

PALIMPSEST OF SELF
REVEALING PAST AND PRESENT IDENTITIES THROUGH
CHOREOGRAPHIC AND EXTENDED REALITY TOOLS

A Thesis

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines what I have termed as the *palimpsest of self*. *Palimpsest* originally refers to writing that has been rubbed out, yet traces remain. My creative and scholarly research investigates the notion that self can be viewed as a layered entity, much like how tree rings or rock striations illustrate a visual history or palimpsest of the whole. The thesis expands on this concept by examining past identities of an historic site, while employing a combination of site-specific choreography, film, and extended reality (XR) virtual tools to create a viewing experience that is both immersive and co-produced between the participant and myself as choreographer. Using the historic colonnade at Princeton Battlefield State Park as a site-specific study, I investigate using choreographic and XR tools to simultaneously reveal both past and present identities of the colonnade's *palimpsest of self*. Chronological layers of the site's palimpsest are expressed through artistically abstracted means while working cross- and interdisciplinarily across the fields of dance, film, technology, philosophy, design, sound, and architecture. Research presentation includes *The Time Traveler's Lens*, an ongoing site-specific production with pre-recorded movement currently viewable both at the colonnade and remotely. Through my research, I created a series of five choreographic works, each representative of a different layer of the colonnade's palimpsest, that exist as immersive XR screendance films using 360-degree videography. These films are accessible via a mobile website that publicly launched in April 2021. Visitors to the colonnade grounds access the website to view these dances as augmented reality (AR) works and are encouraged to select which layer(s) of the palimpsest they wish to view and in which order, allowing past and present identities of the colonnade's *palimpsest of self* to commingle in current time. Remote access to these five screendance films is additionally available for a virtual reality (VR) experience.

KEYWORDS: *Palimpsest, past/present, site-specific, choreography, extended reality (XR), augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR)*

PREFACE

As an artist and history-lover, I constantly find myself tapping into hidden layers of a site's identity, past and present. When visiting ruins, I have an urge to physically touch the remnants of stone walls and pillars that hold memories of times past. Recently, I was introduced to *Arts of Living on a Damaged Planet: Ghosts and Monsters of the Anthropocene*, a collection of works revolving around mankind's relationship with the environment. The introduction suggests that to “learn the stories of stones, geologists might use the insights of ethnographers and poets. In her poem ‘Marrow,’ writer Ursula Le Guin urges us to listen to stones without forcing our will on them” (Tsing et al., G11). I was immediately reminded of a theory introduced to me through a *Sensory Ethnography* film course called Stone Tape Theory (which led to a film, *The Stone Tape*, 1972) in which stones and other materials are believed to record energy much like tape recordings and hold the potential to be replayed, revealing past experiences.

This concept that stones can record and even play back time ties directly into my research. My work investigates the premise that a physical site—be it geographical, architectural, or the human body—exists as a layered entity, with past iterations of “self” layering over time. As I began researching this concept in relation to my chosen architectural site, the colonnade at Princeton Battlefield State Park (Princeton, NJ), I questioned how its marble columns might play back these experiential recordings; how the experiences of these stones might translate into human behavior; and finally, how choreographic and virtual tools might be used to immerse viewers in each layer of this site's identity.

INTRODUCTION

My research investigates the notion that self can be viewed as a layered entity, much like

how tree rings or rock striations illustrate a visual history or *palimpsest* of the whole. In his *Encyclopedia of Environmental Change*, John A. Matthews, Emeritus Professor of Physical Geography, Swansea University, defines palimpsest as a “‘multilayered’, relict feature (e.g., landscape, continental margin, sediment distribution and rock texture) in which the effects of successive generations of formative processes can still be deciphered,” with the term deriving from “the reuse of parchment after earlier writing has been rubbed out” (p. 806). This concept that earlier iterations of a landscape and its artifacts are still decipherable despite deterioration, evolution, or being “rubbed out” denotes remnants of past identities found within a physical site’s present self. An historic site might reveal remnants of its past (and potentially contradictory) purposes, as architectural remains or changes in the landscape signal past identities as a farm, a home, a battlefield, or a multilayered coalescence of all past selves. It is through this site-based palimpsest that these past identities—however rubbed out—can once again become partially or fully revealed.

My research uses choreographic and virtual tools to reveal the *palimpsest of self* for a physical site—be it a geographical location, architectural structure, or even the physical vessel that is the human body. *What “past selves” has a physical site embodied and/or experienced over time? Which remnants of past identities are still clearly visible, tactile? Which ones are rubbed nearly out of memory, and might they still be kinesthetically sensed?* My research strives to choreographically demonstrate this theory, while examining the dualities of past versus present; tangible versus sensory; and viewer versus performer. *How might one recognize and reveal the palimpsest of past and present identities for an historic site, making each selected layer simultaneously come alive for its visitors?*

My interest and expertise in artistic celebration of historic landmarks stems from my seven years of work as an historical interpreter for Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House, home of the book *Little Women* (Concord, MA), and the Paul Revere House (Boston, MA). Over the decade that followed, my work expanded to focus on historically-based community engagement arts programming with interdisciplinary choreography as an integral component. This pairing of professional backgrounds in history and the arts allows me to contribute an historically insightful perspective to the site-specific sub-genre of choreography that goes deeper than the current identity of a site, asking: *What purposes did this space serve? What joys did it witness, tragedies? How might one engage the public with its stories?* In 2012, I formalized this work, innovating and producing Luminarium Dance Company's¹ yearly Cultural Community Outreach Project—a custom-tailored annual event that integrates history, dance, and the arts to celebrate a town's cultural and historic landmarks.

Through these Cultural Community Outreach Projects, my research has been publicly presented through a myriad of inter- and transdisciplinary works and events, including a self-published storybook (Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Amherst, MA); turning a 60-foot-tall water tower into a projection screen for an outdoor performance of dance and visual art (Arlington Reservoir Water Tower, Arlington, MA); a series of screendance films combining dance and quilting via video projection (New England Quilt Museum, Lowell, MA); and a weeklong “breathing installation” series integrating movers into installation art (Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA); among others.²

¹ Luminarium® Dance Company is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization co-founded by Merli V. Guerra and Kim Holman in 2010. Based in Boston, MA, and Princeton, NJ, this award-winning contemporary dance company is regularly hailed for its unique combination of dance and illumination.

² For information on these projects, visit <https://www.luminariumdance.org/cultural-community-outreach-project>.

For the purpose of this thesis, I selected the Ionic colonnade at Princeton Battlefield State Park (Princeton, NJ) to serve as the physical site whose *palimpsest of self* I reveal here.

