

7-11-2013

The Real and Represented Ophelia: An Investigation of Choreographing Women's Madness in Concert Dance

Jacqueline M. Garcia

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/thea_etds

Recommended Citation

Garcia, Jacqueline M.. "The Real and Represented Ophelia: An Investigation of Choreographing Women's Madness in Concert Dance." (2013). https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/thea_etds/20

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Electronic Theses and Dissertations at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theatre & Dance ETDs by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

Jacqueline M. Garcia

Candidate

Theatre and Dance

Department

This dissertation is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication:

Approved by the Dissertation Committee:

Vladimir Conde Reche, *Chairperson*

Linda Biesele Hall

Eva Encinias-Sandoval

Donna Jewell

Jennifer Predock-Linnell

Mary Anne Santos Newhall

**THE REAL AND REPRESENTED OPHELIA:
AN INVESTIGATION OF CHOREOGRAPHING
WOMEN'S MADNESS IN CONCERT DANCE**

by

JACQUELINE M. GARCIA

B.A., Dance, University of New Mexico, 2001

M.B.A., University of Cincinnati, 2005

M.A., Arts Administration, University of Cincinnati, 2010

DISSERTATION

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Fine Arts

Dance

The University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico

May 2013

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to:

My mother, Veronica C. Garcia, Ed.D.

and

In memory of my father, J. Patrick Garcia, Ph.D.

Each in your own time, I watched you dedicate yourselves fully to the pursuit of higher education. Through this process, you instilled in me an unwavering belief in the power of knowledge and the value of public education. Thank you for impressing upon me your love for learning and inspiring me with your untiring work ethic for excellence in all that you do. I dedicate this work to you with my deepest love and gratitude.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank and acknowledge the members of my committee, Vladimir Conde Reche, Linda Biesele Hall, Eva-Encinias Sandoval, Donna Jewell, Jennifer Predock-Linnell, and Mary Anne Santos Newhall. Your sincere support, guidance, and advice have been so greatly appreciated throughout my endeavor to complete this degree program and in particular during the creation of my MFA in Dance Thesis Concert, *OPHELIA*. You have each helped me to grow as an artist-scholar and have pushed me to consider new ways of approaching research and scholarship within the field of Dance.

I wish to especially thank Mary Anne Santos Newhall, Eva-Encinias Sandoval and Jennifer Predock-Linnell for your support as my mentors and professors for over the last fifteen years professionally, personally, and during my undergraduate and graduate degrees in Dance from the University of New Mexico.

I also wish to thank and acknowledge Guest Faculty/Artist Zoë Knights who was present during several of the early rehearsals of *OPHELIA*. Thank you for sharing your insights, ideas and feedback, while the concept for my final thesis concert was still in its early stages.

I wish to deeply thank and acknowledge the dancers who have been an essential part of the process of brining *OPHELIA* to life: Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, Sonja Bologa, Luz Guillen, Sarah Hogland, and Kelsey Paschich. I am ever grateful for your dedication to the work and for the artistry that you brought to these characters. Your investigation in the studio and your performance onstage has absolutely guided my research process for this dissertation.

Thank you to Evan D. Small for the numerous ways in which you have encouraged and uplifted me each and every day to keep pushing forward towards the attainment of my goals and dreams. Once again, I would like to thank and acknowledge my mother Veronica C. Garcia, my brother Jason P. Garcia and my family for your love and support in all that I do. Finally, I wish to thank my father J. Patrick Garcia. I could not have completed this program without the faith and knowledge that you have been here with me every step of the way.

THE REAL AND REPRESENTED OPHELIA: AN INVESTIGATION OF CHOREOGRAPHING WOMEN'S MADNESS IN CONCERT DANCE

by

Jacqueline M. Garcia

B.A., Dance, University of New Mexico, 2001

M.B.A., University of Cincinnati, 2005

M.A., Arts Administration, University of Cincinnati, 2010

M.F.A, Dance, University of New Mexico, 2013

ABSTRACT

The character Ophelia, from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, is an iconographic symbol and cultural emblem of beauty, death and madness. For over four hundred years, her vividly described and picturesque death has inspired the works of countless visual artists and theatrical performers. However, her presence in the larger cultural consciousness of society is not limited only to the realms of fine art, theatre, and literature. Throughout history, her influence has also spilled over into everyday perceptions and beliefs regarding the nature of women and madness. Particularly within Victorian England, Ophelia's character came to influence the recognition and diagnosis of madness in real women at that time.

Therefore, in addressing Ophelia's literary character, I necessarily adopted the larger topics of *women* and *madness* as the subject of study for this written dissertation and also within my final MFA Choreographic Project, *OPHELIA*. The final Choreographic Project is the presentation of a full evening's work of original choreography and demonstrates the degree candidate's highest achievement of artistry and craft. Addressing these interrelated topics within my dissertation, I explore the social

and political concerns surrounding the lives of women in the age of Shakespeare, the issues of misogyny and gender as it relates to mental illness and the rise of the asylum in England, and the challenges specifically related to Ophelia regarding the representation of madness and death in concert dance. In terms of the final Choreographic Project, Ophelia became the vehicle with which to investigate the abstract choreographic problem of representing *fragmentation* of the mind, body, space and time. Relating these two parallel streams of research, this document addresses Ophelia's ever-evolving representation across artistic mediums and the ways in which the larger cultural consciousness of society has been influenced by her presence as an iconographic symbol of beauty, death, and women's madness.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I: THE RESEARCH

| | |
|---|----|
| INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| CHAPTER ONE: Women in the Age of Shakespeare: Beauty, Virtue, Love, and Marriage | 5 |
| CHAPTER TWO: Madness as a Gendered Affliction | 18 |

PART II: THE CHOREOGRAPHY

| | |
|---|----|
| CHAPTER THREE: Pathways to <i>OPHELIA</i> | 37 |
| <i>Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)</i> , 2011 | 37 |
| <i>yo(l)ke</i> , 2011 | 40 |
| <i>fissure</i> , 2012 | 44 |
| Finding <i>OPHELIA</i> | 51 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: <i>OPHELIA</i> : Choreographing Women and Madness in Concert Dance | 55 |
| Interpreting Ophelia's Madness | 56 |
| Representing Madness in Movement | 64 |
| Death as a Woman | 67 |
| Choreographing Madness and an Inevitable Death | 70 |
| CONCLUSION | 85 |
| AFTERWORD | 89 |

APPENDICES

| | |
|--|----|
| Appendix 1: <i>OPHELIA</i> CONCERT DVD – MARCH 9, 2013 PERFORMANCE, Submitted as a Supplementary File to LoboVault Repository | 91 |
| Appendix 2: <i>OPHELIA</i> CONCERT PROGRAM – FRONT COVER | 92 |
| Appendix 3: <i>OPHELIA</i> CONCERT PROGRAM – SHOW ORDER | 93 |
| Appendix 4: <i>OPHELIA</i> PERFORMANCE CREDITS | 94 |
| Appendix 5: <i>OPHELIA</i> “VOICES” TEXT from <i>Hamlet</i> Act 3, Scene 1 | 95 |

REFERENCES

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| References Cited | 96 |
| References Consulted | 100 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: <i>Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)</i> | 39 |
| Figure 2: <i>yo(l)ke</i> | 40 |
| Figure 3: <i>yo(l)ke</i> | 41 |
| Figure 4: <i>yo(l)ke</i> | 42 |
| Figure 5: <i>yo(l)ke</i> | 44 |
| Figure 6: <i>fissure</i> | 45 |
| Figure 7: <i>fissure</i> | 50 |
| Figure 8: <i>fissure</i> | 51 |
| Figure 9: <i>Ophelia</i> by John Everett Millais | 52 |
| Figure 10: “Voices” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 65 |
| Figure 11: Prelude to “Innocence” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 71 |
| Figure 12: “Innocence” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 72 |
| Figure 13: “Voices” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 73 |
| Figure 14: Interlude before “Seeping In” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 71 |
| Figure 15: “Father Ghost” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 75 |
| Figure 16: “Madness” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 77 |
| Figure 17: “Madness” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 78 |
| Figure 18: “Transformation” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 81 |
| Figure 19: “Transformation” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 82 |
| Figure 20: “Transformation” from <i>OPHELIA</i> | 83 |

PART I

THE RESEARCH

There is no “true” Ophelia for whom feminist criticism must unambiguously speak, but perhaps only a Cubist Ophelia of multiple perspectives, more than a sum of all her parts.

- Elaine Showalter¹

¹ Showalter, Elaine. “Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism.” Eds. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman. *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*. New York: Methuen, 1985. 77-94. Print. (92)

INTRODUCTION

The topic of research for my final MFA Choreographic Project, *OPHELIA*, and accompanying Dissertation centers on the central choreographic and artistic problem of the representation of *fragmentation*.² As an artistic concern, this problem encompasses the choreographic issues of creating a formal construct in which to represent the fragmentation of mind, body, space, and time. By its very nature, however, this topic inherently seeks to break apart and scatter itself from its once intact vessel. While this project began squarely situated within the field of Dance and Choreography, I soon found myself picking up the numerous and disassembled shards of *fragmentation* within equally vast fields of study, such as Literature, Psychology, Science, History, and Women's Studies.

Given this fractured and kaleidoscopic view, it was not only practical but also necessary to re-assemble these parts into a cohesive whole. Piece by piece, a new mosaic was created within the framework of *women and madness* as a unifying topic of study. These married themes emerged as a result of my previous choreographic investigations and creations titled *Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)* (2010), *yo(l)ke* (2011), and *fissure* (2012), which would later fold into the body of *OPHELIA* conceptually and also choreographically. Further still, the Ophelia character from William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* provided much needed specificity and directionality to

² See Appendices 1, 2, 3, and 4 for information regarding how to view the full concert DVD in digital format, the concert program, and cast and crew credits.

my research, while offering landmarks for a comprehensive evening-length concert with a unified choreographic intent.³

As such, my research commenced with an investigation of the literary analysis of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and also its various representations in film. This was followed by an extensive search for the various representations of Ophelia in cinematic and theatrical performances, as well as her visual images presented in fine art and photography. In taking up the character of Ophelia, it was necessary to also consider the implications of culturally and socially constructed notions of womanhood, gender, and madness. Bearing in mind Ophelia's tragic demise in Shakespeare's play, it was also important to consider how to represent her death given that it is only *described* in the original text and not a part of the *action* of the play, thus rendering it a mediated representation of a representation in live performance. Further, in historically situating Shakespeare in time and place, I aimed to limit the scope of my research within Europe and primarily within Elizabethan, Jacobean, and Victorian England. Finally, while there are some documents that briefly describe the institutionalization of women during the general period in which *Hamlet* was written, the Victorian era and the overlapping age of Romanticism provide the context for the majority of the research regarding the rise of the asylum and also several autobiographical accounts of women's experience with commitment. This time period also pinpoints Ophelia's emergence as an emblem of women's madness and the ways in which this affected the representation of mental illness among women in Victorian England.

³ Shakespeare, William. "The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. The Second Quarto (1604-5). *Hamlet*. Eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006. Print.

Initially, the intention for researching this topic was in service to the creation of *OPHELIA* and to aid in creating informed choreographic responses to my artistic investigations of *fragmentation* and *women and madness*. However, the information yielded from the research on these topics was so engaging that the written dissertation began to take on a life of its own, as I tunneled ever deeper into the myriad sources. I unearthed a wealth of information regarding the social and political concerns surrounding the lives of women in the age of Shakespeare, the issues of misogyny and gender as it relates to mental illness, the rise of the asylum in England, and the challenges specifically related to Ophelia regarding the representation of madness and death in concert dance. Unfortunately, many of the precious gems I found hidden within the pages of my source materials could not be included in this dissertation, simply due to the limitations of scope for this particular study. However, I would highly encourage those individuals interested in the encompassing subjects of women and madness to refer to the provided list of References at the end of this document for additional reading. Thus, acknowledging the specific thrust of this dissertation, the resulting written document does not aim to provide a sweeping and all-inclusive survey of the literature on these topics. Rather, the research herein provides a concentrated analysis of the specific sources that strengthened my understanding of the complexity of Ophelia's character for the purposes of creating, *OPHELIA*, and a choreographic commentary on the issues of women and madness within the context of concert dance.

CHAPTER ONE

Women in the Age of Shakespeare: Beauty, Virtue, Love, and Marriage

It seems that across the span of history, Woman has been wedged between her body, her beauty, and her virtue, all of which have been mediated and determined by the constraints of male patriarchal society. On the one hand she is revered through the beauty of her physical form in countless works of fine art and praised for her moral virtues of chastity and virginal purity. While she is objectified, she is also the subject and inspiration of men's musings in music, art, and literature. "Over the centuries, visual artists have embodied their ideas about love, life, society, and spirituality in the form of a beautiful woman."⁴ On the other hand, it is her very body that is the site of her expression of sexuality and thus, inherent impurity and disgrace. From the earliest written texts and ancient mythologies, women are made responsible for the source of the world's troubles and the downfall of Man. She is conflated with death and evil. Men tolerate this repulsive creature only for the necessities of reproduction, which they are incapable of on their own.⁵ "Opening the box, Pandora unleashed upon the world death, plagues, old age, sickness, and all the miseries of human life. Similarly, the Old Testament located the cause of death and the world's sorrows in the first woman, Eve."⁶ Once again, it is not only Eve's moral sin that is in question, but also her body and all that it represents:

There is always something imperfect about the female body, which probably originates to a large extent in the biblical portrayal of Eve, the first woman, who

⁴ Mancoff, Debra N. and Lindsay J. Bosch. *Icons of Beauty: Art, Culture, and the Image of Women*. Volume 2. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2010. Print. (ix)

⁵ Kemp, Theresa D. *Women in the Age of Shakespeare*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2010. Print. (1)

⁶ Kemp, 1

represents the sensual, carnal and temptress-like nature of her sex, leading men to sin and unholy sexual relations.⁷

Thus, from the earliest references in history women were seen as objects in desperate need of control. Women were then socialized with the notion that their outward appearance of beauty was expressly reflective of their internal merits of spirituality, morality, and inherent goodness. Naturally what follows is the portrait of the ideal woman as, above all, obedient, passive, modest, mild-tempered, and moderate.

These characteristics further lead to an enduring duality regarding the representation of women. This is found not only in the dualism of the soul and the body, but also in the categorization of women as either the Virgin or the Whore.⁸ This reductive view has, indeed, persisted to the present day. In Kathleen Sweeney's 2008 book titled, Maiden USA: Girl Icons Come of Age, she describes the evolution of this paradigm. Chapter Five, "Mean Girls in Ophelia Land," opens with newly defined roles for the archetypes of the Virgin and the Whore for the twentieth century:

That the 1990's begins with the Victim Girl and ends with the Mean Girl in pop psychology demonstrates the contradictory nature of Girl Power in mainstream culture. In this way, the Victim Girl/Mean Girl polarity becomes a new kind of Virgin/Whore paradigm which has subdivided female culture for eons.⁹

For European medieval women, the ideal of the virgin was intrinsically tied to the image of the Madonna and the Blessed Virgin Mary who are in direct contrast to the whorish Eve. Placing the self along this sliding continuum necessarily meant that the prized goal was forever and unattainably out of reach. This representation of female chastity and

⁷ Lowe, Ben. "Body Images and the Politics of Beauty: Formation of the Feminine Ideal in Medieval and Early Modern Europe." *Ideals of Feminine Beauty: Philosophical, Social, and Cultural Dimensions*. Ed. Karen A. Callaghan. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994. 21-36. Print. (23)

⁸ Lowe, 23

⁹ Sweeney, Kathleen. *Maiden USA: Girl Icons Come of Age*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008. Print. (93)

purity dictated not only standards of outward and physical appearances, but also every aspect of social decorum and behavior. “Those women who had to work least at being outwardly beautiful, therefore, were assumed to be the most moral and godly.”¹⁰

Misogyny remained ubiquitous throughout Medieval England and into the time of Shakespeare. For both men and women alike, “Elizabethan and Jacobean England was an extremely hierarchical society,” often rife with both domestic violence against wives and corporeal punishment of children.¹¹ Women were educated primarily to carry out the many needs of the household, although women of higher classes did have access to some formal education. If not forced into prostitution out of sheer poverty, most women had at least some informal and in some cases apprenticed knowledge of housewifery, lace-making, spinning, knitting, baking, brewing, dairying, preparing and preserving food, planting and harvesting gardens, tending livestock, a basic knowledge of herbs or other medicinal “recipes” for first aid and healthcare, and tending to the needs of “those being born and those dying”.¹² In addition to divisions of class, which affected both men and women, the gendered roles for women across all classes were effectively situated in relationship to men throughout their lives. Kemp elaborates:

Throughout this period, as they had in the Middle Ages, women continued to be defined primarily in terms of their social standing and in terms of their gendered relationships to men as maids (daughters to be married) wives and widows. Thus, it is crucial to consider a woman’s social class and her marital status in imagining what women and their lives were like in Elizabethan and Jacobean England.¹³

William Shakespeare was baptized in 1564 and died in 1616, living precisely between both the Elizabethan (1558-1603) and Jacobean (1603-1625) Periods in England. Except

¹⁰ Lowe, 27

¹¹ Kemp, 29

¹² Kemp, 33-35

¹³ Kemp, 30

for the very elite, men and women were generally not afforded the luxury of leisure and work was necessary in order to sustain life. However, one important aspect that Kemp makes abundantly clear is that a life of servitude was not only for the poor and middle classes. “Among the most common feature of people’s lives in the Renaissance was service, regardless of sex or rank, from the lowliest of peasants to those in the highest ranks of the aristocracy.”¹⁴ While men were offered varying degrees of freedom in their work and personal interests, a woman’s life was spent invariably in service to the wills and needs of her father, her husband, and her children before all else.

Regarding Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, there are three early versions of the work and scholars dispute the merits of an authoritative, singular text. However it has been established that the Second Quarto was completed between 1604-1605 at the beginning of the Jacobean era. For the two female characters, Queen Gertrude and Ophelia, the issues of marriage and propriety drive each of their roles. The reader clearly sees the political and cultural tensions of Shakespeare’s day regarding marriage and sexual conduct being played out through his character’s actions.

While under the law of the time “a married woman had no legal existence apart from her husband,” it was also under the protection of marriage that women could find some measure of financial security, particularly if they outlived their husband as a widow.¹⁵ It was not only social convention, but also the legal structure and regulations that prevented women from building personal wealth and independence. Specific laws on record in the fifteenth century, for example, expressly prevented an emancipated life.

