the juxtaposed elements. I proposed that this balanced complexity is grounded in Turunen's approach, where to address and celebrate the dancing body is an applied method rather than a rhetorical one. By interpreting change and re-invention in Turunen's work, I highlighted her understanding of costume design as a relational practice and an evolving process. Furthermore, I traced a high-level self-reflection in her actions and the integral aspect of effortless communication in the authorship and 'signature style' she provides. This demonstrates one's artistic preferences and self-confidence: professional expertise that includes a sense of ownership over one's artistry. Following Melrose, these elements constitute my reading of Turunen's 'signature style' as her *named way of working* (2009: n.pag.), hence stressing the perennial role of the process for the material outcome. Yet, beyond concluding whether possessing or aspiring to such a recognizable 'way of working' is desirable, I present my analysis with the 'signature style' lens as a viewpoint to better understand core elements of designers with a substantial body of work: not only those similar to Turunen, but also designers whose style may seem more diffuse at first.

Drawing from Turunen's artistry and my understanding of costume as a 'work-within-the-work' in the broader scope of costume research, this study indicates how costume functions as an independent yet always interdependent element in the joint artistic creation. The focus here has been on the costume designer as a formative agent of dance performance through the experiences they create with the perceptible outcome of their artistic process. Based on my interest in expanding the understanding of the myriad types of collaboration in contemporary productions, I examined how Turunen is specifically both a contributor with a signature style, i.e. a distinctive way to

work, a Foucauldian 'author' and one of 'several individuals' (Järvinen 2016: 40) who co-create dance performance. In such deep-seated creative companionship, the costume designer develops her concepts with a sense of ownership yet without a purely individualist agenda. This in turn allows the emergence of a Derridean 'enigmatic originality' of design and may well connect with the potential to re-invent one's artistry in various collaborations – that in Melrosian terms, 'triggers anticipation', even appears 'recognisable as such'. Overall, this article has aimed to situate contemporary dance performance as a relevant ground to explore the agency of the costume designer and interlinked aspects of creative collaboration more broadly. In so doing, it proposes further enquiries into other and co-extant manifestations of signature style, modes of designer identity and co-authorship.

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SUGGESTED CITATION

CONTRIBUTOR DETAILS

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Summary of the pilot interview themes

Topic 1. The costume designer's background and current work within dance

Examples of the questions in the common thread:

– What was your first costume design work for contemporary dance? How did your work with dance develop from that? *Muistatko mikä oli ensimmäinen pukusuunnittelutyösi nimenomaan nykytanssiin? Ja miten tarina siitä jatkui?*

– How would you define 'dance costume', especially in contemporary dance? Why is costume needed in contemporary dance? Is costume needed in contemporary dance? *Mikä mielestäsi tekee tanssipuvusta tanssipuvun, erityisesti nykytanssissa? Miksi pukua tarvitaan nykytanssissa? Tarvitaanko pukua nykytanssissa?*

– Please tell me about your recent works with dance. *Kertoisitko viimeisimmistä töistäsi tanssin parissa?*

Customized questions:

– Hartl: focus on her work in the frame of Zodiak in the 2000s

– Koiso-Kanttila: focus on her collaborations with choreographers Brotherus, Karttunen, and Kivelä; ask about her use of mundane garments as costume and the difference between mundane garments as costume or more abstracted costume

– Relander: focus on her work in the frame of Zodiak before the 2000s

– Turunen: focus on her diversity as a designer across various genres of dance, opera, and drama; ask if she has a favourite area for designing across the performing art; ask about the aspects she finds characteristic of designing for contemporary dance

– Uusitalo: focus on her approach to artistic processes

Topic 2. The costume designer's experiences about and approach to design processes

Examples of the questions in the common thread:

– *How much do you consider (the reception of) your costumes from the perspective of the spectators?* Ajatteletko pukujen vastaanottoa yleisön näkökulmasta?
– For what purposes/ in which moments is the costume designer needed in contemporary dance productions? *Minkälaisissa kohdin mielestäsi pukusuunnittelijaa tarvitaan nykytanssiteoksissa?*

With customized questions, the interviewee was invited to elaborate on the following themes:

– characteristics of working in contemporary dance productions
– the early stages of innovating costumes for a contemporary dance performance
– practicalities and resources
– costume designer's role in the artistic team
– costume designer's communication and input in the performance-making
– collaboration with various choreographers (fresh or more seasoned choreographers)

Topic 3. The designer's views about various 'styles' and approaches to costume and the role of the designer in providing them

– What types of styles or categories can you identify in costume design for contemporary dance? How do you trace them? Are they relevant, and if yes, for what purposes? *Onko nykytanssin puvuissa mielestäsi tyylejä tai kategorioita? Kuinka ne näkyvät? Mihin niitä tarvitaan, jos tarvitaan?*
– Please describe your view about the relationship between costume, body, and movement. *Kuvailisitko käsitystäsi/kokemuksiasi puvun ja kehon sekä liikkeen suhteesta?*
– In which moments/decisions is the costume designer needed in establishing a relationship between the costume, body, and movement?