I researched its layers of past and present identities, examining what was visible or palpable versus hidden or nearly forgotten, and created a series of interdisciplinary choreographic works that highlight these past and present layers of self using 360-degree videography. My research culminated with launching *The Time Traveler's Lens*, an immersive extended reality (XR) performance comprising five 360-degree screendance films.

These films were originally designed to be viewed on the physical grounds of the colonnade at Princeton Battlefield State Park. When viewing these films on the grounds, they are considered augmented reality (AR). Participants can hear, see, touch, and enjoy the scents of the physical site as the performers appear to dance around them. Viewing these films elsewhere is considered virtual reality (VR), as the environment exists only through virtual technology. Both AR and VR technologies now fall under the umbrella category of extended reality (XR). The five XR choreographies of *The Time Traveler's Lens* are now available for public participation via a mobile website I designed that launched on April 19, 2021. This website encourages visitors both on the park grounds and elsewhere to bend and reorder time as they select which layer(s) of the palimpsest they wish to experience and in which order, comingling in current time.

FRAMEWORKS

This section examines the frameworks integral to this research. I will begin by considering the concept of palimpsest in relation to the colonnade, followed by the subject of reframing perspective and reception from technical, historical, and theoretical viewpoints.

Considering Palimpsest

‘Palimpsest’ was considered both visually and auditorily in response to the colonnade. The culminating films manifest research that spans multiple time periods and presents the colonnade from five different angles and across multiple seasons. In an effort to auditorily link these films, the sound of a ringing bell has been included in all, as the resonance of a bell addresses the palimpsest of sound (expanded upon later on pp. 18-19).

It is important to note that chronological events have no bearing on the order in which these films were created nor the order in which they are meant to be viewed. *Palimpsest of self* asserts that remnants of *all* layers of a site’s past and present identities co-exist *simultaneously*; thus, viewers of these works are encouraged on the project’s website to view them in whichever order they prefer.

Reframing Perspective & Reception: Technical, Historical, & Theoretical

As a seasoned screendance filmmaker, I am no stranger to the biases of *perspective*. Each cinematic shot is a choice by me, the videographer, that determines the exact proximity, angle, and framing of the choreography that the viewer is allowed to experience through my lens. While it is true that the viewer witnesses the same choreographic work as the videographer, the viewer is limited to experiencing it through the series of choices *I* make, as I omit the brush of an arm in favor of the stamping of feet. Likewise, history has long been acknowledged as being influenced by its narrators. The American Civil War, for instance, was titled with opposing names depending on one’s geographical ties and associated political ideologies, with northern states terming it the “War of Rebellion” and southern states addressing it as the “War for Southern Independence.” *Yet what if this lens could be controlled more actively by the viewer? What*

happens if the viewer is given the power to modify their reception of the work by choosing what is seen within the frame, and actively shifting the frame organically as the work progresses?

Although some might approach this from feminist film theory, I instead found inspiration in my prior studies of sensory ethnographic film, specifically in relation to *choreocinema*, a term coined by *New York Times* journalist and dance critic John Martin (1946) in response to Maya Deren's cinematic works. Deren's use of the camera is choreographic, with the camera becoming an integrated part of her body.³ The ever-moving lens of Deren's *Divine Horseman: The Living Gods of Haiti* (1985), for example, provides the videographer (and thus, the viewer) with an active role in the narrative unfolding. This work additionally exemplifies *cine-trance* methodology (as termed by cine-ethnographer Jean Rouch), in which the videographer senses *with* the film's subjects by abandoning their own consciousness and corporeal body, becoming one with those they are documenting.⁴ Through *cine-trance* and *choreocinema*, both the videographer and viewer engage in a co-produced immersive experience with the subject at hand, through physical and mental reframing.

This query of reframing shifted my own research towards employing 360-degree videography as a means of providing an immersive viewing experience within each choreographic layer of the colonnade's *palimpsest of self*. Like *choreocinema*, the viewer shifts the lens in response to the narrative unfolding and, like *cine-trance*, the viewer is, indeed, merging body and mind with the immersive, spherical world surrounding them. Too often, as viewers, we become passive, numbed by the illusionary "fourth wall" between audience and performer, house and stage. In contrast to this notion, my project encourages the viewer to play

³ Schäuble, Michaela. "Ecstasy, Choreography and Re-Enactment: Aesthetic and Political Dimensions of Filming States of Trance and Spirit Possession in Postwar Southern Italy." *Visual Anthropology* 32, no. 1 (2019): 33–55. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08949468.2019.1568112>.

⁴ Rouch, Jean. *Ciné-Ethnography*. Translated by Steven Feld. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

an *active* role in the unfolding of the work, while harnessing technology as a means of accomplishing this active viewership and, consequently, the co-created reception of the work.

METHODOLOGY

These realizations regarding reframing perspective and reception developed out of my preliminary creative and theoretical explorations and, as such, it should be noted that my work process follows the Practice as Research (PaR) model.⁵ PaR “indicates the uses of practical creative processes as research methods (and methodologies) in their own right, usually but not exclusively in, or in association with, universities and other [higher education] institutions” (Kershaw and Nicholson, 64). The action of choreographic creation leads to theoretical discovery, which in turn prompts further research through continued creative praxis and theoretical inquiry. The following section illustrates key moments throughout the development of this work when the PaR method was particularly integral, as well as examining methodologies used for data collection, archival research, and cross- and interdisciplinary praxis.

Data Collection

Data collection was derived from three areas of research: 1) Historical elements of the site’s former identities were gleaned from libraries, archives, the Internet, and from the Princeton Battlefield Society and State Parks Service; 2) Recording the palimpsest of the physical site involved numerous visits to the site grounds throughout all four seasons—from heatwaves to an active blizzard—observing the visual and palpably tactile qualities of the physical site, the

⁵ During the 1950s-90s, postmodern performance created “a mash-up world in which binary habits of thought and practice were challenged profoundly” (Kershaw and Nicholson, 63). This period is often referred to as the “practice turn” and it occurred across disciplines, including the arts, sciences, and philosophy. With it emerged the ‘practitioner-researcher,’ a necessary paradox unto itself (Kershaw and Nicholson, 63).

changing seasonal and daily soundscape of the site, and the relationship between its man-made structures and the surrounding natural environment; and 3) Interdisciplinary inquiries were explored to present research via a combination of dance, film, theatre, history, costume design, lighting design, scenic elements, and virtual tools.

Archival Research

This section provides a description of the colonnade at present, as well as an overview of the colonnade's architectural history and the historic relevance of the site where it now stands. It also acknowledges the organizations and individuals who were integral to my gathering of archival research.