“[I]n 1492, Coventry issued a law forbidding single women under the age of forty to set

¹⁴ Kemp, 35

¹⁵ Kemp, 42

up their own households, creating an additional pressure toward marriage and preventing women from earning their own livings.”¹⁶ As they are today, property laws in the cases of land ownership and the inheritances of women were complicated, but generally speaking upon marriage a woman’s legal rights, identity, and personal property were transferred from her father to her husband. “It was assumed that marriage would be the path taken by all women, regardless of other occupations needed to earn a living. For women of the gentry and above, marriage was typically seen as the only path to be taken.”¹⁷ Marital status defined not only the woman’s social position in the world, but also the allowable parameters within which women could explore their sexuality. For young, unmarried daughters, sexual relations outside of marriage were clearly forbidden. The sexual desires of widowed and also menopausal women were often looked upon with distaste and pity.¹⁸

Perhaps adding to the anxieties of both men and women was the beginning of the notions of romantic love in marriage and the idea that each party may choose and give freely of their love to the other. Looking back a century earlier to the edicts laid forth by King Henry VIII of the Tudor dynasty may give some perspective. During his reign, he began the transformation of the country from Catholicism to Protestantism and is generally given credit for launching the English Reformation, spurred in part by his desire for an annulment from his wife Catherine. While a complete break from the Pope

¹⁶ Kemp, 23

¹⁷ Kemp, 33

¹⁸ This comment is based upon the following quotation regarding English women in the nineteenth century, “Menopausal women were more harshly discussed, more openly ridiculed, and more punitively treated than any other female group, particularly if they were unmarried. In this age group, expressions of sexual desire were considered ludicrous or tragic, and husbands of menopausal women were advised to withhold the desired ‘sexual stimulus.’” (Showalter, Elaine. *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985. Print. (75). I believe it is a safe assumption that women in the Jacobean era were not granted any additional latitude in regards to their sexuality nor in society’s attitude towards the sexual desires of older women living outside of the “protections” of marriage.

and Catholicism were not fully adopted culturally during his reign, this shift had definite and also in some cases immediate repercussions on the lives of his subjects:

With the dissolution of the monasteries under Henry VIII, the convent as a life option for women was eliminated, and the pressure towards marriage increased for women on a variety of fronts, both legislative and cultural. [...] Further complicating matters was an increased attention to the idea of companionate marriage as involving reciprocal and freely granted love, a concept that developed through medieval Catholic humanism and was further taken up by Protestant reformers (especially in relation to notions of free will).¹⁹

As illustrated by Kemp above, Henry VIII's edicts served to limit women's options on the one hand in the example of his disbanding the institutional structures of monasteries and convents. While on the other hand, his movement from Catholicism to Protestantism created cultural shifts in attitude which helped to develop a consciousness among those responsible for the arrangements of a marriage that the opinions of the betrothed need be considered.

Returning to *Hamlet*, the tensions experienced by women regarding personal choice in love, obedience to male authority, and the ever-important maintenance of chastity are made explicit through the role of Ophelia. These issues are of primary concern to Ophelia's character who finds herself being tossed between the tender affections and abusive chastising of Prince Hamlet and the calculating schemes of her father, Polonius. In attempting to decipher Ophelia's relationship with Hamlet, one might first look to her father, Polonius, who is the King's chief counselor. While her father's position often places Ophelia within the environs of the court, she is not of equal social status nor does she have the political leverage to warrant an honest proposal of marriage from Hamlet, despite his recent professions of love towards her "in honourable fashion"

¹⁹ Kemp, 36, 40

and “with almost all the holy vows of heaven.”²⁰ Nevertheless, it is clear that Ophelia is taken with Hamlet and quite earnestly believes his advances.

Act I, Scene 3 provides insight to not only Hamlet’s limitations in his choice for marriage, but also Ophelia’s struggle to remain obedient to the wishes of her family and the freedom to explore personal choices in love. Her brother, Laertes, implores that she remain ever watchful of her most highly prized virtues, to restrain her desires, and to indeed fear Hamlet:

Perhaps he loves you now,
 And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch
 The virtue of his will; but you must fear,
His greatness weighed, his will is not his own.
He may not, as unvalued persons do,
Carve for himself, for on his choice depends
The safety and health of this whole state,
 And therefore must his choice be circumscribed
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body
 Whereof his is the head. Then if he says he loves you
 It fits your wisdom so far to believe it
 As he in his particular act and place
 May give his saying deed, which is no further
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain
If with too credent ear you list his songs
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
To his unmastered importunity.
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,
 And keep you in the rear of your affection
 Out of the shot and danger of desire.²¹ [*emphasis mine*]

In this scene, Laertes is presented as a loving brother who seeks to educate his rather inexperienced and younger sister about the realities of sexual and marital relations with Hamlet. Laertes assumes that Ophelia is still a virgin. While this assertion is supported in Shakespeare’s text, some contemporary renditions of *Hamlet* have portrayed Ophelia as

²⁰ Ophelia’s lines in dialog with her father Polonius regarding her recent affairs with Hamlet. See Shakespeare, 1.3:110,113.

²¹ Shakespeare, 1.3:14-34

already having sexual relations with Hamlet.²² If this were to be the case, it is not only her honor but also that of her family that are at stake. Further assuming Hamlet's sincerity, as there is also support in the text for this as well, as the successor to the throne it is not his will alone to choose whom he may marry. Laertes' dialog comes into direct contrast with Ophelia's subsequent conversation with her father in the same scene. Polonius immediately jumps to conclusions about how she has been spending her time. Mocking her naivety and "green"-ness in Hamlet's "tenders of affection" he speaks to her using a running metaphor regarding legal tender and monetary exchange:

Polonius: Do you believe his 'tenders,' as you call them?

Ophelia: I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Polonius: Marry, I will teach you; think yourself a baby
That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay
Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly
Or – not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,
Wrangling it thus – you'll tender me a fool.

[...]

From this time

Be something scanter of your maiden presence;
Set your entreatments at a higher rate
Than a command to parle.

[...]

I would not in plain terms from this time forth
Have you so slander any moment leisure
As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
Look to't, I charge you. Come your ways.

Ophelia: I shall obey, my lord.²³

Reminded of Laertes good counsel and further charged by her father, Ophelia is trapped between her loyalties to Hamlet and the secret matters of their hearts and those to her family. As an unmarried daughter, Ophelia's allegiance to her father must take

²² See *Hamlet*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Sony Pictures Entertainment, 1996. DVD. Branagh portrays Hamlet and Ophelia engaged in sexual intercourse in several scenes of his rendition of *Hamlet* from 1996.

²³ Shakespeare, 1.3:98, 100, 102-135

precedence. However, to go against either would be construed as a betrayal. As such, she is placed in an impossible position. Polonius later demonstrates some tenderness to his daughter, apologizing thus, “I am sorry that with better heed and judgement/ I had not quoted him. I feared he did but trifle/ And meant to wrack thee – but beshrew my jealousy [...]”²⁴ In Act 3, Scene 1, relations between Hamlet and Ophelia unravel when he believes that she is scheming against him along with Polonius and the King. Flying into a rage, Hamlet berates her, “Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for/ wise men know well enough what monsters you make/ of them. To a nunnery go, and quickly too. Farewell.”²⁵ To be clear, the wise man referenced here is Polonius and the nunnery is none other than a brothel. Thus, with these insults Hamlet fully withdraws his professions of love and shames Ophelia with insinuations that she is a whore.

Of course, this shower of humiliation was brought upon her by remaining ever dutiful and obedient to her father’s wishes. As such, Polonius’s offenses are the worse for believing Hamlet’s love to be true and then continuing to use Ophelia as a pawn against him; and for his own personal advancement no less. Referring to Act 2, Scene 2 in which Polonius brings “evidence” to the King and Queen that Hamlet is indeed love-mad for Ophelia, Coppélia Kahn writes, “As for Ophelia, she is not present during this encounter, which makes all the more evident Polonius’s self-promoting exploitations of her relations with Hamlet [...]. What Shakespeare dramatizes here is not Ophelia’s docility but rather her father’s ruthless ambition.”²⁶ Thus, with this more contemporary

²⁴ Shakespeare, 2.1:108-110

²⁵ Shakespeare, 3.1:134-139

²⁶ Kahn, Coppélia. “Afterword.” *The Afterlife of Ophelia*. Eds. Kaara L. Peterson and Deanne Williams. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2012. Print. (234)

reading of Polonius's actions, one might begin to conjecture that Ophelia's madness is not the cause of a lost love, but rather a lost will.

Author George W. Gerwig provides a rather fascinating illumination about Ophelia's strain between love and obedience and her struggle to remain loyal to both Hamlet and her father. As an aside, Gerwig published Shakespeare's Ideals of Womanhood in East Aurora, New York in November 1929, one month after the October stock market crash that sent the world tumbling inevitably towards the Great Depression. He takes the point of view that Ophelia's father, Polonius, is not without blame regarding the "poisoning" of not only Ophelia and Hamlet's love, but also her mind.²⁷ Here, Gerwig states his belief in the ultimate duty to love:

Accustomed to unquestioning obedience to her father Ophelia wavers when Hamlet appeals to her in the soul crisis that has come upon him. He misapprehends her hesitation – and their tragedies are upon them. [...] And just at the moment when her former simple loyal faith would have responded nobly to his need and furnished the real inspiration of his life, *her mind has been poisoned* by her foolish meddling father. [...] Her fate is that of one who allowed a lesser law, that of filial obedience, to step between her and the law of love.²⁸ [*emphasis mine*]

Perhaps these are the lingering Romantic ideals of a writer fascinated by Shakespearean women. However, I highly doubt that women in Shakespeare's time could have ignored the law of filial obedience, even in the name of love. Regarding Act I, Scene 3 as described above, Gerwig states that Polonius interrogated her "in such a way as almost to challenge and force her to *revolt* against his authority" [*emphasis mine*].²⁹ Perhaps the more outspoken and exuberant women of the 1920's had more success with this type of "revolt" against their fathers and husbands. Yet, women who made too much of a protest

²⁷ Gerwig, George W. *Shakespeare's Ideals of Womanhood*. East Aurora: The Roycroft Shops, 1929. Print. (123)

²⁸ Gerwig, 120, 123, and 127

²⁹ Gerwig, 121

against male authority often found themselves accused of hysterics, mania, and madness. A specific case in point includes the intelligent and outspoken women of London who sought to “revolt” or protest through the Suffragist movement against the wills of men in order to earn the right to vote. “In 1912 the nation was confronted with the spectacle of women deliberately starving themselves in Holloway Gaol. The government responded by treating these women as hysterical [...].”³⁰ This resulted in the women being force fed with tubes shoved down into their noses, “a technique which had been employed with lunatics in the old madhouses.”³¹ Returning to Gerwig, he presents a fascinating case of his own “ideals of womanhood” through the lens of the male author in the 1920s. While, I find his analysis of “Shakespeare’s Ideals of Womanhood” in the case of Ophelia out of touch with the realities of her time, I find his Romantic notions of love before all else noble at the very least.

Shakespeare’s Queen Gertrude offers a different view of women’s issues in love and marriage, that of mature love and of the widow. Her hasty remarriage to the brother of her recently deceased husband causes great distress and also disgust in her son Prince Hamlet. Once again, Theresa D. Kemp quite astutely notes:

Hamlet [...] is seemingly overwhelmed by female sexuality – both his mother’s and that of Ophelia. His mother’s remarriage repulses him, and his negative reaction fails to take into account the early modern woman’s need for male protection. [...] Rather than considering this social construct, Hamlet focuses on popularly imagined, misogynist reasons for a widow to remarry: seeing his mother as a creature of “appetite,” he claims she has hurried “with such dexterity to incestuous sheets!” (1.2.157).³²

³⁰ Showalter, Elaine. *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985. Print. (162)

³¹ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 162

³² Kemp, 92-93

Clouded by preoccupations for revenge, he is unable to see beyond his own grief for the loss of his father and to the complexities of his mother's position as not only Queen but also widow. Men in a similar position would not be judged so harshly for such political maneuvers. One might look again to King Henry VIII who married six times during his reign, during which time he had Anne Boleyn beheaded, accusing her of witchcraft, incest, and adultery. It should be noted that his new mistress, Jane Seymour, was already living in the royal quarters before Boleyn's execution took place. It is not within the realm of this particular study to discuss the subtleties, motivations, and complexities of Gertrude's character, however this brief introduction serves to not only unveil many of the tensions in the plot but also to illuminate the social pressures regarding marriage for all women in this Age.

Thus, in terms of representing Ophelia, it is paramount to understand that her iconic beauty and symbolic frailty and innocence are not without cultural and historical context. Beauty is not just a matter of exterior appearances, but rather a conflation of male ideals of suitable female behaviors which include among others modesty, chastity, and obedience. Further, the very premise of Ophelia's love interest in Hamlet is not without risk to her propriety and familial honor. It seems that it is not simply a matter of her personal will and interest to explore the longings of her heart, but also a matter to be questioned and investigated by her brother, her father, and also King Claudius and Queen Gertrude as they attempt to discover if Hamlet's "madness" stems from his love-sickness for Ophelia, as Polonius leads them to believe. Assuming Hamlet's sincerity, he would also eventually risk future political turmoil in deciding to marry below his rank. As a man of thirty years age, he would certainly have both the power and experience to take up a

love affair with a younger woman, such as Ophelia, without much repercussion.

However, for Ophelia, her heart could never be her own. In displaying the true ideals of womanhood of her time, her duty and loyalty remained with her father and to obediently follow his commands; even if this meant stifling her will and dampening the passions of her first forays into adult love.

CHAPTER TWO

Madness as a Gendered Affliction

The following chapter outlines the issues regarding the representation of Ophelia's madness in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and its relationship to the notion of madness as a "gendered affliction".³³ This discussion weaves between academic discourse on mental illness, autobiographical narratives of life in the asylum, and also the cultural influences, which began to shift the interpretation and representation of madness within cultural and political contexts.

When I began this study, I expected to find a general history on the rather clinical aspects of mental illness and perhaps only a few specific autobiographical references to women's personal experiences of mental illness. However, I was quite shocked to find that most contemporary scholars were not writing about the history of women *and* madness, but rather illuminating the darkened history of women *as* madness. Case after case pointed to the innumerable ways in which medical professionals sought to fuse the location of madness within the woman's body so that it was inseparable from her basic nature and human form. Time and again, I found that diagnostic indicators of madness were riddled with feminine overtones and that the specific malady often applied only to women. Repeatedly, the statistics pointed to women being tortured with treatments such as insulin and electroshock therapies more often than men.

³³ I adopt this terminology directly from Allan Ingram's *Cultural Constructions of Madness in Eighteenth Century Writing*. Within Chapter 6 titled "A Gendered Affliction: Women, Writing, Madness" Ingram defines the term: "If women were viewed as passive and sexualized, mad women were viewed thus to a much greater degree, for, in and of itself, madness was perceived as having the same features. As such, we may regard eighteenth-century madness as a gendered affliction: what characterized women also characterized madmen." (136)

While society grew ever accepting of women *as* mad, Ophelia emerged as the symbolic emblem of women's madness in the late nineteenth century in Victorian England. As the following chapter outlines, it is not a simple case of following the singular thread of art imitating life or vice versa. In the case of women's madness and also the conflated representation of Ophelia, not only in literature and performance, but also in manuals of psychology, this entangled web zigzags between the real and the represented with surprising fluidity.

Literary critics speak of the Prince Hamlet's deep existential crisis. However, his "madness" is truly only posturing. While he is clearly perturbed and deeply distraught, he strategically employs erratic behavior and quizzical speech as a ploy to exact revenge on his stepfather and uncle, the King Claudius, for the murder of his father Hamlet of the same name. A popular diagnosis of the time, he was assumed to be love-mad for Ophelia. However, Claudius soon suspects that Hamlet is plotting against him.

It is often cited that "Hamlet has 1500 lines in Shakespeare's play, while Ophelia has only 169. In less than 200 lines, Ophelia must go from love to loss and from sanity to madness."³⁴ Given this disparity in textual information, Ophelia is clearly much harder to diagnose due to her resounding silence. Shakespeare chooses to portray her madness through the symbolic language of flowers and through incongruent song verses. What results is a loosely decipherable yet highly fluid and malleable character. Her ease in adaptability has captured the imaginations of artists, actors, and writers for over 400 years. In fact, she became so iconic that she not only represented the feminine embodiment of madness in literature and in the theatre, but also the very definition of

³⁴ Mancoff, Debra N. and Lindsay J. Bosch, 475

female madness itself. Medical professionals in the nineteenth century sought out Ophelia-type behaviors in their female mental patients as verification of their illness. Laertes defines his sweet sister as “a document in madness”³⁵ and, indeed, it is through the shadings of Ophelia’s madness that the world painted the “female malady.”³⁶

Early historical depictions of madness were often portrayed as the raving *male* lunatic. He was seen as an aggressive, brutish, and un-thinking or feeling animal that should be managed with shackles and chains. Elaine Showalter points to the “two manacled male nudes sculptured by Caius Gabriel Cibber for the gates of Bethlem Hospital” as the most famous representations of madness in the middle of the eighteenth century.³⁷ However, by the end of the 1700s and over the course of the next century, a major shift occurred in the way in which society began to regard the mentally afflicted and subsequently how they should be treated with medical intervention:

They were now seen instead as sick human beings, objects of pity whose sanity might be restored by kindly care. This ideological shift has been called the first psychiatric revolution. In its wake, English social reformers [...] began to create alternative institutions – asylums – in which paternal surveillance and religious ideals replaced physical coercion, fear, and force.³⁸

With this reform, the cultural icon or symbol for the confined and the insane also shifted from male to female. From this point forward and in particular throughout the Victorian era, mental illness began its slow evolution into what many contemporary, and also feminist, scholars define as a *female-gendered* affliction. Seeking a standard definition or understanding of the term, Carolyn Korsmeyer offers the following, “[A] gendered concept is one where there is a hidden skew in connotation or import, such that the idea

³⁵ Shakespeare, 4.5:172

³⁶ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 4

³⁷ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 8

³⁸ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 8

in question pertains most centrally to males, or in certain cases to females.”³⁹ In this case, madness was no longer seen through a male-gendered orientation or even a gender-neutral orientation. Rather, madness came to be seen as inherently female in orientation so much so that women and madness became nearly synonymous. “Thus madness, even when experienced by men, is metaphorically and symbolically represented as feminine: a female malady.”⁴⁰ The female body and her feminine characteristics that were once historically determined as “ideal” became conflated with disturbed behavior.

