CULTIVATING ROOTS: A TENSIONAL-HYBRID INVESTIGATION OF EMBODIED
RESOURCES THROUGH TRADITIONAL CRETAN FOLKLORIC AND
CONTEMPORARY DANCE PRACTICES

NIKOLAOS MARKAKIS

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Abstract

In *Cultivating Roots*, emerging dance artist Nikolaos Markakis investigates choreographic creations through his two embodied resources of Cretan folkloric and Contemporary dance practices. These two embodied resources were questioned and challenged through the lenses of tradition and tensional-hybrid art, a term he has been exploring through his three case studies: *Ithaka*, *Ariadne*, and *Metaxy*. In these case studies Markakis delves into his embodied resources, and investigates influences through the folkloric and contemporary themes of costume, music, and dance. Furthermore, this extended essay questions the role that cultural traditions can play within a contemporary choreography for the Toronto dance scene. Playing with the emotional, political and aesthetic tensions between Markakis' embodied resources; he researched the possibility of a successful and organic approach to marry these two worlds for the stage.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my father, Charalampos (Bob) Markakis. Without you, I would have never been introduced to the world of dance, completed my BFA in Dance, or embarked on the journey that has been my thesis. Thank you for always supporting and motivating me in my passion and instilling the love of dance, art, and Cretan culture into my veins.

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CHAPTER ONE:

Introduction: Investigating Embodied Resources

Investigating choreography that encompasses the embodied resources[1] of Cretan folkloric and contemporary dance practices, through a tensional-hybrid lens while weighing the role of tradition, became the main research focus of this thesis. The ultimate goal became finding a way to create choreography in which these two embodied movement resources can organically and successfully live together on the stage and in the studio. Before going further, the concept tensional-hybrid must be explained and defined in the context of this thesis; the term came to mind while trying to define what this work would become and how it could be 'labeled' or associated in the contemporary dance scene. The work should stand on its own without any need to be defined or labeled, but since we live in a society that strives to understand through labels and definitions, the idea of a tensional-hybrid or a tensional-hybrid dance took form. It can be commonly understood that the term 'tension' can be defined in many ways, for example, one definition could be the arousal of certain emotions (nervousness, excitement, fear, etc.) in a form of art; for example, movies, books, plays, and, more importantly to this work, dances. The use of tension in this thesis not only looks at the emotional aspects of the word, but also includes the tension between both the political and aesthetic components of Cretan folkloric and contemporary dance practices. When looking at the term 'hybrid', many definitions arise but the best suited for this context would simply be, the result of combining two or more different things together. Therefore 'tensional-hybrid' dance looks at the accumulation of the emotions, politics, and aesthetics that have been imposed on the audience, the work, and the performers as a result of two or more dance forms coming together. Furthermore tensional-hybrid work can be both a form that is apparent on stage but also a tool used solely in the rehearsal process. This work can be used to look at the tensions created between the

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[1] An embodied resource simply means the dance resources that live in your body as a performer or choreographer. For the purposes of this thesis 'embodied resource' is directly connected to the two of the techniques I have trained in, which are Cretan folkloric and contemporary dance.

performer and the work as well as the choreographer and the choreography. Therefore a tensional-hybrid dance may not always be apparent to the audience on stage.

The terms tradition and contemporary will be referenced multiple times throughout this thesis; therefore, before moving forward these terms must be defined with regards to the relevance to this work and thesis. The term 'tradition' can be defined as the beliefs, stories, art, etc., from a group of people that have been a part of their culture for a long time. In this case, we are looking at the culture and dance of the individuals from the island of Crete in Greece. There are three main aspects to the traditional Cretan folkloric dance practice: costume/costuming, music/musicality, and footwork/dance aesthetic. These traditions have not only been passed down but have become concretized through specific footwork performed to a particular piece of music in which performers wear certain attire. It can be determined that the term 'contemporary' represents something that can be living, happening, existing, etc., from the same period of time as its creation. In regards to my work, when referencing contemporary dance or its practices, it refers to current work, practices, and dance aesthetic from the present Toronto dance scene. For the purposes of my research and this thesis, the definitions above stand true to the way I view traditional, contemporary and subsequently tensional-hybrid dance, to guide me through my case studies and thesis.

To better appreciate the research methodology in this paper, the work will be analyzed through the three main aspects that make up traditional Cretan folkloric dance. First, each case study will be considered and analyzed through the costume elements. Second, the case studies will be put through the filter of music. Finally, the research will be examined in regards to the aspects of footwork and dance aesthetic. To further solidify the process, each topic will be used to question and compare the traditional, contemporary and tensional-hybrid elements at play.

This investigation through the embodied resources of Cretan Folkloric, and contemporary dance practices proves that drastically different dance forms can successfully share both the rehearsal space, and the stage through an organic approach that considers both traditional and contemporary practices. For these two practices to be successful within a tensional-hybrid lens, the artist has to enter a space where they

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completely let go of all barriers and allow their embodied resources to be organically triggered simultaneously. Furthermore, traditional influences can play a major role in contemporary dance as long as the creator does not claim that the new adaptation of the traditional depicts the societal and cultural definitions of said tradition. Yet, nothing prevents this adaptation from eventually becoming a cultural tradition, since tradition can be a malleable, ever-evolving state through time, but ironically only time can determine this outcome.

Methodology: The Art of Creating

For each of my three research case studies,[2] *Ithaka*, *Ariadne*, and *Metaxy,*[3] there were three different approaches taken in supporting and widening the range of the research. *Ithaka* embodied the sense and need to create a true tensional-hybrid both with the music and dance elements, while keeping the costuming to a more traditional approach with regards to each performer. To build a work based off of the embodied resources, through memory and having the respective music and dance elements share the stage became the main goal of *Ithaka*. In the case of *Ariadne*, using modern/contemporary Greek music along-side contemporary dance practices as the backbone, while extracting traditional folkloric dance movement became key. In this case study the element of costuming would be the one to undergo the tensional-hybrid lens. For *Metaxy*, the main objective became to challenge the traditional music elements of Cretan folkloric dance, while having the costuming and movement spring from a tensional-hybrid lens borrowing from both traditional folkloric and contemporary dance elements.

For all three case studies visual and written sourced materials were used for inspiration. This involved looking at both ancient and modern Cretan/Grecian art and mythology as well as contemporary literature. More specifically, the poem *Ithaka* by Constantine P. Cavafy influenced the process of *Ithaka*; the mythological story of the Cretan Princess Ariadne offered inspiration to the work of *Ariadne*, whereas the two-dimensional figures found on ancient Grecian urns became the inspiration for *Metaxy*. This proved to be essential in the respective creative processes, as it helped to gather concepts, colour schemes, and textures in order to create both movement and costumes.

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[2] As part of the MFA thesis at York University there are three case studies/practice based research projects: first is the 'I AM Solo', an autobiographical solo; second, the 'self-produced' or 'independent' case study; and third, the 'proscenium-arch stage' case study. For the purposes of my thesis, I refer to these three case studies by their titles. The three titles for each piece are *Ithaka*, *Ariadne*, and *Metaxy,* respectively.

[3] Metaxy translates to the English word *between*.

This relatively recent strategy used in earlier projects[4] resulted in the discovery that, embedding concepts and discoveries from works of visual art has given the work an extra element of aesthetic support, and enhanced the rehearsal and creation process for the dancers, choreographer, and in turn the audience.

Developing the Road to *Ithaka*

With *Ithaka*, there were four external links researched to aid the choreography and lineage of this case study. First, the work of BaKari Lindsay and his trust in the dance languages he embodies while creating choreography, became central to this project. Second, the ideology and work of Rallou Manou, a pioneer of modern dance in Greece, allowed me to learn from her journey of renewing dance into the Greek heritage. Third, the poem *Ithaka,* written in 1911 by the Greek native poet Constantine P. Cavafy, which uses the mythological journey of Odysseus traveling back home to Ithaka from Troy. And, consequently providing me a metaphorical parallel to the journey taken in this thesis, which encompassed a return to Cretan folkloric dance practices as a new and changed artist. Lastly comes the concept of using memories of past performances, both from the Cretan folkloric and contemporary dance experiences to gather material and movement for this case study.

To foster a tensional-hybrid work and to create the movement vocabulary for this case study, I created a dynamic improvisational score from memories of embodied performances. To create movement, not directly identifiable as either Cretan folkloric or contemporary dance, became a major objective for the choreographic vocabulary within *Ithaka*. While devising this improvisational score the nine Viewpoints[5] were employed.

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[4] Such projects as Dark *Monk, Deep Church* and *Inspirations by Alex Colville,* choreographed during the first year MFA choreography course at York University.

[5] "Viewpoints is a philosophy translated into a technique for (1) training performers; (2) building ensemble; and (3) creating the movement for the stage" (Bogart 7). Anne Bogart and Tina Landau expanded the Viewpoints technique during the years of 1987-1997 from Mary Overlie's original six Viewpoints. The current nine Viewpoints are tempo, duration, kinesthetic response, repetition, shape, spatial relationship, architecture, topography/floor pattern, and gesture.

With this case study, the movement dynamics, jumps, and turns of the two embodied movement languages were deconstructed to further support the tensional-hybrid lens. The musical elements took a similar improvisational approach as the musical interpretation involved deconstructing traditional Cretan folkloric melodies while introducing contemporary harmonious ones. This was achieved through creating the music and performing it live alongside a solo Lyra (Λὐρα) (see figure 1),[6] and both a cellist and violinist[7]. Since these instruments live within the same stringed family, we attempted to create a musical score that supported the choreography by incorporating influences from both respective melodies. To costume this work, each performer wore the traditional attire for their respective genre. The Cretan folkloric performers wore a historic Cretan costume, paying tribute to their Cretan roots and heritage, whereas the contemporary musician wore contemporary concert attire.

Figure 1: Lyra, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Discovering the Mythological Tale of *Ariadne*

As mentioned above, the main objective of the research for *Ariadne* delved into specific aspects of Cretan folkloric movement, the turns, and intricate footwork while infusing them with the contemporary choreographic understanding of pure dance elements: weight, shape, space, and effort. Again, various strategies were used including chance procedures, viewpoints, and movement exploration, to deconstruct the root of

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[6] The Lyra is a three string bowed instrument that is played upright and is native to the Island of Crete.
[7] The two Cretan artists were Christo Markakis (Lyra) and myself (dancer). The two contemporary artists were Natalie Wong (violin) and Leo Zhang (cello). Due to scheduling conflicts, Natalie and Leo alternated performances so the audience only saw a cast of three per night.