The colonnade at Princeton Battlefield State Park in Princeton, NJ (see Appendix A), comprises an architrave supported by four Ionic decorative columns with fluted shafts, two supporting back pillars, with four shallow steps stretching the width of the supporting horizontal portico leading to the portico floor. Made of white Carrara marble now grayed and discolored from exposure to the elements, this gigantic remnant of early nineteenth-century design strikes the modern eye as a misplaced Greek-style ruin puzzlingly standing along the edge of the expansive preserved battlefield. Princeton Pike now bisects this field, with many local commuters driving past this historic landmark daily, yet not knowing its rich and storied past.

The colonnade originally served as the grand entryway to the Matthew Newkirk house originally located on the corner of 13th and Arch Streets in downtown Philadelphia, PA (see Appendix B). A railroad magnate, Newkirk hired local architect Thomas Ustick Walter to design the mansion in 1835, who later achieved fame as the fourth architect of the U.S. Capitol, including the dome that stands today. In 1876, the Society of the Sons of St. George purchased

the mansion and renamed it St. George's Hall.⁶ The building was eventually demolished at the turn of the twentieth century, with the colonnade being preserved and shipped by canal boats up the Delaware & Raritan Canal to Princeton, NJ, in 1901.⁷ Here, the colonnade again served as the portico to a home, this time for Mercer Manor, which was first owned by Harry B. Owsley⁸ then changed hands in the 1920s to Robert Maxwell, a revolutionary in light-up billboard advertising. In the 1950s, Mercer Manor was damaged by an extensive fire.⁹ Upon its demolition, the Institute for Advanced Study, which now owned the property, donated the surviving colonnade to the State of New Jersey. The colonnade was relocated across the battlefield to its current placement and newly dedicated in 1959 as an entrance to the nearby memorial gravesite of 36 unnamed soldiers (15 American, 21 British) who fell in the pivotal Battle of Princeton on January 3, 1777.¹⁰

In addition to my own research, I am grateful to the State Park Service staff, including Will Krakower, Historic Educator for the Princeton Battlefield State Park, who led me on an historical tour of the grounds and provided additional research assistance and insights; and Neal Ferrari, Superintendent, who assisted with permitting for the filming of this project's choreographic works. I am also thankful to Princeton Battlefield Society President Jerry Hurwitz for sharing his wealth of knowledge surrounding the Battle of Princeton, specifically pertaining to uniforms that might have been worn by the unnamed soldiers buried behind the colonnade.

⁶ "St. George Society Club House. [Graphic] / James Cremer, Photographer and Publisher, 18 South Eighth Street, Philadelphia." Library Company of Philadelphia Digital Collections. Accessed March 1, 2021. <http://digital.librarycompany.org/islandora/object/digitool%3A99849>.

⁷ "Marble Columns Of Mercer Manor To Be Preserved." *The Record*. June 2, 1958. Accessed September 11, 2020. <https://www.newspapers.com>

⁸ McNulty, Bob. "SW Corner of 13th and Arch." Web log. Bob's Philadelphia History (blog), February 18, 2013. Accessed March 1, 2021. <http://phillyhistory.blogspot.com/2013/02/sw-corner-of-13th-and-arch.html>.

⁹ Engstrom, William L. "The Princeton Battlefield State Park." *Montgomery Mumbblings*, April 3, 2003. <http://www.phototelegrapher.org/home/battle>.

¹⁰ "Colonnade and Memorial Grove." Princeton Battlefield Society. Accessed July 7, 2020. <https://pbs1777.org/colonnade>.

Using both archival research and on-site observations as a launching pad for creative exploration, I created a total of five 360-degree choreographic films. These five films take inspiration from different spatial and temporal palimpsest aspects of the site: *In Revolution*, The Battle of Princeton (1777); *Conception: Architect as deity*, the colonnade’s conception through the mind of architect Thomas Ustick Walter (1835); *Passage*, the colonnade’s journey up the Delaware & Raritan Canal (1901); *Dwelling*, the colonnade’s original purpose as an entryway to a private home—with specific inspiration from a Maxwell family Christmas card (1949); and *Remains: Architect as mortal*, the colonnade in its present state, viewed through the imagined lens of Walter posthumously revisiting his work (2021).

Cross- & Interdisciplinary Praxis

Chronological layers of the site’s palimpsest were expressed through artistically abstracted means while working cross- and interdisciplinarily across the fields of dance, film, technology, philosophy, design, sound, architecture, and poetics. This section examines some of the many cross- and interdisciplinary methodologies that were employed throughout the PaR creation of these five works. (As a note, some aspects of the works mentioned here will be discussed in greater detail later in this thesis.)

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Shifting to the realm of 360-degree videography and immersive XR choreography has presented significant opportunities for demonstrating the *palimpsest of self*; yet this shift has also presented challenges. Sita Popat is an academic scholar in performance and new technologies. Her article *Missing in Action: Embodied Experience and Virtual Reality* delves into the “embodied experience” of live theatre and performance art, and how the use of VR blurs the

“virtual and physical, absent and present” (Popat, p. 3). Popat questions the duality VR presents the performing arts field: On the one hand, VR provides the viewer with a new experience of the field (one which often can defy the physical realm); however, the body itself is missing from this experience. In response to this, I questioned, *how can embodied experience be both enhanced and removed from the performing arts through the use of VR?*

This query proved relevant as I first began experimenting with working interdisciplinarily between dance and XR technology. I came to realize early on in the creation process that my dancers were struggling to imagine what the piece might look like when viewing its final 360-degree version, affecting their ability to translate my choreographic direction accurately. In an effort to assist their understanding (and my own as well), I filmed a choreographic phrase twice: once from a removed point of view, and then again from a crouched position between the performers, moving my lens spherically around me and mimicking the motions of a viewer turning their mobile device above, below, and side to side. Not only did this experiment allow my dancers to better understand their newfound relationship between each other and the camera (i.e., the bodiless viewer), but it helped me recognize moments in which the viewer would be forced to choose watching only one performer over the other, while other moments allowed for both to remain equally visible. This simple exercise prompted me to reconsider the dancers’ placements throughout the choreography we had already created, and left me increasingly eager to experiment with the actual 360-degree camera, as a new tool for realizing my artistic vision.

With these early experiments in mind, I began reshaping the choreography of my duet, *In Revolution*, to intentionally provide extended periods during which viewers must choose which performer to follow. In the spirit of reframing cultural perspective, these moments further accentuate the participatory nature of the films. This activates viewers as *co-narrators*, each with

their own unique perspectives, embodied in active collaboration with the choreographer (myself) and reception of the work, rather than acting as a passively receptive audience. In October, I presented an early draft of the duet to an advanced media course; as I had hoped, each viewer interacted with the work differently. One panned his phone continuously across the horizon as he followed one performer circling him, while another actively shifted his phone back and forth between both performers. A third tilted her phone upwards and below to take in the greater environment. No three viewings were the same and, as the students and professor replayed portions to view once more, I began to recognize that *their* motions were becoming choreographic in nature—either by repeating their previous motions in an attempt to recreate what they had just seen or by intentionally deviating from their prior motions in an effort to experience the work from an alternate perspective.