Demonstrations of “excessive” femininity, such as over sensitivity, frailty or weakness were painted with the brush of mental malady. Conversely, a woman who rejected her socially ascribed role was also seen as deviant. Outspoken, aggressive, or active “male” behaviors were also seen as forms of mental illness, which must be corrected. “Thus, women in the nineteenth century who attempted to create a life of their own, striving for independence, could be thwarted and dismissed through being diagnosed as mad.”⁴¹ Feminist scholars began to argue the case that the symptoms of madness acted out by women were actually forms of anger, rage, and protest against the confinement of the institutions of family and marriage. “Labeling us mad silences our voices. We can be ignored. The rantings of a mad woman are irrelevant. Her anger is impotent.”⁴²

In researching this subject, I came to discover that two authors truly provided the eminent sources on Women and Madness. The first and most often quoted is Elaine Showalter and her book, The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture,

³⁹ Korsmeyer, Carolyn: *GENDER AND AESTHETICS: An introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print. (3)

⁴⁰ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 4

⁴¹ Ussher, Jane M. *Women's Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness?*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991. Print. (89)

⁴² Ussher, 7

1830-1980. In nearly every source that I have read regarding these topics, Showalter was likely to be sourced and credited somewhere in the text. The Female Malady is authoritative and extensive, providing a nearly complete history of the changing field of psychiatry in England from Victorianism to the Modern Age. Throughout, she informs the reader of the ways in which specific behaviors were often labeled “as mad” for no other reason than existing within a female body. She points to the mid-nineteenth century as “the period when the predominance of women among the institutionalized insane first becomes a statistically verifiable phenomenon”.⁴³ The second source is that of Jane M. Ussher’s Women’s Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness?. Her text masterfully outlines a deconstruction of women’s madness as seen as the result of misogynistic oppression and the confinements of the male patriarchal society. Within this point of view, however, she also recognizes that “To analyze women’s experience, of madness or of any other oppression, *solely* from the perspective of gender is naïve” and also that women’s madness is not just rhetoric but “that this phenomenon we call madness is certainly a *reality* for many women” [*emphasis mine*].⁴⁴

Where, then, might one point to the source of these misogynistic practices that bind women and femininity to madness? Phyllis Chesler, Ph.D. explains, “As early as the sixteenth century, women were “shut up” in madhouses (as well as in royal towers) by their husbands.”⁴⁵ She further elaborates that during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries private madhouses were run as a profit-making endeavor. As such, they only accepted the patients/inmates of families who could afford to pay the relatively high

⁴³ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 52

⁴⁴ Ussher, 223, 247

⁴⁵ Chesler, Ph.D., Phyllis. *Women and Madness*. 25th Anniversary Ed. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1997. Print. (73)

prices for their services. “Wealthy husbands apparently viewed confinement in these unregulated madhouses as a comparatively inexpensive way of ridding themselves of bothersome wives.”⁴⁶ Perhaps some of these women were actually afflicted with insanity and/or some other illness such as senility, mental retardation, or physical handicap that prevented the patient from caring for herself. However, Chesler indicates from the testaments of English author Daniel DeFoe that men were often incarcerating their wives to these private institutions out of convenience rather than necessity:

Daniel DeFoe began to call public attention to this as early as 1687. He exclaimed against the “vile practice now so much in vogue among the better sort, as they are called, but the worst sort, in fact, namely the sending their wives to mad-houses at every whim or dislike, that they may be more secure and undisturb’d in their debaucheries...”⁴⁷

During the Victorian era, the Parliament-mandated and government-supervised public asylum came into existence. Showalter notes, “Men still made up the majority of middle- and upper-class patients in private asylums, but by the 1890s, the predominance of women had spread to include all classes of patients and all types of institutions.”⁴⁸ Along with the regulation of the asylum, men came to be the ones in charge of managing the institution. Men also held the power to issue and receive the selective credentials needed to treat the patients, as women were often barred or denied entry to education in the medical fields beyond the skills needed for nursing. Thus a dichotomy of power quickly emerged not only between the patient and the medical practitioner, but also within the institutional hierarchical structure of the male and female work force.

⁴⁶ Chesler, 187

⁴⁷ Chesler, 187-188

⁴⁸ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 52

The female body and her sexuality were blamed as the very source of woman's weaknesses and instabilities. Further still, the female reproductive system was the main site of male preoccupation regarding the source of female madness. Showalter notes:

[V]ictorian psychiatry produced theories of female insanity [which] were specifically and confidently linked to the biological crises of the female life-cycle – puberty, pregnancy, childbirth, menopause – during which the mind would be weakened and the symptoms of insanity might emerge. [...] [W]omen were more vulnerable to insanity than men because the instability of their reproductive systems interfered with their sexual, emotional, and rational control.⁴⁹

For centuries, men have created social taboos around women's menstrual cycles. A menstruating woman was believed to be dirty, contaminated, and toxic to the touch. She was forbidden from spiritual practice and ceremony for fear that she would desecrate and defile the consecrated space, holy books, and blessed sacraments of worship. Quoting from a text published in 1938, Ussher expounds, "The menstruating woman has been forbidden to cross a man's path, touch his food, touch children or sleep in the same house as the family. She may wither grass underfoot, cause crops to fail, butter to curdle, and milk to sour."⁵⁰ Throughout history, menses was seen as a cursed condition, which should be controlled through the processes of limitation and exclusion. Elaine Showalter quotes the assertions of Victorian psychologist, Dr. Edward Tilt regarding the notion that menstruation should be delayed as long as possible. "[H]e advised mothers to prevent menarche by ensuring that their teen-age daughters remained in the nursery, took cold shower baths, avoided feather beds and novels, eliminated meat from their diets, and wore drawers."⁵¹ The onset of puberty and menarche for young Victorian girls was often a period of anxiety and disquiet. In some cases, the young girl's mother denied her an

⁴⁹ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 55

⁵⁰ Ussher, 23. Ussher cites this source as Frazer, J. G. 1938: *The golden bough: A study in magic and religion*, Macmillan, London.

⁵¹ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 75

education about her menstrual cycle out of her own embarrassment and prudishness. As such, the girl was left traumatized when she believed herself to be wounded and hemorrhaging.⁵² Showalter further quotes Dr. Edward Tilt by stating, “25 percent of his female patients had been left totally ignorant of the menstrual cycle.”⁵³ Is it any wonder, then, why some of these young women might react with unusual fits, crying, or hysterical behavior at the onset of puberty? Is this the cause of madness?

The late nineteenth century is responsible for what Ussher calls the medicalization of sex which she describes in depth in Chapter 2 of her book. Particularly, women were increasingly diagnosed with nervous disorders, which were intrinsically linked to the female body. Connecting the ailment to the previously discussed topics Ussher elaborates, “Women’s bodies, their reproductive systems, were deemed to be seething with sexuality, leading in many instances to the infamous daughter’s disease: hysteria.”⁵⁴ In addition to hysteria, Showalter identifies two additional “nervous disorders” that were labeled during this time period: anorexia nervosa and neurasthenia. Authors Debra N. Mancoff and Lindsay J. Bosch further link these Victorian era female maladies to Shakespeare’s Ophelia:

Ophelia’s suicidal madness was often attributed to hysteria, and in the nineteenth century she came to represent the disease. [...] A physician in 1859 claimed that a quarter of all women suffered from hysteria, which is not surprising considering one contemporary physician catalogued seventy-five pages of possible symptoms. [...] With so many possible symptoms, hysteria was no more than a catchall diagnosis, assigned when no other identifiable ailment could be discerned. Today, it is no longer recognized as an illness.⁵⁵

⁵² Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 56

⁵³ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 56

⁵⁴ Ussher, 74

⁵⁵ Mancoff, Debra N. and Lindsay J. Bosch, 464

The scholarship on the topic points to the genesis of Ophelia's integration into the symbolic characterization of women's madness during the Victorian era. This was due in large part to the popular on-stage performances of *Hamlet* in the early nineteenth century and also the resurgence of Ophelia's image as a romantic heroine in visual art, particularly with the English Pre-Raphaelites.

One of the most influential stage performances of Ophelia's character came from the Irish actress, Harriet Smithson, in her 1827 performance of *Hamlet* in Paris. Due to her Irish accent, she had never played the part in England. However, the director allowed her performance in Paris, as much of the audience did not understand English. At the time, her part was considered to be minor. However, when she took the stage she animated an entirely new life to Ophelia's role and she subsequently took Paris by storm! Judith Wechsler suggests, "The effect of Smithson's performance on much of the Parisian audience came not from Shakespeare's text, but from her performance of delirium and despair through cadence, intonation, and above all, gesture and facial expression."⁵⁶ Smithson effectively heightened the affective power of her character without reliance on the meaning of the text to carry the weight of Ophelia's madness. Given the way in which Shakespeare constructs Ophelia's madness scene, this may have actually worked to Smithson's favor. Elaine Showalter also comments on Harriet Smithson's groundbreaking performance and its impact on the English public in her seminal work on Ophelia, "Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism," an essay published within the larger text Shakespeare and the Question of Theory in 1985. Showalter elaborates, "[Smithson's]

⁵⁶ Wechsler, Judith. "Performing Ophelia: The Iconography of Madness." *Theatre Survey* 43:2 (November 2002): 201-221. Print. (202)

intensely visual performance quickly influenced English productions as well; and indeed the romantic Ophelia – a young girl passionately and visibly driven to picturesque madness – became the dominant international acting style for the next 150 years.”⁵⁷

Taken with her performance, French visual artists began to represent Ophelia through the lens of Smithson’s particular interpretation of the character, while also referencing Smithson’s visual appearance, actions, and gestures on stage. Wechsler notes that, “Smithson performed in the white dress of innocence and the long black veil of mourning; her long, loosened hair bore sprigs of straw.”⁵⁸ Smithson’s visual appearance, along with Shakespeare’s symbolic representations of flowers, water, and fragmented song soon became part of the iconographic language of Ophelia and women’s madness. Interestingly after Smithson’s performance in Paris, French fashion of the late 1820s adopted “a hairstyle in the manner of Miss Smithson, called the madwoman style. It consists of a black veil, with straw artistically woven in her hair.”⁵⁹ Here, one may find the beginnings of Ophelia’s transition from the High Arts of literature, theatre, and the visual arts into mainstream popular culture and the collective consciousness.

In addition to these early French paintings of Harriet Smithson, the advent of photography further helped to disseminate the image of Ophelia and the madwoman into the wider public sphere. Dr. Hugh Welch Diamond believed his photographs documented an objective representation of his female patients at the Surrey Asylum in England.

Diamond was at the forefront of psychiatric photography, which he practiced during the

⁵⁷ Showalter, Elaine. “Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism.” Eds. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman. *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*. New York: Methuen, 1985. 77-94. Print. (83)

⁵⁸ Wechsler, 203

⁵⁹ Wechsler, 217. Wechsler’s endnote cites the following source: “Déjà on a vu une coiffure à la folle. Elle consiste en un voile noire et en un fêtu de paille artistement entremêlés aux cheveux.” *La Corsaire* (11 October 1827), cited in Borgerhoff, 172.

ten years he was in residence there beginning in 1848. He was amused by the great many patients who posed as “queens” for his photographs. This phenomenon is not terribly surprising, however, given Queen Victoria’s reign at the time. Diamond’s photographs from the 1850s also depicted a number of Ophelia-type women. However, the objectivity of these photographs is questionable in that Diamond and his staff would often encourage his patient/models to pose and to take on particular characteristics. Showalter reveals:

And when young women in lunatic asylums did not willingly throw themselves into Ophelia-like poses, asylum superintendents with cameras imposed the conventional Ophelia costume, gesture, props and expression upon them. Diamond dressed one young woman in a black shawl and placed a garland of wildflowers in her hair.⁶⁰

The untitled photograph of the female mental patient at Surrey County Lunatic Asylum in question was printed in 1851-52. This is the exact same time period in which John Everett Millais created his, now iconic, oil on canvas *Ophelia*.⁶¹ [See Fig. 9 on page 53.] Millais’ representation of the drowning Ophelia is a work of stunning life-like detail. He paid particular attention to the depiction of the flowers detailed from Shakespeare’s text. His work was a departure from the more traditional renderings of Ophelia, which capture her action in the moments *before* her fall into watery death. His work has also been criticized, however, for its quality of “timelessness in the picture, its lack of closure, which left Ophelia suspended forever between life and death.”⁶² Even with these criticisms, Millais’ *Ophelia* is arguably the most widely recognized representation of Ophelia in the visual arts.

⁶⁰ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 92

⁶¹ Millais, John Everett. *Ophelia*. Circa 1851-1852. Oil on canvas. Tate Britain, London.

⁶² Kiefer, Carol Solomon. “The Myth and Madness of Ophelia.” Ed. Carol Solomon Kiefer. *The Myth and Madness of Ophelia*. Amherst: Amherst College, 2001. 9-39. Print. (22)

One finds the ultimate synthesis of representation and reality within Dr. John Conolly's writings from 1863 titled, *A Study of Hamlet*. Judith Wechsler explains that Dr. Conolly was a fellow of the Royal College of Physicians. In his work, he provides a physical description of his patients suffering from hysteria. Wechsler quotes from Dr. Conolly's 1863 text:

Our asylums for ruined minds now and then present remarkable illustrations of this fatal malady, so that even casual visitors recognize in the wards an Ophelia. The same young years, the same faded beauty, the same fantastic dress and interrupted song. An actress, ambitious of something beyond cold imitation might find the contemplation of such cases a not unprofitable study.⁶³

Between the works of Drs. Diamond and Connolly, it is clear that their individual and personal influences came into direct play when representing their female patients in the wards. Showalter notes, "Victorian psychiatrists and superintendents of lunatic asylums were often enthusiasts of Shakespeare. They turned to his plays for models of mental aberration that could be applied to their clinical practice [...]."⁶⁴ In the case of both Dr. Hugh Welch Diamond and Dr. John Conolly, each found his perfect model in Ophelia.

In the case of Ophelia's influence on the English society's shifting views of women and madness as a gendered affliction, one can trace the cyclic patterns of art imitating life, life imitating art, and the art that further mediates these imitations and so on and so forth. Unfortunately for the women in the asylums, their lives were not a play in the theatre and they could not pack up their costumes and makeup and go home after the show. Seeking more information about the lives and treatment of the real women in the asylums, I began to look for written autobiographical material or what Susan J.

⁶³ Wechsler, 216. The author's endnote sources this material as the following: John Conolly, *A Study of Hamlet*. (London: E. Moxon & Company, 1863), 177.

⁶⁴ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 90

Hubert has called “women’s madness narratives.”⁶⁵ Hubert takes into consideration the “stigmatization, which continues even after recovery, of individuals who have been labeled ‘mentally ill’” and therefore expands her definition of the “madness narrative as a firsthand account of the experience of ‘mental illness’ and psychiatric treatment, even if the narrative is presented as a fictitious account or case study,” in addition to the more traditionally recognized asylum autobiography.⁶⁶

Speaking for the often silenced and absent voices of the institutionalized women in academic scholarship Ussher asserts, “Throughout this whole debate, in common with all academic discourse on madness, the voice which is seldom heard, if not silenced, is that of the woman herself, the woman who is positioned as mad.”⁶⁷ While it is most unfortunately out of the scope and limits of this research to detail the following authors’ fully enlightening research, I would like to at least point the reader to Hubert’s work as well as to Rebecca Shannonhouse’s collection of madness narratives in her anthology, Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness.⁶⁸ Collectively, these two works along with the scholarship published by Elaine Showalter, Jane M. Ussher, and Phyllis Chesler, Ph.D. have revealed a most startling picture of women’s lives both inside and outside of the asylum in regards to mental illness and, more broadly, madness. They expose the frightening tales of women who were forcibly confined against their will and in many cases of the women who were committed by their husbands for such raving behavior as

⁶⁵ Hubert, Susan J. *Questions of Power: The Politics of Women’s Madness Narratives*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2002. Print.

⁶⁶ Hubert, 19

⁶⁷ Ussher, 246

⁶⁸ Shannonhouse, Rebecca, ed. *Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness*. New York: The Modern Library, 2000. Print.

having her own opinion. Briefly here, Hubert illuminates the account of Elizabeth

Packard who was committed from 1861-1863:

[...] by her husband, a Presbyterian minister, after she persisted in expressing – and teaching – views that contradicted the doctrines of the church. [...] At the time that Packard was incarcerated, Illinois law gave men the authority to commit their wives involuntarily to psychiatric hospitals; the only stipulation was that the patient needed to be admitted by the hospital superintendent.⁶⁹

There is no doubt that mental illness exists in these asylums. However, it is chilling to read about the numerous cases of women like Packard who were clearly not mad and had absolutely no legal recourse to defend herself from her husband or from her family.

There are also many cases of women in Victorian society who fell victim to anxiety, depression and other forms of psychic strain due to the oppressive, stifling, and immobilizing environments of their home life as adolescents and married adults. “[W]hile doctors blamed menstrual problems or sexual abnormality, women writers suggested that it was the lack of meaningful work, hope, or companionship that led to depression or breakdown.”⁷⁰ Young girls were often frustrated when at the onset of puberty they were no longer allowed to play or to engage in the same activities as their brothers. Their bright minds were often left to idle and engage in undemanding tasks, while their brothers were being educated to be doctors, lawyers, and businessmen. Showalter goes further to say, “The suffocation of family life, boredom, and patriarchal protectivism gradually destroys women’s capacity to dream, to work, or to act.”⁷¹ It is the complete and utter lack of agency which drives these women to dark suicidal desperation or “hysterical” protest. The treatment for this condition, which sources itself from stifling social, physical, and intellectual immobility, was the “Rest Cure” developed after the

⁶⁹ Hubert, 35-36

⁷⁰ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 61

⁷¹ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 64

Civil War by the American neurologist Silas Weir Mitchell.⁷² Many contemporary feminist scholars have given a second reading of what was once thought to be a rather innocuous treatment as something more aligned with the solitary confinement and sensory deprivation tactics used to break the minds of prisoners. The following authors comment:

Neurasthenics – often hysterical women – were put into special institutions. They were kept silent; they were told not to speak; they were not allowed to write; and they were fed up on vast quantities of milk, butter, dairy products, rice puddings, et cetera, in order to fatten them up, and to make them, if you like, bovine.⁷³

For six weeks the patient was isolated from her family and friends, confined to bed, forbidden to sit up, sew, read, write, or to do any intellectual work, visited daily by the physician, and fed and massaged by the nurse. She was expected to gain as much as fifty pounds on a diet that began with milk and gradually built up to several substantial meals a day.⁷⁴

This was the gold standard treatment for many highly intellectual women of the day who found themselves experiencing bouts of anxiety or depression. Noted American women Jane Addams, Winifred Howells, and Edith Wharton were among the patients entrusted to Weir Mitchell's care when they became "thin, tense, fretful, and depressed."⁷⁵

In the case of women's madness, the "treatments" or "cures" were overwhelmingly worse than the "disease" and were quite thinly veiled acts of domination and torture. This is clearly the case in the mind-numbing, coma inducing, memory-wiping treatments of the mid-twentieth century. "From the 1930s to the 1950s, the main

⁷² See the classic literary work, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman regarding the Rest Cure. The text may also be found in Shannonhouse's collection *Out of Her Mind*, pgs. 32-49.

