

<b>Institution:</b> University of Roehampton		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 33A - Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies: Dance		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Dancing with ageing, illness and loss through dialogic artistic research		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2012–2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Beatrice Allegranti	Professor	September 1997 – present
Emilyn Claid	Professor	June 2013 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014-2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Artist-researchers in the Centre for Dance Research have engaged people experiencing ageing, illness and loss in dialogue through dance. Through published texts, workshops, talks and choreographic works for both live audience and screen, Dr Beatrice Allegranti's and Professor Emilyn Claid's artistic research has:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. enhanced and improved the psychological, cognitive and physical wellbeing of individuals experiencing ageing, illness and loss, along with their families and carers;</li> <li>ii. shaped the practice of dance artists and health professionals; and,</li> <li>iii. embedded dance interventions for ageing, loss and young-onset dementia within major healthcare and cultural organisations across South East England</li> </ol> <p>Allegranti and Claid's research has developed dialogic and relational modes of working with lasting significance for individuals and organisations addressing ageing and its effects, as their models of creative practice are carried into participants' wider personal and professional lives and communities. Allegranti's extensive choreographic work with people living with Young Onset Dementia (YOD) enables reflection and progressive change in experiences of the condition. Claid's somatic research into falling repositions the experience as one of agency and change, fostering sustainable ways of being with ageing and vulnerability.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The artistic research of Allegranti and Claid addresses the question of how to sustain, empower and promote agency for self and others through the challenges of ageing, illness and loss. For over two decades, debates around artistic research have questioned the relation of practice to theory, and how embodied processes and associated critical reflection advance the production and theory of art. Less attention has been paid, however, to collaborative artistic research uniquely designed to innovate and propose new ways of relating. These researchers redress this by facilitating – via choreographic and somatic means – a reconsideration of how people relate to one another, and to their wider environments.</p> <p>Allegranti's interdisciplinary choreographic and psychotherapeutic research (<b>R1</b>, <b>R2</b>) develops bespoke performances <i>with</i> and <i>for</i> families living with YOD. Incorporating feminist new materialism and posthumanism, her research engages with the ethics and politics of kinship, vulnerability, othering and care. Allegranti's work posits the entanglement of bodies with environment and language, to reframe experiences of vulnerability and loss. The research introduces an understanding of how affective-kinaesthetic relating can effect progressive change for the person living with dementia and their carers, as well as for the artistic team working with them. Her dance film <i>I Can't Find Myself</i> (<b>R3</b>) was informed by fieldwork interviews with dementia care networks (both lay and professional carers). The practice-research places emphasis on the value of kinaesthetic communication where people's cognitive faculties are impaired, particularly within dementia relationships where meaning-making through language as we 'know it' is changed and challenged. Autobiographical, medical and cultural narratives from the fieldwork were incorporated into the film through a series of choreographic and sonic vignettes, capturing the tactile-kinaesthetic resonance of memories, interactions and shifting identities, and inviting audiences to recognize taboos around loss and the impact of dementia on relationships. A full-length performance based on autobiographical contributions, <i>I've Lost You Only to Discover That</i></p>		

*I Have Gone Missing* (R4), was subsequently developed and toured to 11 venues. The production envisions dementia in a way that disrupts, wider social, political and culturally ubiquitous inequalities of age, loss of 'self' and life, as well as voice, troubling the linear causality of 'story' and opening into a wider ecology according to each contextually and relationally contingent performance.

