

Institution: Bath Spa University		
Unit of Assessment: Music, Drama, Dance, Performing Arts, Film and Screen Studies		
Title of case study: Developing critical bodies: using somatic arts processes to support practitioner agency, facilitate practitioner-community discourse and influence the educational provision of cultural and training organisations		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014 - 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Dr Thomas Kampe	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Somatic Performance and Education	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2/10/2012 - present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014 - 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Kampe's transdisciplinary research at Bath Spa University (BSU) into critical somatic practice crosses performing arts and somatic movement education. Kampe has articulated the role of somatics from neoliberal embodied practices for individual health and wellbeing into a field of critical somatics which interrogates socio-political dimensions of emerging contemporary practices. This theoretical and choreographic research, undertaken from 2014 to 2020, has had an impact on over 1500 individual practitioners' working methods through Kampe's transmission activities at leading international festivals and workshop events. Through international professional collaborations, Kampe has furthered a discourse on critical somatics within somatic and dance communities and has influenced educational bodies and cultural organisations towards changes in their working methods and ethos to focus on critical practice. These have included professional partners and stakeholders in the dance and somatic training field such as the New Zealand Dance Company (NZDC), the International Feldenkrais Federation (IFF), the Feldenkrais Guild UK (FGUK) and Somatische Akademie Berlin (SAB, key professional partner).</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>Kampe's research on critical somatics creates new understandings of the heritage of somatics and somatic-informed performing arts practices, and their potential to be socially and culturally critical and transformative. Traditionally, somatic practices are understood as wellbeing-oriented body-mind practices, applied within performance contexts to develop performers' self-awareness, agency and bodily skills development. As such, they may feed into the construction of a neoliberal wellness culture that centres the white, privileged individual. Critical somatics moves the field towards critical, socially communal and inclusive processes that acknowledge cultural impact upon bodies such as power structures and social hierarchies. Kampe's research has created new understandings of the critical potential and emancipatory histories of somatic practices within Western performing arts cultures and has articulated the need to re-radicalise somatics beyond a wellness practice. Through workshops and event curation with leading international partner organisations, Kampe's research has strengthened an inclusive culture that enables individual practitioners' creative and critical agency, and brings emancipatory discourses in relation to feminist, racial, ecological and class concerns into the practitioner community. This work has impacted arts and practitioner training organisations that are now developing discussions around ethics, social inclusion and the transformative potential of a transdisciplinary somatic-arts nexus.</p> <p>The practice-led project <i>Releasing the Archive</i> (2014-2019, R5; R6) revitalised marginalised modernist exile dance practices and histories, with reference to the work of Viennese Jewish choreographer Gertrud Bodenwieser (1890-1959), the first female Professor for Choreography in pre-WW2 Europe. Persecuted during the Nazi period, she left Austria for New Zealand and Australia in 1938, where she pioneered modern dance until her death in 1959. Her highly influential, radical working methods disappeared in Europe and form an important, nearly lost</p>		

practice heritage. Kampe's research re-activated and documented Bodenwieser's working methods through somatic processes with partners in New Zealand and Australia. Kampe brought this re-embodied dance and somatic heritage back to Europe 80 years after her exile from Vienna. The research identified Bodenwieser's work as pre- or proto-somatic emancipatory practices of cultural critique within choreographic contexts. The research created new understanding of an alternative feminist legacy of critical somatic practices with references to European dance and body-cultures (R6). The research has created recognition of the historical importance of her practices in the development of contemporary dance and somatic cultures. This internationally presented research included immersive performances, dance for screen works, workshop presentations, lectures and academic writings (R1). Professional dancers have found improved and expanded physical movement vocabulary and choreographers have been inspired to make work as a direct result of the research. The project was undertaken in collaboration with and presented through leading international partners: the New Zealand Dance Company, Tempo Festival (Auckland), DANZ (national support organisation for dance in Aotearoa), the National Gallery of Victoria (Melbourne), Tanzkongress (Hannover), ImpulsTanz Festival (Europe's leading international dance festival, Vienna), and Theatermuseum (Vienna).

