

The Plan of Salvation:
Mormon Doctrine Embodied Through Postmodern Contemporary Dance

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ABSTRACT

The Mormon Plan of Salvation explains that people originate in a heavenly state and are sent to Earth in a physical form, where they aspire to lead good lives and gain wisdom in order to reach glory in the afterlife. The dance piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" explores each stage in the Plan of Salvation at a different location, requiring dancers and audience to travel both metaphorically and physically. The piece incorporates several kinds of journeys: the collective journey of humankind based on the Plan of Salvation, the dancers' own journeys, and audience's journey as they watch the piece, and my journey as an artist. In the process of making this piece, I refined my identity as a 21st century Mormon artist interested in conveying religious messages through the traditionally secular art form of postmodern dance.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	3
Dance and Religion	3
The Plan of Salvation.....	7
3 METHODOLOGY	13
4 OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCTION.....	21
There (Section 1)	21
Here (Section 2)	25
There (Section 3)	28
Evaluation.....	31
5 SUMMARY.....	37
REFERENCES	41
APPENDIX	
A LYRICS AND PERFORMANCE NOTES	44
B PERFORMANCE PHOTOS	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. The Plan of Salvation	7

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Who am I? Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going? Many people turn to religion to answers these questions. The Mormon Church, also known as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or LDS Church, provides me with a clear purpose and path as a human being. As a graduate student, however, I initially felt lost and even distressed about my role as an artist. I looked to the Mormon Church's Plan of Salvation for answers. My artistic exploration of the Plan of Salvation culminated in the postmodern contemporary piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?". This work combined my religious beliefs with the traditionally secular dance-making experience and shed light on my identity and purpose as 21st century female Mormon dance-maker.

Since the mid-19th century, Mormon leaders have acknowledged the moral, social, and educational merits of wholesome dancing and other forms of art. In 1967, Spencer W. Kimball, the twelfth President and Prophet of the Church, gave a devotional address at Brigham Young University in which he recognized the performing arts as a valid type of spiritual expression. He stated that art can successfully spread the gospel (Heavenly Father's teachings), that Church members were responsible to produce this art, and that that Church members should view this responsibility as an honor. Kimball saw sacred artistic endeavors as a way for people to praise God and show gratitude for their talents.

The piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" is my interpretation of the Mormon Plan of Salvation's three stages: pre-existence, life on earth, and life after death. The piece answered President Kimball's call to Church members to spread religious beliefs and values through art-making. It did not, however, intend to give audience members a literal understanding of the Plan of Salvation or the gospel. The abstract nature of the work enabled audience members to decipher their own meaning from their observations, representative of how people experience religion and spiritual fulfillment in different ways.

Chapter Two gives a chronological overview of the relationship between dance and religion since ancient times and outlines the Plan of Salvation. Chapter Three addresses the methodology for creating "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?". Chapter Four describes the final concert and also analyzes personal reflections inspired by the work. During the choreographic process, I refined my understanding of where I came from, why I am here, and where I am going as an artist. I also asked the dancers and audience members to reflect on such questions. Finally, Chapter Five summarizes the value of dance as a way to reach higher consciousness and joyous fulfillment through the creative expression of one's own spiritual path.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dance and Religion

Dance in ritual can be traced to ancient times when dance-induced trance enabled people to communicate with the spiritual realm in order to appeal for a desirable outcome such as fertility. In the early centuries AD, Hebrews used dance to worship God during Passover. When dancing was banned from many Christian churches during the Middle Ages, however, secular festivities with music, dancing, and feasting (i.e. Carnival) evolved outside of churches. Historian Barbara Ehrenreich suggests that church officials prohibited dancing mainly because it enabled congregants to reach God themselves and diminished the importance of the minister as the vehicle for worship (2006, p. 83-84).

Religious prohibitions on dancing continued into the Renaissance and Enlightenment. Many church officials produced anti-dance propaganda to dissuade their congregants from partaking in the "lascivious" male-female partner dancing that was gaining popularity in European and American ballrooms. A series of Evangelical revivals in North America in the 18th and 19th centuries proclaimed all dancing and music, particularly fiddling, to be the work of the devil. In many communities, however, dancing secretly continued as play-parties and singing-games without instrumental accompaniment (Giordano 2007, Vol. 1).

In the 18th century, the Shakers reintroduced dance in Christian worship under the premise that "not a single scriptural passage spoke against dance as a means of sacred worship" (Adams and Apostolos-Cappadona 1993, p. 30). In the

19th century, shortly after Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. established the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Church officially recognized wholesome dancing as beneficial to the social, moral, and educational wellbeing of Church followers. In fact, Prophet Brigham Young encouraged music and dancing in the evenings, along with prayer, for morale during the great Mormon pilgrimage from the Midwest to Salt Lake City in the 1840s (Miller 2000, p 15-16).

Religious resistance to dancing diminished in the 19th century and early 20th century, a time when dancing became widely accepted at public schools as a means to improve children's physical fitness, grace, and social demeanor. Also, by 1900, male-female social dancing had gained such popularity that its taboo repute had diminished substantially. Moralists redirected their scrutiny toward the new Animal Dances, improvisational and angular dance forms borrowed from African-American night clubs and saloons. The formerly controversial 19th century dance forms, such as the Waltz, appeared tame and even wholesome when taught by esteemed dancing-masters who emphasized social grace and morals in addition to movement technique (Nielsen 2011).

In the late 19th century, the American modern dance movement originated partly in reaction to the expressive limitations of classical ballet. In the 20th century, numerous modern dance choreographers such as Martha Graham, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn, Jose Limon, Lester Horton, Herald Kreutzberg, Glen Tetly, John Butler, Charles Weidman, Alvin Ailey, and Marcus Schulkind drew inspiration from religious sources for their work (Manor 1980; Adams 1993).

Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn even founded the Church of the Divine Dance, where they implemented and practiced religious dance (Schmidt 1992).

As American society increasingly became aware of modern dance, some churches incorporated modern dance principles into their worship. This type of theatrical Christian dance became known as liturgical dance, sacred dance, or interpretative movement. Liturgical dance practitioner Carla DeSola describes liturgical dance as a moving, breathing, and living epiphany of God and His creations. She elaborates, "As the paced movement of a liturgy unfolds and the dancers emerge, we find ourselves feeling and seeing an embodiment of the 'word'" (Adams and Apostolos-Cappadona 1993, p. 153).

In 2008 the *THE BEHOLD DANCE COLLECTIVE* (BDC) was established with the goal to spread religious messages through dance. The BDC is a Mormon company based in California that and honors the joys and challenges of life and produces dance to inspire individuals and unify communities (Behold, 2010). According to Kathryn Lopez, co-artistic director of BDC, company pieces usually are derived from the gospel and attempt to spread "the love and joy of our loving Savior Jesus Christ and our eternal Heavenly Father" (2009, personal communication). The BDC's approach to choreography usually is based on literal storytelling with dancers assigned to specific character roles.