Minkälaisissa kohdin mielestäsi pukusuunnittelijaa tarvitaan esimerkiksi puvun, kehon ja liikkeen suhteen tuottamisessa?
– Please describe your view about the relationship between costume, space, sound, and lighting. *Kuvailisitko käsitystäsi/kokemuksiasi puvun suhteesta teoksen tilaan, ääneen, valoihin?*
– What kind of themes and ideas can be narrated through costume? *Minkälaisia asioita puvulla voidaan mielestäsi kertoa?*
– Is it possible to name the kind of performances where the costume designer would be the most useful? *Onko mahdollista sanoa, minkälaisissa teoksissa pukusuunnittelijaa eniten tarvitaan?*

Topic 4. The designer's views about the relationship between costume and politics in performance

– What does nudity in dance performance mean to you as a costume designer? Can it be a choice made by the costume designer? *Mitä alastomuus sinulle merkitsee pukusuunnittelijana? Voiko se olla pukusuunnittelijan valinta?*
– What can be expressed through the choice of nudity in dance performance? *Mitä alastomuudella voidaan tanssiesityksessä mielestäsi, pukusuunnittelijana, kertoa?*
– What are your experiences of performing gender in contemporary dance? *Minkälaisia kokemuksia sinulla on sukupuolen esittämisestä tanssissa ja tanssipuvuissa?*
– What are the means to partake in political discussions through costume? *Voiko nykytanssipuvulla osallistua yhteiskunnallisiin keskusteluihin? Kuinka?*

Topic 5. The designer's personal development and outlooks on the future practices

This category arose in the middle stage of the pilot interviews as a tool to prompt narration about the potential of costume design within contemporary dance, as well as to provide further space for the designers to verbalize their artistic practice and visions for the future. Some of the retrospective questions were specifically designed for Uusitalo and Turunen to gain from reflection on their long careers.

– Can you verbalize some of your views that have changed during your career? Are there ideas or approaches you could mention that have either changed or remained the same during the years? *Osaatko sanoa, ovatko jotkin näkemyksesi mielestäsi muuttuneet urasi aikana? Oliko sinulla joitain ajatuksia, joista voisit nyt sanoa, että olet selkeästi joko pysynyt kaiken aikaa samalla linjalla, tai mahdollisesti tullut toisenlaisiin ajatuksiin?*

– Do you have colleagues either in Finland or internationally whose work you follow? *Onko sinulla kollegoja, Suomessa tai ulkomailla, joiden työtä seuraisit erityisen kiinnostuneena?*

– Do you have a 'dream project' in this field? What would that be like? *Onko sinulla "unelmajuttua" jonka haluaisit joskus päästä tekemään? Millainen se olisi?*

Appendix 6

Main interviews for the thesis in alphabetical order

All 16 main interviews were conducted in person and audiorecorded unless otherwise stated below. Notes were taken by hand in all sessions. Interviews with Uusitalo, Koiso-Kanttila, and Turunen for the articles are fully transcribed; others are transcribed from relevant parts and otherwise documented by the themes that arose from the discussion.

Name	Date	Location	Length	Purpose	Themes
Monika Hartl	29 July 2014	Helsinki	2hr 23min 23sec (in four parts)	To investigate potential themes for the thesis	1) characteristics of Hartl as a designer 2) insights into costume design within contemporary dance as a specific genre for design
Carl Knif	15 April 2020	Video call	1hr 7min 28sec	To enrich Article 3 from the choreographer's perspective	1) characteristics of Knif as a choreographer–performer and his experiences of costume design and with costume designers 2) collaboration and costume design in *Red*
	22 May 2020	Video call	1hr 1min 32sec	To complement and deepen the previous interview in the development of Article 3	1) Knif's collaboration with costume designers 2) the principles and artistic methods in his company 3) details from the process of *Red*

Name	Date	Location	Length	Purpose	Themes
Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila	26 August 2014	Helsinki	1hr 12min 20sec (in two parts)	To initiate a research relationship and to map themes for focusing the research scope	1) characteristics of Koiso-Kanttila as a designer: everyday garments as costume and collaboration with choreographers 2) nudity as a costume choice, gender through costume, and political costume
	10 February 2017	Helsinki	1hr 3min 8sec	To collect material for a focused article on Koiso-Kanttila's work	1) her collaboration with choreographer Knif, particularly their use of everyday garments as costume 2) her creative processes 3) details about *The Earth Song* for Article 2
	7 April 2017	Helsinki	1hr 28min 24sec	To complement and deepen the material from the previous interview	1) her approach to collaboration and 2) her approach to 'holistic works of art'
Sonya Lindfors	8 December 2017	Telephone interview	no recording	To deepen the analysis in Article 2 from the choreographer's perspective	1) 'costume consultation' vs costume design 2) contextualization of the costume choices in *Noir?* 3) insights into Lindfors's characteristics as an artist-choreographer
Taina Relander	6 August 2014	Helsinki	1hr 25min 55sec (in two parts)	To investigate potential themes for the research	1) characteristics of Relander as a designer 2) insights into the research context, independent productions prior to 2000s 3) insights into costume design within contemporary dance as a specific genre for design