The research project *Critical Somatics and Performance Culture* investigated the articulation of somatic practices, especially the Feldenkrais Method® (FM), in performance-making and learning culture as critical processes, often in dialogue with professional partner organisations. These have included Feldenkrais Guild UK, the UK professional educational body, the *Journal for Dance and Somatic Practices* (R3; R6) and the *International Feldenkrais Federation* (IFF; R4). Kampe's research articulates the relationship between somatic educational practices, 20th century emancipatory pedagogies and critical social theory, to form foundations for a rationale for an emerging politically inflected field of critical somatics relevant for a twenty-first-century context (R1; R3; R4). Extensive collaborations with international professional and academic partners in the field were pivotal in the facilitation and findings of the research, through editing journal volumes and hosting workshops and symposia (R2; R3). This body of work (2015-2020) has brought together world-leading practitioners who are expanding somatics and performance as radical practices that are able to further emancipatory embodiment (R1-3).

3. References to the research

R1 Kampe, T (2020) [Releasing the Archive \(2014-2020\) \[research portfolio\]](#). Includes projects in collaboration with Prof Carol Brown (Auckland) and professional partners: *Releasing Her Archive* (2017); *LOST + FOUND* (2018); *Displaced/Displayed: re-enacting dances of migration* (2018).

R2 Kampe, T (2017) ['Entangled histories, part 2: releasing the de-generate body.'](#) *Journal of Dance & Somatic Practices*, 9 (1). pp. 75-93

R3 Kampe, T and Batson, G (2020) ['Dancing critical somatics – an emancipatory education for the future?'](#) In: David, A.R, Huxley, M and Whatley, S, eds. *Dance fields: staking a claim for dance studies in the twenty-first century*. Dance Books, Binsted, pp. 154-184

R4 Kampe, T (2019) ['Practices of freedom – the Feldenkrais Method and creativity.'](#) *Feldenkrais Research Journal*, 6

R5 Alexander, K and Kampe, T (2017) ['Bodily undoing: somatics as practices of critique.'](#) *Journal of Dance & Somatic Practices*, 9 (1). pp. 3-12

R6 Kampe, T (2015) ['Eros and inquiry: the Feldenkrais Method® as a complex resource.'](#) *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training*, 6 (2). pp. 200-218

Funding:

- Kampe (Movement Research and Direction), *Releasing the Archive* (2014-2018) Creative New Zealand details, NZD40,400 (independent)

4. Details of the impact

Kampe's critical somatics research has created impact in 3 interconnected ways: the agency of practitioners through live-transmission of somatic arts processes; practitioner-community discourse development on critical somatic-arts culture through facilitating of knowledge exchange opportunities; and cultural, academic or training organisations, their artistic/ educational provision, and their organisational ethos with a focus on critical practice. Kampe's

research sets out to develop body-mind educational and arts practices as socio-culturally transformative in times of crises in social justice, ecology and democracy. It articulates innovative, co-creative and inclusive modes of performer training, education and performance making, and offers new models and understandings of somatic practice application and their culturally critical heritage. Studio-based learning by practitioner-to-practitioner transmission is at the heart of performing arts and somatic educational practices. Kampe's theoretical and artistic research necessarily goes together with this live transmission of somatic dance knowledge. Undertaken in dialogue with performers, makers, pedagogues and cultural programmers, this research has had an empowering impact on international organisations, arts practitioners and somatic educators alike.

Kampe's research reached over 1500 practitioners across the fields of performance and somatics through international transmission workshops in dialogue with cultural and educational organisations and international festivals. This has included Body IQ Festival (Berlin, 2015-2019), Contact Festival (Israel, 2017), ImpulsTanz Festival (Vienna 2019), I-Dance Festival (Taipei, 2019), and most recently, the exhibition *How do we care? – a programme series of the politicisation of bodies and alternative concepts of care taking* at Badischer Kunstverein (Germany, 2020). Kampe's contribution to these international events has shaped practitioner discourse around critical somatics by disseminating new models of practice. Kampe also worked with over 500 students and staff at international conservatoires and private institutions including the Jerusalem Dance Academy, K-Arts (Seoul), TanzART (Darmstadt), and Obrador de Moviments (Barcelona). His work in these settings has impacted syllabi towards somatic-informed practices. Kampe's research has created impact through international collaborations with professional and academic partners including the New Zealand Dance Company (NZDC) The International Feldenkrais Federation (IFF, US), Feldenkrais Guild (UK), the Korean somatic Research & Education Association (KRSEA, Seoul) and leading European non-academic somatic arts provider Somatische Akademie Berlin (SAB).