While Popat's bodiless viewer was indeed a hurdle when initially choreographing the work, I would argue that this PaR method of inserting myself into the role of the viewer and later studying the viewers' early interactions with the performance demonstrates a more actively engaged body than the standard stationary audience member. In this manner, Popat's dualities of virtual and physical, absence and presence are indeed palpable here, with one's sense of disembodiment in the virtual films countered by a *heightened* embodiment in the physical realm.

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Editing 360-degree footage was a new challenge for me as an otherwise seasoned filmmaker. Yet this challenge also provided exciting new opportunities for me to develop an all-surrounding immersive experience. As I worked with my *Passage* footage, I was suddenly reminded of M.C. Escher's mind-bending lithographs. As a child, I remember staring, mesmerized, at a large-scale print of Escher's *Relativity* (1953) in my father's Polaroid office. Its

gravity-defying stairways proffer multiple interpretations of “up,” “down,” “left,” and “right,” and it occurred to me that Escher might be an artist of inspiration as I tackled the seemingly limitless editing possibilities within 360-degree video. Perusing the M.C. Escher Foundation website, I was surprised to discover how many of his works include spherical imagery and optics. Some key examples include Escher’s *Hand with Reflecting Sphere (Self Portrait in Spherical Mirror)* (1935), *Balcony* (1945), and *Magic Mirror* (1946).¹¹

By studying this artist’s renderings of reality-warping spheres through a two-dimensional medium, I began finding it easier to picture myself as being *inside* my spherical footage. As a result, I experimented with implementing XR technology to allow the water footage for *Passage* to appear from different viewpoints within the sphere and ultimately discovered that having it seep into the frame from directly below the viewer provides a delightful reality-warp akin to Escher’s works. This discovery had a direct impact on my choreography, as I initially set the dancers to guide the viewer through the columns and look outwards. For the final filming, I instead reconfigured the dancers to guide the viewer through the columns and look down to find the water virtually flooding in below their feet.

This cross-disciplinary method of studying Escher’s sketches and applying their reality-warping techniques to my films proved pertinent both in the choreographic process and post-production editing. While 360-degree videography is spherical, it can be flattened into an equirectangular projection. In this way, I found Escher’s three-dimensional illusions through a two-dimensional medium cross-disciplinarily translatable to my own work with spherical illusions and possibilities when editing together my two-dimensional equirectangular footage.

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¹¹ M.C. Escher – The Official Website. The M.C. Escher Company B.V. Accessed October 28, 2020. <https://mcescher.com>.

Interdisciplinary methodologies were especially critical when considering the intersectionalities of dance with lighting, costuming, theory, and set elements in the creation of these five films. In the case of *In Revolution*, both costuming and set elements were key aspects of the creative work, with archival research playing a large role in their development. My original premise for the work was to create an athletic combative duet between two male dancers, representing the British and Continental armies of the Revolutionary War. Yet, as rehearsals began in the summer of 2020, it became clear that COVID-19 pandemic restrictions would make hand-to-hand physical combat an impossibility for this work. In speaking with Historic Educator Will Krakower, I learned that the Battle of Princeton employed a variety of combative techniques involving bayonets, rifles, pole arms, swords, and muskets, among other weapons. It was when Krakower handed me a musket with bayonet attached measuring six feet long, end to end, that an idea sparked: six feet was also the distance required for mandated COVID safety precautions among my performers. Thus, we began creating our combative duet using six-foot-long sticks sourced from New Jersey's forests. This choice provided an interdisciplinary approach to our duet: activating us to abstract the sticks as different weaponry; creating a physical and visual clashing of opposing forces; and, symbolically, using an element *of the land to fight for the land*. For the final filming of the work, we were intentional in our choice of exactly which sticks to use, preferring a reddish-brown bark reminiscent of the battle's famed "Brown Bess" musket.

Color proved to be integral to the costume design of this work as well. In an effort to present these two performers as symbolic of their greater armies, I spoke with Princeton Battlefield Society President Jerry Hurwitz about the uniforms and attire most likely worn by the 36 unnamed soldiers buried behind the colonnade. The final costuming for the piece blends

historical details with contemporary design through an interdisciplinary approach based on color. Viewers will notice the familiar red coats with off-white facings of the 17th Regiment and the navy coats with red facings of the 3rd Virginia Regiment, as well as the red with green of the 55th Regiment, the green hunting frocks of riflemen, and the myriad of buff, gray, brown, and blue hues worn by others in the Continental Army. These coded color details help enliven the memories of these fallen soldiers as we set their stories into motion through dance.

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In addition to dance and film, *Dwelling* was created using interdisciplinary praxis that combined elements of philosophy, set design, and architecture. In this work, a window is used as a gateway between two different realities: the colonnade as it now stands, filmed during a contemporary blizzard of Winter 2021; and a warm 1940s-inspired interior scene, reminiscent of the families who once lived in the home attached to this architectural ruin. My goal was to create a nearly-palpable contrast between the cold, snow-covered exterior of present-day, and the warm, glowing interior of past palimpsest layers, with the window acting as a time-traveling portal that transports the viewer between both worlds' temporalities.

French philosopher Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* examines the concept of the house through a philosophical lens. Two passages in this work proved particularly fruitful while creating this piece. Here, Bachelard examines the divisive dialectic nature of "outside" versus "inside":

"This side" and "beyond" are faint repetitions of the dialectics of inside and outside: everything takes form, even infinity. We seek to determine being and, in so doing, transcend all situations, to give a situation of all situations. Man's being is confronted with the world's being, as though primitivity could be easily arrived at (Bachelard 1994, 212).

By using the window here, however, I am able to toy with these concepts, as the “inside” scene the viewer sees through the window is of a past that no longer exists. In this manner, Bachelard’s “this side” and “beyond” are inverted in my work. “This side” now becomes the traditional “outside,” while peering through the window provides viewers with a glimpse into another time, or essentially, the “beyond.” (More on the implications of including a physical window can be found in the “Creative Works: Dwelling” section of this paper.)

Examining the binary elements of cold versus warm, and gray versus glowing for *Dwelling* triggered a new visual for me: The heart of the home is often thought of as the hearth, providing warmth and light, and creating an image of a safe haven. This realization prompted me to return to Bachelard’s *The Poetics of Space*, as I seemed to remember a similar sentiment within its pages. In the following passage, Bachelard explores the work of child psychologists with regards to imagery of the home:

To quote Anne Balif: “Asking a child to draw his house is asking him to reveal the deepest dream shelter he has found for his happiness. If he is happy, he will succeed in drawing a snug, protected house which is well built on deeply-rooted foundations.” It will have the right shape, and nearly always there will be some indication of its inner strength. In certain drawings, quite obviously, to quote Mme. Balif, “it is warm indoors, and there is a fire burning, such a big fire, in fact, that it can be seen coming out of the chimney.” When the house is happy, soft smoke rises in gray rings above the roof (Bachelard 1994, 72).

