

THE CHOREOGRAPHED GARMENT

Contemporary dance and modern ballet often focus on conveying emotions through patterns of movement which may be abstract, obvious, or anywhere in between, as supported by music, sound, or spoken words that set the mood. Scenography is typically sparse or confined to the available space, leaving the dancers as the main instrument of communication.

This work explores choreography and costume design, with a focus on how garments can inform and direct movement, choreography, and performance, and in turn how movement may inform and contribute to the development of dynamic garments. Through a series of live experiments, ranging from self-instigated performance/video work in collaboration with choreographers and dancers to performances of garment interaction associated with everyday life, the performative, spatial, and interactive properties of garments are explored.

The results of these live experiments relate to various aspects of choreography, scenography, and performance space, and offer wide-ranging creative potential. The work shows how designers and choreographers can collaborate on performance scenarios within the context of modern ballet and contemporary dance productions, thus creating conceptual garments that influence the design, choreography, and manipulation of conceptual garments. In relation to the act of dressing and undressing, previously unseen types of garment and ways of wearing and performing were found. New models of collaborative interaction are proposed. This work has demonstrated how the agency of garments can function as a manuscript in modern dance, and how performance itself redefines the notion of wearing and the concept of garments.



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