



## COMBINING CHOREOGRAPHY AND MUSIC

by Kirstine Kyhl Andersen

*Mixing choreography and composing is not a new approach for Kirstine Kyhl Andersen. She's been doing that in her work with the combined band and dance company [WEGO] since it was founded 2004 by her and musician and Niels Bjerg. With Choreosound Kirstine looked forward to meeting the other choreographers and composers who shares her interest in combining choreography and music.*

The collaboration between me and composer Niels Bjerg started as an attempt to erase the borders between the concert and dance performance. We wanted to create a new energetic form that could reach a broad audience from people with backgrounds in music and dance. That's why we started [WEGO].

When working with [WEGO] we're constantly looking for a way to make a concert not just accompany the dance performance, or the other way around. The objective is to integrate movement and music into a coherent whole. The musicians take part in the choreography with specific movements or qualities incorporated into the musical scores. During the past six years, we've developed different methods to combine music and movement into the same compositions, by regarding the dancers and musicians as eight voices in a coherent ensemble.

Our performances build on a number of different compositions, similar to how any other band creates a set list for their concerts. As each composition develops, the dramaturgic arc is defined by the order of sequence. We work with this overall arc as a long and coherent composition rather than a specific story line, and keep changing the order of scenes until we find the one that works best. Since each composition deals with different themes, it gives the final result an open conclusion with space for the audience to interpret the actions into a personal experience.

Participating in Choreosound didn't really change our working methods in [WEGO], but it provided both of us with lots of inspiration.

We usually work out all compositions in detail from the beginning to the end, but often use improvisation as an element, always with a clear relation or assignment. At Choreosound we had the pleasure of collaborating with many great artists, but because of the lack of time, it was often hard to go beyond improvising and explore the ideas that came up in any greater depth.

In fact, Choreosound has helped us realize that in order to go deeper into the technicalities of how choreography and music can work together, we need a lot of time for preparation and experimenting. As a result, we have decided to break our next production into many shorter working periods of 2-3 weeks at a time, spread out over the coming year. This should allow us time to evaluate the results in-between each working period, before deciding on whether or not to use certain material - and most importantly how.

Kirstine Kyhl Andersen, APRIL 2010

*Kirstine Kyhl Andersen is a choreographer educated at SNDO (School For New Dance Development) in Amsterdam. The band/company [WEGO] is run by her and composer Niels Bjerg. Kirstine also works as a freelance dancer, teacher and choreographic advisor, and recently received a working grant from the Danish Arts Council for 2009.*

*Kirstine and Niels' collaboration focuses on how to integrate a live concert with a dance performance and vice versa, and how movement and the musical score can work together in detail. Their common aim is to be able to present performances both in theatre and music venues, in the hope of bringing together new and broader audiences.*



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