Cretan folkloric movement in its various dances such as: Rodo (Ρόδο),[8] Syrtos (Συρτός),[9] and Malevyziotis (Μαλεβιζιώτης).[10] Working with a solo contemporary dancer, *Ariadne* looked into the mythological story of the ancient Minoan Princess by the same name. In Ancient Greek Mythology, Princess Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos of Crete saves Theseus' life and assists him in slaying the Minotaur, which resides in a labyrinth. She accomplishes this by giving him unbreakable golden thread so he can successfully retrace his steps out of the large and intricate labyrinth. After Theseus slays the Minotaur the two flee together, but once they land on the shore of Naxos Theseus abandons her where she sleeps. (Atsma).

The impetus behind *Ariadne*'s costume choices came from images of ancient Minoan garments, taking what Princess Ariadne might have actually worn and creating a modern/contemporary adaptation. This direct attempt in creating a tensional-hybrid costume derives from the accumulation of past cultural structures meeting their present cultural counterparts. The choice to remove the element of traditional music and instead use modern contemporary Greek music caused me to question the effect and role of traditional music. *Ariadne* focused on creating a purely tensional-hybrid dance by utilizing choreography pulled from Cretan folkloric movement, while building upon contemporary dance practices explored in the previous case study. This created choreography that simultaneously lived in both the Cretan and contemporary realms. In an interview with Professor Carol Anderson, BaKari Lindsay observes:

> I have the pleasure of having two very rich dance cultures. My Western training gives me a very specific kind of direction for creating work, but I have all this freedom and richness from a different culture. And I don't marry the two in a context of fusion. I tend to think that all of these experiences live in my body naturally and, therefore, it's not an intellectual process of saying, 'I want to create this new idea of movement and moving, to create something that's called a fusion'. I get very nit-picky when people call my work 'fusion'. In a Webster's dictionary

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[8] Crete has four main dances and over twenty rediscovered 'forgotten' dances. Rodo is one of these rediscovered 'forgotten' dances. Only women dance Rodo, the movement of this dance plays with the swaying motion of their skirts.

[9] Syrtos is the most common of main dances. This dance is often the first dance played at weddings and baptisms to open the dance floor to the family.

[10] Malevyziotis is the more popular main dance by the youth because of its high energy and speed.

sense it probably [stands as a] fusion, but for me, in a physical sense, it isn't because it's movement that has become part of my existence as a mover and, therefore, when I create it comes out. (Lindsay)

Lindsay's words encapsulates the ultimate goal for this case study and, in fact, this thesis; to begin to create dance in which the embodied movement resources can organically and successfully be harvested and live together.

Metaxy, From the Studio to the Stage

For the final case study, there were three outside elements that affected the process and trajectory of the work. Ancient Grecian urns became the first influence. The images of these two-dimensional bodies on authentic Greek pottery were used to gather movement phrases and helped to create the overall intention of the piece. The Cretan Panagirie (Παναγὺπι)[11] became the second influence. Traditionally the majority of Cretan folkloric dance lives in a community setting and is performed in a line, so it seemed fitting to bring these elements into light. Additionally, the Andalucia-Creta performances[12] were an external element of research for this piece, as well as a source of inspiration for this case study, due to their desire for a collaborative marriage between Flamenco and Cretan folkloric dance and music practices. While researching these performances, the readily apparent and purposeful placement of the work in a Panagirie setting revealed itself to the point where it must be considered as relevant. However, it became very clear during their performance which sections were influenced by Cretan practices, and which sections were motivated by Flamenco. This back and forth between

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[11] A Panagirie is a form of a Greek village festival, usually held on grand occasions, in which the entire village pitches in to cook a feast and join together at the village square. The night is usually a long one and is full of food, wine, music, and dance.

[12] The Andalucia-Creta performances were first present in Haroupomilos, Panormo, in Crete, during winter 2007 and continued sporadically until the winter of 2008. The production manager was Korinna Miliaraki and consisted of the following artists El Nano (dance), Lida Valle (dance 2008), Monica Hidalgo (dance 2007), Kiko de Alcala (lyrics), Jordi Albarran Flores (guitar), Zacharias Spiridakis (Cretan Lyra, lyrics), Dimitris Sideris (Laouto, lyrics), Giannis Rompogiannakis (Cretan winds and percussion 2007), Dimitris Koukoulitakis (flamenco guitar and lute), Giannis Papatzanis (lyrics, percussion), and Giorgos Markantoni's dancing group ("Andalucía-Creta").

genres became neither a motivation nor an inspiration for this case study. In *Metaxy*, to produce work that allowed each embodied resource to simultaneously live within the tensional-hybrid structure, while also allowing moments of independence, drove the work forward.

For this ambitious project, two 'casts' of dancers were used. One cast consisted of six contemporary trained dancers, while the second cast consisted of six Cretan folkloric trained dancers. The movement choreographed for the Cretan dancers stayed strictly to traditional folkloric movement; on the other hand, the contemporary dancers were challenged to learn and move in and out of both genres. The two separate casts were used to reflect the Panagirie and the two-dimensional characters on the ancient Grecian urns. The costumes for *Metaxy* played with the dual concepts of the previous case studies, of costuming each Cretan dancer with folkloric Cretan costumes and the contemporary dancers with an adaptation and contemporized lens of the ancient Grecian attire. The contemporary dancers were costumed with influences from both ancient Minoan and Grecian two-dimensional art pieces. The music elements for *Metaxy* were chosen to challenge the choreography, which in turn was to challenge the choreographer and dancers. The strictly traditional folkloric music arose as a challenge to push the choreography to live within both the Cretan tradition, as well as a tensional-hybrid space.

The World of Costuming and Its Significance to the Creative Process

To quote Patricia Beatty, "the costume [becomes] an enormous part of the image that the viewing imagination must deal with" (49). The world of costuming plays a huge role, both in folkloric and contemporary dance practices. The costume reveals the era of the piece, describes the characters in a story, sets the tone and aids in evoking emotion. In folkloric practices, costuming arises from the line of tradition and previous generations. On the other hand, in contemporary practices, costuming often creates the birth of character and story line. When developing a new work, the costume can be used as the impetus for creation that echoes through the entire choreographic process. Every aspect of the costume affects the choreography: the weight, flow, colour, texture and feel of the fabric has a direct connection to the movement quality, mood, emotion, environment and aesthetic.

As stated by Alkis Raftis in his text *The World of Greek Dance*, the traditional folkloric costume clearly states which region or even village the wearer has roots in. To the trained eye, the costume also makes a statement on the generation, class, economic standing, family status and personal history of the wearer (Raftis 53). The accuracy of the costume becomes of utmost important when referencing folkloric practices. In the folkloric world, to perform dances from one region, while wearing a costume from an extreme other, shows tremendously bad etiquette. The only time this would be deemed appropriate would be in the case of a multi-regional performance group wanting to show the costume for each region being presented in the performed dances; even this can be perilous. Theoretically when presenting a performance depicting dances from multiple regions the dancers should be wearing the specific costume for each region only during that particular dance. Domini Crosfield notes in his *Dances of Greece*, "Do not dress a

dancer in a make-believe foustanella (see figure 2) [13] for the Cretan dances. You would be equally justified in dressing a Helston Furry dancer in a Highland kilt" (20).

When it comes to contemporary practices the limits of costuming are bound by the restrictions of movement and considerations for the tone of the work. This highlights the difference between the two practices, as it's not uncommon or considered poor etiquette to costume a contemporary piece with attire that may be more balletic in style (although more recently there has been a lot of talk with regards to an appropriation that actually has trickled into costuming). Of course, this rarely becomes debate for designers of modern dance and ballet. The question of appropriation when specific cultural costumes are designed for

Figure 2: Foustanella, Illustration by: Doreen Renbold (Crosfield 31)

ballet/modern/contemporary choreographies that have nothing to do with the specific culture still stands. As long as the costume can be justified within the meaning of the work the possibilities are endless. In this research, the costume truly became the impetus of the work for all three case studies, which remains similar to Lindsay's process. Lindsay deeply considers costuming throughout his creative process with COBA (Collective of Black Artists), to be mining influences of West African, Diasporic African and contemporary dance practices. Lindsay hints towards the fact that the costume can be one of the first things he takes into consideration while creating a new work (Lindsay). The relationship the costume has on the choreographed material affects variants of movement, flow, aesthetic and the environment. And thus, costuming in my case studies often became a consideration long before the completed choreography.

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[13] The foustanella is a kilt-like garment worn by the men of mainland Greece.

Figure 3: Men's Stivania, Zoni, Knife and Silver Neckalce, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Since *Ithaka* stood as an autobiographical solo and the work drew from Cavafy's poem depicting a journey home, the costuming would be most powerful if it truly represented the performer's roots. As stated in Raftis' text "the costume [becomes] a personal file containing the social and personal history of the individual wearer" (53). Since the cast of this piece consisted of two Cretan artists and two contemporary artists, that divide determined the costume choices—the Cretans were costumed in traditional folkloric Cretan costumes and the contemporary musicians were costumed in 'traditional' contemporary recital attire.

When considering the traditional folkloric Cretan male costume, there are two distinct outfits, depending on the occasion and class. The everyday costume that would have been worn by farmers, craftsmen, workingmen, etc., stands in contrast to the more formal costume worn during weddings, baptisms, and other formal occasions, or by the rich/royal class. To have a more diverse representation of the Cretan costume resulted in a decision to employ a variation of the 'everyday' and 'formal' costume. A 'middle class' individual would wear this costume choice on a slightly formal occasion, which in turn evolved into a costume worn today by some dance troupes in Greece. I costumed myself with black Stivania (Στιβάνια) (see figure 3) [14] and Kilota (Κυλότα) (see figure 4) [15] on the bottom, and on top I wore a black dress shirt with a blue

Figure 4: Kilota, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

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[14] Knee-high, handcrafted leather boots.
[15] Pants that resemble English riding pants.

Figure 5: Male Gileko, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Gileko (Γιλέκο) (see figure 5).[16] To complete the costume, I wore a Sariki (Σαρίκι)(see figure 6),[17] a crimson red Zoni (Ζώνη) (see figure 3),[18] a silver/jeweled necklace and a hand carved silver knife. This variation of the Cretan costume captures both the everyday attire on the bottom, and the formal attire on top.

