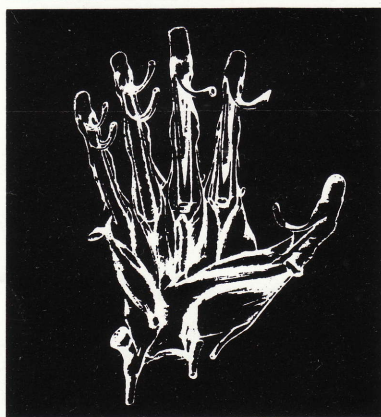


TEXT FLESH

INTERDISCIPLINARY THEATRE



KAREN BAMONTE

GREGORY WHITEHEAD



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TEXT/FLESH describes the collaboration initiated by Karen Bamonte and Gregory Whitehead as a way of addressing their shared interest in the tensions, intersections and contradictions among scripted bodies (choreographs) and physical texts (readings, books, radios). Since 1982, Bamonte and Whitehead have presented TEXT/FLESH programs in the United States and Europe. In 1985, they were invited to perform at the International Theatre Festival sponsored by the Academy of Art in West Berlin.

"My favorite part of last Friday night was spent in left field. An obscure and fascinating work by Karen Bamonte and Gregory Whitehead was the evening's centerpiece. Bamonte dances a mute, sensual underlayer to Whitehead's highly cerebral text. One of Philly's strongest and most beautiful dancers, Bamonte is the muscle and bones behind this talking head."

Philadelphia Afterdark

By constantly circulating and recirculating choreographic and literary fluids, we are attempting to invent a theatre of *migrating* meanings, hard to authorize in any final way, particularly within the standard conventions of "dance with words." Each new piece exposes new seams and opens old stitches, particularly as we become increasingly aware of the intense *competition* for meaning set loose by our different materials.

In several past works, we scrutinize limbs, organs and muscles as possible metaphors for what the body-text and the text-body may have in common. *THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES* presents the ambivalence of the muscle-tongue, "caught between the vocabularies of pleasure and the pleasures of the flesh"; *OFF WITH THEIR HEADS* projects the different categories of "docudrama" stored inside the bodies of individuals who, for one reason or another, *lost* their heads; while both *ANATOMY LESSON* and *BEYOND THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE* are concentrated strippings away of layer after layer of "model" relationships among the distinct skins of Text and Flesh. Each piece represents a new puzzle of dictions and contradictions—our hope is that the activity of working each puzzle will continue to fabricate the material for new insight, a new play.

Karen Bamonte and
Gregory Whitehead

Karen Bamonte is a founding member and associate artistic director of ZeroMoving dance company. Before completing graduate studies in dance at Temple University, Bamonte studied cinematography at the Philadelphia College of Art. Bamonte has received Choreographer's Fellowships from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts in 1984 and 1986. Her solo and ensemble works have been performed widely in the United States and Europe.

Toshi Makihara was born in Chiba, Japan. He studied percussion with Sabu Toyuzumi, one of the most influential innovators in Japanese New Music. Since arriving in the United States in 1978, Makihara has performed extensively both as a member of several New Music ensembles and as a soloist. Throughout his career, Makihara has pursued an interest in linking his percussion training to other performance media.





Gregory Whitehead lives in New York as a writer, director, critic and performance-reader. In addition to *TEXT/FLESH*, Whitehead is presently producing "cinema-in-the-head" features for public radio; his radio works have aired worldwide. A contributing editor of *EAR* magazine, Whitehead writes frequently on language, technology and the body for a variety of publications.

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"Karen Bamonte has language on her mind in Beckett-like fashion. In *THE CONFUSION OF TONGUES*, she and Gregory Whitehead discuss, as it were, the dual nature of language. The tone of the piece is tongue-in-cheek, but the subject is thought-provoking and has special import to dance."

The Philadelphia Inquirer

"Bamonte's spirited talent is very much in evidence in the main piece of this grotesque, entranced and surrealistically exuberant evening, a piece that concerns the legendary ingestion and digestion of books. Bamonte, listening intently or withdrawn in concentration, uses her versatile and expressive body to make images from Whitehead's sectarian ecstasies. No matter how grotesque her inventions, she never loses her instinctive grace. Through the use of English song and speech rhythms, together with Latin, Italian and German bowdlerizations, Whitehead finally arrives at a form of Ur-Sonata. Though this brings one irresistably to laughter, it at the same time remains macabre."

Der Tagespiegel (West Berlin)

"The mature, tongue-in-cheek result is beautifully performed, clever, playful, sometimes profound. English, German and contrived tongues are spoken. Like Dick Cavett, Whitehead speaks excellent fake-Swedish and makes other declarations such as 'basta Blasenhausen.' He says, as he holds up a 35mm slide, 'I don't speak this language, which gives me a chance to talk.' Throughout, his timing and innuendo are superb."

Dancemagazine

"*The Assassination* glides the audience's eye easily from one event to the next: Bamonte and Makihara unveil a series of sensational artifacts—the assassins' disembodied heads; Bamonte bears one head at a time downstage to Whitehead, retracing her steps with a series of spectacular leaps; Whitehead reveals the autobiographical narrative stored in each guilty skull....I'll continue to follow the course of their collaboration through smooth territory, looking forward with perverse glee to Text-Flesh's next waltz through a mine field."

High Performance