The BDC's work makes use of "embodiment," a practice of many cultural groups from ancient times through modern-day to achieve trance, and a concept integral for understanding religion on a personal level (Chidester 2005). For instance, when the Mormon Church organizes educational outings based on the

19th century pilgrimage to Salt Lake City, participants physically embody their ancestors' hardships. This type of embodiment teaches modern-day Mormons to appreciate who they are, where they came from, and the sacrifices their ancestors made for their freedom of religious expression (Daughtrey 2010). One of the most important aspects of embodiment in Mormonism revolves around the idea that God and other resurrected beings have perfected bodies. The ultimate goal for believers is to be like God. In order to understand, appreciate and achieve this desired perfection one has to endure physical hardships and joys and experience them on earth (Morgan 1890).

A person's ability to experience religion through embodiment is more powerful than simply hearing sermons or reading scriptures. The physicality of dance is a means to connect with one's religion on a deep personal level. Modern dance in particular is conducive to spiritual worship. In "Biblical Criteria in Dance: Modern Dance as Prophetic Form," theologian Paul Tillich points out that the majority of modern dance choreography is religious in style but nonreligious in content. In other words, most modern dance pieces contain a prophetic component congruent with biblical narratives, even though they are secular in content (Adams and Apostolos-Cappadona 1993, p. 84).

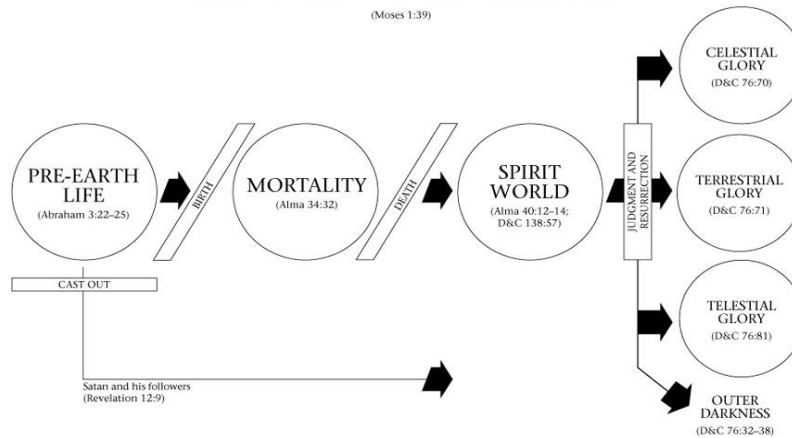
Dance critic John Martin explains that modern dance is not for spectacular display, but instead is an attempt to "communicate personal authentic experiences connected with a basic truth about human beings and reality" (Adams, 1993, p.84). Modern dance and biblical narratives are compatible in that both offer basic truths. In "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?", I sought

to embody of the Plan of Salvation in order to uncover such basic truths about myself as a human being and artist, while blurring the boundary between literal liturgical performance and abstract postmodern art.

The Plan of Salvation

In 1830, Prophet Joseph Smith Jr. established the basic principles of the Mormon faith through his divine visions, and then captured these tenets in the Book of Mormon. Today, Mormons accept the Book of Mormon, the Doctrine and Covenants (D&C), the Pearl of Great Price, and modern-day prophets' revelations as the fundamental sources for their religion. A life plan for salvation (hereafter the Plan of Salvation) is discussed in Mormon scriptures as "the plan of salvation" (Alma 24:14; Moses 6:62), "the great plan of happiness" (Alma 42:8), "the plan of redemption" (Jacob 6:8; Alma 12:30), and "the plan of mercy" (Alma 42:15). Figure 1, The Plan of Salvation map, is from lds.org and illustrates the three phases of life accepted in Mormons doctrine.

Figure 1: The Plan of Salvation



According to the Plan of Salvation, humans are born in a pre-mortal state and embark on a mortal journey toward salvation prepared by the Heavenly Father, their Creator. On Earth, the mortals' objective is to experience joy, gain knowledge and understanding, and become like their Creator by following the example set by Jesus Christ. Mormon doctrine accepts correctly translated teachings of the Bible, believes the Godhead to be three separate beings, emphasizes faith, repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost as the first principles and ordinances of the gospel, and accepts all the laws and ordinances of the gospel (Pearl of Great Price). However, the Mormon faith rejects the notion of "original sin" and recognizes falling from glory as a choice. All mortals are subject to committing sins, however, so the Heavenly Father gives mortals the opportunity for atonement by asking Jesus Christ to forgive their sins. The choices that humans make during their mortal existence determine what happens to them in the afterlife.

The Plan of Salvation begins in pre-mortal life, where humans exist in spirit bodies as children of the Heavenly Father and Heavenly Mother¹. In the pre-mortal realm, each spirit is unique and takes the exact form of its subsequent mortal body. Spirits have eyes, ears, and other attributes with which to later experience the physical world. They are able to move, learn, and perform duties (Morgan 1890, p. 4). In the pre-mortal realm, spirits converse with one another

¹ Building upon the foundation laid by Joseph Smith, subsequent prophets taught that God was not single, but married; that there is a Heavenly Father and a Heavenly Mother; and that we were made in their image: male and female children. Both men and women are conditionally sealed to become kings and queens, priests and priestesses (Smith, 1980).

and with the Heavenly Father to learn His plan. When they become mortal, however, they have no recollection of the pre-mortal life stage.

In the second stage of the Plan of Salvation, the Heavenly Father sends His spirit children to Earth in mortal form (Cieslewicz 2000). Each being consists of a body and spirit, which have the power to influence one another. The spirit existed in the pre-mortal state, however, and therefore is wiser than the body. Cieslewicz remarks "if the spirit yields to the body, it becomes corrupt; but if the body yields to the spirit it becomes pure and holy" (2000). In other words, a strong spirit has the ability to overcome physical temptations.

The Mormon Church aspires to guide mortals along the path presented by the Heavenly Father, a path demonstrated by Jesus Christ. The opposing path is that of the devil (also known as Satan or Lucifer). The devil was not granted a mortal body as punishment for his betrayal of the Heavenly Father, so he tries to corrupt mortals by tempting them to defile, despise, and/or worship their bodies. He entices mortals to perceive the body solely as an object (Tanner 2005). In contrast, Mormon doctrine stipulates that the body is a temple to house the spirit (D&C 93:35, 1 Cor. 3: 16-17).

In the pre-mortal state, one-third of spirits choose to follow the devil and the others follow Christ (Morgan 1890). Those who follow Christ's path on Earth are guided by their spirit, resist corruption, seek atonement for their sins, and ultimately achieve purity and freedom. The wholesome union of the body and spirit on Earth and the free choice of good over evil results in true happiness (D&C 93:33; 138:17; Genesis 3:22). Mormon doctrine asserts that evil versus

good and other oppositions (e.g., health versus sickness) are instructional tools to help mortals gain knowledge and become more like their Creator. A mortal "must feel the influence and power of death, before he can appreciate eternal life" (Morgan 1890, p. 7).