Name	Date	Location	Length	Purpose	Themes
Erika Turunen	17 December 2014	Helsinki	1hr 28min 26sec	To initiate a research relationship and investigate potential themes for the thesis	1) characteristics of Turunen as a designer 2) insights into costume design within contemporary dance as a specific genre for design
	29 March 2017	Helsinki	1hr 28min 35sec	To collect material for a focused article on Turunen's work	1) costume design within dance through three-dimensionality 2) long-lasting collaborative partnerships 3) further characteristics of Turunen as a designer
	15 August 2018	Helsinki	1hr 35min	To complement and deepen the material from the previous interview	1) Turunen's characteristic approach to work 2) her innovative designs in the early 2000s 3) her collaboration with choreographer Saarinen
	27 January 2021	Video call	1hr 2min 38sec	To provide details and clarify questions stemming from writing Article 4	1) mapping the possibility of using her costume sketches for the article 2) updating the process of *Third Practice*: communication, residencies, and the use of mobile phones in creative processes
	6 September 2021	Video call	47min 44sec	To provide details and clarify questions stemming from writing Article 4 and to maintain the research relationship	1) clarifying details for the article 2) her education in costume design and position as an employer for other costume professionals

Name	Date	Location	Length	Purpose	Themes
Marja Uusitalo	25 November 2014	Helsinki	1hr 54min 12sec (in two parts)	To initiate a research relationship and investigate potential themes for the thesis	1) characteristics of Uusitalo as a designer 2) productions *Sahara*, *Being is Everything*, and *Whirls* 3) collaboration, resources, and milieus for work 4) education, collaborative courses between art universities
	21 January 2016	Helsinki	1hr 32min 26sec (in two parts)	To complement and deepen the material from the previous interview in writing a focused article on Uusitalo's work	1) clarifying details about *Sahara*, *Being is Everything*, and *Whirls*; *Whirls* discussion based on images from the process, from her iPad 2) collaboration with costume makers and dancers 3) defines her mode for work
	7 November 2017	Helsinki	1hr 4min 45sec (in two parts)	To continue the research relationship and to contextualize the research topic	1) Uusitalo's career in dance projects 2) the milieu for costume design within dance before 2000s, especially in the 1980s and 1990s

Appendix 7

Complementary interviews for the thesis in alphabetical order

All complementary interviews were conducted in person. Notes were taken by hand in all sessions. Interviews were transcribed from relevant parts and otherwise documented by the themes that arose from the discussion.

Name	Date	Loca-tion	Length	Themes
Maija Hirvanen	26 June 2017	Helsinki	1hr 5 min 11sec	1) characteristics of Hirvanen as a performer-choreographer 2) her approach to costume design and costume choices
Suvi Hänninen	3 November 2017	Helsinki	1hr 40min 34sec (in two parts)	1) characteristics of Hänninen as a costume designer 2) her experiences as a costume designer for contemporary dance in early 2000s 3) insights into costume design within contemporary dance as a specific genre for design
Sanna Kekäläinen	6 June 2016	Helsinki	1hr 20min 40sec	1) characteristics of Kekäläinen as a performer-choreographer 2) her approach to costume design and costume choices 3) values and principles related to nudity and gender on stage
Soile Lahdenperä	14 November 2017	Helsinki	1hr 20min 48sec	1) a dance artist's perspective on costume choices and 'styles' in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s 2) her experiences of the artistic team as the costume decision-maker

Name	Date	Location	Length	Themes
Liisa Pentti	10 November 2017	Helsinki	58min 7sec (in two parts)	1) a dance artist's perspective on costume design in dance in Finland in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s 2) characteristics of Pentti as a performer–choreographer 3) her approach to costume and experiences of collaboration with costume designers
Pirjo Valinen	7 January 2016	Helsinki	1hr 17min 41sec	1) characteristics of Valinen as a costume designer 2) costume/performance documentation and means to assess them 3) creative processes and collaboration in dance productions

Main enquiries from the field in alphabetical order

Communications resulting in an interview are omitted from this list; further clarifying communications are also excluded.