The above passage is additionally referenced in *Fire and Memory: On Architecture and Energy* by architect, and professor at the School of Architecture of Universidad Politécnica of Madrid, Luis Fernández-Galiano (translated by Gina Cariño), who adds: “The warm house, like the maternal womb, expresses the joy of the protective shelter; the more inclement the season, the more intense the joy; the colder it is outside, the more intimate the warmth becomes” (Fernández-Galiano 2000, 15). Intriguingly, here we find justification behind the treatment of the

colonnade as a female entity, a theme which ties into *Passage* (described in the “Creative Works: Passage” section of this paper).

These passages also reinforce the importance of the specific weather conditions under which the colonnade was filmed for *Dwelling*, as the cold, harsh imagery of the blizzard heightens (and is likewise heightened by) the warm, hearth-focused interior scene through the window. It was through these interdisciplinary methods that philosophy, set design, and architecture interwove into a cohesive, yet strikingly oppositional work.

...

Growing up the daughter of an English major and working, as an adult, as a freelance writer for publications both local and abroad, verbiage has always held profound importance to me and my artistic works. As such, the art of language plays a significant role in these five works, as their titles were conscientiously crafted to further the films’ artistic intents, rather than simply to catalogue the works.

In Revolution may seem an obvious choice for this film depicting fallen soldiers from the American Revolutionary War, yet its meaning is two-fold. In addition to its obvious allusion, “in revolution” refers to the ever-circling choreography of this duet—a theme which continues even as the two performers lower each other in a counter-balanced circle to the ground in their final moments of movement. In this manner, the duet orbits physically around the viewer in the horizontal plane, thus engaging the viewer (as axis) in an active state of revolution.

Dwelling is again an example of a title with a two-fold meaning. Historically, I pulled the term from Thomas Ustick Walter’s original architectural plans for the colonnade and its accompanying mansion, which he titled “DESIGN FOR A DWELLING HOUSE FOR M. NEWKIRK ESQ.” This prompted me to consider the root word of ‘dwelling’: the verb ‘to

dwelling.’ On the one hand, ‘dwelling’ refers to the colonnade’s former palimpsest layers as a private home as well as those who dwelled within the home. On the other, ‘to dwell on’ alternatively refers to the act of lingering on a particular subject, object, or site. In this sense, the viewers, themselves, are engaging in the act of dwelling, as they pause to consider and reflect on the colonnade’s existence as a residence.

Passage, likewise, has a dual meaning. Initially it refers to the physical passage undertaken by the columns as they journeyed up the Delaware & Raritan Canal from Philadelphia, PA, to Princeton, NJ, in 1901. Yet since this work focuses on the four columns themselves, this film title metaphorically alludes to the passage of time. One might argue that a third meaning arises during the work, as viewers are essentially given passage to the past through the film itself.

The full meanings behind the titles *Conception: Architect as deity* and *Remains: Architect as mortal* are discussed in detail in the following section, yet in the interest of exploring the interdisciplinary methodology behind these two titles, I will draw attention to their use of capitalization here. Since “Deity” implies one god and “deity” implies one of many, I intentionally chose to employ the latter in this case, as I envision the architect not as *the* god, but rather as one of many. This reasoning is likewise true for *Remains: Architect as mortal*, as the architect now exists as one mortal among millions. These titles are thus an active interdisciplinary component of each of these five works.

...

The Time Traveler’s Lens also worked interdisciplinarily with sound. Just as each film presents a vastly different visual narrative yet all are linked by the common presence of the colonnade, so too each film has a specifically constructed sound score, with the acoustic

presence of a bell serving as a link between all five. Much like a visual or tactile palimpsest, the resonance of a bell can be interpreted as the traces remaining from the bell's initial strike. Thus, the resonance of a bell portrays the palimpsest of sound—a fitting link between these works.

For *In Revolution*, this resonance appears at the end of the work as a deep tolling bell commemorating the fallen soldiers as they reach their final resting place. In *Conception: Architect as deity*, the single strike of an antique train bell conjures the arrival of the work's opening vertical beam of light. A train bell was used for this film both to reference Walter's many travels as an architect, and also the colonnade's ties to Matthew Newkirk, railroad magnate. The opening melody of *Dwelling* is a recording of an antique Westminster long bell door chime, a popular doorbell of the 1930s and 40s that further reminds viewers that this was once a site that required permission to enter. *Passage* integrates an antique ship bell into its water scenes in homage to the canal boats that carried the columns up the Delaware & Raritan Canal, while *Remains: Architect as mortal* includes the gentle ringing of wind chime bells. This final bell selection is the only one of the five that is activated by nature rather than man—a choice that serves to emphasize the abandonment of the colonnade to its current natural surroundings.

CREATIVE WORKS

This section provides a description of each work, as well as a thorough analysis of the additional artistic choices made to illustrate the *palimpsest of self* for the colonnade at Princeton Battlefield State Park. For the sake of discussion, I have analyzed my five works below in order of chronological events. However, as stated earlier, viewers are encouraged to engage with these five works in whichever order they choose.

In Revolution

In Revolution begins with the viewer standing roughly 70 yards in front of the colonnade, causing it to appear quite small in the distance. A burst of light reveals a cacophony of ghostly figures racing across the field on all sides of the viewer as Revolutionary War battle commands cry out in an equally cacophonous acoustic layering. The figural figments rush past the viewer, ducking bullets and clashing weapons made only of large sticks. Upon closer inspection, one will likely recognize that those dressed in the many brown, green, and navy hues of the Continental army are all one performer, while those donning British uniforms are all depicted by a second performer. A second burst of light floods the field as rifle shots bellow in quick succession, mimicking the blast of a cannon. As the light settles, the viewer is left with these two performers, now circling the viewer as they begin their duet.

Over the next several minutes, a combative duel ensues. With the two men fighting on opposite sides of the camera, the viewer frequently must choose who to watch while, at other moments, the men travel farther into the field and become equally visible to the viewer. At times, their sticks resemble muskets or rifles; at others, bayonets or swords. The duet is acrobatic and exhaustive, with the two colliding directly over the viewer's head in a final clash of weaponry. Firing shots as they stumble backwards, the two collapse to the ground as the same ghostly combat scene briefly reappears. Viewers are encouraged by superimposed floating text to "Follow the Soldiers" who have now returned to their feet and begin to traverse the battlefield towards the colonnade. The camera (and thus the viewer) walks with them, watching as the two performers duck behind trees and columns as they make their way through the colonnade.