The third stage of the Plan of Salvation is life after death. The Mormon Church professes that at the moment of death, the spirit leaves the body and goes to the spirit world, "a place of waiting, working, and learning" (Gospel Principles 1997, p. 289). The spirit world consists of two states: paradise for those who were righteous during the mortal life stage; and darkness for those who were evil (Book of Mormon, Alma 40:12-14). When Jesus Christ returns, spirits will reunite with their mortal bodies in an immortal state without disease and death (Alma 40:23). Then, the Heavenly Father will decide where each being deserves to spend eternity: the celestial kingdom, the terrestrial kingdom, the telestial kingdom, or outer darkness (Gospel Principles 1997).

The place where a being spends eternity depends on the amount of glory he or she obtains along the Path of Salvation. The celestial kingdom is for beings with the highest amount of glory, the terrestrial kingdom is for beings with less glory, and the telestial kingdom is for beings with the least amount of glory. The Mormon Church often uses radiance as a metaphor to describe these kingdoms: the bright sun for the celestial kingdom, the sun's reflection off the moon for the terrestrial kingdom, and the brightness of faraway stars for the telestial kingdom. Beings that lack glory are sent to the outer darkness, the devil's kingdom.

Admissions requirements for the celestial kingdom include baptism, belief in the name of Jesus Christ, living life based on Christ's testimony in the gospel, and marriage in a temple (D&C 131:1–4). The Mormon Church aspires to help mortals reach the celestial kingdom through both temple work and mission work, but the Church expects followers to incorporate religious principles and values into their everyday lives as well. All who inherit the celestial kingdom will live as gods and goddesses with Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ forever² (D&C 76:62).

Beings who reject the gospel on Earth but receive it in the afterlife will be sent to the terrestrial kingdom. Christ will visit this kingdom, but the Heavenly Father will not visit it (D&C 76:73–79). Neither Christ nor the Heavenly Father will visit the telestial kingdom, which is reserved for beings who never received the gospel. These beings are sinners who suffer until the time of resurrection, when they will redeem themselves by embracing the gospel and Christ's testimony through the Holy Ghost (D&C 76:81–88, 103–6, 109). At this time, beings who continue to reject the gospel and Christ will be sent to the outer darkness for an eternity of misery and torment with Satan and his angels (D&C 76:28–35, 44–48).

The Mormon Church often teaches the gospel through the use of symbolism, metaphors and allegories. In Chapter 1 of 1 Nephi in the Book of Mormon, a metaphorical anecdote to the Plan of Salvation, referred to as the story of the Iron Rod, is provided. In the Iron Rod story, Prophet Lehi receives a vision

² The natures of male and female spirits complete and perfect each other, and therefore men and women are intended to progress together toward exaltation (Bednar, 2006). "Never the less, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (1 Cor. 11:11).

of himself traveling on a straight and narrow path, avoiding obstacles and alternative routes, to reach the Tree of Life. At one point along the path, Lehi finds an iron rod and grips it firmly. The iron rod navigates Lehi to the tree, and Lehi eats the tree's fruit and feels joy. Lehi's path represents the way to salvation; the obstacles he encounters represent vices that threaten to dislodge people from their path to salvation; the iron rod represents the gospel, the Tree of Life represents Christ, and the fruit represents the love of the Heavenly Father (1 Nephi:11). Today, the iron rod is a familiar Mormon symbol of "following God's commandments and staying true to the path that leads back to Him" (Iron Rod 2010).

In studying the Plan of Salvation, the theme that resonated most clearly within me was that of journeying. Learning, growing, and moving forward have long been intriguing topics to me and the Plan of Salvation contained all of them. The act of spiritually and physically progressing from one realm to another creatively inspired me. I desired to echo this theme of journeying and portray the relationship between God and His children in the postmodern contemporary dance production of "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?"

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The creation of "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" first entailed studying the Plan of Salvation and transforming my literal interpretations into abstract movement. I began the creative process by reading scriptures that addressed the Plan of Salvation as well as other relevant materials by the Mormon Church, and I also attended Church conferences. I reflected on these experiences through journaling, doodling, drawing, writing poetry, and movement improvisation. The cast was not required to research Mormon doctrine. During the research process, however, I introduced the dancers and musicians to religious concepts to help them internalize the choreographic intent.

I selected six female dancers Kristen Barrett, Rebecca Ferrell, Kasey Fletcher, Kaitlyn Klassen, Xela Oyer, and Tara Wrobel for their technical ability, expressiveness, stamina, open-mindedness, and reliability. I recognized that they possessed these qualities from previous experiences of working with them. Carolyn Koch served as production manager, Davey Trujillo as lighting designer, William Swayze as sound technician, and Mark Ammerman as set designer and technical director. Ryan Gee, Lorne Mills, and Robin Vining each composed music for a section of the piece.

Rehearsals took place from March 2010 through October 2010, approximately three times per week, two hours per rehearsal (i.e. six hours per week), with the majority of rehearsals during the academic year. Summer

rehearsals generally lasted longer but happened less often. Early versions of "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" were videotaped at graduate showings in May and August and I studied the videotapes to refine the piece prior to the October 8-10 concert.

All six dancers met for every rehearsal, which helped to build rapport and friendship. In fact, the group became an important support network for one member who was experiencing difficult life challenges. The dancers' unity showed that "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" was more than a dance; it was an exploration of life, the journey we take, the many troubles we encounter, and the people who help us along the way.

Before physically rehearsing with the dancers, I explored the concepts of the Plan of Salvation on my own. It was my goal to pull away from literal intellectual meaning and to find an embodied meaning of the material. I inquired about the material in more than one realm; discovered what it felt like to touch, to taste, to smell, to see, etc. Deeper personal connections to the gospel teachings were made through journaling, doodling and drawing pictures, deciding how the material could be presented as a line of poetry, capturing the essence of the Plan in only five words, discovering what shapes in my body and through space encompassed the material, how the material might be portrayed through a single line on a page or in space, among others. All approaches resulted in new and personalized movement.

Digging further into the Plan of Salvation from different creative angles allowed for more fully developed movement. For example, when focusing on the

realm of pre-existence, my journaling revolved around the idea of gathering and togetherness, my doodles and drawings were circular and intertwined in nature and my poetry revolved around individuality. Shapes that were curvilinear felt most connected in my body and pathways that traveled from left to right made the most sense. These things lead to improvised movement that was full, curvilinear, and internal in nature. My improvisations were then refined and formed into more cohesive phrases of movement. The phrases captured the essence of what I discovered and involved things such as circling the arms to gather in the space around me and breathing in deeply and having a soft focus to portray a sense of internalizing. I approached each section of the piece "There", "Here", and "There", in a similar manner allowing me to discover how I wanted each section to feel and look overall. I continued to engage in such exercises throughout the entire process of creating the piece. This allowed for continuous reconnection to the material inspiring the work.