When it came to costuming the musicians, I decided to costume the Lyra player in a similar traditional costume.[19] The Cellist and Violinist, on the other hand, wore 'traditional' contemporary recital attire. To be more specific the two were costumed in all black formal wear appropriate to the musician's gender. This showed the divide between the two worlds living and playing simultaneously on one platform. Furthermore, the costumes demonstrated each individual's cultural roots from their respected areas of music. The intent behind the costuming choices in *Ithaka* focused on each individual performer paying homage to their cultural heritage and beginnings.

The response to this costume decision became quite interesting because it varied depending on the background and knowledge of the viewer. For example, through conversations with the contemporary viewers, the traditional costume became a window into the Cretan culture and an educational tool that intrigued them, evoking a desire to learn more. The contemporary audience questioned the symbolism and significance of each element of the costume: from the

Figure 6: Sariki, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

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[16] A vest that is hand embroidered with intricate designs.

[17] A crochet headscarf that can either be worn wrapped around or over the top of your head. During more formal occasions you will see men wear this over their shoulders.

[18] The Zoni is a hand woven belt that varies in length from six to ten feet and sometimes longer. The belt is wrapped and twisted around the waist seven to ten times. The twisting action of the Zoni gives it texture and allows the knife to be held in the Zoni.

[19] The only difference between Lyra player's costume and mine stood that he wore an all-black version with a non-embroidered vest.

colour of the fabric, to the embroidery on the vest, to the story of the jewelry. For them, the decision of costuming the performers in a traditional manner proved to be an asset to the piece. When conversing with the Cretan folkloric viewers, I could not pinpoint one concise opinion. Some felt confused and at times even a sense of discomfort; still, for the other half, the costume did not create a problem or they did not consider the costume at all during their viewing of *Ithaka*. The same discomfort did not arise when the use of traditional costuming occurred during Cretan folkloric movement but instead when it appeared in the context of the contemporary or even tensional-hybrid moments. The beauty or the symbolism of the costume was not questioned; the inquiring or discomfort, or some might even say concern, arose purely because of context. For some, it became hard to see a traditional costume being used out of context. This did not become an issue with respect to the musicians because each musician stayed within his or her folkloric or contemporary realm. From my understanding, the Cretan folkloric audience neither liked nor disliked the juxtaposition; it seemed more that they were unsure how or what to feel about it. *Ithaka* pushed the limits of the Cretan costume and only certain aspects of the piece played by the true representation of the costume.

Figure 7: *Ithaka,* Nikolaos Markakis, Photo by: David Hou

Figure 8: *Ithaka*, (Left) Christos Markakis, (Right) Leo Zhang, Photo by: David Hou

The inspiration for *Ariadne's* costume was drawn from the ancient Minoan art of the Minoan Snake Goddess and her votary. When working with mythology/mythological characters, it became the choreographer and performer's shared responsibility to inspire the believability of the story and the character. Thus, a tremendous importance arose on the costuming for this work; everything had to be, at the least, believable. The costume sought to capture the correct fabric materials, colour palette, cut, and fitting, as well as address the correct era of the story and represent a certain class. As a result, the audience would believe that the performer depicted the royal status of Princess Ariadne. The Minoan Snake Goddess wore a deep V-neck jacket that leaves her breast quite bare, a long striped skirt and an apron that reaches almost to her knees (Abrahams 11). The costume went through many different designs but in the end, consisted of a satin white blouse, with three satin skirts, each at different lengths: one navy blue, one burgundy and one gold, respectively from shortest to longest. Furthermore, the navy blue and burgundy skirts had accents of white for a trim at the base and were cut on the diagonal with a slit creating an apron aesthetic.

Each colour represented something different about the work and the character. White represented Ariadne's innocence and good nature in assisting Theseus to slay the Minotaur. The navy blue depicted the sea and Ariadne's journey to come. Deep red represented the blood of all those who were slain by the Minotaur, Ariadne's passion and courage to betray her father in order to save her love, ending the tyranny of the Minotaur's labyrinth, as well as her ultimate demise. The gold represented Ariadne's royal status and goddess-like qualities. As a whole, the colours were also pulled from present day traditional Cretan costumes in order to connect the work to the current folkloric Cretan culture.

The material of the costume utilized strategically represented her royal status. The costume, being made from satin, befitted her rank and class by the use of such a luxurious textile material. Moreover, satin has a very natural, elegant flow and drapes nicely over the body. The satin moved beautifully and assisted the choreography

tremendously, even to the point that it started creating a life of its own, and thus became another character in the work. In *Forms Without Formula*, Beatty explains this concept quite poetically; "Some costumes actually move in such a way that they seem choreographed. This simply makes the feast richer (and the choreography easier)" (48). With each movement of the dancer, the satin would either twist around her or flow back and forth, thereby visually bringing another element of movement to the work. Also, since satin has a shine, every time the fabric moved it would capture different sources of light, giving the costume a glowing effect.

Figure 9: The Minoan Snake Goddess, Sketch by: N. Gouvousis (Mathioulakis 14)

Figure 10: *Ariande*, Justine Comfort, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Beatty states, "As for appropriateness, if the work [stands as a] narrative in nature, start with real life and then simplify, that is, eliminate the fussiness and most detail" (48). So taking Beatty's words of advice to heart, the costume for *Ariadne* became simplified and altered to best assist the choreography. If we look back to the ancient Minoan Snake Goddess, her garments do not include a blouse but instead the deep V-neck jacket baring her breasts. From the beginning of the process it became clear that the performer's breasts should be covered to depict an innocent aesthetic. In the

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earlier designs, there had been plans to use a deep V-neck jacket, but in movement the sleeves of the jacket covered the performers hands, thus taking away from their dexterity when playing with the golden thread throughout the space. Likewise, the Minoan Snake Goddess's skirt consists of only one striped skirt creating a layered effect instead of an actual layered skirt. To add more weight and movement to the costume, and to show the multiple layers of Ariadne's character, I decided to actually layer the performer's skirt instead of merely creating a layered effect. Ultimately, the goal became not to recreate an exact replica of the Minoan Snake Goddess's garments, but instead to extract influences that could be used to adapt the garments for this work. The final effect, and perhaps the most influential for the costume, was the decision to make the bottom skirt floor-length so that you could barely see the performer's feet. This gave the work a dream-like feel, as it appeared she floated around the stage. In turn, the audience felt as if they were peering in on one of Princess Ariadne's dreams.

Generations Between *Metaxy's* Costumes

The costuming for *Metaxy* had two sources of inspiration; one for the Cretan cast of dancers and another for the contemporary. The Cretan dancers were once again costumed in traditional folkloric attire. Each dancer wore their own folkloric costume that in some cases had been handed down from generation to generation. This tradition became a recurring theme throughout present day Greece and is depicted in Crosfield's *Dances of Greece*. He explains, "Each province has its own traditional costume handed down from generation to generation, to be worn on festival occasions" (17). Having the dancers wear their own unique costume helped to represent the variety of the Cretan attire from across the island. As for the contemporary costumes, the influences were from ancient Grecian urns and Minoan paintings. Once again these costumes were not identical replicas of their ancient counterparts, but rather modernized adaptations that were enriched by influence.

Two of the three male performers in *Metaxy* wore similar costumes to what I wore in *Ithaka*. One of the male performers wore an identical costume comprised of the

black Stivania, black Kilota, and a red crimson Zoni on the bottom. On top, he wore a black dress shirt with a blue highly embroidered[20] Gileko. As a finishing touch he wore a black Sariki, a silver/jeweled necklace and a hand carved silver knife. The second male performer wore a similar costume comprised of black Stivania, beige/khaki Kilota, and a red crimson Zoni on the bottom. On top, he wore, a black dress shirt and a black Sariki with a hand carved silver knife. These two costumes would represent a common everyday villager in both a working and formal environment. Furthermore, the first performer's costume showed more embellishments in the Gileko and jewelry to demonstrate the difference in generational status. The final male performer wore a costume that can be tied to those worn by Cretan dance troupes of today. This costume represented the formal attire for the common villager and depending on their class or status the costume would have more intricate embroidery, with golden thread instead of black, and additional garments such as jackets and capes. His costume consisted from head to toe: a black Sariki, white dress shirt, blue Gileko with black embroidery, red crimson Zoni, silver/jeweled necklace, hand carved knife, a blue Vraka (βράκα) (see figure 11),[21] and white Stivania. When it comes to these variations of the male traditional costume, not just one region, city or village can make claim to its origin today.

Figure 11: Vraka, Photo by:Nikolaos Markakis

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[20] "Embroideries occupy a peculiar place in the social economy of the people of the Greek Islands. They are real folk embroideries, made by the women for their own household purposes with no intention of sale" (Crosfield 17).
[21] "A kind of wide, baggy pantaloons tied around the waist and calves since they hang well below the knees" (Raftis 59).

Figure 12: *Metaxy*, (Left to Right) Charalampos (Bob) Markakis, Christos Markakis, Nicholas Papadakis, Photo by: David Hou

Like the men, the Cretan women wore their own folkloric costumes; two of the three costumes were quite similar with subtle variations on the embroidery and prints. The costumes worn by these two women originated from the village of Anogia (Ανώγεια) from the middle region of Rethymno (Ρεθύμνου). Their costumes consisted

Figure 13: (Left to Right) White slip, pantaloons, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

of white pantaloons and a white slip that extended to just below the knee (see figure 13). On their heads they wore a bright red Mantili (Μαντήλι) (see figure 14) [22] that had a gold trim. On their chest, these two women wore a black sleeved Gileko embroidered with gold thread (see figure 15). The women had ribbons of gold coins across the neckline of the Gileko. The red Zoni (see figure 16)[23] demonstrates a similarity between the women's and the men's costume. While a clear difference in the women's costume, was

[22] A headscarf that can be worn tied, wrapped, or placed around the head.
[23] The main two differences between the female and male Zoni are that the male Zoni is longer and therefore wrapped around the waist more times, and the female Zoni is never twisted.