The camera settles and the viewer sees they are now standing in the center of a burial for 36 unnamed soldiers (15 American, 21 British) who fell at the Battle of Princeton on January 3,

1777. The two soldiers perform a brief combative *adagio* before lowering each other to the ground in unison. As their bodies fade into the leaves and stones beneath them, the ghostly soldiers from the opening battle scene return, now rolling, crawling, and stumbling towards the burial from all sides, sinking into the ground as the scene fades to black.

...

In addition to the concepts of reframing perspective (discussed in the “Frameworks” section of this paper) and the interdisciplinary approaches given to elements such as color, props, and costuming (as discussed in “Methodology”), this work presented a unique artistic challenge with regards to its layering within the colonnade’s *palimpsest of self*. Unlike the four other works in this project series, whose layers of the palimpsest were more clearly defined, the event depicted in this layer of the palimpsest is simultaneously the *oldest* event from an historical perspective and the *newest* event from the colonnade’s perspective. While the Battle of Princeton took place in 1777, it did not become a layer of the colonnade’s identity until the colonnade’s dedication on the battlefield in 1959. *How, then, does one artistically depict this?*

Here, again, is a moment when *palimpsest of self* is so striking; when a single layer of identity can simultaneously encompass two temporal periods. We are again bending time. *Yet how might we portray this for the viewer?* Ultimately, I chose to use distance to my advantage. Unlike the other four films, this work begins in the center of the battlefield. While the colonnade is ever-present, its existence is visually minimized by its small stature against the enormity of the battlefield. This tactic in placement allows the viewer to suspend time, for a moment, and concentrate of the battle that once raged across these grounds. Later in the work, viewers traverse the field alongside the two soldiers as they travel to their current resting place. In making this physical transition, both viewer and soldier are essentially bending time: As the colonnade

increases in size, so too the soldiers draw closer to their present reality, as the memorialized deceased. I should note that this choice, while artistic, is also an intentional tactic on my part to encourage visitors to walk through the colonnade to the grave on the other side, as many locals do not know that this grave exists.

This work also deploys an interdisciplinary integration between contemporary choreographic choices informed by historical battle modes of combat. Each combatant in the duet uses specific movement vocabulary in an effort to metonymically represent the two opposing armies and their military techniques. The performer representing the Continental army pays homage to the guerilla warfare strategies of the colonists by staying low to the ground with tumbles, crawling, and the occasional unexpected barrel leap; his movements appear raw and impassioned in execution. In contrast, the performer representing the British troops remains predominantly vertical and calculated; there is a flourish to his movements, complete with choreographic tricks from color guard training. As a whole, the piece stays primarily in the horizontal plane—in contrast to works such as *Passage* and *Conception: Architect as deity*—taking inspiration from the horizontal movement of the troops converging in battle.

Conception: Architect as deity

Of the five films comprising this project, two were created as an antithetical pairing: *Conception: Architect as deity* and *Remains: Architect as mortal*. These works proffer two sides of the same coin, focused on the colonnade's architect, Thomas Ustick Walter. The goal of these works is to present the architect through two manifestations: 1) as a god-like figure whose memory is immortalized through his architectural creations; 2) as an insignificant mortal who—

like the columns—was eventually displaced from wealth and would perhaps feel akin to the columns, alone and forgotten.

Conception: Architect as deity begins with a vertical beam of light in a dark abyss. A man's silhouette appears; as he walks towards the viewer, his 1830s-inspired costuming design and elements become more clear as he approaches the camera. As though working on an invisible drafting table placed across the camera lens, the soloist manifests his architectural concepts through calculated hand gestures and focused facial expressions. The performer pulls imaginary lines of spatial thought from his head and places them intentionally onto the imaginary picture plane. From his sleeves, four miniature Ionic columns magically emerge, as if birthed from his mind and then body, which he places in a row before him. With the wave of his hand, the columns begin to blend into a photograph of the original Matthew Newkirk residence in Philadelphia, PA, before dissolving into a 360-degree image of the colonnade as it now stands in Princeton Battlefield State Park.

Conception: Architect as deity is the only work of the five that was filmed inside a traditional theater. The lighting is dramatic yet minimal, allowing the soloist to appear omnipresent within the dark abyss surrounding him. Placing the camera lower to the ground creates an intriguing relationship between viewer and performer, giving the soloist a larger-than-life presence. In keeping with this god-like persona, this first solo focuses on a movement vocabulary derived from architectural conception. The term “conception” plays a key role here: Similar to how the goddess Athena was born from the forehead of Zeus, so too might the Newkirk House (the original 1835 home of the colonnade) be thought of as being “born” from the mind of the architect. The movement vocabulary for this solo plays with this notion of

conception by employing choreographer William Forsythe's Improvisation Technologies¹² in relation to lines (point-to-point, extrusion, matching, etc.) that, in this case, emanate from the architect's head as a means of birthing new ideas.

Passage

Passage places the viewer directly behind the colonnade, sitting at the edge of the portico floor. Hovering with vertical alignment between the four columns and two supporting pillars are the words "WE THE / COLUMNS / HAVE / TRAVELED / FAR," which soon dissolve into the brilliant blue sky behind them as four women appear from behind the columns. Clad in pale gray with formfitting tops and long, columnar pleated pants, these women emerge circling the rim of each column's base before eventually disembarking. As they make their way close to the camera, their outstretched arms and flattened palms pushing upwards appear to replace the columns behind them, as if mimicking the columns' Ionic capital designs and holding up the colonnade's horizontal architrave capping themselves.

As viewers, we are eventually guided by the performers to stand and follow them to the edge of the portico stairs. Here, a performer motions for the viewer to watch, as she quivers her hands and footage of rippling water begins to seep into the scene, flooding beneath the viewer's feet. The viewer now finds themselves at the opposite end of the vertical spectrum, peering down at these four dancers as they float on white boards calmly and stoically down the Delaware & Raritan Canal. As the scene disappears, the viewer returns to their original placement at the edge of the portico floor where a pair of dancers indicate with their arms the horizontal directionality

¹² Forsythe, William, Nik Haffner, Volker Kuchelmeister, Christian Ziegler, and Astrid Sommer. *William Forsythe: Improvisation Technologies - a Tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*. Ostfildern, Germany: Hatje Cantz, 2012.

of the canal. Here, again, the two pairs of dancers are seen floating down the canal, yet this time the scene blends with that of the present colonnade.

The piece ends with each performer circling their respective columns until out of sight. An overlay of their towering figures slowly vanishes as the words “TODAY / HERE WE / STAND” fade into view.