At the first rehearsal, I described the Plan of Salvation to the dancers, using the LDS map (see Chapter 2) for visual reference, and I identified my intent to convey its three stages: pre-existence, mortal life, and life after death. To inspire creative thinking revolving around journeying, I distributed handouts with three columns labeled FROM, TO, and WITH, and asked the dancers to fill in the spaces below each column. The resulting phrases ranged from serious to silly and dealt with physical travel as well as shifting mental states. Each dancer shared three responses, which helped to generate discussion, reveal personalities, and build rapport among the group.

The strongest vision that I had for "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" was the notion of metaphysical change: the spirit comes to Earth and takes on mortal form, the spirit and body separate at death, and the body and spirit reunite in the afterlife. The majority of movement used in the piece stemmed from my improvisations about these moments of metaphysical change. I wanted to be fully involved with the movement creation in order to connect with the dancers on a visceral level. During my improvisations, I found that using intense focus followed by open thought allowed for the most feelings, thoughts, and creative discoveries to flow.

At rehearsals, I often asked the dancers to reflect on the feelings, nuances, and textures of dancing my movement. I also asked the dancers to improvise movement responses to questions such as: Who am I? Where did I come from? Why am I here? And where am I going? The dancers' movement creation strictly belonged to them and was not danced or explored by anyone else. This was my way of allowing the dancers to have their own stories and journeys throughout the dance piece. I wanted them to have an understanding and strong commitment to the notions of "group" and "self". A deep holistic connection to the concept of "journey" was important to my vision, and the performers were able to find this connection through the uniqueness that each of them brought to the work and the overall group.

Rehearsals took place in FAC 28, outside the Galvin Playhouse, and FAC 122. The performance used these same spaces, each representing a distinct stage of the Plan of Salvation. By rehearsing in the actual performance spaces, we were

able to verbally and internally reflect on the surrounding elements, explore movement possibilities, and determine the most appropriate abstract movement to represent the content. During rehearsals, dancers familiarized themselves with the elements in each space and practiced embodying different qualities for each realm of life.

I chose FAC 28 because its mirrors enabled audience members to see their reflections, symbolic of everyone's coexistence in the pre-mortal stage. The courtyard outside the Galvin Playhouse contained both natural and human-made elements, demonstrating the dualisms of mortality. The most important attribute of this space was the metal railings, representative of the iron rod (see Chapter Two). Finally, FAC 122, an experimental dance space, offered several spatial and production possibilities for representing the afterlife. The "There," "Here," and "There" in the title "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" correspond to these spaces, respectively.

To highlight the metaphysical changes associated with moving through the stages in the Plan of Salvation, I devised costumes that were easy to put on and take off in front of the audience. Each dancer had a base costume of a tank top in the color the dancer chose at the first rehearsal (red, pink, yellow, green, blue and purple), a burnout (partially see through) white cotton t-shirt, and knee-length white shorts. The dancers wore their base costumes and had bare feet for the first section, "There," about the pre-mortal realm. The white symbolized the spirit's perfection, and the color symbolized each spirit's uniqueness.

The dancers added coveralls to their base costume in the second section, "Here," to represent the spirit taking on a mortal body. The coveralls were long-sleeved, adorned with pockets and a long front zipper, and spray-painted each dancer's corresponding color. We never washed the suits, because I wanted them to have wear and tear to illustrate the imperfections of the mortal realm. Because section two occurred on pavement outdoors, the dancers wore All-Star Converse sneakers in their corresponding color in order to protect their feet.

For the third section, "There," the dancers exchanged their worn colored coveralls for clean white coveralls to represent the perfect reunion of spirit and body at the time of Christ's resurrection. The dancers accented their white coveralls with sparkling fabric on their left front pocket, back right pocket, and collar areas. They also doused the coveralls in silver glitter spray and applied silver rhinestones for a more radiant and vibrant effect in contrast to the previous suit.

I began working with musicians in April, which gave them ample time to reflect upon ideas and music that directly related to the Plan of Salvation. For the pre-mortal section, I asked Robin Vining to compose music that referenced the hymns *I Lived in Heaven* and *I am a Child of God*. I selected Lorne Mills, composer of electronic music, for the mortal realm. I asked Mills to explore the struggles and successes found on Earth through his composition, and I gave him two hymns for inspiration: *For the Beauty of Earth* and *The Iron Rod*. The third composer, Ryan Gee, was the only Mormon musician. I asked Gee to incorporate

his own understanding of the afterlife realm into his music, and I gave him the hymns *Now Let us Rejoice* and *Families Can Be Together Forever*.

Before each concert on October 8-10, I gave the dancers a handout (see Appendix A) with the lyrics to the six hymns that inspired the music. The lyrics reminded the dancers about the Plan of Salvation and helped them to prepare spiritually. Each dancer was free to interpret the material in their own spiritual context. The handouts also contained performance notes and gave the dancers qualitative and technical guidance for each section. For instance, the section one performance notes give the dancers the following key terms to consider: excited, anxious, hopeful, contemplative, enveloped, gathered, warmth, safe, and home.

Also before each concert, the dancers collectively gathered their energy, reflected upon their choreographic journey, and then anticipated the new journey to be shared with the audience. To promote clear focus, the dancers did an imagery exercise that entailed visualizing the choreography. This mental exercise helped to unify the dancers as a group as well as to solidify each dancer's body and spirit. The dancers' deep understanding and strong commitment to the notions of "group" and "self" during the concert was essential for clearly, albeit abstractly, conveying ideas about personal journeys and moments from the Plan of Salvation.

Pre-concert meetings calmed the dancers, directed their focus, and created a relaxed atmosphere. Consequently, the dancers performed "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" with confidence, poise, energy, and excellence. After months of rehearsing and discussing religious concepts and

personal life journeys, I witnessed my interpretation of the Plan of Salvation unfold onstage. The dancers embodied the human journey, their own journeys, and they also took the audience on a journey both metaphorically and literally. The subtitle "Whose Journey is it Anyway?" refers to the multiple types of journeys embedded in the work.

Chapter 4

OVERVIEW OF THE PRODUCTION

The piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" ran for three nights, October 8-10 2010. The audience met in FAC 28 for the first section, and then the dancers led the audience to the courtyard outside the Galvin Playhouse for the second section, and finally the audience and dancers finished the piece in FAC 122 for the third section. The nontraditional use of multiple spaces for a single "traveling" work helped to contextualize the concepts of learning, growing, and journeying through life. The use of multiple spaces also encouraged audience members to think about dance in a different light. Altogether, the piece lasted 32 minutes, about 10 minutes per section.