1) Costume designers, graphic designers, lighting designers, visual and multidisciplinary artists

Name	Institution	Date	Media	Topic
Laura Haapakangas		8 December 2015	e-mail	Her recent works for dance [in response to the author's thesis project introduction in *Meteli*, Helve 2015b]
Kirsti Maula		27 July 2016	e-mail	*Being is Everything posters*
Kaija Maunula	Rimpparemmi	2 June 2016	e-mail	Her position at the small VOS dance theatre Rimpparemmi, costumer/costume designer terminology
Johanna Naalisvaara (Salomaa)		14 & 15 November 2017	e-mail	Her work as lighting and costume designer
Rachel Quarmy–Spadaccini		13 April 2021	e-mail	Collaboration with Tero Saarinen company
Jyrki Riekki		18 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design in the performances by The Blackroom Act, especially in *Rakkaus lunastetaan jouluna* (2004) and *Born Under Saturn* (2006)
Salla Salin		10 & 13 November 2017	e-mail	Her work in performances without a named costume designer, especially in *Paper Piece* (2015) and *Kolme huonetta* (2010)
Soile Savela		19 December 2017	e-mail	Costume design in *AmazinGRace* (2010)

2) Choreographers, dance artists, performing artists

Name	Institution	Date	Media	Topic
Anne Hiekkaranta		19 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design in the performances by The Blackroom Act, especially in *Rakkaus lunastetaan jouluna* (2004) and *Born Under Saturn* (2006)
Simo Kellokumpu		16 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design processes in his work and in the performances by The Blackroom Act
Jenni Koistinen		5 December 2017	e-mail	Costume design processes in her work, especially in *Leena ja Pertti* (2010, with Virva Talonen) and *Kotimatkalla* (2015)
Anna Mustonen		7 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design process in her choreography *Di Anima et Di Corpo* (2012)
Vera Nevanlinna		9 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design process in her choreography *Just* (2014)
Kaisa Niemi		17 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design in the performances by The Blackroom Act, especially in *Rakkaus lunastetaan jouluna* (2004) and *Born Under Saturn* (2006)
Tomi Paasonen		15 & 16 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design processes in his work, especially in *Monogram* (2011), *MeMoRe* (2004), and *Olotila* (2000)
Liisa Risu		7 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design process in her choreography *Metri* (2004)

Name	Institution	Date	Media	Topic
Masi Tiitta		2 November 2017	e-mail	His approach to costume in performance-making: how, when, and by whom are the decisions made? Who should be credited for the costume design?
Satu Tuomisto		20 & 21 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design processes in her work, especially in *Mirjami ja Mikael* (2007), *Huu, haukka haukkaan* (2008, 2009) and *Keittiönpöydällä* (2011)
Taneli Törmä		17 November 2017	e-mail	Costume design processes in his work, especially in *ZOOM* (2014)

3) Communications managers, managing directors, producers

Name	Institution	Date	Media	Topic
Piia Ahonen	Zodiak – Center for New Dance	31 May 2016	e-mail	Zodiak's production structure
		8 December 2017	e-mail	Details about *The Earth Song* (2013) video documentation
Asta Elijoki	Regional Dance Centre of Eastern Finland	19 January 2016	e-mail	Regional Dance Center of Eastern Finland and its production structure
Sanna Kangasluoma	Dance Info Finland	30 May 2022	e-mail	Dance performance and audience statistics in Finland
Piia Kulin	Central Finland and Pirkanmaa Regional Dance Centers	18 January 2016	e-mail	Central Finland and Pirkanmaa Regional Dance Centers and their production structures
Minna Luukko	Dance Info Finland	29 October 2015 & 18 January 2016	e-mail	Dance Info Finland statistics and TANKA database
Terhi Mikkonen	Tero Saarinen Company	28 January 2021	e-mail	Literature pertaining to Saarinen's work
		13 April 2021	e-mail	Artistic teams at Tero Saarinen Company
		23 June 2021	e-mail	Confirming production details
		19 April 2022	e-mail	Confirming production details
Marjo Pyykönen	Carl Knif Company	3 April 2020	e-mail	*Red* (2014) performance materials

Name	Institution	Date	Media	Topic
		29 May 2020	e-mail	*Red* (2014) details
Ona Sandberg	Carl Knif Company	28 September 2017	e-mail	Production details about *Tusen ord i sekunden* (2008) and *Mandorla* (2009)

Research materials used per article

Article 1

	Sahara	Being is Everything	Whirls
Photographs	X	X	X
Full video			
Video extract	X	X	X
Live event			
Written description	X		X
Press reviews	X	X	X
Choreographer's account			
Costume designer's account	X	X	X
Material costume	X		
Costume sketches			
Mood boards/references		X	X

Article 2

	AmazinGRace	Noir?	The Earth Song
Photographs	X	X	X
Full video	X	X	X
Video extract	X	X	X
Live event		X	
Written description	X	X	X
Press reviews	X	X	X
Choreographer's account		X	
Costume designer's account			X
Material costume			
Costume sketches			
Mood boards/references			

Article 3

	Red
Photographs	X
Full video	X
Video extract	X
Live event	X
Written description	X
Press reviews	X
Choreographer's account	X
Costume designer's account	X
Material costume	
Costume sketches	
Mood boards/references	X