The research of Allegranti and Claid enables those facing ageing, illness and loss to coexist and reimagine their experiences of vulnerability and othering by offering new modes of expression and new experiences of physicality through dance. Claid's research (R5, R6) draws on gestalt psychotherapy, somatic movement, and choreographic practices, to reposition falling as an intentional experience of agency and change. Through dance practice and movement-based therapy, falling is reframed as creative resource for developing self and environmental support. Explored relationally, physically, psychologically and metaphorically, the action of falling comes to be understood as refiguring relations between body, gravity and ground. Claid's research draws on intersubjective practices of encounter to foster sustainable ways of being with ageing and vulnerability, alongside dying as a 'falling through life' with others (R5). Her choreographic film, *A Long Side* (R6) further explores the theme of falling by documenting processes of falling out of fixed choreography, whilst exploring themes of economic decline and ageing community among older dance participants in south eastern Northumberland.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1** Allegranti, B. (2019) *Moving Kinship: Between Choreography, Performance and the More-Than-Human*, in Prickett, S., Thomas, H. (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook for Dance Studies*. London: Routledge, pp. 88-108. ISBN 9781138234581. Listed in REF2.
- R2** Allegranti B. (2020) *Dancing Activism: Choreographing the Material With/in Dementia*, in Wendgrower, H., Chaiklin, S. (eds.) *Dance and Creativity Within Dance Movement Therapy: International Perspectives*. New York: Routledge. ISBN 9781138337527. Available on request.
- R3** Allegranti, B. (2015) *I Can't Find Myself*, Film, online, created in collaboration with composer Jill Halstead. London: Olympic Studios Cinema. Available at <https://vimeo.com/332300965>. Password: SCREENd@nce\*.
- R4** Allegranti, B. (2016) *I've Lost You Only to Discover That I Have Gone Missing*, 60-minute touring dance theatre performance toured to 11 venues including: Open Senses Festival (May 2017); Babel in Bloom (June 2017); Crouch End Festival (June 2017); Psychoanalysis and Creativity Conference, University of Canterbury (November 2017); Merton Arts Space (December 2017); Alexandra Palace, Transmitter Hall (December 2017); Wellcome Collection (May 2017 and February 2018); Michaelis Theatre, University of Roehampton (March 2018); Bergen International Festival (May 2018), Utrecht Centre for the Arts (March 2019).
- R5** Claid, E., Osborne, L. (2015) *Falling – A Creative Process*, *Gestalt Journal of Australia and New Zealand*, 12(1), pp.17-29. Available on request.
- R6** Claid, E. (2016) *A Long Side*, short choreographic film co-directed by Lucy Cash, exhibited at Woodhorn Museum, Ashington, Northumberland, 18 October 2016-5 March 2017. Listed in REF2.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Both Allegranti and Claid's research uses dialogic methods to focus most immediately on the participants in their choreographic and somatic work, who, as a result of engaging with these dialogic dance methods, experience improved psychological, cognitive and physical wellbeing. Dance becomes a way to learn about ageing, illness and loss in embodied and progressive ways. Allegranti and Claid also use dialogic methods to broaden understanding of a given situation or practice (intentional falling, living with YOD), and to build practical tools for future application (e.g. in therapists' work, artists' collaborations and their relationship to audiences, or the daily lives of families affected by illness and loss).

#### i. Enhancing the psychological, cognitive and physical wellbeing of those experiencing ageing, illness and loss along with their families and carers

Allegranti and Claid have worked closely with diverse groups of participants to develop projects which engage with the experiences, circumstances and embodied knowledges of their members. As part of her *Moving Kinship* hubs (methodology discussed in R1 and R2) developed with and for diverse audiences, Allegranti has created bespoke performances in collaboration with 36

families living with YOD. Claid's research has similarly engaged participants in the process of its development and has helped participants in a public workshop at Tower Bridge manage their vertigo as well as improved the psychological, cognitive and physical wellbeing of the Elderflowers, a group of 14 older people from a former mining town in South East Northumberland.

The inherent methodology of mutual recognition in Allegranti's *Moving Kinship* project has evoked feelings of empowerment and improved the wellbeing of the participants. Allegranti's use of dialogic methods, emphasising engagement, capacity and co-creativity (R1, R2), has enabled participants to mourn losses and address taboos through safe, playful choreographic engagement. The reach of this research has been substantial: internationally established *Moving Kinship* hubs have been attended by 1,140 people in venues across Japan, Norway and the United Kingdom (IMP1). The combined psychological and kinaesthetic benefits to participants are demonstrated by feedback following the participatory hubs: one family carer commented that the dance was a *'nice way for us to be together as a family in complete contrast to normal. To move, be in contact, to just be with each other. All centred around dementia, a burden we all face day to day – but it came as a release rather than a reminder.'* Another reported that, *'It was incredibly liberating to see mum enjoy and be so engaged in the dance; for the first time in a while I was able to leave her to herself and her own enjoyment without feeling guilt or responsibility. It was so incredibly cathartic for me and let me release a lot of anxiety and stress.'* Equally, the dances also allowed the participants living with YOD to express themselves. As one reported, *'I have Fronto Temporal Dementia, non-fluent. Can't speak or sing. Music, art and dancing is best for me'*. Another wrote of her experience, *'I enjoy the intense expressions on faces and the body emotive movements. I feel like moving... also being part of a group making close connections feels good'* (IMP2).

In 2015, Claid's research, which demonstrates the clinical usefulness of the practice of falling in Gestalt psychotherapeutic practice (R5), underpinned a public workshop held at Tower Bridge. Claid worked with 15 members of the public who experienced vertigo and fear of heights, using somatic and mindful falling skills to help them manage body-based sensations that arose without allowing fear to take over. This enabled them to walk over the glass walkway at the bridge, which is 42 metres above the Thames (IMP3). Media coverage enhanced public understanding of the use of falling to combat the effects of vertigo. Before the workshop, Claid appeared on ITV's *Good Morning Britain*, working with an ITV presenter who experiences vertigo to walk the glass walkways (IMP4), reaching the programme's approximately 1,000,000 daily viewers.