Here (Section 1)

At the beginning of the concert, audience members entered FAC 28 to the music of jazz artists such as Frank Sinatra and Billie Holiday. A dancer in pink subtly drew the audience's attention to a large Plan of Salvation map drawn in white window paint on the mirrored wall. The dancer scanned the space and then interpreted the contours of the map through slow improvised movement. She aspired to increase the audience's awareness of the map and the room's overall atmosphere. After about three minutes, the music faded and the dancer settled upstage center in an attentive stance facing the mirror.

The dancers performed the first section, "There," to a recording of Robin Vining's original 10-minute electric keyboard, guitar, and piano composition

Premortal Portal. The music did not follow any particular meter and possessed a free-flowing, soothing quality with many low frequencies. It incorporated melodies from the hymns *I Lived in Heaven* and *I am a Child of God*, so audience members who were familiar with the hymns could immediately feel connected to the work. The audience sat or stood facing the mirrored wall, and everyone's reflections symbolized everyone's coexistence in the pre-mortal phase as described in Mormon doctrine.

To emphasize the Plan of Salvation map, I placed fabric panels (red, pink, yellow, blue, green, purple, and white) along walls perpendicular to the mirror. I also covered the ceiling with white fabric to create a more intimate space. Some preexisting white lights on the ceiling were used, their glare softened by the white fabric, and six floodlights were placed behind the colored panels (three on each side of the room). The simple lighting scheme combined with the fabric provided a warm and comfortable atmosphere.

On the floor, colored electrical tape marked pathways for dancers whose costumes matched the tape colors. All of the paths began at different points and intersected with the mirror, symbolizing how the Plan of Salvation affects everyone, and all paths led the dancers to the same point stage left. Each dancer performed personal movement along her path that foreshadowed movement phrases later in the piece. These individual pathway explorations were my interpretation of how we looked as spirits when Heavenly Father presented us with the Plan of Salvation in the pre-mortal realm. Heavenly Father said that we

would go to Earth and that our journeys would differ as we sought to return to our heavenly home.

Through out "There" (Section 1), many concepts tied to the Plan of Salvation were explored. At times the dancers moved as a group and found their timing in one another, not the music, illustrating the concepts of group cohesion and interdependence. There were moments were they paused, glanced at the mirror, and lifted their sternums toward the sky, and symbolically offered their entire being to the Plan of Salvation. Although not all spirits in the pre-mortal life choose to follow the Plan of Salvation, I chose not to represent the dissenters in my work. I am here on Earth, as are the dancers, so according to the Plan of Salvation we have chosen to follow Heavenly Father. At times, their movement phrases represented the strength, power, and confidence gained from learning more and more about the Plan of Salvation in pre-mortal life. The dancers repeated and explored movements that conveyed excitement, anxiousness, and anticipation indicative of the dancers' motivation to embark on the Plan of Salvation.

A particularly memorable portion of "There" (Section 1) was performed at the mirror. The dancers separated into trios and each subgroup executed a distinct movement phrase. The dancers interweaved and leaned and made sounds against the mirror. When the group reunited, each dancer took a partner; one partner went to her hands and knees and formed a table-top, and the other partner laid on her back and bicycled her legs in the air. The choreography at the mirror and map

highlighted the concept of "support" and was my way of showing my trust in the Plan of Salvation to support my life journey.

The dancers also abstractly proclaimed their commitment to the Plan of Salvation. At one point the dancer in pink took center stage and expressed her confidence and excitement for the plan through large external gestures while the five-dancer chorus happily stretched, balanced, and circled around the soloist as witnesses to her proclamation. Eventually the dancers' gestures evolved into a sign language abstraction of "I am a Child of God," the title of a hymn that informed the music for this section. The sign language was altered to make the gestures cover more space. Sign language for "one another as" and movement that suggested "family" was also found through out "There" (Section 1).

The term "one another" came from a hymn that I gave to the dancers and composer of section one. In sign language, "one another" entails circling the thumbs around each other. The word "as" requires tapping the pointer fingers together. Both of these gestures served as a movement motif throughout the piece. Section one ended with large movement phrase for the entire group representing a family members who journeyed together yet maintained their individuality.

At the end of section one, the music faded into the sound of heartbeats and light entered the dim room through an opened doorway. A musical speaker on the staircase projected quiet ambient music by Lorne Mills. The dancers walked up the staircase steadily and with determination, still in performance mode, ready for their next task. The audience followed.

Here (Section 2)

Ambient electronic music by Lorne Mills welcomed the dancers and audience into the second space, the courtyard outside of the Galvin Playhouse. The music was darker, rougher, and less refined than the music in section one, and it included drones and everyday sounds such as cars and wind. The dancers waited while the audience members situated themselves and observed the surroundings: four trees in the middle of the courtyard, the large circular Music Building, a metal sculpture, rocks, parking lots, cars, sidewalks, passer-bys, and two metal railings. The metal railings provided a boundary for the performance space and also symbolized the "iron rod," a metaphor for the gospel. The dancers' "mortal" coveralls (see Chapter Three) were messily strewn across the performance space.

The music for section two, Mills' *Experience the Mortal*, was played at high volume from the roof of the Music Building and began at a moderate tempo, very quirky and tinker-toy like. The sound track aided in creating an atmosphere that was familiar, inviting, and recognizable. The dancers marked the beginning of section two by ascending several stairs to the audience's level which added the elements of focus and intensity to the atmosphere. They shifted their weight from foot to foot like eager runners in a starting position to race, and they thought, "Who gets to go first? Who is going to win?" The race analogy helped the dancers to express the spirits' excitement and anticipation of coming to Earth. Then, one at a time, the dancers ran into the courtyard and "discovered" the space with their own sense of timing. Sometimes a dancer's movements paralleled another dancer's

movements, but for the most part the explorations were individualistic. The personal manipulation of the material was my way of recognizing the uniqueness of each being.

The initial movement phrases brought the dancers to their designated coveralls where each dancer traced the contour of her body, highlighting how the spirit has the same form in pre-mortal life and in mortal life. In unison, the dancers manipulated the space around their coveralls, hovered above them, and drew close to them representing the major excitement of knowing that they were about to receive a physical body.

The dancers climbed into their coveralls, struggling a bit, and zipped their zippers toward the audience at a pause in the music. The music took on a "rock out" quality, and the dancers flailed, jumped, and essentially had a party in their skin. Their wide-eyed, happy facial expressions were exaggerated to show wonderment regarding the possibilities of having a physical body.

Through out "Here" (Section 2) the dancers explored many concepts relating to earthly life. Concepts ranged from "trying on" their new body, balancing fast-paced life, the family unit and how it evolves and works throughout life, life's different support systems, etc. At intermittent points, some dancers stopped suddenly to represent the times in life when one needs to slow down and look around. From time to time the dancer in yellow simply observed her surroundings not engaging in any movement to illustrate how one learns and grows through life experiences. At times, the dancers were asked to improvise

movement they desired revolving around the busyness of life. This was my way of allowing the dancers to build a deep personal connection to the second section.