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Figure 14: Mantili with gold trim, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 15: Female Gileko 1, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 16: Female Zoni 1, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 17: (Left to Right) Front Podia, Back Podia, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 18 – Blouse and petticoat, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

witnessed by the silver hand carved knife placed in the Gileko instead of the Zoni. Additionally, the women wore a front and back Podia (Ποδιά) (see figure 17).[24] The final female Cretan performer wore a more embellished Cretan costume originally from the village of Sfakia (Σφακιά) in the western region of Chania (Χανιά). Her undergarments consisted a white blouse and petticoat (see figure 18). Her dark red Mantili wrapped around her head. The Mantili's trim consisted of a woven black thread instead of the gold coins like the other female costumes (see figure 19). For this costume, the Gileko matched her deep red Mantili, almost burgundy in colour, with rich gold embroidery. The sleeves of this Gileko were not sewn on, but rather attached by buttons with more of a winged opening at the hands (see figure 20). Instead of wearing a front and back Podia this costume consisted of an ankle length velour Fousta (Φούστα) (see figure 21)[25] displaying embroidery at the bottom. The colour of her Fousta matched the colour of the Gileko, which tied the costume together. Once again the Zoni for this costume slightly differed from the other females' since it buttoned in the back instead of being wrapped around the waist multiple times, and had similar embroidery to the Gileko and Fousta (see figure 22). For shoes, each female performer wore black leather heels that resemble Broadway character shoes.

Figure 19: - Mantili with black trim, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

[24] The Podia is an apron. The back Podia is a pleated red apron, which at times has accents of blue and gold. The front Podia is a white apron that is embellished by Cretan needlepoint.
[25] The direct translation for "Fousta" is a skirt.

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Figure 20: Female Gileko 2, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 21: Fousta, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 22: Female Zoni 2, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 23: *Metaxy*, (Left to Right) Christos Markakis, Kleanthi Markakis, Charalampos (Bob) Markakis, Gilliam Sapounakis, Maria Gialedakis, Nicholas Papadakis, Photo by: David Hou
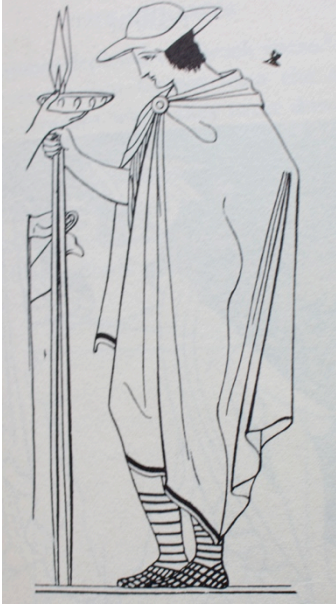
Figure 24: Wrap for Men
(Abrahams Plate G)

Turning our attention to the contemporary costume elements for *Metaxy*, there were two different influences from ancient Grecian and Minoan art. The first influence drew from the bottom garments of the Minoans and the second influence pulled from a "wrap for men's use, originating in Thessaly as a rider's dress worn over armor. From the fifth century onwards it became universal in Greece" (Evans 53) (see figure 24). Even though both influences stemmed from the male garments, the entire contemporary cast of both male and female dancers were costumed the same. Historically the Minoans' bottom garments were a waistcloth that wrapped around the waist and one leg leaving a loose end to hang. In some instances, this waistcloth took the form of a triangle, where the apex of the triangle became drawn through the legs and tucked into a belt (Abrahams 5-6) (see figure 25). For *Metaxy*, the contemporary costumes stayed true to these ancient influences with slight alterations for functionality purposes and to aid the choreography. Once again the very light material allowed the costume to be affected by the movement of the dancers. The bottoms were a navy blue satin with a strip of white chiffon as a trim, whereas the tops were bright red chiffon, allowing the dancers' silhouettes and figures be seen through the costume. These colours were specifically chosen to match those of the traditional folkloric Cretan costumes, thus uniting both worlds on stage.

Figure 25: Male Minoan Attire,
Sketch by: N. Gouvoussis
(Mathioulakis 15)

The clear juxtaposition between the folkloric and contemporary costumes secured the overlaying theme of the tension that lies between the realms of Cretan folkloric and contemporary practices. The choice to costume *Metaxy* in this way arose from questioning the effectiveness of none folkloric costuming when used in a context of folkloric and tensional-hybrid dance. Even though half the cast wore folkloric costumes, the main focus for this work came from the contemporary dancers attire. This decision further pushed the impetus to challenge the level of authentic and truly traditional content for the work. That the motivation behind the costuming had met its objective became clear through conversing with the audience after the performance; comments such as how the ancient influences in the contemporary costumes created the affect of the ancient world challenging and confronting the present day traditional representation of Crete. From those audience members I had the privilege to speak with, and from questions asked by a first-year undergraduate class, I can confidently conclude that the costumes depicted a true tensional-hybrid adaptation of Ancient Grecian, traditional folkloric and contemporary influences.

Figure 26: *Metaxy*, (Left to Right) Nicholas Papadakis, Maria Gialedakis, Justine Comfort, Amanda LaRusic, Photo by: David Hou

Interpreting Music Through a Tensional-Hybrid Lens

Similar to costuming, music plays an enormous role in both the folkloric and contemporary dance practices. For Cretan folkloric dance, the music determines the type of dance; for example, you would not dance a Syrtos to a Malevyziotis. In the case of contemporary dance, the music becomes a tool to create a relationship, story, era, or to evoke emotion and so on. No matter what the case may be, or even an individual's opinion on the choice of music, both dance practices rely on the tools of music, or in some contemporary dance work the lack of music. Lynne Anne Blom in *The Intimate Act of Choreography* explains that movement becomes the source of dance; the music becomes the related art or tool that helps the choreographic intent to be achieved (162). Blom goes further with a quote from Edward Villela, arguing that once the finished work becomes a performance the two should blend and the music becomes "the floor that the dancer dances upon" (as qt. in Blom 162).

Before looking at the case studies, I would like to share some history with respect to the Greek and Cretan folkloric music. As Dora Stratou explains in her text *Greek Dance,* Greek folkloric music stems from a fusion between the residues of ancient Greek scale and Byzantine ecclesiastical music (32). Gradually Greek folkloric music has adapted and evolved, assuming its own unique identity. Furthermore Greek folkloric music can be described as monophonic and in constant free scale not tied to any particular pitch. The characteristic rhythms of 5/4, 5/8, 7/8, and 9/8 are the same meters found in both present days folkloric music and those of the tragedies written by Aeschylos and other ancient writers (Stratou 32). On the present-day island of Crete, you can still

Figure 27: Laouto, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

Figure 28: Askomandoura, Photo by: Nikolaos Markakis

find local musicians playing and learning the traditional instruments and music. The two main instruments of Cretan folkloric music are the Lyra and Laouto (λαούτο) (see figure 27).[26] On some occasions you will see Cretan musicians playing the Askomandoura (Ασκομαντούρα) (see figure 28),[27] however, this instrument has not become as popular as the Lyra and Laouto. Recently, but more in regards to the younger musicians, you will see the addition of a drum kit or guitar to the Cretan band.

To conclude, and in agreement with Blom, music supports the underlying drive and mechanism of the movement, thus adding to the work's forward momentum. Music can create space in which a work can live; it adds colour, conversation, and even teases, playing with the dance. Music can create a beautiful relationship with the dance, as it can be a neighbour, friend, foe, lover, etc. With that being said, those elements and added nuances all rely on the piece of music and the way the choreographer uses it (Blom 164).

Ithaka's Path to Music

Since the choreography of *Ithaka* started off with pure Cretan folkloric dance and slowly deconstructed as a transition into contemporary styles, ultimately ending with an intimate tensional-hybrid, the music needed to do the same. Furthermore, since the theatre where we performed *Ithaka* could be considered an intimate black box theatre the work called for live musicians to emphasize this concept of tensional-hybrid. The reason for working with a Lyra player became two-fold: primarily, and to be completely frank, this practical decision was made based on the availability of musicians. The

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[26] The Laouto is a Cretan lute.
[27] Askomandoura is the Cretan bagpipes made from the inside of a sheep's stomach.

second, and perhaps the more productive reason, drew from the melodic rhythms the Lyra player produces. The decision to work with a cellist and violinist, considering the aesthetic resemblance of the Lyra to the violin, and the fact that the upright playing of the Lyra somewhat resembles a miniature cello, seemed obvious. (Stratou 30). The personal reason for going with the cello rests in a deep love for the eloquent, sensous tones created by the instrument.

Tackling the music for *Ithaka* worked differently in regards to the Cretan folkloric aspects and its contemporary counterparts. The Cretan musical elements (i.e. the Cretan musician's task of playing the Syrto) stayed static whenever Cretan folklore was being performed on stage. Conversely, the cellist and violinist had more range in repertoire during the contemporary dance section. For the first minute of this piece the dance floor remained empty, the dancer poised in the wings. During this time the audience watched and listened to the two musicians onstage play short improvisational phrases back and forth; eventually the space was completely transformed by the voice of the Lyra and the subsequent entrance of Cretan dance styles. During the Lyra's sections, the tone and emotion of the music was melodic and melancholy. In order for the audience to take in the beauty of the Cretan movement the piece started with a calm tone. As this section progressed, the music moved to a more dynamic, lively tone just as the switch happened from the Lyra to either the cello or the violin. Once the Lyra reappeared the musician picked up right where he left off. It seemed as if the Lyra, literally made a crash landing into the Western styles of music.

Looking at Blom's working relationships[28] between music and dance, and the natures[29] of the relationships, *Ithaka* took the form of the music and dance being composed and choreographed simultaneously with the idea of a one-to-one relationship (163-164) with the Western style of music. This piece would not have worked any other

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[28] 1) Dance and music created simultaneously. 2) Dance created first and music composed for it. 3) Composed music with dance choreographed to it. 4) Dance and music created separately and performed simultaneously. 5) Working sketch of dance is created and suitably composed music is found (Blom, 163).
[29] 1) One-to-one relationship where both music and dance are equally important. 2) Music is the background to dance. 3) Dance is the background to the music. 4) Fluctuations of nature two and three in one piece. 5) Conscientiously designed, unexpected relationships between music and dance (Blom, 164).

way, as the folkloric aspect lived tied to one song, while the Western style needed to be created and adapted with the choreography. Another way this concept supported the piece occurred when the choreography became based on past memories and experiences. The musicians were given the task to do the same with their melodies and phrasing. To end the piece, the two instruments[30] were playing simultaneously, the Lyra still playing a Syrto as the cello or violin supported and adapted the Cretan melodies to encompass their world of music. This offered a fluid partnership between what the audience saw and heard on stage. Daniel Nagrin supports this idea when he beautifully says, "The life that flows back and forth between the dance movement and the music [becomes] dependent upon the vibrant inner life of the dance" (114). Ultimately, the music demonstrated that these two worlds of music could live together and adapt. It was effectively beautiful to hear the similarities and differences between the two styles. It became even more beautiful when they came together, creating moments where, as audience, you became absorbed, forgetting who played what, and thus demonstrating the true essence of tensional-hybridity.