Claid's participatory project has also inspired a group of older residents of the area of Northumberland around Woodhorn Museum, who in 2016 commissioned a project to enable people in the area to create and take part in inspiring and high-quality arts experiences. South East Northumberland is a particularly deprived area of the UK, following the demise of the coal mining and fishing industries. The core issues for this group are ageing and economic decline. Claid's research on falling – how working with gravity can bring psychological and metaphorical support – informed the devising process for participants as well as their choices of material and ways of film-making (R5, R6). As a result of the work, Claid produced a choreographic film with filmmaker Lucy Cash, called *A Long Side* (R6). Participating in the film resulted in enhanced wellbeing for those involved. Of taking part in the film, one participant reported that, *'I have done things I would never have without the encouragement of others'*, another that *'I have arthritis in my hands... When we first started they were painful—as we went on, they got better'* (IMP5).

## ii. Shaping the practice of dance artists and health professionals

Due to the clear benefits of these dance and choreographic methodologies for those participating, dissemination of Allegranti's and Claid's research and dialogic methodologies have shaped and enriched dance and health practitioners' practice as they have learned how to better support their own and others' wellbeing through adoption of these principles into their practice.

Comments by the approximately 250 participants in Claid's workshops on falling (R5, R6) in Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the US attest to the new inspiration experienced by dance artists and the motivation they felt to bring the new practices to which they were introduced into their art. One described the experience as having *'given me a new paradigm through which to*

*engage with my life/ world/ studio practice*’ and said she would incorporate Claid’s dialogic process into her work: *‘The way in which we... engage with vulnerability and support... was very useful for my practice...I will use what I have learnt in future rehearsal processes’*. An attendee of a workshop in 2018 reported that her practice would *‘benefit from a boost in confidence in pursuing the potential intelligence of embodied practice’*, whilst another commented that she would, *‘create more time for falling – and work with contact improvisation/Aikido and gain a sense of technique needed to fall and catch or be caught falling – safely.’* The resilience she would gain from practicing embodied falling would benefit her work as a workshop facilitator for Child Assault Prevention UK: *‘If I can become more comfortable with falling and model an acceptance to fail and make mistakes... I will develop a greater resilience to bounce back. In turn by modelling this to the children/ young people I work with... they too can build more resilience and bounce in adverse situations’ (IMP6)*.

Similarly, workshops led by Claid (**R5, R6**) for psychotherapeutic organisations in six countries (Australia, Finland, Italy, New Zealand, the UK and the US) resulted in the adoption of her research by psychology practitioners. One psychotherapist claimed the workshop had *‘impacted both my psychotherapy practice as well as the training that I teach’* and further reported that he subsequently used falling as a metaphor to support issues of loss (**IMP6**). The reach of Claid’s work is evidenced by the approximately 60 participants in the workshops and the range of their own practices in which they embedded the findings of the research, and extended to their networks of associated organisations, workplaces and relationships (**IMP1**). One participant in a workshop in Italy noted that he would now include exercises in group therapy settings (**IMP6**). The reach of the research has been extended to business contexts; for example, a psychotherapist now uses Claid’s discursive methods in personal development training for the Senior Management at Ingram Micro, an IT company with offices in 170 countries (**IMP7**).

Similarly, the *Moving Kinship* methodology was disseminated internationally to approximately 260 dance, music, theatre and psychotherapy practitioners through workshops and collaborations in Japan, Norway and the UK (**IMP1**). This has informed the practice of dance and theatre artists across the globe, causing practitioners to re-think methods of engaging with artistic creation as a form of embodied activism. Allegranti’s *Moving Kinship* performance hubs (methodology discussed in **R1** and **R2**) involved dialogic collaboration with the professional dance artists who worked with Allegranti to choreograph bespoke responses to the stories of these families. The hubs profoundly affected the dance artists’ understanding of the value of their somatic practices, artistic skills and psychological investment. As one dancer reported of the experience, *‘I have been inspired by the dance movement psychotherapy approaches Beatrice works with to find an honest and heart-felt response to my creative work. This has allowed the emotional integrity of the participants’ stories to shine out through our movement’ (IMP2)*. Another noted that dancing in the hubs had evolved his dance practice in directions he would not have considered otherwise. It affected the dancers personally as well: *‘My dad is living with dementia and the process allowed me to engage with performance in deeper and more meaningful ways [...] The progressive nature of these sessions, and the exchange of energy from dancers to participants results in a dialogic exchange of energy and emotion... where all participate as equals’*. This dancer has gone on to use *Moving Kinship* methodology in his inclusive dance practice with around 100 stateless people in Japan, Thailand and the UK (**IMP8**).