⁷³ Porter, Roy. "Madness and Creativity: Communication and Excommunication." *Madness and Creativity in Culture*. Eds. Corinne Saunders and Jane Macnaughton. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2005. 19-34. Print. (26)

⁷⁴ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 138-139

⁷⁵ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 138

English treatments for schizophrenia were insulin shock, electroshock (ECT), and lobotomy.”⁷⁶ Quoting Ussher on the justifications for these tortuous treatments:

It has been claimed that women are more likely to be given amnesia-inducing treatments such as ECT because ‘they are judged to have less need of their brains’ (Breggin, 1979). [...] The justification for lobotomy being more frequently practiced on women was similar: lobotomy did not interfere with their ability ‘to assume or resume the role of a housewife’ (Berke, 1979: 96). In fact, psychiatric textbooks published in the 1970s recommended lobotomy to enable a woman to cope with her marriage (Showalter, 1987: 210).⁷⁷

Even more harrowing, Phyllis Chesler’s interviews with patients who were hospitalized between 1950 and 1970 indicate that in addition to the massive drug regimen which was given to *all* of the patients, “many received shock therapy and/or insulin coma therapy as a matter of routine, and often *before* they were psychiatrically “interviewed” [*emphasis mine*].”⁷⁸ Likely due to its portrayal in film, literature, and photography, the general public or reader might already have some awareness or perhaps even desensitization regarding the actual torture which is involved with these forms of treatments. Less visible, however, is one of the most extreme treatments for female insanity, which came in the form of Dr. Isaac Baker Brown’s clitoridectomy performed in his private clinic in London between the years 1859 and 1866. Once again, Showalter lays bare the graphic reality of Dr. Brown’s experimentation with this surgical procedure:

In the 1860s, he went beyond clitoridectomy to the removal of the labia. As he became more confident, he operated on patients as young as ten, on idiots, epileptics, paralytics, even on women with eye problems. He operated five times on women whose madness consisted of their wish to take advantage of the new Divorce Act of 1857, and found in each case that his patient returned humbly to her husband.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 205

⁷⁷ Ussher, 174-175

⁷⁸ Chesler, 193

⁷⁹ Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 76

Dr. Isaac Baker Brown is certainly not the first person to mutilate the female genitalia in this fashion. However, Showalter positions him among the first to do so under the guises of treatment and medicine specifically to restore mental health. According to the World Health Organization, current statistics on the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) as of February 2013 report, “About 140 million girls and women worldwide are currently living with the consequences of FGM. In Africa an estimated 101 million girls 10 years old and above have undergone FGM. FGM is mostly carried out on young girls sometime between infancy and age 15.”⁸⁰ This final example, perhaps the most brutal, graphic, and extreme in its misogyny, helps to shed light on the verifiable facts that FGM is not a barbaric practice from the distant past, but rather continues to affect millions of girls and women to this very day. On a final note, the World Health Organization states unequivocally “FGM is a violation of the human rights of girls and women.”⁸¹ Given our contemporary perspective of the practice, it should be seen as no less of a violation to the human rights of the women in the late nineteenth century who found themselves mutilated for the simple desire to exit their marriages.

This final example aids in illuminating the larger social and political implications of situating madness in the female body and reproductive system. Framed in these terms, treatments then are the direct means for the physical and psychological control of the patient’s sexuality and in maintenance of her chastity, purity, and obedience. Further, defining the woman *as* mad becomes the justification to maintain inequalities of power between men and women in all spheres of society. Showalter comments:

⁸⁰ World Health Organization. “Female Genital Mutilation. Fact Sheet N°241.” Updated February 2013. Web. 31 March 2013. <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/index.html>

⁸¹ World Health Organization. “Female Genital Mutilation. Fact Sheet N°241.”

[T]he medical belief that the instability of the female nervous and reproductive systems made women more vulnerable to derangement than men had extensive consequences for social policy. It was used as a reason to keep women out of the professions, to deny them political rights, and to keep them under male control in the family and the state.⁸²

Clearly, these larger societal beliefs affect not only the institutionalized and those labeled as “mad,” but the full strata of women across class and culture.

Looking at the larger picture of mental illness, I would like to acknowledge that the explanations surrounding women’s madness as a gendered affliction must be multi-dimensional. Indeed, the core issues centered within the gendered notions of madness are not so simply dealt with by placing blame squarely on the shoulders of men or male patriarchal society. The larger societal issues are surely much more complex. Jane M. Ussher elaborates:

There can be no simple answer to the question of whether women’s madness is a misogynistic construct, or a mental illness. It is both. It is neither. It cannot be encapsulated with one explanation, one interpretation. As women, we are regulated through the discourse of madness. But the woman herself is real, as is her pain – we must not deny that. So we must listen to women.⁸³

Thus, in my research on the topic of women and madness it was my intent to simply listen without a preconceived notion of what I would find or discover. While I most definitely agree with Ussher that there is no singular explanation, I also must acknowledge that my perceptions of this topic have transformed greatly over the course of my investigation. After reading Showalter, Ussher, Chesler, and numerous madness narratives authored by women, I can no longer ignore the fact that over the course of history mental illness has been and can still be perceived as “gendered.” This realization

⁸² Showalter, *The Female Malady*, 73

⁸³ Ussher, 306

alone completely changed my understanding of women's mental illness and how I must address this issue in my choreography.

As stated initially, the larger goal in this research was in service to the creation of my concert *OPHELIA*. By looking beyond the text of *Hamlet* as the sole source for understanding Ophelia's madness, I have been able to obtain a much fuller grasp of the "realities" of this mental affliction. The harrowing details of each of the aforementioned cases helped to provide extrinsic information apart from Shakespeare's text about the realities of women's madness that further informed my understanding of Ophelia's fictional character. As such, the historical perspective of women's madness provided by feminist authors such as Elaine Showalter and Jane M. Ussher supplied additional layers of social and political context for my investigation of Ophelia's actions and motives. Finally, my alternating horror, disgust, and outrage in response to the autobiographical accounts of women's institutionalization and involuntary commitment to the asylum throughout history further influenced me to give voice to these long silenced narratives in madness through the language of choreography and with the creation of my concert *OPHELIA*.

PART II

THE CHOREOGRAPHY

*Dance, dance...
Otherwise we are lost.*

- Pina Bausch⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Bausch, Pina. *Pina*. Dir. Wim Wenders. Choreography: Pina Bausch. Mongrel Media, 2012. Film, DVD.

CHAPTER THREE

Pathways to *OPHELIA*

Part II of the Dissertation links the preceding research to my choreographic process and outlines how these sources further informed my investigation of *fragmentation* and *women and madness*. This begins in Chapter Three with a review of the works I created while in residence in the MFA in Dance program at the University of New Mexico, which later became part of the larger body of *OPHELIA*. Chapter Four extends this conversation by analyzing the aesthetic concerns and choreographic choices presented in *OPHELIA* as a complete body of work.

Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds), 2010

Looking back to my previous work, the conceptual foundations for *OPHELIA* were already forming in the first work that I created while in residence in the MFA in Dance degree program, although not intentionally. *Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)* was created in form through one of the first assignments I was given by Professor Vladimir Conde Reche.⁸⁵ Professor Conde Reche taught *Creative Investigations I (DANC 510)* during my first semester in the program in 2010. The assignment was to construct a self-performed solo. The content was to be determined by the random distribution of a common object among the students in the class. In previous sections of this course, items included such things as a coffee cup and toilet paper. I received an un-inflated balloon.

⁸⁵ *Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)* was originally presented by the UNM Department of Theatre & Dance in the Fall 2010 Student Choreography Showcase in the Carlisle Gym Performance Space. Choreographed and Performed by: Jacqueline M. Garcia

I had not intended for this piece to be emotionally or even narratively driven. I began working on the piece with the idea to work abstractly with how the balloon moved and responded to different types of stimulus when it was 1) un-inflated, 2) inflated with my breath, and 3) inflated with helium. This investigation was already proving to be very fruitful in the studio. Very shortly after I began the MFA in Dance program, my father was admitted to the hospital. Although he had been diagnosed in 2005 with Primary Pulmonary Hypertension, a rare and incurable disease with a life expectancy of about 5-7 years with aggressive treatment, he was actually found to have an advanced and inoperable brain tumor. It was a sunny Saturday afternoon on September 18, 2010, when my father passed away at home and in the presence of his loving family. At his memorial service, his children and grandchildren released white balloons up into the sky. Dancing on the wind, they floated up and away towards the east until they could only be seen as tiny specks over the distant Sandia Mountains. When I returned to campus the following week, I was faced with an approaching deadline and audition for this new and unfinished work. Two nights before the audition I found myself lying in the center of North Arena's white Marley floor, paralyzed by my thoughts and emotions, literally unable to move, and with not a single count of usable choreography. As much as I was comforted, I was also haunted by the memory of the white balloons disappearing into the infinite unknown. My professors encouraged me to distance myself from the piece, but the image was seared into my brain. In the end, the role that I choreographed and also performed was from two perspectives. The first was of the balloon's perspective rising up into the clouds. The second was what I had imagined the balloon's perspective to be gazing back down to the

earth from the sky above. As much as it was a piece *for* my father, I also had the strange sense that *I was* my father dancing in the piece.

It is fairly obvious why I would later resonate with the character of Ophelia, who suffers the loss of her mental faculties upon the death/murder of her father, Polonius. In terms of my final Choreographic Project, *Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)* provided the foundation for *Father Ghost*. In its final presentation in *OPHELIA*, the piece was unrecognizable from its beginnings, save a few snatches of original movement material. *Father Ghost* became much more theatrical and narrative driven in service of the larger evening of work. However, the emotional underpinnings were created through my own personal struggle to create and perform this original solo. While I was not conscious of it at the time, in retrospect it is no wonder why the choreographic work I would create over the following year would center on the investigation of fragmentation of the mind and the body.



Figure 1: *Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)*
Dancer: Jacqueline M. Garcia, Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2011

yo(l)ke, 2011

The following fall semester I began an exploration of concepts regarding non/linearity in time, fragmentation and wholeness, and the interior landscapes of both the mind and heart in my work titled *yo(l)ke*.⁸⁶ I was greatly inspired by the popular writing of national best-selling scientist and author, Brian Greene in his book, The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time and the Texture of Reality.⁸⁷ In Chapter 6 of his book, “Chance and the Arrow” he investigates through the accepted laws, theories and suppositions of classical, rather than quantum, physics the question, “Does time have a direction?”⁸⁸ Throughout the chapter, he employs the visual example of a cracking egg to discuss both time and entropy and also, the ordering of the universe. “Eggs fall, cracking and splattering, but we never see splattered eggs and eggshells gather together and coalesce into uncracked eggs.”⁸⁹

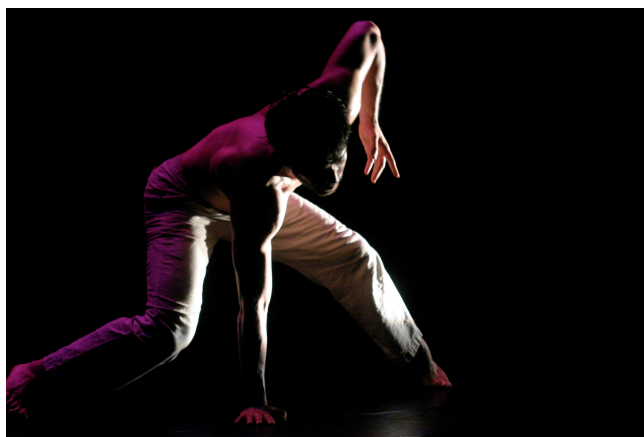


Figure 2: *yo(l)ke*
Dancer: Esteban E. Garza, Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2011

⁸⁶ *yo(l)ke* was originally presented by the UNM Department of Theatre & Dance in the Fall 2011 Student Choreography Showcase in the Carlisle Gym Performance Space. Original Cast Members: Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, Esteban E. Garza, Luz Guillen, Marissa Manion, and Tasha Williams. Performed by Jacqueline M. Garcia for E. Garza in Week 1 of the performance.

⁸⁷ Greene, Brian. *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality*. New York: Vintage Books, 2005. Print.

⁸⁸ Greene, 143

⁸⁹ Greene, 143

When I first read this passage, the visual image of the splattering egg transferred a visceral response to my body. I began to feel egg yolk slipping between my fingertips and dripping from my skin and from my hair. I began to imagine a movement vocabulary that described not only the tipping and breaking of the egg's shell, but also the splattering of the yolk off of the body. This led me to explore a very specific movement vocabulary in which both weightedness and release were paramount to the work.



Figure 3: *yo(l)ke*
Dancers: Luz Guillen (front) and Esteban E. Garza (back)
Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2011

I then took Greene's metaphor from the locus of my body and into the puzzling dimensions of time, mind, and memory. In discussing a singular temporal order, Greene states, "Perhaps the most pointed example of all is that our minds seem to have access to a collection of events that we call the past – our memories – but none of us seem to remember the collection of events we call the future. [...] There seems to be a manifest

orientation to how an enormous variety of things unfold in time.”⁹⁰ From this statement, I began to question whether or not one’s mind and heart ever “un-breaks” from the memories of his/her past experiences and embodied experiences of loss and suffering. I began to hypothesize if it is only possible to become whole/un-broken by reversing the arrow of time and returning to the past or if one can be restored to a new “whole” by moving forward into the future. This idea further inspired the title of the piece, which plays between the words *yoke* and *yolk*; that which binds, tethers, and joins coupled with the slippery aftermath of that which has been broken. Greene’s quote further inspired explorations of the *part* versus the *whole* in terms of movement vocabulary, bodies in space, and also the liminal boundaries created by the edges of the stage. I began to work with isolating the stage by creating entire movement sequences that hovered just outside of the space of the wings or at the far edges of the stage. I also began to play with creating extreme visual distance between the solo figure and the ensemble in order to create a gulf of emptiness between the two.

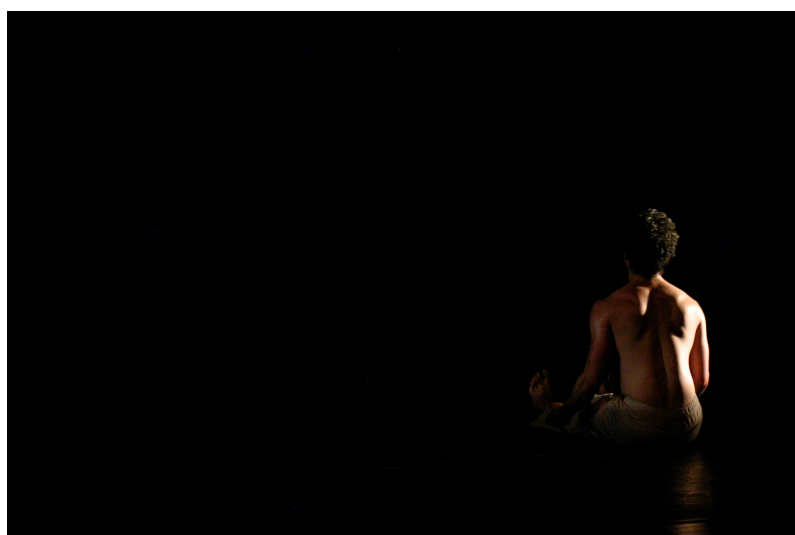


Figure 4: *yo(l)ke*
Dancer: Esteban E. Garza, Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2011

⁹⁰ Greene, 144

Finally, I was intrigued by Greene's concluding summary of his chapter. I will include a section of it here, for it most certainly planted a seed in terms of how I would later view the character of Ophelia and her representation in my choreography:

This is the stunning connection we've been leading up to for the entire chapter. A splattering egg tells us something deep about the big bang. It tells us that the big bang gave rise to an extraordinarily ordered nascent cosmos. [...] Thus, conditions at the birth of the universe are critical to directing time's arrow. The future is indeed the direction of increasing entropy. The arrow of time – the fact that things start like this and end like that but never start like that and end like this – began its flight in the highly ordered, low-entropy state of the universe at its inception. [Emphasis is Greene's].⁹¹

Essentially, Greene points to the idea that objects or matter will tend to move from order to disorder. This idea certainly helped to establish an internal philosophy, and even cosmology, for the micro-universe that *yo(l)ke* creates on stage. The probability of witnessing a situation that moves in the opposite direction, such as a splattered egg gathering itself, flying off the floor and settling from a slow roll into perfect stillness and pristine composition at the edge of a countertop, is highly unlikely. This does not give much hope, at least poetically, for those wishing to return to a state of psychic or emotional wholeness after a painful experience of loss or trauma. One can pick up the pieces, but the cracks will always be present. Perhaps, in the end, finding oneself “damaged” is highly preferable to perpetually finding oneself trapped by a prison of fixed thought and circumstance time and time again.

Again, this is important to the seeming inevitability of “disorder” in terms of Ophelia's mind and madness given the forces that metaphorically push her over the edge. This is also paramount to the seeming “order” that is utilized as a metaphor for mental unity and wholeness in the opening scenes of *OPHELIA*. As it is presented in the context

⁹¹ Greene, 174-175

of *OPHELIA*, the soloist in *yo(l)ke* is the Madness character. With this characterization, Ophelia begins to sense that she and Madness are actually one in the same and the audience begins to witness the “cracking” of the shell of sanity.