Verticality was a key artistic choice in this work. Standing beside the columns, one feels the enormity of their presence, driving upwards towards the sky. To emphasize this spatial directionality, I filmed my dancers early in the morning with the sun facing the colonnade, causing long, dark shadows behind each column. This setting, coupled with the extremely low positioning of the camera (mere inches off the ground), created a heightened verticality to the footage. I have also chosen to place the viewer directly behind the colonnade. Given the directionality of the sun, the traditional photographer will undoubtedly seek to capture the front of the columns, shining brightly against the dark trees. By placing the viewer *behind* the colonnade, there is instead a feeling of existing within the portico’s being, the enclosure itself. The viewer witnesses the shadowed, hidden side of the columns and is, thus, entrusted to learn their secrets.

This work physically layers imagery of the four columns (manifested as four women) gliding down the Delaware & Raritan Canal (in homage to the columns’ journey along this very same canal from Philadelphia, PA, to Princeton, NJ, in 1901) against the current stoic placement of the colonnade on the stationary battlefield grounds. The layering technique used in the second overlay mimics that of a textual palimpsest, with pieces of imagery indecipherable to the viewer. The manifestation of these columns as women was also an important artistic choice: Ionic columns have associations with femininity, and one might be reminded of the Acropolis

Erechtheion's *caryatids* when viewing this work, in which sculpted women stand in place of columns (see Appendix C). Yet it was actually through my many observational studies of the space that I initially sensed their female presence. Dualities have been key to my research of the colonnade's *palimpsest of self*, and ultimately, the act of a male creator (the architect) further reinforces the choice to personify these columns as female, not for opposition, but for balance.

Still, the *caryatids* are, in fact, referenced in the final version of this work through the film's sound score. The following passage appears in Carl Kerényi's *The Gods of the Greeks*: "As Karyatis she rejoiced in the dances of the nut-tree village of Karyai, those Karyatides, who in their ecstatic round-dance carried on their heads baskets of live reeds, as if they were dancing plants" (Kerényi, 149). This passage resonated with me, as not only does it tie in themes of femininity and dance, but it also speaks of carrying an object on their heads, akin to the columns' carrying of the architrave in the colonnade structure. For this sound score, I have spoken this passage with an unintelligible, yet felt, autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR) technique,¹³ with the line whispered audibly in the film's final moments to emphasize these ties.

Dwelling

Dwelling begins with viewers standing roughly 20 paces in front of the colonnade. A large black and white Christmas card stands in place of the columns, reading "GREETINGS FROM MERCER MANOR / THE MAXWELLS CHRISTMAS 1949," while the battlefield appears likewise covered in snow with a black and white filter, and snow falls around the viewer. As the card dissolves into the background, the colonnade appears with a large eight-paned

¹³ Autonomous sensory meridian response (ASMR) is "described as a pleasurable tingling that begins in the head and scalp, shimmies down the spine and relaxes the entire body," that is triggered by auditory sounds such as finger tapping and low whispering (Gibson, 2014).

window leaning against one of the back pillars. As the camera moves closer to this window, the black and white filter dissolves into color videography, yet the snowy scene is still predominantly monochromatic by nature. A woman dressed in 1940s attire fades in and out behind the window, tracing the edges of the window panes, then backing away and disappearing behind the pillar.

At this point, the camera moves forward towards the window, peering through the glass to reveal a warm and vibrant 1940s interior. The same woman fusses over pillows on the sofa and the fire in the hearth. She plays briefly with her young dog who goes to fetch the woman's husband from another room before welcoming friends into the home. Merriment abounds as the two couples greet one another and the two pups play excitedly. The woman's husband pours drinks and the four toast to their reunion. Gradually this merry scene fades as the room darkens, showing time passed. The original husband and wife relax as the fire continues to glow, and they share an intimate moment dancing slowly by the hearth as the entire scene fades away until viewers once again see through to the snow-covered battlefield grounds. Yet this moment is fleeting as the entire 360-degree world blurs with circular motion, as if standing inside a snow globe that has just been shaken. All that remains is the white snow falling against a black abyss, before that, too, vanishes.

Realizing I had a salvaged window in my garage that was very similar in design to the windows on Mercer Manor, I began exploring ways in which I might create a work inspired by the Maxwell family Christmas card from 1949, while honoring *all* past home owners associated with this architectural entryway. The work would toy with concepts of inside versus outside, past versus present, and would invite viewers to peer through the window pane into the ruin's past identity as a family's private home. It is important to note that, while I manifested this work

based on imagery from the late 1940s, the characters in this film are not meant to literally portray the Maxwells, but rather to serve as representatives of all three families who knew these columns as a piece of their home: The Newkirks (Philadelphia, PA, 1835-1850s); the Owsleys (Princeton, NJ, 1900s-1920s); and the Maxwells (Princeton, NJ, 1920s-1950s). The goal was to present this space as one of joy, merriment, and hosting, yet also one of a generalized quietude, sanctuary, and intimacy—a reminder that this public ruin, open to all, was once the portico to a private domain.

In this manner, *Dwelling* presents an array of oppositions. In addition to interior versus exterior, past versus present, I aimed to heighten these dualities through artistic means, including: fire versus snow; welcoming versus harsh; colorful versus monochromatic; and snow falling versus smoke rising. These visual dualities draw the viewer into two modes of existence simultaneously: that of the interior (past) and of the exterior (present) and, while the viewer is given a limited view of the interior, this very limitation is meant to heighten its intensity. This is an important artistic choice to note: I have intentionally cropped the interior footage to limit its viewing to the edges of the window pane and layered a static image of the window mullions on top of this footage to create a definitive edge. This act of framing, specifically through a smaller pane of glass, is key. Architect and design theorist Christopher Alexander is a Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the University of California, Berkeley. His book *A Pattern Language*, co-written with Sara Ishikawa and Murray Silverstein, explains that while a massive singular plate glass window provides an uninterrupted view, it is the paned window that provides a stronger connection to that which is on the other side:

This is an important paradox. The clear plate window seems as though it ought to bring nature closer to us, just because it seems to be more like an opening, more like the air. But, in fact, our contact with the view, our contact with the things we see through windows is affected by the way the window frames them. When we

consider a window as an eye through which to see a view, we must recognize that it is the extent to which the window frames the view, that increases the view, increases its intensity, increases its variety, even increases the number of views we seem to see — and it is because of this that windows which are broken into smaller windows, and windows which are filled with tiny panes, put us so intimately in touch with what is on the other side (Alexander et al. 1977, 1109).