Article 4

	Wavelengths	HUNT	Georgia	Borrowed Light	Vox Balaenae	VORTEX	Kullervo	Third Practice
Photographs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Full video						X		
Video extract	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Live event	X	X	X	X	X		X	
Written description		X						
Press reviews		X		X	X			
Choreographer's account								
Costume designer's account	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Material costume								
Costume sketches								X
Mood boards/references								X

Appendix 9

Appendix 10

Performances mentioned in the thesis in order of premiere date

Wavelengths (2000)
    Choreography Tero Saarinen
    Costume design Erika Turunen
    Lighting and visual design Mikki Kunttu
    Music Riku Niemi
    Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki,
    Finland, 28 January
    Performed by Finnish National Ballet

Pyhä koulu* ('Sunday School') (2000)
    Choreography Jenni Kivelä
    Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila
    Lighting design Terike Popovits
    Set design Salla Salin
    Sound design Juha Storm
    Premiere venue and date Media Centre Lume, Helsinki, Finland 19 April
    Performed by Simo Kellokumpu, Satu Rekola/Jenni Kivelä
    *Theatre Academy and UIAH student production

IHO – SKINLESS (2001)
    Choreography Sanna Kekäläinen
    Costume design Riitta Röpelinen
    Lighting design Matti Jykylä
    Music Aake Otsala; collage
    Premiere venue and date Cable Factory, Helsinki, Finland, 3 April
    Performed by Sanna Kekäläinen

Sini (2001)**
    Choreography Tero Saarinen
    Costume design Erika Turunen

Lighting design Mikki Kunttu
Music collage
Premiere venue and date Lyon Opéra, Lyon, France, 17 April
Performed by Lyon Opéra Ballet
**in Article 4 only

Guardian of the Night (2001)
Choreography Alpo Aaltokoski
Set and costume design Taina Relander
Make-up design Tuija Luukkainen
Lighting design Pasi Pehkonen
Composition Olli Koskelin
Sound design Timo Muurinen
Premiere venue and date Kuopio City Theatre, Kuopio, Finland, 13 June
Performed by Mika Backlund, Joona Halonen, Simo Kellokumpu/Alpo Aaltokoski, Carl Knif, Ari Numminen, Timo Saari, Sami Vartiainen

A Blind Moment (2001)
Choreography Harri Kuorelahti
Costume design Marja Uusitalo
Video Harri Kuorelahti, Reine Lukinmaa
Lighting design Mia Kivinen
Sound design Johanna Storm
Premiere venue and date Ateneum Hall, Helsinki, Finland, 21 November
Performed by Harri Kuorelahti, Liisa Pentti

Sahara (2002)
Choreography and direction Alpo Aaltokoski
Costume design Marja Uusitalo
Lighting and set design Tarja Ervasti
Music and sound design Mikko Hynninen
Video directing Tapani Launonen
Video photographer J-P Passi

Video editing Tapani Launonen, J-P Passi
Premiere venue and date JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre, Oulu,
Finland, 25 April
Performed by Melissa Monteros, Raisa Punkki, Katri Soini,
Pirjo Yli-Maunula, Reijo Kela, Wojciech Mochniej

HUNT (2002)
Choreography Tero Saarinen
Costume design Erika Turunen
Multimedia Marita Liulia
Multimedia programming Jakke Kastelli
Lighting design Mikki Kunttu
Music Igor Stravinsky
Premiere venue and date Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy, 2 June
Performed by Tero Saarinen

Fairy (2002)
Choreography Jyrki Karttunen
Costume design Marja Uusitalo
Make up design Tuija Luukkainen
Set, lighting, sound, and video design Kimmo Karjunen
Music Leena Joutsenlahti
Premiere venue and date Kuopio City Theatre, Kuopio, Finland, 19 June
Performed by Jyrki Karttunen

Georgia (2003)
Choreography Tero Saarinen
Costume design Erika Turunen
Lighting design Mikki Kunttu
Music collage
Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki,
Finland, 21 March
Performed by Finnish National Ballet

Trickle, Green Oak (2003)

    Choreography Susanna Leinonen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Set Design Erika Turunen, Olli-Pekka Koivunen, Susanna Leinonen

    Lighting design Olli-Pekka Koivunen

    Music Mia Erlin

    Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki, Finland, 31 October

    Performed by Salla Eerola, Sara Saviola, Johanna Nuutinen, Maria Tamminen

Red-Letter Days (2003)

    Choreography and texts Jenni Kivelä

    Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila

    Set design Salla Salin

    Lighting design Heikki Paasonen

    Sound design Johanna Strom

    Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Cable Factory, Helsinki, Finland, 3 November

    Performed by Joona Halonen, Carl Knif, Ninu Lindfors, Katri Soini

Disturbed Silence (2004)

    Choreography Susanna Leinonen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting design Mikki Kunttu