Figure 5: *yo(l)ke*
Dancers (Left to Right): Esteban E. Garza, Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, and Marissa Manion
Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2011

fissure, 2012

Building upon the themes in *yo(l)ke*, I began work on *fissure* in 2012.⁹² I was fortunate enough to be able to work with two of the same dancers from my previous cast of five for this new quartet. Given this continuation in casting, I felt that I was able to gain quite a bit of momentum in pushing myself to explore an even more complex theme and style of choreography. In *fissure*, I was interested in the exploring *figments* in

⁹² *fissure* was originally presented by the UNM Department of Theatre & Dance in the Spring 2012 Student Choreography Showcase in the Carlisle Gym Performance Space. Original Cast Members: Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, Sonja Bologa, Luz Guillen, and Kelsey Paschich.

addition to *fragments* in both corporeal and psychological terms. Further, I was intrigued by the notion of representing the imagined inner landscapes of a fractured mind on stage.



Figure 6: *fissure*
Dancers (Left to Right): Luz Guillen, Kelsey Paschich, and Sonja Bologna
Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2012

As such, I began working with the basic structure of *figments of mind* and *fragments of body* and then began to disassemble its dualistic nature to encompass the various permutations of each variable. What is a *figment of the body* and/or the self? What is a *fragment of the mind* and/or self? This quite naturally led me to explore issues within the realm of mental illness, including schizophrenia and self-harm/suicide, which was a direct offshoot of the subjects I was studying through the coursework in my degree program.

During the spring semester of 2012, I was enrolled in *HIST 629: The History of Beauty, Body and Power* with Professor Linda Biesele Hall and *THEA 506: Theories of Theatre: "Boundaries of Performance"* with Professor Bill Walters. In Professor Hall's course, we investigated the body and its intersections with beauty and power through an

historical lens. The course covered topics such as the history of cosmetics and plastic surgery, gendered notions of beauty, attractiveness, and power, “sacred pain” and its relationship to fasting/anorexia, and the iconographic figures of John F. Kennedy, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Evita Perón, Frida Kahlo, Emiliano Zapata, and Che Guevara in relationship to beauty, body, and power.⁹³ Marilyn Monroe, in particular, painted a particularly tragic example of an iconically beautiful and socially powerful woman whose self-destructive behaviors led to a death shrouded in mystery. During the decades since her death, Monroe has continued to fascinate the imaginations of artists and scholars across the boundaries of both popular culture and scholarly investigations. Similarly, the concepts covered in this course would eventually lead me to discover the character of Ophelia whose iconic madness, beauty, and ambiguous death has been the topic of historical concern and artistic inspiration for not only a few decades, but for the last four centuries.

In Professor Walters’ course, we delved deeply into the issues of aesthetics and the physical body of the artist/performer, as well as the related works of the visual, theatrical, and performance artists that blurred the boundaries of “matrixed” performance.⁹⁴ Moving into the 1970s and beyond, a fringe group of visual and

⁹³ See Glucklich, Ariel. *Sacred Pain: Hurting the Body for the Sake of the Soul*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.;

Bynum, Caroline Walker. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. Berkeley: University of California Press, Ltd., 1987. Print.

⁹⁴ Michael Kirby, former professor of drama at NYU and editor of *The Drama Review* (TDR) from 1969-1986 coined the terms “matrixed” and “non-matrixed” performance. He taught at NYU with Richard Schechner during the formative years and emergence of performance studies as a new field of academic study. In the *Tulane Drama Review* (1965), Kirby writes: “Acting might be defined as the creation of character and/or place: details of “who” and “where” the performer is are necessary to the performance. The actor functions within subjective or objective person-place matrices. The musician, on the other hand, is non-matrixed. He attempts to be no one other than himself, nor does he function in a place other than that which physically contains him and the audience.” (25-26)

performing artists utilized human flesh as the canvas and exposed the living, breathing, and sensing body to audiences in performative acts that often included tests of endurance, pain, and self-mutilation. Contemporary critics, now highly respect and praise the works of artists such as Gina Pane, Marina Abramović, and Chris Burden who were intentionally and directly dealing with the body and the intensity of its sensations in real time and in actual space without a filter for the actual experience of cutting, bleeding, burning, or piercing.⁹⁵ For myself, studying these concepts and further surveying these artists' works began to raise important questions regarding notions of aesthetics and the non/representation of the mind, body, and madness in non/performance contexts. I bring these examples to the fore of the discussion here because, while I am not drawn to explore the aesthetic and political concerns of Abramović and similarly oriented artists in my own choreography, their work in particular forced the issue of how far I would be willing to test the outer limits and boundaries of representing both madness and suicide in both matrixed and non/matrixed contexts in my concert. While this question was necessarily posed with my confrontation of these works, it was a decidedly and unequivocally easy answer to assert my preference for representation rather than reality when it relates to the types of self-inflicted harm that lead to suicide and death.

The rather detailed research I completed on these subjects during the spring semester was absolutely critical in the shaping of my understanding of mental illness, self-harm, and the un/performance of the body. In regards to *fissure*, I utilized this information to begin to ask how I might create a matrixed performance environment in which to explore “figments” of bodies and also the embodied action of a splintering

⁹⁵ Goldberg, RoseLee. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. 3rd ed. New York: Thames & Hudson, 2011. Print.

mind/self. While working in the studio, I began to utilize disjointed choreographic phrases and transitions to aid in my representation of these themes. While testing these new ideas, I also returned to some of the works of established and respected choreographers in the world of concert dance whom I find highly interesting in terms of their use of space, time, movement vocabulary, and overall aesthetics.

I was greatly influenced by the work of Wayne McGregor and his choreography for The Royal Ballet. He works with a movement vocabulary that is essentially balletic in form. His contemporary approach to style, movement invention, transitions, use of space, and incorporation of design and technology all particularly piqued my interest in how they might be used as choreographic devices in my investigation of *fragmentation*. In particular, I studied the work *CHROMA* (2006) in depth.⁹⁶ Taking the time to map out the spatial configurations, entrances, and exits of the each section, I paid particular attention to his use of carefully crafted stillness that effectively offset the continuity of motion elsewhere on the stage. Often, the dancers were simply standing in a parallel first position with little affect or additional stylization. This stillness gave the viewer's eye a place to rest. The dancers' natural position added a sense of humanity, though not in a pedestrian sort of way. I was also attracted to the dichotomy of fragmentation and flow in his phrasing and transitions. His particular aesthetic choices of setting one movement against another, often felt counter-intuitive and non sequitur. Admittedly, after watching an entire evening of his work, I began to tire of the similarity in his phrasing and stream of conscious approach to developing vocabulary. However, within the context of *CHROMA*, I found these choices to be highly effective.

⁹⁶ McGregor, Wayne, choreographer. *CHROMA. Three Ballets by Wayne McGregor: CHROMA, INFRA, LIMEN*. Choreography: Wayne McGregor for The Royal Ballet. Music: Joby Talbot and Jack White III, Max Richter, and Kaija Saariaho. BBC/Opus Arte, 2001. DVD.

I also took a particular interest in a short excerpt of movement from the work *Kamuyot* (2003) for the Batsheva Ensemble by Ohad Naharin, which I happened to find online.⁹⁷ In a 2008 *New York Times* dance review, Roslyn Sulcas exquisitely describes the work as such:

There are periods of immobility and silence. There are moments of intimate connection between the dancers and those watching. There are the blank-faced performers, whose movement becomes, over time, a source of profound emotional content. And there is the movement itself, sharply delineated, dislocated, explosive, liquid — an improbable blend of geometric lines and calligraphic curves, propulsive dynamics and mysterious gesture that is all Mr. Naharin's own.⁹⁸

While watching the video excerpt, I was enticed by the extreme physicality and percussive nature of the choreography and also that the work was set in the round. Within the choreography, the dancer (unidentified online) slapped his chest, legs, and head/face with his hands. He moved between bound flow and a sinuous fluidity that then cut into sharp directional changes and timeless suspensions.

Both McGregor's *CHROMA* and Naharin's *Kamuyot* helped to provide choreographic strategies for exploring the thematic concepts of mind, reality, and memory within my own choreographic work. Following the lead of both choreographers, I even further disrupted natural transitions, as well as beginnings and endings of phrases. Rather than working linearly, I gave myself the license to follow a process that allowed for the unexpected to emerge. At the same time, I also explored the use of restraint and the carefully crafted stillness that I so particularly enjoyed in McGregor's *CHROMA*. The

⁹⁷ Naharin, Ohad, choreographer. *Kamuyot*. Choreography: Ohad Naharin for Batsheva Ensemble, 2003. Uploaded on September 11, 2008 as *Makot Solo* to YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Fu4Wt66TNM>.

⁹⁸ Sulcas, Roslyn. "Movement Complimented by Immobility and Silence." *The New York Times*. Published: 8 March 2008. Web. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/05/arts/dance/05bats.html>. Also in Print.

stillness that I created in *fissure* also echoed the long pauses between the often discordant and jarring sounds in the compiled and edited music score by Sylvain Chauveau.⁹⁹ These pauses and stillness created a sort of internal isolation, much in the same vein which I explored through the physical stage space in *yo(l)ke*. Both *yo(l)ke* and *fissure* employed choreographic devices to explore the sense of both physical and mental isolation.



Figure 7: *fissure*
Dancers (Left to Right): Luz Guillen, (back) Sonja Bologna, and Kelsey Paschich
Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2012

In the final moments of each piece, the soloist is isolated in a pool of light, while the ensemble begins to fade away. [See Figure 8 below.] Through *fissure*, I attempted to create a visual and kinesthetic landscape of the female soloist's splintering psyche and sought to manifest and give form to the figments of this character's crumbling inner world through the crafted art of choreography and "matrixed" performance. The totality

⁹⁹ The music score for *fissure* was created by editing and compiling three works by Sylvain Chauveau: *Andréa*, *Andréa's Hands*, and *Andréa's Hands II*.

of this research and also the creation of *fissure*, in particular, would lead me to ask essential questions regarding the representation of mental illness and suicide in the context of performance. In *OPHELIA*, *fissure* becomes the proverbial “point of no return” in which Ophelia is bombarded from all sides of her psyche and she can no longer trust even the most Faithful, Beautiful or Innocent of thoughts to be her own and not the voice of Madness speaking.



Figure 8: *fissure*
Dancers (Left to Right): Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, Kelsey Paschich, (back) Sonja Bologna,
and Luz Guillen
Photo Credit: Pat Berrett, 2012

Finding *OPHELIA*

In August 2012, my cast and I commenced work for the MFA Thesis Concert with the working title “*figments & fragments*” in continuation of my previous work. I was able to retain all four of the dancers from *fissure* and I added one additional dancer to the cast to create a quintet. During one particular rehearsal, I gave my dancers the image of

“balancing on a rock with one foot in the middle of deep and rushing river water, while reaching with the tips of the fingers into the icy currents to retrieve a lost wedding ring.” This particular image correlated with a flat-back arabesque in *plié* with arms reaching in opposition off the back and down to the floor simultaneously. During the course of this rehearsal, this fleeting image began to take hold in my imagination and it brought to the surface of my memory the loosely congruent ideas of wedding, river, ring, bride, floating, death, memory, loss, yearning, future, past, stillness, rushing, balance, nature, flowers, and so forth. Suddenly, the Pre-Raphaelite painting titled *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais came rushing to the front of my consciousness. [See Fig. 9.] That weekend I re-read Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and was drawn even deeper into the richness of Ophelia’s character. In terms of creating a formal structure for an evening of work, *Ophelia* provided the necessary fluidity and specificity of both imagery and content to build upon choreographically.



Figure 9: *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais, circa 1851-1852. Oil on canvas. Tate Britain, London.

From this point, Ophelia became the unifying theme for both my choreographic and written research for my final MFA Choreographic Project. Through the Ophelia character, I married the themes from my previous works *Through the Open Window (a door in the clouds)*, *yo(l)ke*, and *fissure*, while emphasizing the existing and interrelated themes of women and madness, beauty, loss, transformation, and the reclamation of self and personal power; even if through the ultimate destruction and demise of the self. Ophelia's character is rich in both symbology and iconography. Additionally, Shakespeare created an enigmatic persona for the stage that is complex and provides a wealth of both content and imagery to draw upon for my choreographic work. To quote Carol Solomon Kiefer from The Myth and Madness of Ophelia:

The cause of Ophelia's madness is unclear, an ambiguity surely intended by Shakespeare. Was it the result of her rejected love, the death of her father, or a combination of the two? Doubt also lingers about the precise circumstances of her death. Was it an accidental drowning, as reported by Gertrude, or was it suicide, as implied by the gravedigger (Act V, Sc. I)? These ambiguities add to the mystique of Ophelia.¹⁰⁰

Indeed, it is this ambiguity that drew me to Ophelia. In the play, her role is quite limited and her death occurs off stage. However, she is essential to the forward motion of the plot. Given the manner in which Shakespeare left room for interpretation regarding the cause(s) of her madness and also the circumstance(s) leading up to her death, allowed for me to take certain artistic liberties in answering these questions through my choreography. As such, my choreographic research focused on the multi-dimensionality of Ophelia's character, as well as the complexity of her madness and death, in order to universalize her story. Through Ophelia's particular narrative, it was my goal to research a particular choreographic movement vocabulary that favors the incongruent, irregular,

¹⁰⁰ Kiefer, 11

dissonant, and discordant. Further, I aimed to develop a vocabulary that ultimately creates an *affective experience* for the audience in order to highlight not only the tragedy of Ophelia's fractured mind, but also her beauty and transfiguration.

CHAPTER FOUR

OPHELIA: Choreographing Women and Madness in Concert Dance

Taking Ophelia as the title role for my Thesis Concert necessitated deciphering and interpreting Shakespeare's unanswered questions and ambiguities surrounding her character within the text of *Hamlet*. The first question is in regards to the root cause of her madness. Shakespeare provides two events that perhaps triggered the onset of her mental illness: 1) Hamlet's cruel behavior and the unexplained loss of his love in Act 3, Scene 1 and 2) the murder of her father, Polonius, at the hand of Hamlet's sword in Act 3, Scene 4. Because there is such little text surrounding Ophelia's character in the play, critics point to these two events most frequently because they provide the most direct evidence in the actual text. The second question is in regards to Ophelia's death. The audience does not see the *action* of her drowning played out on the stage. Rather, the surroundings and circumstance of her final moments of life are only *described* to the audience through Gertrude's recounting of it to Laertes in Act 4, Scene 7; during which, she paints a vivid and tragic image of Ophelia's serene descent to "muddy death."¹⁰¹ The language used in Gertrude's narration of the scene seems to imply that Ophelia's death was accidental. However, the commentary provided by the Gravedigger and the presentation of her "maimed rites" hint to the possibility of suicide in Act 5, Scene 1.¹⁰² In each instance, there is no singular explanation that serves as the definitive interpretation. This ambiguity is partly what has made Ophelia such an intriguing and enduring character across the centuries.

¹⁰¹ Shakespeare, 4.7:181

¹⁰² Shakespeare, 5.1:208

Interpreting Ophelia's Madness

The obscurity of the exact nature of Ophelia's madness and the precise motive for her death presented definite challenges in determining how to represent her character within my thesis concert. The interpretation of Ophelia's madness has shifted several times over the course of history according to the collective sentiment regarding female madness in general. Just as the popular diagnoses for women's madness have moved in and out of fashion over time, so has the understanding of Ophelia's death and madness also adjusted accordingly with society's particular and popular views regarding the "female malady." Despite hundreds of years of analysis of Shakespeare's text, there is no unequivocal answer to the questions that Ophelia's character presents. Thus, it is the responsibility of each artist, actor, writer, and critic to examine the evidence and make his/her own assertion. I wish to re-emphasize Elaine Showalter's opinion, which was cited as the foreword to Part I of this dissertation: "There is no 'true' Ophelia."¹⁰³ Perhaps the only truth is this, that the manner in which Ophelia's ambiguities are dealt with and, further, represented serve as commentary on the larger societal opinions of women and madness within specific historical frameworks of place and time.

Once again, Ophelia's madness has not been given a singular interpretation over the course of history. Rather, the reasoning for the loss of her mental faculties seems to fall in line with changing societal views of women's madness and ever-more sophisticated clinical diagnoses of mental illness. Shakespeare created a character whose symbolic elements may be adapted and reinterpreted for each new generation of artists, actors, and critics. For the Elizabethans, Ophelia was cursed with "female love-

¹⁰³ Showalter, "Representing Ophelia," 92

melancholy or erotomania.”¹⁰⁴ For the Victorians, Ophelia was a case study in “hysteria” and further evidence of female “sexual instability.”¹⁰⁵ The Romantic Ophelia was a victim of sensibility and sentimentality “who drowns in feeling.”¹⁰⁶ In the early twentieth century, Sigmund Freud’s influence created an Ophelia who is brought to her demise through her indecorous demeanor and her sexual appetites. By the 1950’s this was taken to the extreme “where directors have hinted at an incestuous link between Ophelia and her father” and in some cases a sexual attraction to both Hamlet and her brother, Laertes.¹⁰⁷ As such, she desires a lover who will release her from the entrapments of life with her father and she is stricken with guilt and madness when Hamlet brings these unspoken fantasies to fruition. The 1960s situated Ophelia’s incongruent thoughts and behaviors as schizophrenic, while feminist critics of the 1970s preferred to frame Ophelia’s outspoken lewdness as “protest and rebellion.”¹⁰⁸ Each of these readings of Ophelia’s madness places her downward spiral most directly in relationship to her love interest with Hamlet and to the inherent tensions created by her obedience to her father.

This manner of understanding Ophelia’s character places the greater emphasis on the intensity of her feelings and perhaps gives too little credit to her ability to rationalize and think. Shakespeare offers specific dialog, which, with a literal reading, paints Ophelia as thoughtless. For example, Ophelia speaks to her father, “I do not know, my lord, what I should think.”¹⁰⁹ Later, she responds to Hamlet, “I think nothing, my lord.”¹¹⁰ These lines reflect the larger societal views of women at the time as being incapable of

¹⁰⁴ Showalter, “Representing Ophelia,” 81

¹⁰⁵ Showalter, “Representing Ophelia,” 85

¹⁰⁶ Showalter, “Representing Ophelia,” 83

¹⁰⁷ Showalter, “Representing Ophelia,” 90

¹⁰⁸ Showalter, “Representing Ophelia,” 91

¹⁰⁹ Shakespeare, 1.3:103

¹¹⁰ Shakespeare, 3.2:111

reasoning and logic and rather plagued with over-emotional irrationality. With the notion that Ophelia's mental faculties can be so easily swayed by the suggestion of others, it would seem logical that early interpretations of her character would conclude that her mind could ultimately be overtaken by the intensity of her sensing body. Once again, this situates her madness as the result of either her uncontrolled feelings of love for Hamlet and/or her desperate mourning for the loss of her father, Polonius.