Listening to *Ariadne's* Song

Looking at the musical elements for all three case studies, *Ariadne* most differed from the others. For this case study, and only this case study, there became no trace of Cretan folkloric music or musical elements used. The music still had its ties to Greece and its culture, but in this case, we were looking at present day culture and music in Greece. For *Ariadne*, four modern-day Greek pieces of music were used. The four pieces of music were: *Aftoschediasmos / Flaouto* - Giorgis Xylouris (*Αυτοσχεδιασμός / Φλάουτο* - Γιώργης Ξυλούρης),[31] *To Meintani* - Loudovikos ton Anogeion (*Το Μεϊντάνι* - Λουδοβίκος των Ανωγείων),[32] *Ta Chromata Tis Agapis* -Loudovikos ton Anogeion

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[30] On half the nights the Lyra and the cello performed together and on the other half the Lyra and the violin performed.
[31] *Improvisation / Flute* by Giorgos Xylouris.
[32] *The Meidani* by Loudovikos of Anogia.

(*Τα χρώματα της αγάπης* - Λουδοβίκος των Ανωγείων),[33] and *Ki Inta Den Kanei O Erotas* - Vasilis Skoulas (*Κι Ήντα Δεν Κάνει Ο Έρωτας* - Βασίλης Σκουλάς).[34] As Princess Ariadne, motivated by her young and naïve love, decided to help Theseus, all four pieces of music selected, were related through the theme of love or at least contained a romantic melody.

Clearly, if we look at Blom's five relations of music and dance, this case study used the relationship of pre-composed music, which the dance became created on and with. On the other hand, while looking at the five natures of these relationships, this piece evolved with the idea that both music and dance elements might vary in dominance (Blom 163-164). At certain points, the music became the 'dominant' forerunner of the piece, at others, the dance lead. This occurred solely because the music was just as much of a character to this work as the soloist. The dancer would be performing a duet at times with the music and at other times with the 'thread'. This concept by Beatty, who suggests "that music and dance must be like a good marriage: the union allows both parties to maintain their separate identity and dignity, knowing all the time that they belong together" (37).

Even though this piece developed while choreographed to a pre-composed score, the ultimate goal remained, to not make the movement tied to the music. Therefore the dance would not to be glued to every nuance of the music's structure but in fact, to play to that contrast, and give the music context through movement. The words of Doris Humphrey, in *The Art of Making Dances* supports the idea, when she makes the correlation that using music and dance exists not in an "attempt to adhere to the formal structure of the music, and the movement [becomes] set above the sound on the basis of emotional timing" (136). The preceding summarizes what the musical elements for *Ariadne* set out to do, and ultimately accomplished on stage.

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[33] *The Colors of Love* by Loudovikos of Anogia.
[34] *And What Does Eros Does Not Do* by Vasili Skoulas.

Between the Instruments of *Metaxy*

The main challenge, with respect to the musical elements for *Metaxy*, was realized in the strict use traditional Cretan folkloric music and nothing else. The challenge exclusively lived in the extreme difficulty of removing oneself, and listening to the Cretan folkloric music on its own. It is puzzling to accomplish this once you have been dancing and choreographing a folkloric dance to this specific genre of music for more than twenty years. That being said, the task required a more detailed and sensitive creative lens. Just like in *Ariadne* four pieces of music were used: Erotokritos (Ερωτόκριτος),[35] Siganos (Σιγανός),[36] Pentozali (Πεντοζάλι),[37] and Syrtos performed by Manos Pyrovolakis (Lyra), Nektarios Hatzidakis (Laouto/Mandolin), and Dino Karabelas (Percussion). The test lived not with regards to the Cretan folkloric elements because the Cretan dancers were dancing the appropriate movements to the music. The real trial stood with the contemporary movement since the majority of it moved completely out of context to the music. Thus arose a true challenge, solely because I had to push myself to think outside of the Cretan folkloric movements that are tied to the music. I now had to remove myself from the movement and listen to the nuances of the music.

Once again looking at Blom's five relationships of music and dance, *Metaxy* follows *Ariadne*, in that the choreography developed to pre-composed music, while the two case studies differ within the five natures of music and dance relationships. Metaxy would fall under the category of the music as background and the dance as the main focus point (Blom 163-164). This is not to argue that the music stood as insignificant to the dance, but rather in regards to the way the piece became choreographed placed the dance as the main point. Since there arose such a challenge to choreograph the work, the

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[35] Erotokritos is a lover's ballad depicting the story of Erotokritos and Aretousa.
[36] Siganos, directly translated to slower, is a slower paced dance that moved in the line of the circle. Siganos has two main traditional basics and usually feeds into Pentozali.
[37] Pentozali, directly translated into five steps, is a faster-paced dance that moves in the line of the circle. Personally, this dance is my favourite to perform.

piece needed to focus on the tensional-hybrid lens of the choreography rather than bringing the music to the foreground of the piece.

One of the experiments for the dancers, during this case study, became finding and understanding the counts within the music. When dancing to Cretan folkloric music dancers usually count in threes, whereas contemporary dancers are more used to counting in eights, thus causing a bit of a struggle. To further explain, the Cretan dancers only count the actual steps taken in the basic, whereas the contemporary dancers count the steps and pauses. Therefore, the Cretan dancers would count one, two, three, two, two, three, etc. where for the contemporary dancers it became one, two, three, hold, two, two, three, hold, etc. Together we figured out that one dance phrase of any of the Cretan dances consisted of sixteen counts. This became an asset during the second and third dance in the piece since the movement stood either purely folkloric or a deconstructed version of folklore. When it came to the last section of the piece this information became obsolete. Once the contemporary dancers were in their true element of dance the counts became far more difficult and did not always match up. This was not an issue in the first section, as Erotokritos does not actually exist as a piece of music for folkloric dance. One of the strategies we used, discovered in Blom's text, was to create counts for the movement's feeling instead of to the music itself (168). The music elements in *Metaxy* were only a challenge because of personal ties to tradition creating an artistic barrier. Once I was able to enter the studio and allow myself to let go of said barriers, the true sense of tensional-hybrid took over and subsided these challenges. Which in turn allowed myself to hear the folkloric melodies with a different artistic ear.

Behind the Movement of Tensional-Hybrid Dance Practices

Besides costume and music, there are many other things that can influence choreography. Some tools or elements that proved to be useful during the three case studies were: gathering other visual or written sourced material, using props, creating a strong narrative, using movement ideas the dancers or performers found through improvisation, and finally digging into memories. Each one of these tools became equally important and valuable during the creative process of *Ithaka*, *Ariadne*, and *Metaxy*. Some of these devices were used across all the case studies, whereas, others were only used in one or two of them. In considering the elements that were used particular to each case study, the motive for using them varied from piece to piece.

Visual and written sourced materials were used in different ways for each of the choreographic projects. In addition, each thesis project had a different kind of sourced material, from poetry to mythology to ancient art. The visual or written sourced material also directly influenced different aspects; these sources at times directly influenced the costuming, environment, tone, movement, and/or narrative. In the end, they had an impact on the choreography but it was always the case that they were constantly influencing the choreographed movement. In *Ithaka,* Cavafy's poem directly influenced the environment, tone, and concept behind the improvisational score, thus indirectly affecting the choreographic movement. In *Ariadne*, her mythological story as well as the images from ancient Grecian urns and Minoan paintings did not directly influence the movement in a choreographic opinion; instead, these forces influenced the character, props, environment and music choices. Finally, when looking at *Metaxy* the two-dimensional beings on the ancient Grecian urns had a largely direct influence on the contemporary movement. These influences also had an affect on the costuming, but more importantly it influenced the improvisational score to create the aesthetic of the body and the physical movement.

The use of props and a narrative were only used during *Ariadne*; conversely, the idea of past memories existed only in *Ithaka*. For *Ariadne* the narrative of her mythology became the piece; and although one could argue that without it the piece would still

make sense, the outcome might differ without this influence. It's true the narrative existed as a backbone but it also significantly stood as the impetus for the work and gave direction to the movement. If we look at the use of props in *Ariadne*, their utility was realized to create a duet for the solo dancer. The ball of golden thread came to life and picked up characteristics of its own. In a fascinating way, the prop also affected the movement of the piece; on one hand, there were restrictions and limitations that it placed on the dancer, and on the other, it revealed opportunities that would not be there without it. The concept of memories for *Ithaka* became equivalent in nature to the narrative in *Ariadne*. We see the same situation arise, in that without these concepts, the pieces would be aesthetically the same. Where this concept differs from the narrative, exists in that it had direct influences on the movement, improvisational structure(s), and process of the work.

In all three case studies there were a multitude of improvisational scores used, and in which two concepts became significant. The first came from Nagrin's text *Choreography and The Specific Image*, which highlights "pour[ing] all of one's energies and mind into the moment and the action of a specific image" (56). Garnered from this idea, we stood always to be present in the moment of improvisation and, if necessary, fixate on one specific image or idea and rework it. The second concept comes from Bogart and Landau's text *The Viewpoints Book*, which required taking a piece of choreography and playing with the nine viewpoints: tempo, duration, kinesthetic response, repetition, shape, gesture, architecture, spatial relationship and topography or floor pattern (8-11). This offered the opportunity to view and expand a piece of material from several different lenses, angles, and levels of composition.