Impact on agency of practitioners through live transmission of somatic arts processes:

Kampe's research supported process expertise and knowledge exchange in somatic-informed performance practice. Feedback from workshop, training, and symposia activities revealed an impact on individual performance practitioners and somatic educators as an increase in their creative agency. This manifested in an improvement in self-image and expanded ability to make differentiated movement choices (E3; E7). The project *Releasing the Archive* (2014-19) undertaken with New Zealand's leading contemporary dance company, NZDC, aimed to reactivate the work of Bodenwieser through the application of somatic practices within the recreation processes. Research participant feedback suggested an increase in performer empowerment and embodied creativity. A company dancer expands on this: "After both the Feldenkrais Method and Bodenwieser training I felt a lot more around my back and especially my pelvis... It gives me so much more freedom of how I could use my body and how I create movements in many different ways" (E7).

Performers and workshop participants identified the transmission of Bodenwieser's dance heritage through somatic dance inquiry as innovative, embodied, intellectual and affective ways of engaging with marginalised dance histories (E3). The research offered new understandings of how notions of the autonomous critical self as foundations of modern citizenship are embedded within the construction of contemporary somatic practices (E3). It has informed Elizabeth Ward's choreographic work who states: "[Brown and Kampe's] historical research into the somatic principles behind Bodenwieser's work helped me trust my own instinct to follow the felt sense while working on [*Dancing Demons*]" (Vienna, 2000; E9). This experience was matched by practitioners' enhanced understanding of somatic practices as critical, emancipatory processes, and their historical placement (E3; E5). Somatic practitioners found new extended practices by embracing creative freedoms and dynamic improvisation processes. This enabled practitioners to develop a competence to embrace new, socially interactive modalities beyond traditional understandings of transmission (E5). Participants engaging in critical somatics activities found new ways to integrate political and social meanings into their somatic practices. For example, workshop participants stated: "I have gained more clear understandings of the possibilities of taking the somatics out from the studio into the world" (E2); "It contributed to my understanding

of why somatic practices are practices of critique – a mindful reflective use of the body changes how we think and engage with one another” (E2).

Impact on practitioner-community discourse development on critical somatic-arts culture through facilitating of knowledge exchange opportunities

Kampe's articulation of critical somatics influenced practitioner discourse through co-editing an issue of *Journal for Dance and Somatic Practices* (9.1 'Bodily Undoing: Somatics as Practices of Critique') and hosting 2 symposia at Bath Spa (2017; 2019) which reached over 150 practitioners. Kampe co-directed the *Body IQ Festival 2019* in collaboration with Somatisch Akademie Berlin (SAB), focussing on critical somatic arts practices and activism. The festival brought together 50 world-leading presenters with 180 international participants to exchange ideas. Questionnaire feedback (sent out to 100 participants, with 47% return) demonstrated the impact of facilitating new theory-practice dialogues (E2). Participants identified a new understanding of somatic practices as processes of critique, moving beyond wellness and enhanced functioning. This was expressed as “intensifying and informing” and “providing new inroads” towards constructing somatic practices as socially relevant. Feedback highlighted the event as “facilitating acts of communal re-humanizing as somatic-resistance in contemporary techno-digital-cultural contexts” (E2). Participants also felt “inspired to develop new models of somatic-arts practices from non-Western perspectives” and stated that:

The curation was excellent. The diverse and forward-thinking topics explored in the various workshops demonstrated some original examples of practitioners who delve into social and political questions through the body. ... the last panel discussion was pivotal for my understanding of critical aspects of somatic practices. The connection made between private work with the body and its situatedness in concrete communities and political power structures was important. (E2)

The festival was reviewed in the journal *Somatika* (Czech Republic, 2020): “somatics is the re-humanization of man in his nature... The current global ethical and ecological crisis is a call to renew and implement these connections. The organizers of the Body IQ Festival respond to this” (E2).

Kampe's research collaboration with international governing-bodies of FM, Feldenkrais Guild UK, Fachverband Feldenkrais Germany (FVD), International Feldenkrais Federation (IFF), bridged the divide between somatic-educational practice and arts-making processes in significant ways. His work facilitated debate across non-academic and academic spheres by hosting a symposium, *Feldenkrais as Creative Practice* (2015) in cooperation with the Feldenkrais Guild UK and academic partners (E6). As a result of his articulation of the intersection between FM and performing arts practices, he was invited by the IFF to guest edit *IFF Research Journal 6* to foster critical-somatic arts scholarship within the international practitioner-community (downloaded 5,537 times in September 2020). Kampe ran an online symposium hosted by BSU, *Practices of Freedom - Feldenkrais and the Moving Performer* (June 2020) in further collaboration with the Feldenkrais Guild UK, which brought together 175 somatic arts practitioners. The impact of these collaborations on practitioner community discourse is demonstrated by an increased understanding of how the Feldenkrais Method contributes to arts and creative practice, and it has fostered community networking within the field at national and international levels (E1).