To be certain Elaine Showalter's analysis of Ophelia's character and representation has been the most often cited source on the subject since the publication of her essay, "Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism" in 1985. For nearly thirty years, Showalter has been the eminent source and authority on the subject and her scholarship has clearly dominated the field. In 2012, The Afterlife of Ophelia was published with contributions by sixteen authors who offer a contemporary analysis of Ophelia's character in the new millennium.¹¹¹ Most of these authors present the vision of an empowered woman who is thinking, intelligent, and paradoxically reasoned in her madness. During the decades since Showalter's publication, the topics of concern have shifted from making the assertion that madness is a gendered ailment to the issues of agency and giving voice to those suffering from mental illness. In the afterword to the diverse collection of essays presented in The Afterlife of Ophelia, Coppélia Kahn offers a final interpretation for the contemporary reader/audience: "I have studied the dramatic character in the context of the plot's multiple narratives and found there an Ophelia articulate, perceptive, and socially poised, but exploited, misinterpreted, and finally, broken in mind and spirit by more powerful

¹¹¹ Peterson, Kaara L. and Deanne Williams, eds. *The Afterlife of Ophelia*. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2012. Print.

men around her.”¹¹² Indeed, most contemporary authors find evidence in Shakespeare’s text to validate this reading and point to the specific instances when Ophelia openly defends her position to her father, directly accuses Hamlet of being a liar and treating her with manners unbefitting of his position, and skillfully redirects Hamlet’s inappropriate behavior towards her while in the presence of the court.¹¹³ This new rendering of Ophelia’s character downplays her traditional casting as a victim of manipulation and transfers the power of her reasoning and willful action squarely within herself. Following the lead of the early feminist critics, contemporary scholars tend to view Ophelia’s madness and death through the lens of empowered action rather than victimized tragedy.

In Act 4, Scene 5 the Gentleman reports to the Queen that Ophelia has been acting erratically, since her father’s death. “She is importunate – indeed, distract./ [...] She speaks much of her father, says she hears/ There’s tricks i’th’ world, and hems and beats her heart,/ Spurns enviously at straws, speaks things in doubt/That carry but half sense. Her speech is nothing/ [...]”¹¹⁴ While the Gentleman portrays Ophelia’s behavior as insanity, I would rather characterize her insistent distraction or madness as warranted outrage. Her father has been murdered and hastily buried. She should rightly believe there are “tricks” or devious plots in the world. Further, she is right to “spurn enviously at straws” or act suspiciously and to be doubtful of everyone around her. Her father was a loyal servant to the King and, yet, in his “obscure funeral” he was buried with “No trophy, sword nor hatchment o’er his bones,/ No noble rite, nor formal ostentation – .”¹¹⁵ As stated previously, *service* and *duty* were the hallmarks of English society at this time.

¹¹² Kahn, “Afterword,” *The Afterlife of Ophelia*, 237

¹¹³ Shakespeare, 1.3:109-113; 3.1:96-100; and 3.2 (The Mousetrap Scene) respectively

¹¹⁴ Shakespeare, 4.5:2,4-7

¹¹⁵ Shakespeare, 4.6:205-207 This is Laertes’ text as he accuses the King of foul play in the death of his father.

For women in particular, their very sense of self-worth was tied to their unfailing service and loyalty to her father or husband, her duty, and her obedience, in addition to her virtuosity and propriety. Men, similarly, prided themselves on their honor, loyalty, and service. Ophelia, then, is rightly shocked to her wits end to witness this most insulting defamation of her father's character by way of his improper burial after years of loyal service to the court.¹¹⁶ Given that she is unmarried and without her father or other male figure to look after her well being, she has good cause for worry and anxiety regarding how she is to be cared for given the poor and humiliating treatment of her father in his death.

Before the time of her father's passing, her brother Laertes had since taken leave to France. Thus, left alone and bereft in her father's death, her thoughts are left to contemplate the crumbling pillars of service, duty, loyalty, and obedience, which used to provide the very foundations for her existence. If even her father cannot be honored, what use is there for her to continue the charade of social decorum? Thus, when she takes her audience with both the King and the Queen in Act 4, Scene 5, her words are not the incoherent ramblings of a madwoman but rather an adept commentary on the hypocrisies of the court and society at large.

Countless critics point to her "lewd songs" as evidence of her uncontrolled sexuality. However, by taking her madness as protest, her lyrics actually point to the injustices of how women are treated in love relationships, in general, and how Hamlet betrayed her specifically:

¹¹⁶ Shakespeare, 4.5:75-76,81-84. The King corroborates this sentiment, "O, this is the poison of deep grief. It springs/ All from her father's death, and now behold – / [...] the people muddied,/ Thick and unwholesome in thoughts and whispers/ For good Polonius' death, and we have done but greenly/ In hugger-mugger to inter him;"

Tomorrow is Saint Valentine's Day
 All in the morning betime,
 And I a maid at your window
 To be your valentine.
 Then up he rose and donned his clothes
 And dugged the chamber door –
 Let in the maid that out a maid
 Never departed more.
 [...]

Quoth she, 'Before you tumbled me
 You promised me to wed.'
 He answers:
 'So would I ha' done by yonder sun
 An thou hadst not come to my bed.'¹¹⁷

Here, she puts into plain view how the disingenuous man who lures a woman into bed can sully her honest reputation with the false promise of marriage. These lyrics may give some insight into the, also ambiguous, issue of Ophelia's chastity. It seems that Ophelia was not alone in her belief of Hamlet's sincere love.¹¹⁸ Gertrude states at Ophelia's funeral, "I hoped thou shoudst have been my Hamlet's wife."¹¹⁹ This being said, perhaps Hamlet had already made a promise of marriage to Ophelia. The audience is aware of the tokens of his affection or "remembrances" which Ophelia had in her possession.¹²⁰ It is plausible then, that believing his professions of love and possible promises to marriage which she points to in her lyrics, she naïvely allowed Hamlet to take her to his bed. This interpretation provides much more context for the "nunnery" scene in 3.1. Thus, his pointed inquisitions, "Are you honest?/ [...] Are you fair?," are all the more painful for

¹¹⁷ Shakespeare, 4.5:48-55, 62-66

¹¹⁸ Shakespeare, 2.2:108-121 Excerpted here: "To the celestial and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia – [...] Doubt truth to be a liar,/ But never doubt I love./ [...] I have not art / to reckon my groans, but that I love thee best, O most best,/ believe it. Adieu. Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst/ this machine is to him. Hamlet."

¹¹⁹ Shakespeare, 5.1:233

¹²⁰ Shakespeare, 3.1:92

Ophelia.¹²¹ “I say we will have no more marriage. Those that/ are married already – all but one – shall live. The rest/ shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go!”¹²² Critics often cite this as Hamlet’s commentary on the marriage between Gertrude and Claudius. However, in regards to Ophelia this statement is perhaps his deepest betrayal in verbally shunning her to a brothel and revoking his love and promise for a future, all the while knowing it was he who deflowered her. Further still, Hamlet continues to berate and insult Ophelia in 3.2 during the “mousetrap” scene:

Hamlet: Lady, shall I lie in your lap?
 Ophelia: No, my lord.
 Hamlet: Do you think I meant country matters?
 Ophelia: I think nothing, my lord.
 Hamlet: That’s a fair thought to lie between a maid’s legs.
 Ophelia: What is, my lord?
 Hamlet: Nothing.¹²³

This conversation happens during the “play within the play” in which Hamlet seeks to gain confirmation that Claudius poisoned his father. As this is all happening within earshot of both the King, Queen, Polonius, and other members of the court, her apparent silence takes on an entirely different meaning. Often times, Ophelia is portrayed as lacking in wits to effectively thwart Hamlet’s quips or she is depicted as painfully dull and “thoughtless.” However, here we see Ophelia as a woman with more cunning and social skill than she is often given credit for.

This reading of Ophelia’s relationship with Hamlet is paramount to understanding the nature of her madness. So often, critics paint her as an erotomaniac or driven mad by hysterical lust and uncontrolled desire. However, I find it much more plausible that

¹²¹ Shakespeare, 3.1:102, 104

¹²² Shakespeare, 3.1:146-148

¹²³ Shakespeare, 3.2:108-114

Ophelia's "mad" scene paints a rather scathing criticism of Hamlet's actions rather than pointing to her ongoing sexual desire for his love and his loins.

Indeed, Ophelia moves between a riddled explication of unrequited love and also mourning for her father's death. Her fluid transition in text between love, assumedly referencing Hamlet, and allusions to the grave, clearly citing Polonius, are often used as examples of her simple-minded and incongruent babblings in madness. However, when one views Ophelia's larger purpose as to make commentary on the misplaced values and expectations of obedience, sincerity, and honesty, even her most incongruent statements have clear context. Each of her lines can be read with either of the following two subtexts: "*Pray you mark.*"¹²⁴ *I was honest, sincere, and loyal in my love for Hamlet. I was a dutiful and obedient daughter. I have followed every order by my father, the King, and the Queen, and often against my better judgment, will and personal wishes. Look, now, how I am "rewarded!" My father was an honest and loyal servant to this court. He obediently followed your wills and orders. Look, now, how he is "rewarded" in his death!*

Lastly, I would argue that while Ophelia is certainly beside herself in grief, outraged, suspicious, anxious, bewildered, and wounded by betrayal, her words are not without meaning and directed purpose. Her "mad" scene in 4.5 is not truly madness, but rather her last attempt at protest to the injustices shown to her and her father. I would further argue that the "true" madness, which can also present itself as clarity, which leads her to death occurs in the interim between 4.5 and Gertrude's portrayal of her drowning in 4.7. For this, the reader has no further context as she exits the scene in 4.5 and her body is not seen again until her funeral in 5.1.

¹²⁴ Shakespeare, 4.5:34

Throughout Act 4, Scene 5, Ophelia displays not only clarity but also forethought. While I have not seen this interpretation elsewhere, I wish to point to the singular line which may hint to the notion that Ophelia premeditated her suicide. She begins in reference to her father's death:

(Sings.)
 They bore him bare-faced on the bier
 And in his grave rained many a tear.
 Fare you well, my dove.¹²⁵

Again, critics point to this final incongruent line as evidence of her confusion. The footnotes provided by the editors in The Arden Shakespeare edition of *Hamlet* note, "If this is Ophelia's own addition to the song (see t.n.), *my dove* seems more appropriate to a lost love than to a dead father; again she is alternating between the two (and possibly mistaking Laertes for Hamlet here)."¹²⁶ It is my belief that she is not confused. She is neither referencing her father, nor a lost love, nor Hamlet, nor mistaking Laertes for the former in this line. Rather, in recounting the bare face of her father in his grave she imagines herself in a similar fashion and foreshadows her own death. *Fare you well, my dove*, is a reference, then, to herself as she hints to her thoughts on suicide. She, thus, either bids herself adieu or she supplants this line as one her father might have given to her on her own deathbed.

Representing Madness in Movement

Given the near deluge of both intrinsic and extrinsic information regarding the interpretations of Ophelia's madness, it was absolutely necessary to limit how I would

¹²⁵ Shakespeare, 4.5:160-162

¹²⁶ Shakespeare, William. "The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. The Second Quarto (1604-5). *Hamlet*. Eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006. Print. (387)

approach the issue of representing Ophelia's malady in my thesis concert. Therefore, I centered my choreographic depiction of her descent into the realms of mental illness with the following two scenes. These are Act 3, Scene 1 and Act 4, Scene 5, which are both discussed at length above. For the purposes of my thesis concert, I was much more concerned with exploring through my choreography the *process* by which madness begins to filter and seep into the mind rather than coming to a definitive conclusion regarding a diagnosis of her illness. In fact, the larger choreographic questions in my concert were centered on how to depict the onset and later onslaught of Ophelia's madness. At first, madness appears almost imperceptibly as a strange thought or an



Figure 10: "Voices" from *OPHELIA*
Dancer: Kelsey Paschich, Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

unsettling experience. From this point, madness begins to whittle away at the pillars of Ophelia's virtue. She is at times gently manipulated and other times forcibly coerced into

“acting” out the madness that is no longer the “Other,” but is the dominating presence within Ophelia’s mind and body as “one and the same.”

Although insanity and mental illness is generally interpreted as a dark force, Ophelia’s madness breaks through to deepest recesses of her mind in order to shed light and illuminate the hidden self that had long been shackled by fear, obedience, and duty. Believing there are worse things than death and also in the ultimate transformation of the human spirit, Ophelia finally *takes action*. This singular undertaking to take control of the final moments of her life is then seen as a liberation and empowerment of Ophelia’s will.

The instrument of madness, which at first renders Ophelia as “incongruently mad,” is also the very same vehicle which drives her final awakening and the greater realization that death is also a means for transformation and transfiguration. Madness erases the fear of death and exposes the greater fear of living the rest of her days in confinement; forgotten in a padded cell.¹²⁷ Mancoff and Bosch also point to Ophelia’s inevitable incarceration:

Ailments of the nerves – fainting spells, loss of appetite, or the vapors – were the acknowledged symptoms of overwrought sensibility. But the conventional cures of rest and bland food would not be enough to restore Ophelia to health and good sense. [...] Ophelia’s behavior indicated that she was a victim not of strained nerves but of overstimulated sexuality. And the only treatment for that was confinement.¹²⁸

While I do not agree with the authors’ interpretation of Ophelia madness as a case of perturbation due to insatiable sexual appetite, I do agree with her certain detainment and perpetual confinement in solitary misery if she is left to continue down her path of mental anguish, anxiety, and paranoia. While I find it unnecessary to place a definitive label on

¹²⁷ See *Hamlet*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Sony Pictures Entertainment, 1996. DVD.

¹²⁸ Mancoff, Debra N. and Lindsay J. Bosch, 459

Ophelia's madness, I am willing to conjecture that it is potentially the fear of her permanent confinement that leads her to release her body and spirit to the open elements of nature; enveloped by the water of the free flowing brook, bedecked with garlands of flowers, and singing her final melodies out into the open air she gave way, rather, to permanent rest.

Death as a Woman

Karl S. Guthke rouses his reader with the very first line to the introduction of his book with the following question, "Is Death a woman?"¹²⁹ His question would seem to imply that death, like madness, is also gendered. Throughout his book, The Gender of Death: A Cultural History in Art and Literature, Guthke provides several examples of ways in which death is depicted as either male or female given the specific country, culture, or even language. The Grim Reaper, for example, is a well-known male personification of Death in Western cultures and he points to the fact that in both English and German cultures, "Death more often than not appears as a man."¹³⁰ So, why then, given that his book provides numerous examples of Death as both male *and* female does he choose not to open his Introduction as he does with his *second* paragraph, "Is Death a man or a woman?"¹³¹ Is it because he knows that female death represents that seductive "something" that Western cultures fear and desire simultaneously? *Is* Death a woman?

Elisabeth Bronfen takes up this question even further in her book, Over Her Dead Body: Death, femininity and the aesthetic.¹³² Just as Elaine Showalter and Jane M.

¹²⁹ Guthke, Karl S. *The Gender of Death: A Cultural History in Art and Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1999. Print. (1)

¹³⁰ Guthke, 7

¹³¹ Guthke, 1

¹³² Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Over Her Dead Body: Death, femininity and the aesthetic*. New York: Routledge,

Ussher point to the historical legacy of positioning women and madness as the same entity, so does Bronfen point to the synthesis of women, femininity, and death in the aesthetic realms of art. In the Preface, Bronfen elucidates these views:

Narrative and visual representations of death, drawing their material from a common cultural image repertoire, can be read as symptoms of our culture. Furthermore, because the feminine body is culturally constructed as the superlative site of alterity, culture uses art to dream the deaths of beautiful women.¹³³

To be certain Ophelia is entrenched within the “common cultural image repertoire” of beautiful and dying women. The image of a beautiful woman in white, surrounded by flowers, floating serenely in water, half-dead, drowning, and corpse-like immediately conjures the cultural memory of Ophelia. One does not even need to see her face or the specific image at all. The description alone will suffice. This is partly due to the ubiquity John Everett Millais’ life-like/death-like *Ophelia*. However, this specific cultural imagery has implanted itself in the symbolic languages of Western cultures due to the vividness with which Shakespeare describes Ophelia’s death. Through Gertrude’s poetic description, the audience must further take responsibility for filling in the visual gaps of her doubly represented death. Perhaps, the reader’s complicit participation in Ophelia’s death is why she has captured the imaginations of authors and artists for the last four centuries. Illustrating with brilliant detail, Gertrude recounts Ophelia’s final moments:

There is a willow grows askant the brook
That shows his hoary leaves in the glassy stream.
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make
Of crowsfeet, nettles, daisies, and long purples,
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men’s fingers call them.
There on the pendent boughs her crownet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,

1992.

¹³³ Bronfen, xi

When down her weedy trophies and herself
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide
 And mermaid-like awhile they bore her up,
 Which time she chanted snatches of old lauds,
 As one incapable of her own distress,
 Or like a creature native and endued
 Unto that element. But long it could not be
 Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pulled the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.¹³⁴

This is arguably one of the most gorgeously rendered death scenes in all of history that never actually happens. In Bridget Gellert Lyons' article "The Iconography of Ophelia," she astutely notes that, "Ophelia's death is 'beautified' by the Queen [...]; it is described visually in terms of the flowers with which she has been associated, and in language that emphasizes the natural beauty rather than the horror of the scene."¹³⁵ Interestingly, Gertrude seems hardly affected when she recounts the paradoxically beautiful and horrific account of Ophelia's death.¹³⁶ Nevertheless, the beautifying of Ophelia's death necessarily feminizes the account. In the process of symbolically representing her death with feminine overtones consequently conflates Ophelia's death with her female body. Thus, it is not surprising that Ophelia has become a cultural icon for not only women and madness, but also women and death.