It is this intensified intimacy, as described by Alexander et al., that I aim to achieve through the definitive edging of the small windowpane in this work. Yet here, it is an intimacy with the *inside* of the space that the viewer experiences. Should the viewer turn their device beyond the window pane's edges, they will instantly be brought back into the cold, harsh reality of the colonnade in its current location, complete with contemporary cars driving along Princeton Pike in the distance. *How many of those driving by today know that this ruin once welcomed visitors into the lively home we peer into through this film?* By presenting both realities simultaneously, viewers are again able to experience multiple layers of the colonnade's *palimpsest of self*, and in keeping with this concept, they must peer up close and carefully to decipher its earlier layers.

Remains: Architect as mortal

Remains: Architect as mortal places viewers on the right-hand side of the colonnade, viewing the portico stairs on an angle. This film shows the colonnade in its present state, viewed through the imagined lens of colonnade architect Thomas Ustick Walter posthumously revisiting his work today, in 2021. We see the figure of a man (Walter) slowly fade into the scene walking towards the colonnade, this time wearing a long black coat, which he removes and places at the bottom of the stairs. As the architect communes with each of the columns, moving from the furthest left column to right (the same order in which he places the columns in *Conception*), the dancers from *Passage* emerge from behind their respective columns, as if Walter has awoken

each. As the dancers expand off the colonnade and onto the field just past the stairs, we notice that they are fully opaque, unlike Walter, who appears as a semi-translucent ghost.

Walter surveys the scene, walks past the dancers (who are independent of him now), then pauses, looking outwards in deep thought. Yet as he pauses, we see the columns react in stoic unison, looking toward him as if they sense he requires consolation, comfort, and recognition, then joining him in this same stance in solidarity. One by one they approach him; upon the final dancer touching his arm, Walter's opacity rises until he is fully opaque with his arms opened wide as he stares up at the colonnade and the dancers appear faded into the colonnade itself. As he lowers his arms, the architect once again becomes a ghost, walking past the now-opaque dancers, and returning them to their respective columns in reverse order. He picks up his jacket, redresses for his impending journey, looks once last time at his creation, then returns from whence he came.

Remains is the antithesis work to *Conception*, and as such it intentionally avoids the use of overly-magical special effects, relying instead on subtle shifts in opacities. *Remains* depicts Walter as an insignificant mortal who—like the columns—was eventually displaced from wealth and would perhaps feel akin to the columns, alone and forgotten. Yet there is also a sense of reunion here, a balancing of feminine and masculine energies, of permanence and impermanence. At the work's climax, the architect is fully opaque in response to the columns, as cognizant figures recognizing and remembering Walter as being real and significant to *them*.

LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

As of May 1, 2021, my research and culminating production have received great interest from individuals and organizations both local to the colonnade and abroad. Public response to

The Time Traveler's Lens has been positive and in keeping with my earlier experiments and expectations. I observed viewers interacting with the AR works on the grounds, and as anticipated, they all moved their bodies and mobile devices through different choreographic trajectories during the films. Each viewing experience was, indeed, unique. "I had an incredible, multi-dimensional experience," recounted one AR viewer. "There we were, with one foot firmly planted on the grass at the park, and the other foot trodding through history. Amazing!" Another on-site viewer with a background in XR technology commented, "The layering of images was amazing, the sound design and the choreography were wonderful. My hat off to you for designing a container [mobile site] that fluidly and effectively delivered the material to the audience. I was really impressed by the integration of the technology." Perhaps most encouraging was the feedback received from a remote viewer in Massachusetts: "My mother's property is within walking distance from the monument. I remember many visits there when I was a child. Your work has brought this monument alive again! What fascinating research you uncovered. I got lost in time while watching all the videos!"

This project has received international and academic attention as well. In April, I presented on my research and culminating project at an international globinar hosted by Our World Heritage, where I spoke about how this integration of choreography and XR technology can be used at other world heritage sites. As a result of this presentation, I am now in communication with organizations in Arizona, Connecticut, Canada, and Benin (West Africa) to discuss possibilities for collaboration with their own historic sites. I was additionally invited by Harvard University to present on this research for HUV/AR (Harvard University Virtual/Augmented Reality), a group of staff and faculty who are all exploring 360-degree, 3D,

and immersive spaces. I will be giving my presentation *The Time Traveler's Lens: Using AR/VR and Choreographic Tools to Enliven Historic Ruins* on May 18, 2021.

The work was also well received by the State Park Service staff, who have requested that *The Time Traveler's Lens* become a permanent addition to Princeton Battlefield State Park. Historic educator Will Krakower is looking into funding to install formal signage about the project at the park's entrance, encouraging viewers to engage with the work. The park is also in the early stages of designing a mobile app that will prompt visitors to view educational tours triggered by their GPS locations across the park grounds; Krakower would like to embed my five films into this app, with a tentative launch expected two to three years from now.

CONCLUSION

Working transdisciplinarily between dance and XR technology in no way replaces live performance; instead, it proffers a new performance experience of its own—one that is both immersive and intimate for the viewer, while broadening accessibility to site-specific performance. As such, this new performance genre lends itself well to interpreting the *palimpsest of self* for a physical site, as it allows the viewer to access the site's historical layers from any angle and any order.

As I continue to further my choreographic explorations of *palimpsest of self* through the intersection of dance and XR technology, additional avenues of research include studying Professor of Philosophy, Dance, and Media Technologies (Malmö University) Susan Kozel's concept of phenomenological flesh as it pertains to the body in response to technology; a further look into what can be kinesthetically sensed with regards to a physical site; and addressing more broad concepts of 'audiencing,' currently being explored by contemporary choreographers and

immersive theatre artists, as recently detailed by Professor Julia M. Ritter in her book *Tandem Dances: Choreographing Immersive Performance* (2020).

It is my goal to continue developing the work begun here by employing these methodologies and concept of choreographically illuminating the *palimpsest of self* to other historic sites both nationally and abroad. Meanwhile, as press continues to circulate about *The Time Traveler's Lens*, and more viewers venture to the Princeton Battlefield park grounds to experience this immersive work, it is my hope that the colonnade will indeed come “alive again” for the project’s participants—be they first-time colonnade visitors or park regulars.

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APPENDIX A

The Colonnade at Present



The Ionic colonnade in its current location at Princeton Battlefield State Park, Princeton, NJ. Photo: Merli V. Guerra, 2020.

APPENDIX B

The Matthew Newkirk House / St. George Society Club House



A photograph of the colonnade's original purpose, as the portico to Matthew Newkirk's house in Philadelphia, PA. Although purchased by the Sons of St. George at this point, construction had not yet begun, thus this photograph depicts Thomas Ustick Walter's original architecture. "St. George Society Club House. [Graphic] / James Cremer, Photographer and Publisher, 18 South Eighth Street, Philadelphia." Photo: James Cremer, ca. 1876. Courtesy of Library Company of Philadelphia.

APPENDIX C

The Caryatids



“View of The Caryatid porch of the Erechtheion at Acropolis in Athens, Greece.” Photo: CYSUN, n.d.