    Music Kasperi Laine

    Premiere venue and date Helsinki Festival, Stoa, Helsinki, Finland, 28 August

    Performed by Heidi Lehtoranta, Kaisu Hölttä, Sara Kovamäki, Maija Kiviluoto, Susanna Leinonen

Borrowed Light (2004)

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting and set design Mikki Kunttu

    Arrangement of the original Shaker music Joel Cohen

    Leading of music Anne Azéma

    Sound design Heikki Iso-Ahola

    Premiere venue and date Octobre en Normandie Festival, Le Havre, France, 8 October

    Performed by Tero Saarinen Company and The Boston Camerata

Sine (2005)

    Choreography Kati Kallio

    Costume design Sari Suominen

    Video design Mika Ailasmäki

    Lighting design Juho Rahijärvi

    Music and sound design Nuutti Vapaavuori

    Premiere venue and date Kanneltalo, Helsinki, Finland, 7 October

    Performed by Riikka Kekäläinen, Satu Rekola

Frail Line (2006)**

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting and set design Mikki Kunttu

    Music collage

    Premiere venue and date Lucent Danstheater, Den Haag, The Netherlands, 9 March

    Performed by Nederlands Dans Theater NDT1

    **in Article 4 only

Numen (2006)

    Choreography Arja Raatikainen

    Costume design Marja Uusitalo

Set and lighting design Jukka Huitila
Sound design Antti Nykyri
Premiere venue and date Full Moon Dance Festival, Pyhäjärvi,
Finland, 25 July
Performed by Jonna Eiskonen, Terhi Vaimala, Jenni-Elina von Bagh (née
Lehto)

Diano Marina (2006)
Choreography Jenni Kivelä
Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila
Set and lighting design Salla Salin
Sound design Johanna Storm
Premiere venue and date JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre, Oulu,
Finland, 18 October
Performed by Anne Hiekkaranta, Elina Hauta-aho

Friedenplatz (2006)
Choreography Kirsi Monni
Costume design Suvi Hänninen
Set design Simon Le Roux
Lighting and sound design Mikko Hynninen
Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Helsinki,
Finland, 3 November
Performed by Joona Halonen, Vera Nevanlinna, Katri Soini

Sold Out (2007)
Choreography Eeva Muilu
Costume design Monika Hartl
Lighting design Tuukka Törneblom
Music Air
Premiere venue and date Stoa, Helsinki, Finland, 27 October
Performed by Eeva Muilu

My Imaginary Friend Is with Me (2007)
  Choreography Jyrki Karttunen
  Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila
  Set and lighting design Jukka Huitila
  Character design Marko Mäkinen, Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila,
  Jyrki Karttunen
  Character making Pipsa Keski-Hakuni with students Karoliina Nikitin,
  Anne Mikkilä, Anna Pelto, Salla Pokkinen
  Music Maija Ruuskanen; collage
  Sound design Jukka Huitila, Jyrki Karttunen, Maija Ruuskanen
  Premiere venue and date Stoa, Helsinki, Finland, 27 October
  Performed by Jyrki Karttunen (with Joona Halonen, Sari Lakso,
  Tuovi Rantanen as Friends)

MEVOTH (2008)
  Choreography Petri Kekoni
  Costume design Joanna Weckman
  Set design Petri Kekoni
  Lighting design Matti Jykylä
  Composer Iiro Ollila
  Premiere venue and date Cable Factory, Helsinki, Finland, 16 May
  Performed by Andrius Katinas, Maija Kiviluoto, Tanja Kuisma,
  Petri Kekoni, Sara Kovamäki, Terhi Vaimala

Next of Kin (2008)
  Choreography Tero Saarinen
  Costume design Erika Turunen
  Lighting design Mikki Kunttu
  Music Jarmo Saari
  Sound design Heikki Iso-Ahola
  Premiere venue and date Lithuanian National Drama Theatre, Vilnius,
  Lithuania, 9 September
  Performed by Tero Saarinen Company

Mandorla (2009)

    Choreography Carl Knif

    Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila

    Set and lighting designer Kaisa Salmi

    Music Janne Hast, Nico Muhly

    Sound design Janne Hast

    Premiere venue and date JoJo – Oulu Dance Centre, Oulu, Finland, 31 January

    Performed by Jonna Aaltonen, Carl Knif, Terhi Vaimala

Hohto/Shine (2009)

    Choreography and visualization Kenneth Kvarnström

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting design Kenneth Kvarnström, Olli-Pekka Koivunen

    Music William Lawes, Mika Vainio, Ludde Hagberg (recording)

    Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki, Finland, 28 February

    Performed by Jaakko Eerola, Linda Haakana, Anna Sariola, Kare Länsivuori, Jouka Valkama, Antti Keinänen, Samuli Poutanen, Frans Valkama

Being is Everything (2009)