Dancing Down the Road to *Ithaka*

"As you set out for Ithaka hope the voyage is a long one, full of adventure, full of discovery" (Cavafy). The opening line in Cavafy's poem created the impetus for this piece, which would later share the same title. The performance of *Ithaka* took place at York University in September 2015 in *Available Light – I Am Solo Series*. The *I 'AM' Solo* case study stood to be an autobiographical solo; therefore, it seemed fitting that the

piece followed my journey from Cretan folkloric dance to contemporary dance ending in a tensional-hybrid. Furthermore, Cavafy's poem alludes to the concept of remembering the past on your journey into the future. Thus the metaphor that spawned the idea of gathering the memories of all my past performances and merging them into one piece developed. Thereby came a constant questioning, 'did this happen' or 'is this the exact feeling that occurred in my body during the original piece', or were these memories just revisions that were adapted and affected by current events. In Jay Winter's text *Performing the Past* he explains that the "performance of memory [becomes] both a mnemonic device and a way in which individual memories are relived, revived, and refashioned" (11). He also states "the performance of memory [stands as] a set of acts, some embodied in speech, others in movement and gestures, others in art, others still in bodily form" (Winter 12). What can be gathered from these two quotes, are that our memories live within us and are always present in our day-to-day lives. They are there in the way we move, think, breathe, and speak, as well as in the way we create. If this stands true, that our memories are so influential in our present, then why not use them for an artistic purpose? Using the past created an effective way to enter into the world of choreographing a tensional-hybrid dance.

In Cretan folkloric dance practices the person in the front of the line stands free to improvise, and adapt the basic structure in order to play with the crowd and music. Since Syrtos has become the most performed dance in the Cretan repertoire and one of the more freeing dances to elaborate on, it was an easy decision to use this dance for *Ithaka*. As noted in Theodore Petrides and Elefledia Petrides' text, *Folk Dances of The Greeks*, when it comes to the Cretan[38] the leader performs a variety of different alterations to the basic, including but not limited to, leaps, turns, thigh and foot slaps, hand-claps and so on while the line continues to dance smoothly and evenly with the line of the circle (49). When performing a solo, the leader feels a state of euphoria, letting the music and energy flow through his/her movement, almost relinquishing their

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[38] Syrtos is performed all around Greece, and the basic footwork and aesthetic of the dance changes per region.

state of consciousness and letting their feet take over. This trait lives not only in the Cretan dancer; but stands as a universal quality to the Greek Folk dances across the regions. Rallou Manou recalls attending a performance where the male solo dancer performed neither for the show nor the money, but instead seemed as if his performance stood as a personal ritual in that it would contradict reality (Pagona 71). This quality became integral to the piece and needed to be worked into the improvisational solo. This usually brings out of the performer an aesthetic that exhibits a dropped head and closed eyes. Exhibiting this aesthetic in the contemporary dance practices will often be frowned upon, as the audience wants to connect with the performer through his/her eyes and facial expression. That being said, since the performance of *Ithaka* took place in a small intimate black box studio theatre, this concept worked well with the contemporary audiences, as long as the head did not stay held in that position for the entire work. Further, the response from most contemporary audience members stood actually quite in favour of this aesthetic, as it made them more drawn to and thirsty for the essence of the work.

Improvisation played a major role in stimulating the choreography and tying the Cretan folkloric footwork to its contemporary counterparts in order to join in a tensional-hybrid aesthetic/lens. Used throughout this process were the tempo, repetition, and topography viewpoints as a way to alter and ultimately deconstruct the Cretan folkloric footwork. Once the goals for style and aesthetic of the material were achieved; movement, emotions, shapes and aesthetics were pulled from past contemporary performances that completely contrasted or mirrored the Cretan movement. In the second section the: duration, shape, architecture, and spatial relationship viewpoints were used to influence the embodied resources or memories of past performances. To end the piece, the material gathered in both the Cretan and contemporary sections were forced to work together. This occured through extracting the similarities from the two sections. In the studio, I constantly remember thinking, 'Well, if I extend the height of this kick or pull this back sweep out a little more it can marry well with this jump or bring me to the floor.' Choreographing this piece resembled kneading dough, the more it was worked the smoother the transitions felt and the blurrier the lines became between folklore and contemporary movement. This is not to say there were moments that were

less than brilliant, for example during a rehearsal run, I remember trying to add a jump after a certain Cretan movement and finding myself face first on the floor. At first, I thought it occurred simply as a mistake or a misstep but every time after that incident the exact same result occurred. Could there have been a way to determine what continuously went wrong and find a solution for it? Of course there could have been, but instead, I decided to find other alternatives. In fact, because I moved on, I discovered richer material that perhaps I wouldn't have otherwise.

To bring Manou's concept of the personal ritual to life in both the Cretan and the contemporary world, there came a conscious decision to allow room for live improvisation during the performance. This surfaced as a concept, an idea that I pulled from Jonathan Burrows's text *A Choreographer's Handbook*. In his chapter on improvisation, he explains how improvisation, as a performance, can create a demand for focus, clarity, and integrity to the work (Burrows 24). Again, not to say that the entire piece was left to chance; rather, the piece had a very detailed structure in place and had a multitude of choreographed phrases and sections. This structure left some freedom for movement and emotional interpretation. As the performer, I found this truly allowed for the movement, musical melody, and passion to flow through my veins and heart, freely pouring itself onto the stage.

Dancing *Ariadne's* Struggle

I presented *Ariadne* at Hub14 in November 2015 as part of my self produced show, Fall Immersion. Choreographed to be a narrative, throughout the process the words of Beatty were always present, "[S]tay away from literal story-telling. You are not there to represent life but to express it" (32). This case study never existed to be an exact depiction of Princess Ariadne's life in fact it was quite the opposite. In the end, the story that occurred would not be the narrative one would find in her mythology. This piece looked at the brief moment just after she snuck out of her house and just before she found Theseus to hand him the golden thread. *Ariadne* became the untold moment of a young woman conflicted between betraying her father and watching the love of her life die.

Before elaborating on the choreographic methods of folkloric and contemporary practices that were applied during this case study, it must be explained how the tool, or strategy, of props was utilized. Throughout the entire piece, the soloist danced alongside a ball of golden thread. The dancer then tied this thread throughout the performance space to symbolize the labyrinth and how Theseus would ultimately use the thread to defeat the Minotaur. The maze of the golden thread also stood to create the poetic metaphor of Ariadne's own inner maze as she struggled, deciding to either betray her father or save Theseus. In agreement with Humphrey, a prop can play an important role to a narrative (164). As suggested by Martha Graham, sets and props can become characters in a work and not just decoration (as qt. in Blom 193). To further explain Graham's notion, Blom advises on the importance of rehearsing with said props and sets as soon as possible, because they alter the performer's connection with the work and sometimes can hinder their movement (193-194). All three of these statements and warnings came true when creating *Ariadne*. As Graham signifies, the gold thread became more than just a ball of thread; it became a character that allowed the performer to duet. The movement of the thread granted the performer the ability to play to its every twist and turn. Furthermore, the sporadic and unpredictable movement of the thread became an interesting element for the audience to focus on as the performer exhibited more pedestrian movements. The thread had a mind of its own; there were moments in the studio and during the run where the dancer manipulated the ball to spin or roll a certain way that just could not be recreated. Therefore, Blom's warning became hauntingly true; it became evident early on that we could not rehearse without the thread, costume, or outside of the performance space. The process became the epitome of what a site-specific work[39] represents. Furthermore, if we were to extract the thread from the piece it would not have had the same outcome. The movement developed as a partner to the thread in space. The dancer would pull on certain threads or dive under other ones; she would use almost every part of her body to manipulate the thread, and she even relied on the thread to hold her weight whilst she completely released on top of

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[39] A site-specific work is a performance that is created only to be performed in a certain location.

it. Hence, to further support my earlier statement, the thread gave the dancer's movement purpose and justification.

Prior to actually choreographing the piece, I gave my performer a crash course/mini Cretan workshop based on the four Cretan dances to be used in the work. She learnt the basics and some improvisational steps for Rodo, Pentozali, Syrtos, and Malevyziotis. Once she became more comfortable with the movement we started to improvise with the: shape, topography, tempo, duration and repetition viewpoints. As Burrows elaborates on improvisation he describes the freedom improvisation offers to the process (24), in which there are instances of movement discovered that surpass the choreographers imagination alone. Working in this way became extremely fruitful; I had the opportunity to see the movement that has lived in my body for years be challenged and deconstructed, to the point that when presented, it was almost unidentifiable to any one style of dance. It existed then, as if watching my embodied resources burst out of a cocoon into a beautiful colourful butterfly. Watching the dancer take the quick animated steps and leaps of Malevyziotis (Petrides 30), transition them to these extensive falls and leans, became quite breathtaking.

Through audience comments I overheard or through some conversation with the viewership, it became apparent that an overwhelming majority of people enjoyed the work. There were comments on every aspect: from the stunning connection between the dancer and the thread to the work with the material, even to the dream-like state and environment that the movement and music elements created. The audience truly enjoyed the intimacy of space and work. Some viewership told me they felt as if they were watching and living within Ariadne's dream. Out of all the comments I heard on the costumes, props, and music, the one that made me feel most accomplished with this work was focused on the movement. Both Cretan and contemporary audience members stated how they were lost in the world of the movement. There were moments where they could see the Cretan influences and others where they observed the contemporary ones. Overall, the general consensus turned out to be that neither style became more dominant than the other. In fact, for the vast majority of the work, it became unidentifiably Cretan or contemporary. Hearing those responses and emotions truly

demonstrates how tensional-hybrid art can work, and how, in this case, it accomplished every determined goal.

Metaxy and the Movement Between

Metaxy took place at York University in February 2016 as a part of the final thesis concert *New Light/Ancient Light*. The in-between moments of Cretan folkloric and contemporary dance practices became the impetus behind this work. The piece literally placed both embodied resources on stage and forced them to perform simultaneously. Hence, seeing if they would live in conjunction and find a way to connect to each other, or if they would implode on stage. To accomplish this, as stated earlier, the piece consisted of twelve dancers: six Cretan trained dancers and six contemporary trained dancers. The Cretan dancers were choreographed with exclusively traditional folkloric dance steps corresponding with the music of the piece. In contrast, the contemporary dancers were choreographed using the deconstructed Cretan established in the prior two case studies as well as using two-dimensional images from ancient Grecian Urns.

