Abstract:
A growing collection of self-determined reflections on dance practice are being published by choreographers in a variety of formats. Often working in collaboration with researchers, editors and designers, these heterogeneous publication projects make use of text, moving image and more open-ended digital tools and platforms. Many of these projects are either newly available or are in the process of development. In addition to offering practice led contributions to the discourse on dance, they point towards the artist's role in developing alternative forms of documenting, analyzing, notating and archiving contemporary dance.

Part One:
There are several definitions of choreography in Jonathan Burrows' recently published A Choreographer’s Handbook (Routledge 2010). I cite the first here: “Choreography is a negotiation with the patterns your body is thinking” (p 27). This brief description guides us toward a couple of interesting concepts. If the body is capable of thought, then choreographic thinking may be what happens when one is making dances. Or one could speculate on how choreography emerges from the interaction between an abstract idea and what has been learnt by the body – its patterns. In any case, the conditions of this interaction vary depending on the methods and tools used by the particular choreographer.

How does this all come together in a work of art, the finished dance? Burrows’ book, based on his many years of performing, choreographing and teaching, provides wonderful and useful insights into the process of dance making. Thusly, A Choreographer’s Handbook makes an important contribution to the growing collection of resources dance artists have begun to offer the field. Some are publishing their ideas about choreographic practice, like Burrows, in book format. Some are making film documentaries. Others are combining aspects of text and moving image with more open-ended digital publishing tools and platforms. Whatever the media, there appears to be a
desire on the part of dance artists to inspect their own practice, then share and communicate these ideas to others.

Once published or produced, these resources have the potential to be of use to teachers and students in dance and related arts, as well as educate audiences in new ways. They also bring choreographic ideas into contact with other fields of knowledge and research. For example, *Improvisation Technologies: a tool for the analytical eye*, an multi-media CD-Rom published in 1999 by William Forsythe, generated a great deal of interest in the field of architecture. Its use of graphic annotation on video (see Fig. 1) has also helped cognitive psychologists, anthropologists and other non-arts specialists understand an aspect of choreographic thinking. In 2009, Forsythe followed up *Improvisation Technologies* with the creation of the award winning on-line digital dance score *Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing*, reproduced.

In the meantime, other choreographers, some inspired by *Improvisation Technologies*, began to explore the use of digital tools to bring choreographic ideas and processes into newly productive exchanges with audiences, education and other specialist areas. These include Wayne McGregor and Siobhan Davies, both London-based, and Emio Greco|PC in Amsterdam. In 2008, these choreographers and the researchers and designers working on their initiatives came together during a series of workshops entitled “Choreographic Objects: traces and artefacts of physical intelligence”. These workshops drew attention to an emergent international ‘community of practice’ involved in the complex work of publishing choreographic ideas. From this emerging community a variety of important contributions to research areas are in development, including new creation and notation tools, and fresh perspectives on archiving dance [1].

**Part Two:**

This last decade of activity provides a context for a new collaborative initiative of William Forsythe and The Forsythe Company. The following summarizes the project goals and partners:

Motion Bank is a new four year (2010-2013) project of The Forsythe Company providing a broad context for research into choreographic practice. The
main focus is on the creation of new on-line digital scores in collaboration with selected guest choreographers to be made publicly available via the Motion Bank website. Both these unique score productions and development of related teaching curriculum will be undertaken with and rely on the expertise and experience of key collaborative partners. Public educational activities and events reflecting the diverse issues related to score creation will be offered at The Frankfurt Lab, and will include performances and presentations of the guest choreographers as well as lectures. Workshops and residencies organized with senior scientists and scholars aim to stimulate interdisciplinary research based on questions coming from dance practice. Exchange of information with and support for related projects is facilitated through working groups and associate networks.

**Motion Bank Partners:**

For the digital score development: the Advanced Computing Center for Art and Design at The Ohio University, the Fraunhofer Institute for Computer Graphics Research IGD, the Hochschule Darmstadt-University of Applied Sciences (h_da) and the Hochschule für Gestaltung (HfG) Offenbach.

For education and workshops: the Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts and the Palucca Schule Dresden – Hochschule für Tanz.

For interdisciplinary research: The Berlin School of Mind and Brain – Humboldt University Berlin and the Max Planck Institute for Brain Research Frankfurt.

Motion Bank is supported by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, the Hessische Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst, Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain, the Volkswagen Foundation and Susanne Klatten.

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**References**

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- Inside Movement Knowledge. URL: insidemovementknowledge.net (accessed 29 June 2010)
- Motion Bank. URL: motionbank.org (accessed 29 June 2010)
- Siobhan Davies Replay. URL: www.siobhandaviesreplay.com (accessed 29 June 2010)
- Synchronous Objects for One Flat Thing. reproduced. URL: synchronousobjects.osu.edu (accessed 29 June 2010)

[1] Other established choreographers publishing works include Meg Stuart, Steve Paxton, Rui Horta and Deborah Hay.