Impact on cultural, academic or training organisations, their artistic/educational provision, and their organisational ethos with a focus on critical practice

Kampe's research has impacted on professional bodies and organisations in the fields of both somatic practice and dance. After collaborating with Kampe on the *Releasing Her Archive* project, the NZDC has now included Feldenkrais practices into dancer-training provided because the company recognises the creative agency the practice provides in company dancers (E7).

Kampe's research has impacted on scholarly community-building and influenced structural activities of the Feldenkrais Guild UK. Inspired by Kampe's research, the FGUK has funded the development of 2 networking groups, one concerned with musicianship and the other with dance/theatre practices (E6). Kampe's work has enabled the questioning of traditional modalities in facilitating the Feldenkrais Method in which, traditionally, clients are mostly asked to respond

passively to teaching while lying on their backs; his research has shifted the field towards more dynamic, vertically-oriented dialogic facilitation (E6). Kampe was invited by the German professional body FVD to deliver a practitioner workshop for the German Feldenkrais-Convention in 2017, aimed at unsettling traditional learning modalities. Workshop reflections were disseminated in practitioner journals, thus impacting the topics of subsequent national conventions, including the focus of 2020 Feldenkrais FVD-Congress on 'new directions, development and social context'. Kampe's research also had an impact on the programming policies of small-scale Feldenkrais organisations such Kulturzentrum Schwalbe Zarrentin (Germany) and Obrador de Moviments (Barcelona). These organisations are now running regular workshops exploring creative approaches to critically extend and renew traditional modes of facilitation and transmission as articulated by Kampe (E8).

Dance organisation TanzArt Darmstadt (Germany) continues to programme Feldenkrais-informed dance workshops as part of their yearly syllabi (E8). Kampe hosted the Korean Somatic Research and Education Association summer training in 2019, enabling the extension of traditional Korean modes of embodiment through Feldenkrais-informed reflective processes (E10). Kampe's lecture on *Feldenkrais as Critical Practice* at Somatische Akademie Berlin (2015) was seminal in shaping SAB's policies towards promoting forms of somatic activism and social somatics through training and event programming (E4). Kampe was invited to present his work at SAB's Body IQ festivals from 2015 to 2017 and to co-direct the Body IQ Festival 2019. The festival co-director states that Kampe "made a tremendous contribution to Somatic Academy Berlin's ambition to integrate somatic practice and learning with academic research and discourse" (E5).

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

E1 Statement by IFF Feldenkrais *Research Journal* editor on Kampe's role of providing frameworks for theory/practice discourse in Feldenkrais-informed arts practices and the community impact.

E2 Body IQ 2019 survey questionnaire: practitioner and participant feedback on discourse development in the field of Critical Somatics. Critical review in *Somatika* journal (2020).

E3 ImpulsTanz/IDOCDE Vienna residency survey questionnaire: information on critical somatic dance heritage and impact of new practice models on practitioner agency.

E4 Statement by Somatische Akademie (SAB) Director, 'Body IQ 2019' and SAB Co-Director on Kampe's role in developing Critical Somatics ethos of SAB and 'Body IQ'.

E5 Questionnaire from workshops in Zarrentin and statement by Kulturzentrum Schwalbe on the impact of Feldenkrais-informed dance practice towards development of new models of somatic transmission.

E6 Feldenkrais Guild UK 'Functional Information' (2015), review and statement by the Chair of FGUK Adkins (2017) on the impact of Kampe's Feldenkrais/Arts discourse facilitation in the UK.

E7 Letter by NZDC Director and NZDC dancer questionnaire (2016): information on the impact of Feldenkrais-informed dance practices on company dancer agency and skills development.

E8 Statements from the Director of TanzArt dance School (Darmstadt) and Obrador de Moviments (Barcelona): information on practitioner agency and the integration of Feldenkrais-dance practices into curriculum.

E9 Statement from choreographer Elizabeth Ward (Vienna, 2020) and [blog on the impact of research into critical somatic dance legacies on their choreographic processes](#).

E10 Statement from the Chair of Korean Somatic Research and Education Association (KSREA): information about Kampe's impact on the somatic dance practitioner agency in the Korean dance community and on the developing ethos of KRSEA.