Given the fact that Ophelia's drowning is mediated through the voice of Gertrude, it brings to the fore the issue of Ophelia's absent body. By removing Ophelia's physical presence from the scene and transferring the "action" of her death to Gertrude, Shakespeare undoubtedly undermines Ophelia's personal power in this scene and

¹³⁴ Shakespeare, 4.7:165-182

¹³⁵ Lyons, Bridget Gellert. "The Iconography of Ophelia." *ELH* Vol. 44, No. 1 (Spring, 1977): 60-74. Print. (71)

¹³⁶ See performances by Julie Christie (*Hamlet*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Sony Pictures Entertainment, 1996. DVD.) and Glen Close (*Hamlet*. Dir. Franco Zeffirelli. Warner Bros., 1990. DVD.) in their roles of Gertrude in each film respectively.

inevitably diminishes the potency of her actions. While I certainly do not wish to romanticize or glorify death, I do not see either Ophelia's madness or her final demise as the real tragedy in this situation. Rather, the actual tragedy lies in her lamentable and distressing lack of agency throughout the play. Thus, when Shakespeare provides the option of interpreting Ophelia's death as either an accident or a suicide, I find it painful to reconcile her death as the ultimate lack of un-willful agency and that she falls helplessly unaware into the cold river below. I would rather choose to believe that even a young woman in Shakespeare's age could cast off the limited roles available to her of the waiting maid, the dutiful daughter, the submissive wife, or the wretched widow through her own volition; even if only through the force of madness. Given that the madness is of her mind and not of an external impetus, it should be interpreted that it is in fact *Ophelia* and not her *madness* that summons up her power and courage to act, if only for but a brief moment leading to her impending doom. Once again, the tragedy is neither in her madness nor in her death, but in the brevity of her action as an agent of her own will.

Choreographing Madness and an Inevitable Death

Recalling Brain Greene's text in Chapter 3, there is certainly an ongoing play between the notions of order, disorder, and inevitability regarding Ophelia's madness and death in my thesis concert, *OPHELIA*. From the very first moment of the production, when the audience views Ophelia alone in the bathtub, it sets into motion an entire series of events that propel her forward through varying degrees of mental disarray. Eventually, the internal chaos of Ophelia's mind gives way to a peaceful calm, which guides Ophelia



Figure 11: Prelude to “Innocence” from *OPHELIA*
Dancer: Kelsey Paschich, Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

back into the bathtub as her deathbed. Given this dramatic arc, I attempted to portray Ophelia as a full character with multiple layers of complexity. I also wanted to depict Ophelia’s madness as a gradually strengthening force and influence upon Ophelia’s actions and reactions, rather than a sudden onset of illness brought on by a singular event. Essentially, *OPHELIA* is a story about transformation from one type of wholeness to another type completely, through the fracturing of the psyche and the process of emptying herself of her very ideas of *self*. This then leads from the transcendence of *self* to the transfiguration of spirit through death. Perhaps this is a bit esoteric for what so many critics have called such a pitiful and pathetic character. However, this is the precise journey I hoped to traverse through my interpretation and representation of Ophelia by way of the choreography in my thesis concert.

Moving briefly through selected scenes, *OPHELIA* begins with the depiction of Ophelia’s wholeness and unity of mind, body, and spirit. The scene opens upon a young woman daydreaming in the bathtub. Through the personification of her virtues, Faith,

Beauty, and Innocence, the audience witnesses these three characters as not only facets of Ophelia's mind and internal attributes, but also as participants and witnesses along her personal journey. The three Graces first appear in "Innocence" as the playful manifestations of Ophelia's wandering mind as she projects her hopes, dreams, and hidden secrets onto the main of the stage. As the Graces gently draw Ophelia out of the



Figure 12: "Innocence" from *OPHELIA*
 Dancers (Left to Right): Kelsey Paschich, Sarah Hogland, Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, and Luz Guillen
 Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

tub, she makes her way downstage to begin her solo titled, "He Loves Me." This piece of choreography is a sweeping depiction of uninhibited love by a young woman unscathed by heartbreak, loss, or betrayal. She swells with hopeful promise, as the Graces swirl in and out of the wings as evidence of her internal exhilaration. She is secretly enraptured by her remembrances of her first encounters of adult love with Hamlet. This is the last piece in the production, however, which characterizes Ophelia as being fully intact in her mental faculties.

After “He Loves Me,” the characters begin the gradual process of transitioning from sanity to madness until the final moments of the show, which portrays Ophelia’s death. In coaching the dancers, I related the work, “Voices,” to the monumental task of turning the *Titanic*. The mood must shift with imperceptible subtlety in its first few



Figure 13: “Voices” from *OPHELIA*
Dancer: Kelsey Paschich, Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

moments of silence. “Voices” is set to a score of spoken text, which is performed by the Graces off stage. Their vocal word-scapes are then amplified and projected from alternating speakers throughout the house and around the stage space so that the sound seems to be coming from varying directions. The text is taken directly from Act 3, Scene 1. [See Appendix 5.] However the choreographed solo is meant to portray Ophelia’s incessant and obsessive thoughts on Hamlet’s insults and harsh words *after* the fact, rather than during the scene itself. At first, Ophelia is unsure if the voices she hears are coming from outside or from within herself. She begins to imagine that people are talking

about her and taunting her with Hamlet's words. The movement portrays an individual who appears to be chased or attacked by an unseen manifestation of sound. However, it eventually becomes clear that the opponent is none other than the thoughts inside Ophelia's mind when in the final moment of the scene, the Madness character drops into the space from the edge of the wing, the voices immediately fall silent, and Ophelia begins speaking to herself out loud in rushed whispers.

Between the pieces "Washed Clean" and "Seeping In," there is a very short interlude in which Ophelia "comments" on Hamlet's statement that there should be no more marriages. Having physically and metaphorically washed herself of Hamlet, she removes the top part of her dress and lets it drape around her waist. The Graces bring out



Figure 14: Interlude before "Seeping In" from *OPHELIA*
Dancers (Left to Right): Kelsey Paschich, Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, and Luz Guillen
Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

a long train of fabric, which appears to be a deconstructed section of a wedding dress. With the fabric trailing behind her, Ophelia begins to walk slowly across the stage with determined and measured steps. Having lost all belief in the institution of marriage, Faith

pours thick soil from a tall glass vase along the length of the train. Ophelia, thus, drags the soil across the space and deposits it at the far edge of the stage, wringing the train as she exists. This soil is directly related to the Madness character. In Gertrude's description of Ophelia's drowning, she explains that she is pulled to "muddy death." This soil serves to represent the darkened depths of Ophelia's mind from which, "Madness" is literally birthed.

In the play, the audience is not made aware of how Ophelia learns of her father's death nor do they see his funeral. The only commentary Shakespeare provides for Ophelia regarding her father's death comes in Act 4, Scene 5 during her "mad" scene. However, I do not believe that Polonius' death sent her spiraling into madness straight away. As such, I wanted to create a scene where Ophelia mourns her father at his grave



Figure 15: "Father Ghost" from *OPHELIA*
Dancers (Left to Right): Sonja Bologna and Kelsey Paschich
Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

shortly after he has been buried. The soil from which Madness emerges also serves as the site of Polonius' grave. I thought it would create an interesting juxtaposition to overlap the experiences of both Hamlet and Ophelia in this piece. "Father Ghost" takes on a

similar feeling to “Voices,” in that at the beginning of the piece Ophelia believes she sees her father among the shapes and shadows of the cemetery. Thus, just as Hamlet sees an apparition of his father’s ghost, Madness manifests as the ghost of Ophelia’s father. Once again, Ophelia is unsure if she is hallucinating or if the figure of her father is actually present. This time, however, Madness has already begun to take hold of Ophelia’s mind and she believes in the truth of her visions. Ironically, she never actually *sees* the Madness character as she crosses the stage. The “father” ghost is only a presence that is felt by Ophelia. Seeing the vision of her father fade away up into the distance she futilely runs across the stage and cries for him to stay. As earlier described by the Gentleman, she wails and beats upon her chest, completely heartbroken by her mixed emotions of sorrow, outrage, and disbelief.

Rounding out this discussion, I address the issues presented in the final two pieces in the concert: “Madness” and “Transformation.” Once again, in Shakespeare’s work the audience does not see the moment which madness takes full control over Ophelia’s being. In Act 3, Scene 2, Ophelia clearly still has her wits about her and she uses them skillfully against Hamlet. Then, when she appears again in Act 4, Scene 5 she is inexplicably “distracted.” Claudius comments, “poor Ophelia,/ Divided from herself and her fair judgement,/ Without the which we are pictures or mere beasts.”¹³⁷ Throughout my concert, I offer several examples that lead to the “why” of her madness without necessarily pointing to any singular event. However, in this case, I felt it was necessary to pinpoint the exact moment in which Ophelia becomes “divided” and to address the precise “how” of the matter. Again calling upon Greene’s metaphor of the egg, I portrayed Ophelia’s mind as being fully cracked open and shattered by madness. These

¹³⁷ Shakespeare, 4.5:84-86

final moments in which Ophelia struggles to hold on to the last remnants of her sanity are not passive in the least. This is indeed a violent contest of wills between Ophelia and



Figure 16: “Madness” from *OPHELIA*
 Dancers (Left to Right): Sarah Hogland, Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, (back) Sonia Bologna,
 (front) Kelsey Paschich, and Luz Guillen
 Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

Madness for the ultimate prize of her in/sanity. While the Graces explore the full ranges of screaming, sobbing, laughing, singing, babbling, etc., Madness is paradoxically in very quiet and orderly control as she exercises complete domination over Ophelia and her virtues. At the moment that Ophelia’s mind finally breaks completely open, every thought and clinging notion of *self* pour out of her like yolk slipping through a cracked shell. As such, she is rendered completely and utterly empty of her former self.

In preparation for this scene, the dancers and I watched several renditions of *Hamlet* on film, examined photographs, and analyzed texts on madness. However, the

most influential source came from watching the film *Butoh: Piercing the Mask*.¹³⁸

Several concepts from this film made its way into the final construction of “Madness.”

The primary reference to the film was in finding inspiration for the manner in which Ophelia should look and act when madness finally consumes her mind and body. Along with my cast and advising faculty committee, questions and suggestions abounded regarding the representation of Ophelia’s madness. The cast and I explored several treatments of her character within this scene. However, in the end, the stark and utter emptiness found in the Butoh performance of female dancer Akeno Ashikawa proved to be the most startling and affective inspiration for Ophelia’s madness.



Figure 17: “Madness” from *OPHELIA*
Dancers (Left to Right): Kelsey Paschich and Sonja Bologna
Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

Ashikawa speaks to this process in detail:

I like the feeling of the texture of cocoons. A cocoon produces numerous threads. The threads come out so fast that my body is often left behind. At such times my body is empty. I wonder where my stomach and other organs have gone. But the threads that go out may be my organs or they may go out through all my pores.

¹³⁸ *Butoh: Piercing the Mask*. Dir. Richard Moore. Insight Media, 1991. DVD.

They spread out into space; no one can stop them. All that's left of me is contours. In the meantime, my body remains in the cocoon and is suffocated. People often say that I'm not moving or that I look like an idiot. Is it because I move too fast?¹³⁹

Once Madness has taken control of Ophelia's mind, she is rendered motionless at the edge of the stage. A living shell, she gazes inwardly and outwardly simultaneously. Fully entranced by madness, the last remains of her former *self* ooze out of her body.

Given that Madness is represented in the body of its own character within the concert, it is at times difficult to hold the conceptual awareness that the madness Ophelia experiences is of her own mind/self. Ophelia and Madness are the same entity, the same being, and the same body. Madness is *of* mind. It is simply a different *quality* of mind that most people never experience. So, while the action of the choreography may give the impression that Madness is acting upon Ophelia it should be understood that Ophelia is actually acting upon *herself*. When Ophelia cultivated her virtues of faith, beauty and innocence and behaved in a manner to uphold these qualities, she was rendered powerless and invisible in the world. Thus, in order to obtain an effective tool to exercise her agency and power within society, Ophelia's mind created madness out of necessity.

While the dancers and I were working on the "Madness" choreography/scene, I always emphasized that madness was not a dark force that debases Ophelia's spirit. Rather, it is a vehicle for her transformation into a position of greater clarity and insight. While I was also influenced by the power of Butoh performance, I was also inspired by the many examples of ecstatic dance and trance rituals, which connect the dancer, practitioner, healer, or shaman to higher states of consciousness and into communion

¹³⁹ Ashikawa, Akeno. Interview. *Butoh: Piercing the Mask*. Dir. Richard Moore. Insight Media, 1991. DVD.

with the divine spirit. Drawing examples from the film *Dances of Ecstasy*,¹⁴⁰ I came to equate Ophelia's journey into the recesses of her mind with the similar journeys of these ecstatic dancers who voluntarily release their consciousness in order to seek divine wisdom. A small booklet accompanied the DVD to this film, which provided some very useful quotations from both practitioners and scholars of trance/ecstatic dance:

It comes from the Gods and the ancestors. When the power comes it enters my body like a wind then I can feel that I am now having power. – San healer¹⁴¹

In your backbone you feel a pointed something and it works its way up. The base of your spine is tingling, tingling, tingling. Then N'um makes your thoughts nothing in your head. It bursts, it's like fire, it burns you... - San healer, Kxao Oah¹⁴²

That's why we call people in trance living in the earth and in the heaven, because their body is still in the earth, but the soul and the mind has already gone very far. – Sandodare, Yuruba priest¹⁴³

Shamanic trance is a very dramatic changing of consciousness and the biochemistry of the body and mind. It is to enter into the treasure house of what may be called collective and universal consciousness to gain knowledge, to gain wisdom to bring back into space and time. – Jean Houston¹⁴⁴

With this specific frame of reference, I began to choreograph and direct the “Transformation” scene in my concert, which leads Ophelia into her final rest. This scene is a complete departure from the action of “Madness” and places Ophelia within an environment of tranquil ease and peaceful resolve. Madness gently guides Ophelia out of her trance and leads her toward the upstage space, where the Graces bring in the bathtub and help her to dress into her burial attire. Donning a long simple dress and veil of white,

¹⁴⁰ *Dances of Ecstasy*. Dir. Michelle Maher, Nicole Ma. Opus Arte, 2003. DVD.

¹⁴¹ “Dances of Ecstasy DVD Booklet.” Booklet Editor Miranda McIntyre. Silveroaks Farm: Opus Arte UK Ltd, 2003. Print. (6)

¹⁴² “Dances of Ecstasy DVD Booklet,” 6

¹⁴³ “Dances of Ecstasy DVD Booklet,” 11

¹⁴⁴ “Dances of Ecstasy DVD Booklet,” 22



Figure 18: “Transformation” from *OPHELIA*
 Dancers (Left to Right): Luz Guillen, Kelsey Paschich, Sarah Hogland, Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales,
 and Sonja Bologna
 Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

Ophelia’s garments suggest the union between marriage and death in this scene. While Shakespeare’s suggestion and requirement for Ophelia’s “maimed” burial rites are historically appropriate, I nonetheless took offense, as did Laertes, that no further ceremony or blessing could be offered for Ophelia:

Laertes: Must there no more be done?

Priest: No more be done.
 We should profane the service of the dead
 To sing a requiem and such rest to her
 As to peace-departed souls.
 Lay her i’t’h’ earth.¹⁴⁵

Unlike the Priest, however, I believe that Ophelia did pass gently and with great peace. In my concert, I took great care to attend to the details of Ophelia’s death scene and final rites. Madness places a rose petal upon her tongue. Some may view this to be symbolic of the Eucharist, which is given during the Sacrament of Marriage and also with one’s final

¹⁴⁵ Shakespeare, 5.1:223-228

rites before death. Alternately, one may choose to view the rose petal as the poison, which she takes to ease her into her death inside the bathtub coffin. Yet a third interpretation, is that Madness symbolically transfers and restores Ophelia's love, transcendent sanity, and virtues with this final offering. At this point, the Madness character retreats back into the darkness and exits the stage. Ophelia is again restored to a new wholeness with her Graces of Faith, Beauty, and Innocence in a matured and more nuanced characterization of each. Rather than construct a cold, lonely death, the Graces attend to her "bedside" and bathe her body in a manner of baptismal cleansing.



Figure 19: "Transformation" from *OPHELIA*
 Dancers (Left to Right): Sarah Hogland, (back) Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, (in tub) Kelsey Paschich
 and Luz Guillen
 Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

When Ophelia passes away, the Graces cover her body and the tub with a sheer white burial shroud. Once again, questions arose regarding the necessity for the shroud and why I would choose to remove Ophelia's body from the view of the audience. I return to Coppélia Kahn in [The Afterlife of Ophelia](#) for perspective on the subject.

Referring to the work of John Everett Millais, Kahn states, “both painting and [Gertrude’s] narrative ‘reduce her to an object, whether verbal or visual.’”¹⁴⁶ Further still, Jane M. Ussher comments, “The images of woman as object, not as active agent or creative autonomous subject, ensure that women remain on the outside, that women’s voices are not heard.”¹⁴⁷ As such, I did not want to objectify Ophelia in the state of her death, as so many visual artists have done in their represented deaths of beautiful women throughout the ages. Clearly, some may argue that pulling the shroud over her body only reduces her to an amorphous and inanimate object, which may be even worse than her objectification as female death. However, I disagree with these interpretations. I believe that the shroud provides a finality to her “burial” that was never offered to her in



Figure 20: “Transformation” from *OPHELIA*
 Dancers (Left to Right): Sarah Hogland, Ana M. Arechiga Gonzales, (covered) Kelsey Paschich,
 and Luz Guillen
 Photo Credit: Travis Lewis, 2013

¹⁴⁶ Kahn, “Afterword,” *The Afterlife of Ophelia*, 237

¹⁴⁷ Ussher, 278

Shakespeare's text. No sooner does Ophelia's bare and paltry funeral begin, Laertes leaps into her grave to embrace her one last time. At this moment, Hamlet reveals himself from his place of hiding and Laertes leaps out of the grave dropping Ophelia's dead body from his arms. Enraged, Laertes and Hamlet begin fighting with intent to kill. The men are pulled away from each other and Hamlet professes, with much bravado, his true love for Ophelia anew. The action of the play moves ahead in dealing with the tensions between Hamlet, Laertes, and the King and Ophelia and her funeral are forgotten.¹⁴⁸ As such, I attempted to give Ophelia a "proper" burial, if only through the dignity of covering her face. Furthermore, I had hoped to draw the audience's attention and preoccupation away from Ophelia's physical body in the bathtub and towards the idea of Ophelia's spiritual body beginning its new journey beyond the confines of her watery coffin. Perhaps the only "kindness" offered to Ophelia during Shakespeare's scene is from the Queen.