Half way through "Here" (Section 2), the dancers united using heavy, grounded movement and strained facial expressions, a stark contrast to the "party" scene. The movement for this part came from reflections about life's frustrations and evoked sentiments of angst, struggle, and aggression. Mormon doctrine explains that the dualisms or oppositions (e.g., good/evil, health/sickness, life/death) are necessary tools for personal growth in mortal life, so I portrayed the importance of these dualisms by contrasting the dancers' party phrase with their painful phrase.

Pain yielded to remembrance when the dancers repeated movement from the pre-mortal section, "There." Repetition of map-associated movement illustrated the dancers' positive outlook upon finally realizing their life's path. The dancers used strong carriage and pleasant facial expressions to project their confidence and excitement as they traveled upstage to the metal railing. The railing represented the iron rod, a metaphor for the gospel derived from Prophet Lehi's Tree of Life vision (see Chapter Two). I instructed the dancers to perceive the railing as an anchor, support beam, or any type of constant in their life, if the gospel metaphor did not apply to their personal beliefs.

The dancers interacted with each other along the railing to the melody of "Hold to the Rod." The dancers pulled themselves along the railing, dove under it, draped over it, jumped over it, fell away from it, walked on top of it, and balanced on each other's backs while standing on it. The railing dance began at stage right

and concluded at the end of the railing, center stage. The audience's eyes followed the dancers as if reading a book, left to right, a choreographic technique to suggest progression or the passage of time. At center stage, the dancers briefly paused to reflect on their accomplishment. The dancers represented mortals who had successfully followed the Plan of Salvation on Earth.

"Here" concluded with a disrobing of the dancers coveralls. The act of disrobing represented the spirit separating from the mortal body at death. Each dancer illustrated a different reaction to death; some accepted it immediately, whereas others anxiously struggled with it. The dancer in pink disrobed last. She clung onto her coveralls longer than the others, dragged them on the floor, and eventually released them. The audience followed her to FAC 122 for the third section.

There (Section 3)

Robin Vining's *Premortal Portal* from section one played as the audience entered FAC 122 for section three, a reminder that beings will *return* to the Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ in the afterlife. For this section, I transformed FAC 122 into a unique intimate space with ceiling-to-floor black curtains, cool-colored lighting, and star and slash gobos to texture the floor. The audience sat in chairs arranged in a horseshoe shape along the edge of the performance space. The audience's proximity to the dancers was my way of showing that the possibility exists for everyone to be together in the afterlife according to the Plan of Salvation.

The set consisted of six white coveralls hung from six different coat racks in front of three circular platforms creating a three-tiered stage. The platforms represented the three kingdoms of glory: the tallest platform for the celestial kingdom, the second-tallest platform for the terrestrial kingdom, and the shortest platform for the telestial kingdom (see Chapter Two). Bright box lights positioned above illuminated the platforms and coat racks. A white wall behind the platforms served as the backdrop for video projection.

Ryan Gee's *Now Let us Rejoice* slowly replaced Vining's *Premortal Portal* and marked the beginning of section three and continued throughout the section. Key characteristics of Gee's work included original melodies and indiscernible words sung by the composer himself. At one point, Gee also incorporated the melody from *Families Can Be Together Forever*. The dancers' movement was directly tied to the beats and phrasing of Gee's music and alternated between a driven duple-meter and a light-hearted, fanciful triple-meter.

The dancers emerged through the same entrance as the audience, implying that everyone involved in the concert was coming from and going to the same place. The first five dancers to enter walked upright and took in the beauty of their surroundings, overwhelmed with joy and intrigue. The dancer in pink, who had lagged behind the others in section two, ran happily into the performance space. The music intensified in response to her excitement. Her clear and direct focus indicated recognition of belonging; she was where she was supposed to be. Her reaction was based on my own ideas of how I believe I will be after life on Earth.

Through out "There" (Section 3) the dancers moved in ways that allowed them to spread their joy to everyone else who occupied the space. Repeated movements from the previous two sections were executed and at one point each dancer took center stage and celebrated the notion of eternal salvation in a "rock out" moment. The dancers revisited the sign language abstraction motifs of "one another" and "as" from section one. They implied a sense of relief through use of breath, conveyed teamwork and incorporated building gestures and executed movement that entailed waiting. These themes came from the Plan of Salvation, which teaches that all spirits in the afterlife will work, interact, learn, and wait for resurrection. During the last half of "There" (Section 3) the dancers put on the white coveralls, discreetly positioned themselves in front of the platforms and waited while a video played, and eventually ascended the platforms.

A video appeared on the back wall accompanied by the melody of *Families Can be Together Forever*. The video included dance excerpts from the previous sections, as though the dancers were watching their lives pass before them. The video also contained photographs of the dancers and their families symbolizing the reunification of families in the afterlife. The photos were tinted pink, green, blue, purple, yellow or red based on each dancer's costume color. I personalized the video by including photographs of myself as well as the Plan of Salvation map that inspired my personal and artistic journey.

In the end, the dancers met and celebrated at the top platform, the celestial kingdom where beings live with the Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ. From the top platform, all six dancers repeated the "one another" and "as" gestures at

different levels. Because this piece was my ideal creation, I decided it was appropriate for everyone involved to make it to the highest kingdom. A bright light flashed and the piece ended in blackout.

Evaluation

The piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" successfully conveyed my interpretation of the Plan of Salvation and life journeys in general. First and foremost, the piece's strength stemmed from the family-like relationship between the dancers. This relationship evolved through rapport-building activities at rehearsals as well as reflective discussions on coexistence, interdependence, support, and family, among other concepts. During the concert, the dancers also connected with one another on a deep visceral level through their mutual understanding of the content and their performance goals.

Each section of the piece gave the dancers opportunities to express themselves with personalized movement, which helped them to connect to the work in a meaningful way. The multiple images and metaphors incorporated throughout the piece guided the dancers in terms of movement quality. Even if the dancers did not understand or believe in the Plan of Salvation, they could draw upon other ideas that were more relevant to them in order to embody the emotions and concepts that I aspired to portray.

Aside from timing problems and other minor issues that are resolvable through rehearsals with dancers and better communication with composers and production staff, I would have tweaked very little of the piece. In section one, I

would have liked more build-up when the dancer in pink finds her pathway and joins the group. In "Here" (Section 2), I felt the railing dance could have been improved using more imagery from Lehi's vision. I chose to have the railing bare. Perhaps placing obstacles along the railing for the dancers to maneuver around would have more closely resembled the struggle and effort necessary to stay in contact with the rod, as portrayed in Lehi's vision.