    Choreographer Alpo Aaltokoski

    Costume designer Marja Uusitalo

    Set and lighting designer Matti Jykylä

    Sound designer Aake Otsala

    Graphic design Kirsti Maula

    Premiere venue and date Stoa, Helsinki, Finland, 16 April

    Performed by Otto Akkanen, Anne Hiekkaranta, Johanna Ikola, Sampo Kerola, Tuovi Rantanen

Last Laugh (2009)

    Choreography and texts Jenni Kivelä and the performers

    Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila

    Scenography Salla Salin

    Lighting design Heikki Pasonen

    Sound design Johanna Storm

    Music composed for the work Peloton trio: Pentti Luomakangas, Hannu Risku, Eero Savela

    Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Cable Factory, Helsinki, Finland, 13 May

    Performed by Leila Kourkia, Andrius Katinas, Elina Hauta-aho, Ninu Lindfors

Double Lives (2010)**

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Scenography Ville Konttinen, Tero Saarinen

    Lighting design Ville Konttinen

    Video design Jakke Kastelli, Ville Konttinen, Tero Saarinen

    Video editing Jakke Kastelli

    Videography Andreas Etter

    Sound design Jarmo Saari

    Premiere venue and date Oldenburgisches Staatstheater, Oldenburg, Germany, 12 February

    Performed by nordwest/Tanzcompagnie Oldenburg and Tanztheater Bremen

    ** in Article 4 only

Stage Animals #2: Sissi, Anno 2010 (2010)

    Concept and direction Liisa Pentti

    Costume design Terttu Torkkola

    Make-up design Tuija Luukkainen

    Set design Pasi Ruokonen, Liisa Pentti

Lighting design Mia Kivinen
Sound design Aleksi Haapaniemi, Patrick Kosk, Liisa Pentti
Sound design realization Paul Pignon
Musician Aleksi Haapaniemi
Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Helsinki,
Finland, 7 April
Performed by Satu Herrala, Felix Marchand, Andrius Katinas,
Mikko Orpana, Nina Viitamäki

AmazinGRace (2010)
Choreographer Kirsi Törmi
Costume designer Soile Savela
Set designer Markku Hernetkoski, Soile Savela
Lighting designer Niko Kurola
Video editing Niko Kurola, Heikki Törmi
Premiere venue and date Kajaani, Finland, 15 April
Performed by Kirsi Törmi, Heikki Törmi

Hologram Walls (2010)***
Choreographer Carl Knif
Costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila
Lighting designer, visuals Jukka Huitila
Sound design Janne Hast
Premiere venue and date Helsinki Festival, Kiasma Theatre, Helsinki,
Finland, 2 September
Performed by Jonna Aaltonen, Hanna Ahti, Carl Knif, Terhi Vaimala,
Eero Vesterinen
***in Article 3 only

YOUMAKEME (2011)
Choreography Kenneth Kvarnström
Costume design Erika Turunen
Lighting design William Iles

Premiere venue and date Helsinki City Theatre, Helsinki,
Finland, 5 March
Performed by Kenneth Bruun Carlson, Janne Marja-aho,
Valtteri Raekallio, Terhi Vaimala, Eero Vesterinen

Whirls (2011)
Choreographer Alpo Aaltokoski
Costume designer Marja Uusitalo
Scenography and projections Alisha Davidow
Lighting designer Matti Jykylä
Music Uuno Klami, Kalevi Aho, recorded by Lahti Symphony Orchestra
Premiere venue and date Alexander Theatre, Helsinki, Finland, 25 August
Performed by Janne Aspvik, Johanna Ikola, Ahto Koskitalo, Kaisa Launis,
Arttu Lindroth, Jouni Majaniemi, Tuovi Rantanen, Samuli Riik, Jussi
Suomalainen, Esete Sutinen, Heidi Suur-Hamari, Terhi Vaimala,
Jussi Väänänen

Vox Balaenae (2011)
Choreography Tero Saarinen
Costume design Erika Turunen
Lighting and set design Mikki Kunttu
Music George Crumb
Sound design Marco Melchior
Premiere venue and date Automne en Normandie, Le Rive Gauche,
Saint-Etienne-du-Rouvray, France, 5 November
Performed by Tero Saarinen Company and Ensemble InterContemporain/
Avanti!