### iii. Embedding dance interventions for ageing, loss and YOD within major healthcare organisations

Since 2017, Allegranti’s *Moving Kingship* hubs (drawing from **R1-R4**) have been incorporated into the recommendations of major health and cultural organisations and included as part of social prescribing in GP surgeries. This creative and psychosocial intervention enabled Allegranti to hold 24 monthly hubs for families working on referrals from Haringey and Merton Councils; St George’s NHS neurology unit; Dementia Action Alliance; Public Health England in collaboration with Merton Arts Space and Merton Council; and Alexandra Palace. The hubs provide an important means for these organisations to achieve their missions and aims; for example, Alexandra Palace designates their work with Allegranti as *‘a flagship project... helped raise the profile of the charity as a place that supports community cohesion, wellbeing and somewhere that people might seek support or*

*advice*. Allegranti's research has become embedded widely in referrals for those living with YOD, and in 2017, Dementia Action Alliance and Public Health England cited the work as an exemplar of *'innovative creative practice in dementia'*. In 2020, Surrey Arts Partnership commissioned the hubs across the county, expected to start in 2021, as allowed by government regulations (**IMP9**).

The reach of Allegranti's research amongst both dance and health practitioners has been essential to embedding socially and psychologically imbued dance practice as a means of achieving positive outcomes for families living with YOD, providing an example of best practice for how artistic research can be used to benefit end users. 24 screenings of Allegranti's dance film *I Can't Find Myself* (**R3**), a discursive resource for enhancing kinaesthetic communication with lay and professional dementia carers, reached a total audience of 1,412, including medical professionals, with further screenings reaching the Alzheimer's Society in 2017 and the Dementia Pathfinder's Annual Award Ceremony in 2016. Comments from attendees emphasised how the film empowered them to *'[recognise] again how much you can help people with art'* and to acknowledge *'how non-verbal communication through touch and movement can help'* (**IMP10**). The screendance was the cover story of *Therapy Today*, the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy's magazine, reaching over 40,000 monthly readers (**IMP1**) and has subsequently been used as a family support and staff development resource by Dementia Pathfinders (**IMP9**).

After the success of *I Can't Find Myself*, Allegranti developed a full-length production based on her research (**R1-R3**) and the hubs. The performance, *I've Lost You Only to Discover I've Gone Missing* (**R4**), has toured to 11 venues to date as a work-in-progress, reaching an audience of 580. Allegranti created a short film that includes an extract from the performance. An audience member stated that, *'it has reminded me of how important co regulation is, particularly with people who have dementia... I will approach any other contact... with a renewed sense of connection'*; another that they had realised their need to *'move, express'* more (**IMP1**).

#### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

**IMP1** Metrics Report 2014-2020, showing attendance at workshops, roundtables, knowledge exchange sessions, public engagement, etc.

**IMP2** Testimonials from *Moving Kinship* hubs housed on Dr Allegranti's website. Available at [beatriceallegranti.com](http://beatriceallegranti.com).

**IMP3** Press release advertising Professor Claid's public engagement workshop at Tower Bridge on 5 December 2015. Available at <https://mediacentre.kallaway.com/tower-bridge-and-monument/press-releases/-the-glass-floor-challenge-conquer-your-fear-of-heights-at-the-worlds-most-famous-bridge>

**IMP4** Professor Claid's appearance on ITV's *Good Morning Britain*. Available at <https://www.itv.com/goodmorningbritain/articles/can-sean-fletcher-conquer-fear-of-heights-on-tower-bridge>.

**IMP5** TURNS exhibition booklet containing comments of participants in *A Long Side*, 2016

**IMP6** Responses to attendee survey at falling workshops, New Zealand, 2014; responses to attendee survey at 'Between You and Me' workshop, Taormina, Sicily, 2016; responses to attendee survey at 'Potency of Gravity' workshop, New Zealand, April 2018.

**IMP7** Testimonial from a Leadership Development and Coaching Lead dated 23 November 2016, discussing his use of Professor Claid's methodologies in his own work with Ingram Micro.

**IMP8** Testimonial from an inclusive dance practitioner who dances in the *Moving Kinship* hubs, dated 7 August 2020, attesting to how he has adopted the methodology in his own work.

**IMP9** Report on major health and cultural organisations who have incorporated *Moving Kinship* hubs into their recommendations, 2017-2020.

**IMP10** Evaluations of attendees at screenings of **R3** on 9 May 2015, 23 November 2015, 16 May 2016, 10 June 2016 and 10 August 2016.