Figure 29: Grecian Urn Inspiration (Panagiotakis 27)

Figure 30: *Metaxy*, (Left to Right) Samantha Grist, Amanda LaRusic, Photo by: David Hou

The Cretan dancers performed three dances during the length of this piece. They performed the Siganos, Pentozali, and then Syrtos respectively. Throughout the piece the Cretans demonstrated three different lines and holding positions. First, the open circle with their arms held in a way that resembles the letter 'w' and their hands cupped in the next persons hand. Second, the straight line with outstretched arms holding onto the next person's shoulder. Finally, a curve-line with their hands in a basket weave position[40] (Petrides 9) (see figure 31). The only exceptions to this were during Syrtos where the dancers performed in a Stavroto (Σταυρωτό)[41] formation or at the end when they were dancing in freestyle duets. The majority of the choreography that the Cretan dancers performed drew from authentic Cretan footwork and basics that you would see danced across the island by all dance troupes. This movement, as I have learned through my training from my father and instructor at the Cretan Association of Toronto, is considered the inheritance of all Cretan dancers, since the basic steps are owned by the culture. Furthermore the basics of any Cretan dance do not fall under the ownership of any one choreographer. That being said there are choreographers today in Crete creating new steps outside of the basic tradition. When choreographing *Metaxy*, I took it upon myself to create original Cretan footwork and movement. Throughout the piece, I gave solo opportunities to three of the Cretan dancers, in order to showcase the creativity and free spirit of the Cretan dancer. Two males performed the male solo called a Talimi

Figure 31: Hand holding in the line (Petrides 8)

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[40] The hands are held in front of the person next to your waist. The left arm is held in front of the right, thus creating a weaving affect.

[41] The Stavroto translates to the English word cross. When dancing in the Stavroto formation the dancers create a pinwheel where the female dancers are in the center and the male dancers are on the outside. This is a couple's version of Syrtos where the men dance around alternating, thereby dancing with each female.

(Ταλίμι).[42] As well as the two male Talimia (Ταλίμια),[43] there stood one female solo to show the elegance and floating qualities of the female dancer.

One quick aside, I need to clear up a common misconception of the Cretans as people and more specifically the Pentozali. In Petrides's text, he states that the Pentozali "was also a war-dance" (34). I completely and whole-heartedly disagree with this quote because it is simply misleading and historically incorrect. From studying the 1941 battle of Crete in grade 10 History, and from listening to lectures on the Cretan people, the Cretans were not 'war-people' they were freedom fighters. Every time Crete went into battle they went to free themselves, or others, and their lands. Therefore, to associate the fast and springy steps on the balls of your feet, vigorous foot slams, and roundhouse kick like movements (Petrides 35) to warlike qualities, and to label this dance as a 'war-dance' does it a disservice. If anything, at the most, you could label this dance as a 'freedom fighters dance', but even that association uncomfortably pushes the boundaries.

The contemporary sections were directly influenced by two elements. First, the deconstructed material as set forth in the previous case studies. The second being the two-dimensional art on ancient Grecian urns. In addition, improvisational scores manipulated both elements. Dancing folkloric Cretan during certain sections, alongside the Cretan dancers, challenged the contemporary dancers. Once again we turned to Burrows and his examples of improvisation methods. We used improvisation as a way to find material and to structure the material to be set for the piece, as well as using his 'cut and paste'[44] concept (Burrows 25-26). One of the improvisational scores created, involved the use of six specific images from the visual arts depicting Grecian Urns, and in turn, this created a traveling phrase based on these images. Four of the dancers were also given the task of creating mini solos based on these images by playing with the tempo viewpoint concept for the opening of the piece. This offered the opening moments the illusion of the images on the urns slowly coming to life. Giving the dancers

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[42] The Talimi is a male solo that consists of intricate footwork and dynamic slaps followed by powerful leaps and jumps.

[43] Talimia is the plural spelling for Talimi.

[44] Burrows 'cut and paste' concept is exactly what it suggests. It is when you cut a particular phrase and paste it somewhere else, or more simply when you rearrange the orientation of the material.

the opportunity to take any of the movement already crafted in the piece and in turn create their own sixteen-count phrase became another effective improvisational tool. After the creation of this phrase, I employed Burrows 'cut and paste' concept to rearrange the material for a grand unison ending. Once all the material was created, we reassessed the middle section and I gave the dancers an opportunity to improvise, to further find ways we could adapt the material for solo opportunities. The last improvisational tool, pulling one female Cretan dancer and one male Cretan dancer, then pairing them with their contemporary counterpart inspired two duets. The task assigned to the contemporary dancers, with regards to a pre-choreographed solo for the Cretan dancer, was to play with the improvisational game of everywhere they aren't you are[45]. The final element used to create this piece came from the simple, yet effective concept of repetition. This concept came to light after reading Burrows's *A Choreographer's Handbook*. In this text, Burrows places such an importance on the use of repetition that he even creates a bit of irony by writing three chapters on the subject each titled *Repetition* (8-23).

In the end, *Metaxy* became a high-spirited, energetic, and dynamic piece, showcasing the true excitement from both dance styles. The piece truly demonstrated that tensional-hybrid stands as a concept worth exploring and that two dance vocabularies as different as Cretan folkloric and contemporary can live simultaneously and successfully on the stage. Each night the audience commented on the high energy they saw on stage, and how from beginning to end there grew a smile on their face and a sense of excitement in their soul. Not surprisingly, the case study that started off with the most challenges and which appeared to be the most perplexing to choreograph had the largest payoff.

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[45] Everywhere they aren't you are, is an improvisational game I learned from Professor Holly Small during my undergraduate degree at York University. The game is set up to look at the duet, trio and so on. The idea of the game is that you fill the space that is not being used by another dancer.

Final Thoughts: What Lies Beyond *Ithaka*, *Ariadne*, & *Metaxy*

After much reflection on each of these three case studies, and their respective elements of costume/costuming, music/musicality, and footwork/dance aesthetic, I can conclude that each of these elements played a dynamic role in creating tensional-hybrid art that stayed sensitive to the concept of tradition. Each case study had at least two of the three main elements of tradition folkloric Cretan dance; while at the same time opening the door to contemporary dance and its practices. Through each case study new ways of tapping into the embodied resource were found, be it through improvisation or visual and written sourced material.

Through these three case studies it was determined that: to create a work that flourishes within the lens of tensional-hybridity while still being sensitive to tradition, the creator needs to be completely comfortable with breaking all the rules of tradition. That is not to say, completely throw them out the window, but rather, take them out of context. As discovered in *Ithaka*, using traditional elements of costuming while performing in a contemporary or tensional-hybrid setting can be accomplished. That being said, not everyone may appreciate this costuming choice. Let us take into consideration the decision of using traditional footwork to depict a non-traditional story as in *Ariadne*. This choice provided an environment that truly created an organically tensional-hybrid dance. As seen in *Metaxy*, the limits of traditional music need to be pushed. Why should traditional music only be choreographed in a traditional way? Music stands as music; use it in the way that inspires you most. Strip it of all its social structure and truly listen for the inspiration. For this kind of work to prosper one needs to realize that what becomes 'traditional' today, was not recognized as tradition during its establishment. Things become traditional through repetition and by being passed down from the previous generation. Pay your respects to tradition but find ways to create your own 'new' traditions.

One of the roles that tradition can play in tensional-hybrid dance is as impetus. Tradition can be the seed for a new idea, concept, or journey. Can it be possible that if the performer stands naïve to the traditional aspects that the role of tradition to the

process changes? This becomes a possibility but at the same time, just because someone stands naïve to a concept does not mean it doesn't exist. It becomes the whole 'if a tree falls in the middle of a forest' idea. The only thing that may change is the significance and acceptability of the work to the naïve individual versus the informed one.

It can and should be concluded that there are no limits or thresholds to which tradition can be incorporated and challenged. *Ithaka*, *Ariadne*, and *Metaxy* were jam-packed with traditional aspects. Therefore, the opportunities are endless. Now, can one state that because these three case studies used traditional aspects that in turn they must be examples of traditional folkloric Cretan dance? No, once you alter one aspect of tradition no matter how small or seemingly unimportant of an aspect it may be, the outcome no longer stands as traditional. That being said, if you do alter one aspect of tradition the finished product still has traditional qualities and can still be considered influenced by tradition. You simply no longer claim it as being traditional.

Throughout this process the constant question of what defines tradition arose and moreover the question of whether it changes through generations or remains stagnant inspired much discussion. Tradition is a set of cultural and moral ways of living that were passed from generation to generation. It definitely does change as it passes through generations for reasons of social, economic and environmental change. Think of tradition as a game of broken telephone, every time the phrase is passed on it changes slightly. The same goes for tradition. Every time tradition gets passed on to another individual or generation it alters a bit. To think of tradition as a stagnant state of being seems naïve.

The impetus that started this entire thesis grew from the desire to find a way to create choreography in which these two embodied movement resources could organically and successfully live together on stage and in the studio. Looking back at all three case studies, it cannot be nailed down to one finite way or one definite answer on how to create tensional-hybrid work. There are many different approaches one can take to accomplish this. One approach could be through improvisation, another could be visually and/or written sourced influences, an alternative could be by playing with the level of capacity of one embodied resource verses the other. All of the ways can work, both independently and simultaneously. The question does not rest with the possibility

of tensional-hybrid dance existing; the real question lies around you as an individual artist, will you allow your embodied resources to be organically triggered simultaneously.

To conclude, embodied resources of Cretan Folkloric and contemporary dance practices, or for that matter, any two embodied recourses, can successfully share the stage through an organic approach that considers both traditional and contemporary lenses. A specific challenge arises in the case where one of the embodied resources comes from a culturally traditional setting. I discovered that traditional dance influences could play a major role in a tensional-hybrid as both an impetus for choreography and a source of inspiration during the creative process. Contemporary dance can be greatly influenced by tradition folklore and prove to be an asset to a choreography, as long as the creator doesn't claim that the work has become a true depiction of traditional dance. In fact, one could speculate that because traditions are malleable and ever evolving, the tensional-hybrid dances created today may be considered traditional decades from now.

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Figure 32: *Available Light,* Program Title Page

Ithaka

Choreographer/Performer: Nikolaos Markakis
Lyra: Christo Markakis
Violin: Natalie Wong (September 24, 26)
Cello: Leo Zhang (September 25)
Costume: Traditional Cretan

Choreographer's Note

For my *I AM* solo I am working with three musicians, a violinist, a cellist and a Lydasi, or player for the traditional Cretan Lyra (the violinist and cellist will be alternating performances). The solo will start with a folkloric dance, move through a contemporary sensibility and end with a true marriage of the two forms. This choreography is the story of my journey in dance thus far, and a possible way into the future.