Placing flowers upon her body Gertrude laments:

Sweets to the sweet. Farewell.
[...]
I thought thy bride-bed to have decked, sweet, maid,
And not have strewed thy grave.¹⁴⁹

Taking inspiration from Gertrude's gesture, the final image in my concert is that of a shower of rose petals fluttering down from the sky and landing gently upon Ophelia's body and coffin.

¹⁴⁸ See Shakespeare's *Hamlet* Act 5, Scene 1

¹⁴⁹ Shakespeare, 5.1:232-234

CONCLUSION

Reader!
If thou hast a Heart fam'd for
Tenderness and Pity,
Contemplate this Spot.
In which are deposited the Remains
of a Young Lady, whose artless Beauty,
innocence of Mind, and gentle Manners,
once obtain'd her the Love and
Esteem of all who knew her. But when
Nerves were too delicately spun to
bear the rude Shakes and Jostlings
which we meet with in this transitory
World, Nature gave way; she sunk
and died a Martyr to Excessive
Sensibility.

Mrs. SARAH FLETCHER
 Wife of Captain FLETCHER
 departed this Life at the Village
 of Clifton, on the 7 of June 1799,
 In the 29 Year of her Age.
 May her Soul meet the Peace in
 Heaven, which this Earth denied her.¹⁵⁰

While this text belongs to the gravestone of Mrs. Sarah Fletcher who died by her own hand, this could easily serve as the final memorial to Ophelia as well. As is characterized and epitomized by Ophelia, Mrs. Fletcher was young, beautiful, innocent, and apparently also “mad.” Driven to suicide by her husband’s infidelities and betrayal, she committed suicide by hanging. The coroner, however, ruled her death with the verdict of “Lunacy” rather than suicide so as to afford her a proper Christian burial.¹⁵¹ As the precise circumstances of Ophelia’s death remain shrouded in mystery (accident or suicide), so

¹⁵⁰ Small, Helen. *Love’s Madness: Medicine, the Novel, and Female Insanity 1800-1865*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. Print. (1) See also pages 1-6 for more information regarding the life and suicide of Mrs. Sarah Fletcher.

¹⁵¹ These details are strikingly similar to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* Act 5, Scene 1: Gravedigger: Is she to be buried in Christian burial,/ when she willfully seeks her own salvation? MAN: I tell thee she is. Therefore make her grave/ straight. The crowner hath sat on her and finds it Christian burial.

are the details of Mrs. Fletcher's demise in which there remain rumors that she was actually murdered by her husband.¹⁵² This brief, yet striking, example serves to illustrate the myriad issues surrounding Shakespeare's character of Ophelia and the ways in which her archetype found its way into the lives of real women. By extension, Mrs. Fletcher's example also points to the very same historical, cultural, and political concerns of women, madness, death, and suicide, which are explored through the various representations of Shakespeare's Ophelia.

My investigation of Ophelia through the languages of choreography and the written word have completely transformed my notions about women and madness and have opened my eyes to the multiplicity of issues surrounding this icon of beauty, madness, and death. Through this process, additional questions have necessarily been raised regarding the contemporary Ophelia. Would today's Ophelia still be mad? Would she lack options and agency? How would she deal with the male relationships in her life? These are intriguing questions, indeed, and they most certainly point to areas of future research. Further, addressing the concept of a "contemporary" Ophelia also points to the difficulty in isolating her character and numerous representations to any particular point in history without acknowledging or referencing her historical evolution. Like any other woman, real or represented, she does not exist without a past.

For myself, the most intriguing questions regarding Ophelia's madness were encapsulated within the issues of voice and agency. I discovered that through the language of choreography and movement, Ophelia is given a voice to speak about her madness, which cannot otherwise authentically be experienced or understood outside of herself. Furthermore, Ophelia as the dancing body necessarily embodies agency as she

¹⁵² Small, 4-5

must act and she *must move*. In these terms, to act and to move is to speak and to transform. Here, I close with one final quote from Sharon Klayman Farber, Ph.D., “The body speaks that which cannot be spoken.”¹⁵³ Thus, in transferring the primary site of Ophelia’s text from the page to the body she is able to speak volumes beyond the 169 lines of text cited in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and she is effectively empowered through the deliberate actions of the moving body. Therefore, it is my sincere hope that in choreographing *OPHELIA* I have been able to not only listen and empathize, but to also give voice and body to the many silenced tales of women and madness throughout history through the nuanced languages of movement and dance.

¹⁵³ Farber, Sharon Klayman, Ph.D. *When the Body Is the Target: Self-Harm, Pain, and Traumatic Attachments*. Northvale: Jarson Aronson Inc., 2000. Print. (263). Dr. Farber is a Board Certified Diplomate in clinical social work. She specializes in child and adolescent treatment with an emphasis on eating and psychosomatic disorders.

AFTERWORD

Valuing the language of dance and the crafted form of choreography as legitimate forms of research, I placed considerable effort in the creation of my final MFA Choreographic Project as the body of work with which I would express my informed opinions and views regarding the representation of fragmentation, madness, women, beauty, and death via the formal structure of concert dance performance. Each live presentation of *OPHELIA* thus acted as a means of transmitting not only knowledge and information, but also a shared experience to the audience through the powers of affect and kinetic empathy. This lived and embodied experience for the audience also created a shared cultural memory, furthering discourse and commentary on the existing artistic and literary works in the field. Much like the written and published document, these performances are also documented through video/high definition recordings. As such, these records should be seen as discrete and complete bodies of research and not “supplemental” to the written dissertation.

For the artist-scholar and, even more specifically for the choreographer-scholar, there exists a palpable tension in the world of academia between his/her choreographic and written research. This tension stems from an institutionalized value for the less ephemeral and the more concrete, and also publishable, forms of scholarship. Diana Taylor defines this particular strain within various scenarios in her text, The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas. In positioning her argument, she states:

The rift, I submit does not lie between the written and the spoken word, but between the *archive* of supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the so-called ephemeral *repertoire* of embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual). [...] The archive

and the repertoire have always been important sources of information, both exceeding the limitations of the other, in literate and semi-literate societies. They usually work in tandem and they work alongside other systems of transmission – the digital and the visual, to name two.¹⁵⁴

Given the framework of the *archive* and the *repertoire*, it is noted that by recording and digitizing the live performance it thus becomes part of the archive. It should also be made abundantly clear that the recording is not an adequate replacement for the live performance. However, for the purposes of addressing the value of the *repertoire* within this context I heartily welcome the inclusion of a digitized version of, *OPHELIA*, as a “supplement” to this written dissertation as noted in Appendix 1. I absolutely agree with Taylor that “performances function as vital acts of transfer” and that they effectively “transmit social knowledge [and] memory.”¹⁵⁵ As such, I would encourage the reader to view the recorded concert with the notion that the choreography is not merely a “supplement” to this document but a complete body of research onto itself with its own inherent value, which also dialogs within and between this written dissertation.

¹⁵⁴ Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. Print. (19, 21)

¹⁵⁵ Taylor, 2

During the third and final year of study, the MFA in Dance degree candidate is required to engage in two parallel streams of research. The first is the creation of a final MFA Choreographic Project, which takes the form of a full evening of original choreography. This evening of work must demonstrate the degree candidate's highest achievement of artistry and craft. The second is the creation of a written Dissertation, which must address an aesthetic concern or choreographic problem in addition to a topic of formal research. In addressing the first, I created a 70-minute choreographic work titled, *OPHELIA*.

OPHELIA was performed on March 8 and 9, 2013 in Rodey Theatre at the University of New Mexico Center for the Arts in Albuquerque, New Mexico. In order to provide the reader access to this choreographic research, a DVD of the March 9th performance has been archived as a "supplementary file" to the LoboVault repository. Thus, the concert may be watched in its entirety by accessing the digital file, which accompanies the PDF file for the written dissertation.

While I highly encourage the viewing of the digital file of *OPHELIA* by all readers, please be advised that all rights are reserved and duplication or reproduction is not permitted without permission.



Appendix 2: *OPHELIA* CONCERT PROGRAM – FRONT COVER
Photography and Poster Design: Travis Lewis, 2013

OPHELIA

Innocence

Music: Colleen

He Loves Me

Music: Olafur Arnalds

Voices

Text Excerpts: *Hamlet*

He Loves Me Not

Music: Olafur Arnalds

Washed Clean

Music: Max Richter

Seeping In

Music: Valerio Vigliar, Nature Sound Series,
Baby Lullabies & White Noise

Yo(l)ke

Music: Hildur Gudnadottir, Tenniscoats

Father Ghost

Fissure

Music: Sylvain Chauveau

Madness

Music: Joelle Léandre

Transformation

Music: Olafur Arnalds

CAST

Ophelia

Kelsey Paschich

Madness

Sonja Bologna

The Graces

Faith – Ana Mercedes Arechiga Gonzales

Beauty – Luz Guillen

Innocence – Sarah Hogland

Choreography & Artistic Direction

Jacqueline M. Garcia, Degree Candidate

MFA in Dance, Choreography

CREW

Stage Manager: Michael Hidalgo

Assistant Stage Managers: David Alonzo de Franklin, Kyle Bible, Loren Billington

Lighting Designer: Michael Hidalgo

Sound Board: Allison Cravens

Light Board: Stephen Balling

Master Electrician: Nathan Capriglione

Deck Electric: Chelsea Costello, Kaylor Karlin, Yolanda Knight, Rebecca McConaghy

Run Crew: Tamara Farmer, Kim Jennings, Dominic Perea, Carrie Tafoya

Company Class & Cast Warm-Up: Lisa Nevada

Costume Conceptualization: Jacqueline M. Garcia

Costumes Provided by: UNM Dept. of Theatre & Dance Costume Shop

Costume Alterations: Erik Flores

Photography & Poster Design: Travis Lewis

VOICES:

Soft you now... the fair Ophelia!

Nymph, in thy orisons be all my sins remembered.

Are you pure?¹⁵⁶ Are you fair?

I did love you once... You should not have believed me... I loved you not.

Get thee to a nunnery. Why wouldst thou be a breeder of sinners? ...

We are arrant knaves, all. Believe none of us.

If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry.

Be thou chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny.

Get thee to a nunnery, go. Farewell.

Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool, for wise men know well enough what monsters you make of them.

To a nunnery, go, and quickly too.

Farewell.

Appendix 5: *OPHELIA* "VOICES" TEXT from *Hamlet* Act 3, Scene 1

¹⁵⁶ This line was changed from "Are you honest?" to "Are you pure?"

REFERENCES

References Cited

- Ashikawa, Akeno. Interview. *Butoh: Piercing the Mask*. Dir. Richard Moore. Insight Media, 1991. DVD.
- Bausch, Pina. *Pina*. Dir. Wim Wenders. Choreography: Pina Bausch. Mongrel Media, 2012. Film, DVD.
- Butoh: Piercing the Mask*. Dir. Richard Moore. Insight Media, 1991. DVD.
- Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Over Her Dead Body: Death, femininity and the aesthetic*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. Berkley: University of California Press, Ltd., 1987. Print.
- Chauveau, Sylvain. “Andréa,” “Andréa’s Hands,” and “Andréa’s Hands II.” *Nuage*. Type Recordings, Ltd., 2007. CD, MP3.
- Chesler, Ph.D., Phyllis. *Women and Madness*. 25th Anniversary Ed. New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1997. Print.
- Dances of Ecstasy*. Dir. Michelle Maher, Nicole Ma. Opus Arte, 2003. DVD.
- “Dances of Ecstasy DVD Booklet.” Booklet Editor Miranda McIntyre. Silveroaks Farm: Opus Arte UK Ltd, 2003. Print.
- Farber, Sharon Klayman, Ph.D. *When the Body Is the Target: Self-Harm, Pain, and Traumatic Attachments*. Northvale: Jarson Aronson Inc., 2000. Print.
- Gerwig, Gerooge W. *Shakespeare’s Ideals of Womanhood*. East Aurora: The Roycroft Shops, 1929. Print.
- Gilman, Charlotte Perkins Stetson Gilman. “The Yellow Wallpaper.” *Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness*. Ed. Rebecca Shannonhouse. New York: The Modern Library, 2000. 32-49. Print.
- Glucklich, Ariel. *Sacred Pain: Hurting the Body for the Sake of the Soul*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.
- Greene, Brian. *The Fabric of the Cosmos: Space, Time, and the Texture of Reality*. New York: Vintage Books, 2005. Print.
- Goldberg, RoseLee. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. 3rd ed. New York:

- Thames & Hudson, 2011. Print.
- Guthke, Karl S. *The Gender of Death: A Cultural History in Art and Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1999. Print.
- Hamlet*. Dir. Kenneth Branagh. Sony Pictures Entertainment, 1996. DVD.
- Hamlet*. Dir. Franco Zeffirelli. Warner Bros., 1990. DVD.
- Hubert, Susan J. *Questions of Power: The Politics of Women's Madness Narratives*. Newark: U of Delaware P, 2002. Print.
- Ingram, Allan with Michelle Faubert. *Cultural Constructions of Madness in Eighteenth Century Writing: Representing the Insane*. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2005. Print.
- Kahn, Coppélia. "Afterword." *The Afterlife of Ophelia*. Eds. Kaara L. Peterson and Deanne Williams. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2012. Print.
- Kemp, Theresa D. *Women in the Age of Shakespeare*. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2010. Print.
- Kiefer, Carol Solomon. "The Myth and Madness of Ophelia." Ed. Carol Solomon Kiefer. *The Myth and Madness of Ophelia*. Amherst: Amherst College, 2001. 9-39. Print.
- Kirby, Michael. "The New Theatre." *The Tulane Drama Review* 10.2 (Winter, 1965): 23-43. Print.
- Korsmeyer, Carolyn. *GENDER AND AESTHETICS: An introduction*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.
- Lowe, Ben. "Body Images and the Politics of Beauty: Formation of the Feminine Ideal in Medieval and Early Modern Europe." *Ideals of Feminine Beauty: Philosophical, Social, and Cultural Dimensions*. Ed. Karen A. Callaghan. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994. 21-36. Print.
- Lyons, Bridget Gellert. "The Iconography of Ophelia." *ELH* Vol. 44, No. 1 (Spring, 1977): 60-74. Print.
- Mancoff, Debra N. and Lindsay J. Bosch. *Icons of Beauty: Art, Culture, and the Image of Women*. Volume 2. Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2010. Print.
- McGregor, Wayne, choreographer. *CHROMA. Three Ballets by Wayne McGregor: CHROMA, INFRA, LIMEN*. Choreography: Wayne McGregor for The Royal Ballet. Music: Joby Talbot and Jack White III, Max Richter, and Kaija Saariaho. BBC/Opus Arte, 2001. DVD.

Millais, John Everett. *Ophelia*. Circa 1851-1852. Oil on canvas. Tate Britain, London.

Naharin, Ohad, choreographer. *Kamuyot*. Choreography: Ohad Naharin for Batsheva Ensemble, 2003. Uploaded on September 11, 2008 as *Makot Solo* to YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Fu4Wt66TNM>.

Peterson, Kaara L. and Deanne Williams, eds. *The Afterlife of Ophelia*. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2012. Print.

--- "Introduction." *The Afterlife of Ophelia*. Eds. Kaara L. Peterson and Deanne Williams. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2012. Print.

Porter, Roy. "Madness and Creativity: Communication and Excommunication." *Madness and Creativity in Culture*. Eds. Corinne Saunders and Jane Macnaughton. New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2005. 19-34. Print.

Shakespeare, William. "The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. The Second Quarto (1604-5). *Hamlet*. Eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006. Print.

Shannonhouse, Rebecca, ed. *Out of Her Mind: Women Writing on Madness*. New York: The Modern Library, 2000. Print.

Showalter, Elaine. *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1985. Print.

--- "Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism." Eds. Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman. *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*. New York: Methuen, 1985. 77-94. Print.

Small, Helen. *Love's Madness: Medicine, the Novel, and Female Insanity 1800-1865*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996. Print.

Sulcas, Roslyn. "Movement Complimented by Immobility and Silence." *The New York Times*. Published: 8 March 2008. Web. Also in Print. <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/05/arts/dance/05bats.html>.

Sweeney, Kathleen. *Maiden USA: Girl Icons Come of Age*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2008. Print.

Taylor, Diana. *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2003. Print.

Ussher, Jane M. *Women's Madness: Misogyny or Mental Illness?*. New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991. Print.

Wechsler, Judith. "Performing Ophelia: The Iconography of Madness." *Theatre Survey* 43:2 (November 2002): 201-221. Print.

World Health Organization. "Female Genital Mutilation. Fact Sheet N°241." Updated February 2013. Web. 31 March 2013.
<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/index.html>

References Consulted

A Beautiful Mind. Dir. Ron Howard. Universal Pictures, 2001. DVD.

ADFV-12 Eiko and Koma/Land. Dir. Douglas Rosenberg. Choreography by Eiko and Koma. American Dance Festival Video, 1995. DVD.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Phantom of the Opera. Dir. Joel Schumacher. Warner Bros. Pictures, 2004. DVD.

Felman, Shoshana. Trans. Martha Noel Evans and Shoshana Felman with Brian Massumi. *Writing and Madness (Literature/Philosophy/Psychoanalysis)*. Ithaca: Cornell U P, 1985. Print.

Hamlet. Dir. Laurence Olivier. Universal Pictures, 1948. DVD.

Hewitt, Kim. *Mutilating the Body: Identity in Blood and Ink*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1997. Print.

Pipher, Ph.D., Mary. *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1994. Print. Pitt, Angela. *Shakespeare's Women*. Newton Abbot: DAVID & CHARLES, 1981. Print.

Plath, Sylvia. *Collected Poems*. Ed. Ted Hughes. London: Faber and Faber, 1981.

Rutter, Carol Chillington. *ENTER THE BODY: Women and representation on Shakespeare's stage*. London: Routledge, 2001. Print.

Shandler, Sara. *Ophelia Speaks: Adolescent Girls Write About Their Search for Self*. New York: Harper Perennial, 1999. Print.

Thiher, Allen. *Revels in Madness: Insanity in Medicine and Literature*. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1999. Print.