Absent Presence (2011)**
Choreography Tero Saarinen
Costume design Erika Turunen
Lighting design Mikki Kunttu
Music Jarmo Saari: Jarmo Saari solu

Premiere venue and date Alexander Theatre, Helsinki,
Finland, 23 November
Performed by Tero Saarinen Company
**in Article 4 only

Wonderful and Fine (2012)
Choreography Janina Rajakangas/FREEcollective
Costume design Maria Sirén
Lighting design Tero Koivisto
Sound design Jouni Tauriainen
Premiere venue and date Tanssivirtaa Festival, Hällä stage, Tampere,
Finland, April 17
Performed by Maija Ikonen, Maria Kananen, Terhi Kuokkanen,
Outi Yli-Viikari, Rea-Liina Brunou

Mothertongue (2013)
Choreography Carl Knif
Costume design Erika Turunen
Visualisation, lighting design Jukka Huitila
Sound design Janne Hast
Poems Johannes Hämeen-Anttila
Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki,
Finland, 20 September
Performed by Jonna Aaltonen, Annika Hyvärinen, Carl Knif,
Riku Lehtopolku, Pekka Louhio, Terhi Vaimala

The Earth Song (2013)
Choreographer Sari Palmgren
Costume designer Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila
Lighting designer Heikki Paasonen
Sound design Tuomas Norvio
Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Cable Factory,
Helsinki, Finland, 16 May

Performed by Maria Saivosalmi, Lotta Suomi, Sari Palmgren,
Jukka Peltola, Jukka Tarvainen, Tuomas Norvio

Scars – Breaking the Barriers of Intimacy (2013)
Choreography Pirjo Yli-Maunula and William Petit
Costume and set design Heidi Kesti
Lighting design Jukka Huitila
Sound design Pom Bouvier B.
Premiere venue and date Culture Centre Valve, Oulu,
Finland, 1 November
Performed by Pirjo Yli-Maunula and William Petit

NOIR? (2013)
Choreographer Sonya Lindfors
Costume design Sanna Levo
Set design Aino Koski
Lighting design Erno Aaltonen
Sound design Hannu Hauta-Aho
Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Cable Factory,
Helsinki, Finland, 29 November
Performed by Esete Sutinen, Ima Iduozee, Deogracias Masomi,
Sonya Lindfors

Red (2014)
Choreography Carl Knif
Costume design Karoliina Koiso-Kanttila
Lighting design Jukka Huitila
Music collage
Sound design Janne Hast
Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Helsinki,
Finland, 8 April
Performed by Carl Knif

VORTEX (2014)

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting and set design Mikki Kunttu

    Music Young-gyu Jang

    Premiere venue and date National Theater of Korea, Seoul, South Korea, 16 April

    Performed by National Dance Company of Korea and Be-being ensemble

Morphed (2014)

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Teemu Muurimäki

    Set and lighting design Mikki Kunttu

    Sound design Marco Melchior

    Music Esa-Pekka Salonen

    Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki Festival, Helsinki, Finland, 16 August

    Performed by Tero Saarinen Company

The Greatest Dance Hits (2014)

    Direction and concept Maija Mustonen

    Costume design Suvi Matinaro (née Forsström)

    Lighting design Anton Verho

    Sound design Viljami Lehtonen

    Premiere venue and date Zodiak – Center for New Dance, Helsinki, Finland, 5 December

    Dance and choreography Leena Gustavson, Joona Halonen, Jyrki Karttunen, Ninu Lindfors, Heli Meklin, Maija Nurmio, Anne Pajunen/Saara Töyrylä, Laura Pietiläinen, Anni Rissanen, Taneli Törmä/ Saara Töyrylä

Kullervo (2015)

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting design Mikki Kunttu

    Music Jean Sibelius

    Premiere venue and date Finnish National Opera and Ballet, Helsinki,
Finland, 13 February

    Performed by Finnish National Ballet and Tero Saarinen Company

Fields of Glory (2015)

    Direction and choreography Jarkko Partanen

    Dramaturgy Anni Klein

    Costume design Laura Haapakangas

    Lighting design Samuli Laine

    Sound design Jussi Matikainen

    Premiere venue and date Helsinki Festival, Eläintarha Sports Park,
19 August

    Performed by 100 amateur performers

Third Practice (2019)

    Choreography Tero Saarinen

    Costume design Erika Turunen

    Lighting and set design Eero Auvinen

    Projection design Thomas Freundlich

    Music Claudio Monteverdi

    Music direction, arrangement Aapo Häkkinen

    Premiere venue and date Teatro Amilcare Ponchielli, Rassegna di Danza
and Festival Monteverdi, Cremona, Italy, 29 May

    Performed by Tero Saarinen Company and Helsinki Baroque Orchestra

Costume design in Western dance performance ranges from street and rehearsal wear to fashionable dress and ground-breaking artistic innovation. However, few scholarly studies have been published on dance costume. This doctoral thesis appears as a landmark body of work due to its dedicated focus on costume design in contemporary dance in the twenty-first century, explored through selected case studies from Finland. Core to this study are the interconnections between design processes, costume outcomes, and collaboration. As this enquiry reveals, costume outcomes are shaped not only by conceptual and material choices but also by co-creative and interpersonal exchanges during the design process between costume designers, choreographers, and other members of a creative team. This thesis advances current knowledge in dance costume by examining underexplored themes such as the use of everyday garments as costume, the formative nature of costume in dance performance, and the far-reaching effects of sustainable collaboration in performance-making.

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