The transition between the first and second sections was the greatest weakness of the piece. I would have appreciated a brighter light at the doorway at the end of section one to more strongly convey the idea of entering into a new realm. A disconnect occurred when the audience ascended the staircase because it seemed as though they were taking a break between two separate dance pieces. The challenge of a "traveling" dance piece is connecting spaces in a way so that the audience understands that the walking transitions are also a part of the piece. When I began this project, I did not foresee the transitions being as important as the actual sections. As I look back, the piece as a whole would have been more cohesive and impactful if the transitions had been stronger. If I decide to undertake a production such as this again, the transitions will receive more time, energy, and focus.

My process for creating "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" was quite different from my previous creative endeavors. Never before had I researched and examined specific motivational material so closely. The purpose of this project was to artistically express and embody a religious concept found within the LDS Church in order to more fully understand the

doctrine from which it was derived. Movement served as the teaching tool. In my search to grasp the ideas and concepts behind the Plan of Salvation, I found that I had to work in a more refined way. Working in this way took more time and energy than I had previously put into works. However, had I not taken the time to abstract the teachings and doctrine in so many ways, the movement vocabulary created might have been less personal and "real."

Creating the movement on my own body before working with the dancers was a successful way of working for this piece. I was able to make my own connections to the material, which allowed me to more clearly articulate the intentions of the movement to the dancers and be fully prepared for each rehearsal. Because I was closely involved in the movement creation, I feel the movement presented was more authentic and "real" to me than my previous choreography. There was also a prominent spiritual connection between myself and the movement vocabulary. I had not investigated a connection such as that prior to this project. I believe the authenticity of the movement was enhanced due to this added element. True reflections of me as a mover and a total person were present in the choreography.

As a choreographer, I have discovered that how I approach movement invention varies from piece to piece. For some works, it is fairly stressful to create inventive, meaningful movement, while for other works large amounts of inspiration make movement invention much easier. The movement created for "Here" (Section 2) was fairly easy for me to invent. My tangible understanding of the family unit, the learning process, and the necessity of the gospel in my life

helped to shape "Here" (Section 2). Previous works of mine have often dealt with lived experiences such as those presented in "Here" (Section 2). For "Here" (Section 2), movement invention was derived from my lived experiences on earth. This resulted in a physically driven movement vocabulary that called on strength and stamina. Movement creation for "There" (Section 1) and "There" (Section 3) was slightly difficult in comparison to "Here" (Section 2) because the abstraction gap was much greater. I had to rely on how I believed and hoped both realms, premortal life and life after death, to be. My research and investigation of the Plan of Salvation proved to be most helpful for the two "There" sections. In these sections, movement invention was influenced by faith, the teachings of the gospel and the feelings brought about by Holy Ghost while studying the Plan of Salvation. The "There" sections were more spiritually driven and called for more imaginative connections than the "Here" (Section 2). Though connections were difficult to make at times, I believe I was successful at eventually finding them.

Throughout the creative process I ran into challenges and at times found myself trying to create literal, obvious and even "cheesy" movement. For example, when working on the "pain" section in "Here" (Section 2), I felt rushed and tried to go with the first thought that popped into my head. Cliché gestural movements, such as grabbing the stomach and shaking the fist in order to portray pain, found their way to the forefront. At those moments, I would convince myself to step back, breathe, and approach the desired subject from another angle. I had to refocus in order to be choreographically inspired. My original intent for the piece stemmed from a desire to learn more about the Plan of Salvation and

myself and to fulfill this intent I needed to fully investigate all the aspects of the Plan of Salvation.

Time constraints influenced the creative process of this piece. Given more time, the movement, scenery, and use of ambient soundtracks would have been slightly different. Having more time to develop the movement vocabulary would most likely result in deeper personal connections to the motivational material and an even more abstracted delivery of those connections. I would have liked to transform the hallways leading to the different performance spaces just as I did the studio spaces. Perhaps this would have aided in the connectivity of the transitions to the piece as a whole. Creating the ambient soundtracks for "Here" (Section 2) ended up being more of an after thought compared to the development of the other musical scores. Given more time I would more fully develop the sounds relating to the feel and intention of "Here" (Section 2).

I did not have the opportunity to research how other artists in the field translate ideas into movement. Although my research revealed many choreographers whose work has dealt with, and still deals with, religious or sacred themes, time constraints limited the scope of my inquiry. I chose to explore several specific approaches for drawing out the essence of literal meaning into choreography (see Chapter 3). Now that I am more familiar with, and aware of, my own process I look forward to discovering how other choreographers approach this challenge. Perhaps implementing their methods in conjunction with my own would affect my movement invention and would encourage me to create a movement vocabulary less familiar and habitual to me. In turn this would reveal

another perspective in relation to the motivating research creating an even deeper understanding of the material.

The process of creating "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" related very closely to the Plan of Salvation taught by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. During the creation of the work, I ran into obstacles, had moments of extreme inspiration, formed relationships with the dancers and production staff, felt excited, felt sad, felt overwhelmed, etc. I had to remind myself of the ending goal and my original intention each and everyday. The act of creating this piece closely resembled different parts of the doctrine I examined revolving around the Plan of Salvation. Both the Plan of Salvation and my creative process involve learning through opposition, answering questions such as "where did I come from?" and "where am I going? ", and call for support systems and networks. Perhaps most importantly, both the Plan of Salvation and my creative process are both on going journeys. Overall, I believe the production of my work was successful because of the connection between the motivating material and the creation of the piece. I sought to embody of the Plan of Salvation to uncover basic truths about myself as a human being and artist, and my choreographic process allowed for it to happen.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY

Prior to graduate school, I never considered using religion as the impetus for choreography. However, as I struggled to understand my role as a student artist, I looked to my religion for answers and found comfort in the Plan of Salvation. The Mormon Church's endorsement of dance to spread the gospel motivated me to create "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" about my interpretation of the Plan of Salvation. Throughout the choreographic process, I refined my understanding of where I came from, why I am here, and where I am going as a 21st century female Mormon artist.

I believe that the artistic and humanistic understanding I gained from "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" is part of my own Plan of Salvation. In general, I am not comfortable sharing my religious beliefs in traditional ways such as baring my testimony in front of a congregation or doing missionary work. The piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" allowed me to share my testimony in a personal way and gave me the confidence to openly express things I hold most dear. I believe that I am daughter of God, that I existed before this life, and that I am working toward my eternal salvation. The process of embodying these beliefs in movement enabled me to more fully grasp the Plan of Salvation as it relates to my own life.

As the choreographer of "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" I saw myself in a raw and real state, and I discovered the joys of dance-making by being truly honest with myself. In the past, I have been satisfied

with my choreography but at times found moments of disconnect either because I was working under someone else's rules, or I was not being completely honest with myself. Previous works have always come from my perspective and in some form or fashion incorporated religious references, because religion is so embedded in my identity as a lifelong Mormon. This work often felt "less real" however, because I lacked a spiritual connection with it.