My title is *Ithaka*, coming from the poem of the same name by Greek cultural icon Constantine P. Cavafy. The poem complements Homer's *Odyssey* and Odysseus's ten-year-long journey in ancient Greece from Troy to the island of *Ithaka*. I am using the concept of *Ithaka* as a metaphor for my journey from my past to my present and hopes of my future, and as a through line to my later projects. I started dancing at the age of three. My family lineage of dancers appears through *Ithaka*, starting with my grandfather and ending with myself at present day.

> *When you set out for Ithaka*
> *ask that your way be long,*
> *full of adventure, full of instruction.*
> *~ Constantine P. Cavafy*

Thank you: to my musicians for bringing the musical elements of Ithaka alive. Thank you to the Artistic Director Carol Anderson and my Thesis Supervisor William J. Mackwood for your guidance and support. Thank you to BaKari I. Lindsay for your mentorship and added guidance on this project. I would also like to thank my entire family who have heard all of my stresses and worries throughout this project, more specifically to my Father Charalampos (Bob) Markakis. Your wealth of knowledge of the Cretan Culture, Dance and Music has been such an important part of my life and more specifically a tremendous support on this project. Thank you to Justine Comfort and Sebastian Oreamuno for your help in the studio and over the phone. To my MFA Colleagues, Allison, Michelle and Suma, we have built such an amazing support team and community over the past year. Thank you for being my sounding board and bouncing ideas back and forth. Lastly I would like to thank Mahssa Chavoshi for all of our late night phone calls and listening to all of my stresses and calming me down, I love you and am eternally grateful for your friendship.

Figure 33: *Ithaka,* Program Notes
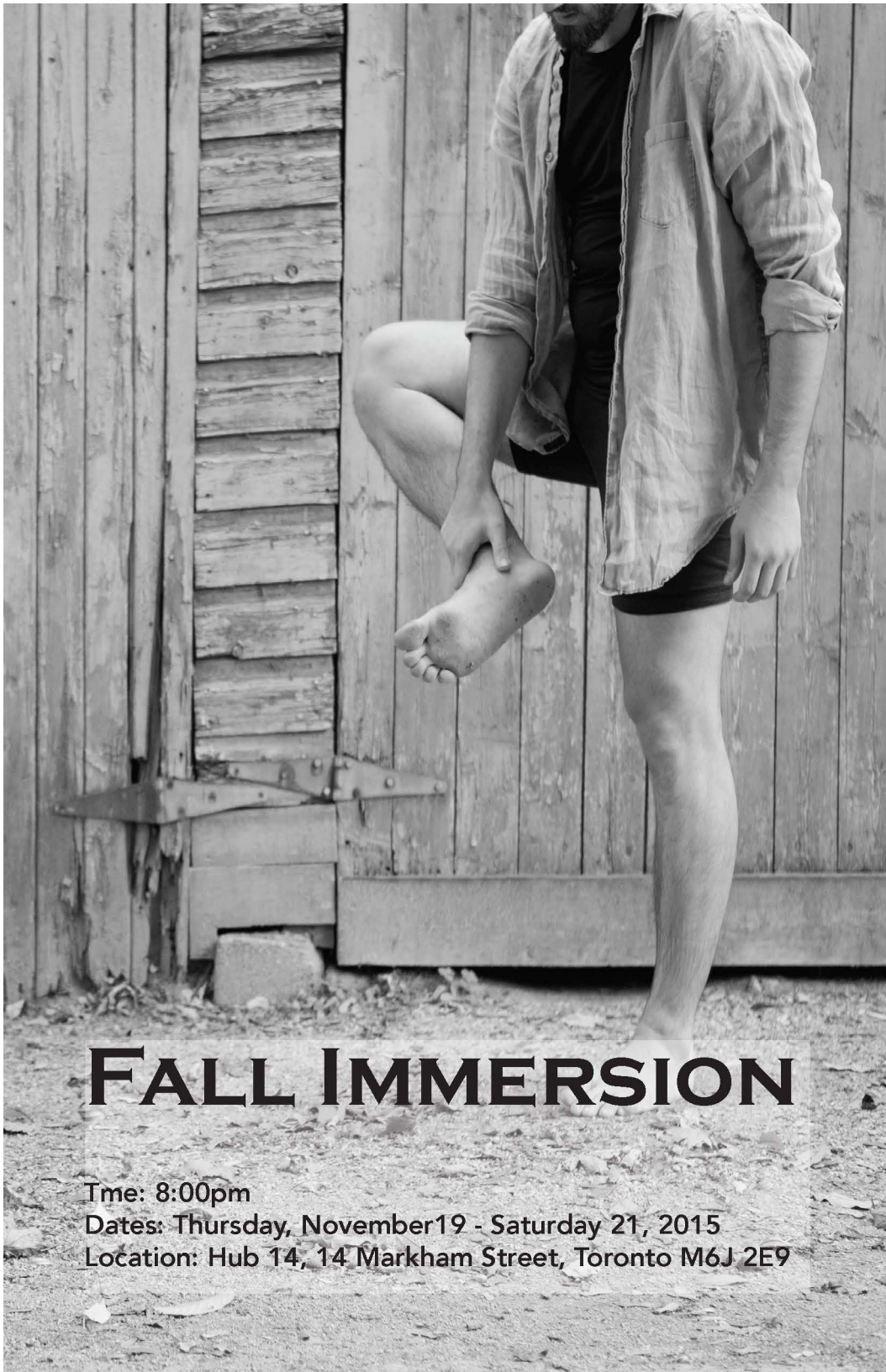
Figure 34: *Fall Immersion,* Program Title Page

ARIADNE

Choreography: Nikolaos Markakis

Performed By: Justine Comfort

Costume: Olga Markakis

Music:

> Improvisation/Φλογερα – Ξυλουρης Γιοργης
> [Improvisation/Flute - Giorgis Xylouris],

> Το Μειντανι – Λουδοβικος Τον Ανωγειον,
> [The Meidani - Loudovikos Of Anogia],

> Ποιο Χρωμα της Αγαπης – Λουδοβικος Τον Ανωγειον
> [The Colours Of Love -Loudovikos Of Anogia]

> Κι Ηντα Δεν Κανει Ο Ερωτας – Σκουλας Βασιλης
> [And What does Eros Does Not Do - Vasili Skolas

Choreographers Notes:

This piece looks at the ancient Greek mythology based around princess Ariadne, who assisted Theseus in the mission to slay the Minotaur. We enter her world during her internal struggle of either betraying her father, or watching the love of her life die. The choreography marries the traditional Cretan dances of Rodo, Syrto, and Malevizioti to a more contemporary/modern movement.

Special Thanks:

Thank you to Olga Markakis for the countless hours spent constructing the costume. Thank you to Justine Comfort for tackling the choreography with such grace. And lastley thank you to Syreeta Hector & Sebastian Oreamuno for their help in the studio.

Figure 35: *Ariadne*, Program Notes

Figure 36: *New Light/Ancient Light*, Program Title Page

Μεταξὺ (METAXY)

Choreographer	Nikolaos Markakis
Music	ΕΡΩΤΟΚΡΙΤΟΣ (*Erotokritos*) ΣΙΓΑΝΟΣ (*Siganos*)
	ΠΕΝΤΟΖΑΛΗΣ (*Pentozali*) ΣΥΡΤΟΣ (*Syrtos*)
Musicians	Manos Pyrovolakis – Lyra
	Nektarios Hatzidakis – Lute/Mandolin
	Dino Karabelas - Percussion
*Costume Designer	Nikolaos Markakis
*Costume Construction	Olga Markakis
Lighting Designer	Ian Garrett
MFA Committee	William Mackwood, Darcey Callison, Shawn Kerwin
Dancers	Sierra Chin Sawdy, Justine Comfort, Maria Gialedakis,
	Samantha Grist, Miles Gosse, Amanda LaRusic
	Charalampos (Bob) Markakis, Christos Markakis,
	Kleanthi Markakis, Megan Nadain, Nicholas Papadakis,
	Gillian Sapounakis

Μεταξὺ (*Metaxy*) is the Greek word for "between". In this work I am investigating the tension between Cretan Folkloric and Contemporary dance practices, drawing inspiration for movement and costumes from images on ancient Greek urns. ΕΡΩΤΟΚΡΙΤΟΣ (Erotokritos) is a contemporary love ballad depicting the story of Erotokritos and Aretousa, while ΣΙΓΑΝΟΣ (Siganos), ΠΕΝΤΟΖΑΛΗΣ (Pentozali), and ΣΥΡΤΟΣ (Syrtos) are Musical scores for the traditional Cretan dances by the same names.

First, I would like to acknowledge my father, Charalampos (Bob) Markakis, for introducing me to the world of dance and joining me in Μεταξὺ as a performer and mentor. Thank you to my family and friends for their hard work in the studio and on stage as performers; to my mother, Olga Markakis, for her skill and artistry in constructing the costumes; and to my lighting designer, fellow MFA Candidates, MFA supervisors and Faculty members for their dedication and creativity throughout this work. Lastly thank you to Julia Sasso, BaKari Lindsay, Victoria Gubiani, Sebastian Oreamuno and Syreeta Hector for dedicating their time in the studio and mentorship on Μεταξὺ (*Metaxy*).

Figure 37: *Metaxy*, Program Notes

Appendix B: Written Inspirational Sources of Material

Ithaka

When you set out for Ithaka
ask that your way be long,
full of adventure, full of instruction.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon - do not fear them:
such as these you will never find
as long as your thought is lofty, as long as a rare
emotion touch your spirit and your body.
The Laistrygonians and the Cyclops,
angry Poseidon - you will not meet them
unless you carry them in your soul,
unless your soul raise them up before you.

Ask that your way be long.
At many a Summer dawn to enter
with what gratitude, what joy -
ports seen for the first time;
to stop at Phoenician trading centres,
and to buy good merchandise,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
and sensuous perfumes of every kind,
sensuous perfumes as lavishly as you can;
to visit many Egyptian cities,
to gather stores of knowledge from the learned.

Have Ithaka always in your mind.
Your arrival there is what you are destined for.
But don't in the least hurry the journey.
Better it last for years,
so that when you reach the island you are old,
rich with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to give you wealth.
Ithaka gave you a splendid journey.
Without her you would not have set out.
She hasn't anything else to give you.

And if you find her poor, Ithaka hasn't deceived you.
So wise you have become, of such experience,
that already you'll have understood what these Ithakas mean.

Written by: Constantine P. Cavafy

Translated by: Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard

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