I exposed a new and vulnerable part of myself when I created "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" and now I am more comfortable with sharing this part of myself. The discoveries I made about myself broadened my views about dancing-making and gave me the confidence to take choreographic risks. This project has shown me that creative inspiration can, and does, come from many realms and that I should not limit myself as an artist. In order to continue to be true to who I am and who I want to be as an artist, I have to be willing to explore and share all aspects of myself.

My artistic statement reads as follows:

As a choreographer, performer and teacher of dance, artist Randi L. Frost pulls from her own experiences and understanding of life to inspire, motivate, and execute her endeavors. Through the lens of a modern day Latter-day Saint, Frost creates postmodern contemporary works of art in which she attempts to capture her experiences and bring the essence of them to the performance realm. Often revolving around aspects of human behavior, the need

for change, and the idea of journeying, Randi L. Frost's works explore personal reflections of both herself and her dancers, contain a strong sense of musicality, and call for a particular amount of athleticism. She believes that dance can braid together the universal and the personal. Frost is fully committed to finding her own meanings and understandings of dance and the endless possibilities it provides.

Religiously inspired dance can take many shapes. It can be dance in liturgical form that uses literal storytelling and characters for worship, dance with religious content displayed in a non-religious way, or even dance religious in style with non-religious content. The piece "From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" falls into the second category. An advantage of presenting religious content in a non-religious form is that people of different faiths can relate to the work without feeling forced to accept or negatively confronted with a different belief system.

In my piece, I strove to create a comfortable atmosphere in which personal beliefs and values were respected. I did not force my own beliefs upon the dancers, which enabled them to understand and appreciate the intent of the work from a more objective point of view. Throughout the process, the dancers shared their thoughts regarding the Plan of Salvation. Their ability to relate to the content helped them to identify and define themselves and enhance their performance, and it also helped me to refine the choreography. Audience members were not directly

informed about the religious content, but they were able to develop their own conclusions based on clues such as the map and hymn melodies.

"From There to Here to There: Whose Journey is it Anyway?" was more than a dance performance; it was a stepping stone on my own Plan of Salvation, it helped me define myself as an artist, and it inspired dancers and audience members to reflect on their own personal journeys regardless of their religious orientation. All of the dancers voiced the strong connection they felt to the piece and the outlook on their own lives that it provided for them. After the concert, some people expressed their gratitude for having the opportunity to witness my testimony of the gospel. Others recognized the secular concept of journey in the work and thought about their own struggles and achievements.

Overall, I believe that my endeavor to create dance in secular form with spiritual content was a success. It touched people in different ways and it allowed me to more fully develop and understand who I am as an artist, a person, and a child of God. Who could ask for more than that?!

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APPENDIX A
LYRICS AND PERFORMANCE NOTES

SECTION ONE

I Lived in Heaven

I lived in Heaven a long time ago it is true
Lived there and loved there with people I know, so did you
Then Heavenly Father presented this beautiful plan
All about Earth and Eternal Salvation for man

Father said he needed someone who had enough love
To give his life so we all could return there above.
There was another who sought for the honor divine.
Jesus said, "Father, send me, and the glory be thine."

Jesus was chosen, and as the Messiah he came,
Conquering evil and death through his glorious name,
Giving us hope of a wonderful life yet to be—
Home in that heaven where Father is waiting for me.

I am a Child of God

I am a child of God.
Rich blessings are in store;
If I but learn to do his will
I'll live with him once more.
Lead me, guide me, walk beside me,
Help me find the way.
Teach me all that I must do
To live with him someday.

I am a child of God.
His promises are sure;
Celestial glory shall be mine
If I can but endure.
Lead me, guide me, walk beside me,
Help me find the way.
Teach me all that I must do
To live with him someday.

Performance thoughts: Excited, anxious, hopeful, contemplative, enveloped,
gathered, warmth, safe, home

SECTION TWO

For the Beauty of the Earth

For the beauty of the earth,
For the beauty of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies,

For the beauty of each hour
Of the day and of the night,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower,
Sun and moon and stars of light,.

For the joy of human love,
Brother, sister, parent, child,
Friends on earth, and friends above,
Pleasures pure and undefiled,

For each perfect gift of thine,
To our race so freely given,
Graces human and divine,
Flowers of earth and buds of
heaven,

For thy Church which evermore
Lifteth holy hands above,
Offering up on every shore
Her pure sacrifice of love,
Lord of all, to thee we raise
This our grateful hymn of praise.

Performance thoughts:

Opening: exploring, discovering, a twinkle in your eye if you will
Suits: stoked, excited, "how does this work?"...out there in your face, smile!
Groups/solo: supportive, narrowed in connection, personal
T-Pain: heavy, overwhelmed, fighting
Improvisation: back to pleasant, hopeful; remember what you learned in the first section!
Railing: struggle, hanging on, it's your guide, focused to cont on to the end
Ending: accomplished, YOU DID IT, smirk like, can have some separation anxiety with suit

The Iron Rod

Hold to the rod, the iron rod;
'Tis strong, and bright, and true.
The iron rod is the word of God;
'Twill safely guide us through.

While on our journey here below,
Beneath temptation's pow'r,
Through mists of darkness we must go,
In peril ev'ry hour.

And when temptation's pow'r is nigh,
Our pathway clouded o'er,
Upon the rod we can rely,
And heaven's aid implore.

And, hand o'er hand, the rod along,
Through each succeeding day,
With earnest prayer and hopeful song,
We'll still pursue our way.

Afar we see the golden rest
To which the rod will guide,
Where, with the angels bright and blest,
Forever we'll abide.

SECTION THREE

Now Let Us Rejoice

Now let us rejoice in the day of salvation.
No longer as strangers on earth need we roam.
Good tidings are sounding to us and each nation,
And shortly the hour of redemption will come
When all that was promised the Saints will be given,
And none will molest them from morn until ev'n,
And earth will appear as the Garden of Eden,
And Jesus will say to all Israel, "Come home."

Families Can Be Together Forever

I have a family here on earth.
They are so good to me.
I want to share my life with them through all eternity.

Families can be together forever
Through Heavenly Father's plan.
I always want to be with my own family,
And the Lord has shown me how I can.
The Lord has shown me how I can.

Performance thoughts: HOME, overjoyed, love, safety, warmth, pure beauty.
Pleasant looks...radiating joy...small smiles...feel each other...you are each
other's families!

APPENDIX B
PERFORMANCE PHOTOS

There (Section 1)



Pre-show observance of the map by the performer in pink



Individual pathways and drawing on the mirror



Performers dancing with and on the “map”/mirror



Performers prepare to leave the space
Sign language for “one another”: a reoccurring motif through out the whole production

Here (Section 2)



Performers executing individual phrases of discovering the new space = earthly life



New costumes representing the physical body are put on



Performers on the railing, which represents the “word of God”



Performers disrobe and prepare to enter the next space

There (Section 3)



Dancers move together in the new space = Heaven



Performers dress in their “perfected” suits as video plays



Dancers make their way up the platform



Ending look of Section 3 executing "one another" sign