Over the past decade, contemporary Belgian choreographer Frédéric Flamand has collaborated with several architectural and design practices on conceptualizing and realizing performances. These offered the architects a laboratory for intensive and focused exploration of space in relation to body, time, and perception. This article investigates the themes established as a common ground for three of the collaborative teams and the manner in which each participant investigated their own career-long, discipline-specific obsessions through the work. Furthermore, these collaborative projects are examined for their success at pushing beyond mere “collages” of dance and spatial décor, creating synthesized performance works.

**Choreographic + Architectural Overlaps**

The flirtation between architecture and dance is a long-standing romance. The body, its form, and movements are embedded in architectural treatises, proportional systems, and theories. These date from Vitruvius’ advice on temple proportions, and the Vastu Shastra, to Francesco di Giorgio and Leonardo da Vinci, to Bernard Tschumi’s textual and notational investigations of the inseparability of architecture and action, event, program. Architectural histories of the avant-garde and modern movements would also be incomplete without the work of artist/choreographer Oskar Schlemmer. His work and teaching explicitly used drawing and notation to make space (“felt volume” or Raumfindung) with bodies. Similar to Tschumi’s, Schlemmer’s work exemplifies two of three predominant ways in which the choreographic and architectural disciplines overlap. The first is that both are allographic practices—“those arts capable of being reproduced at a distance from the author by means of notation.” The second is the architect’s use of dance or movement as a model for complex form making, often generated through notational methods, and reciprocally, the choreographer’s use of architectural concepts to generate and organize dance movement on stage.

A third overlap of disciplines is collaborative exploration between choreographers and architects.

For those with exposure or training in both disciplines, the link between architecture’s and choreography’s processes and products is self-evident. For example, choreographer Rudolf Laban, who studied design at the École de Beaux Arts, formulated systems for movement analysis and dance notation. More recent examples include choreographers Gus Solomons, Jr., who studied architecture at MIT, and Sasha Waltz, whose father is an architect. However, it is infrequent in architectural discourse for choreographic references to go beyond analogies or metaphors. The intention of this article is to transcend the metaphoric and, using Belgian choreographer Frédéric Flamand, explore collaborative works between the disciplines. I will examine his projects with three architectural practices—Diller + Scofidio, Jean Nouvel, and Thom Mayne/Morphosis—in terms of their underlying theme and the manner in which each develops this relative to their discipline and “obsessions” within that discipline. Before delving into Flamand’s work, it is important to explain the context of architectural and choreographic overlaps within which his work has emerged.

Dance notation has existed at least since Arbeau’s publication of Orchesographie in 1589, but unlike architectural drawing, it has rarely been the primary mode of communicating the “design” to those who will execute the “work.” Unlike most architectural projects, choreographic works are repeatable events, enacted by different groups of people, often with long gaps of time between productions. In the reconstruction or rebuilding of dances, notational drawings, plus photographs, video/film footage, and information from previous performers of the piece are gathered to communicate the fullest range of knowledge to future performers. The multidimensionality and multiscalar nature of many dances warrant diverse means of recording and transfer. Dance notation systems, such as Rudolf Laban’s labanotation, tend to focus on a particular scale of detail and do not convey well the full scalar spectrum of information. For example, the notations that Lucinda Childs employed for the Melody Excerpt (1977) “score” give overall instructions for the larger patterns made by two groups of dancers in space (Figure 1, left). Such reductive drawings served her work well, as the smaller scale details of movement are minimal and the primary impact of the work is through larger repetitive rhythms and patterns.

These extremely geometric and ordered patterns can be likened to the drawings made by Bernard Tschumi in the early speculative work of his...
1976–1981). In notes to the publication of these drawings, he refers to the intertwined relationship between dance, movement, choreography, and architecture, stating that it is “not a question of knowing which comes first, movement or space, which molds the other . . . . After all, they are caught in the same set of relationships; only the arrow of power changes direction” (Figure 1, right). He continues:

the logic of [choreographic] movement notation ultimately suggests real corridors of space, as if the dancer has been “carving space out of a pliable substance”; or the reverse, shaping continuous volumes as if movement has been literally solidified, frozen into a permanent and massive vector.11

The third overlap between disciplines, as mentioned above, is the explicit interaction between architectural or urban space and choreographic works. Contemporary choreographers Sasha Waltz, Noemie Lafrance, and Elke Rindfleisch appropriate architectural and urban spaces, such as sidewalks, stairwells, museums, or plazas, as the sites for their performance works, generally without architectural collaborators. Frédéric Flamand has both appropriated architectural spaces and engaged several architects to collaborate on performances that investigate the body, time, image, and space. To close the gap between the disciplines, he has adopted from his first architect-collaborator, Elizabeth Diller, the definition of architecture as that which “exists from the surface of one body’s skin to that of another.” To this, Diller adds that she likes to “think of architecture as an event, that can be choreographed . . . [and] that choreography [is] the design of time, bodies in time.”12 This interrelated set of definitions, linking body, space, time, and architecture, challenges the limits of each discipline and is well suited to Flamand’s work. The scale of his concerns tends to be the relationship of the body to a larger space or image rather than body part to body part. Flamand has therefore sought out collaborations with visual artist Fabrizio Plessi, Brazilian designers Fernando and Humberto Campana, and architects Zaha Hadid, Dominique Perrault, Diller + Scofidio, Jean Nouvel, and Thom Mayne to create performances exploring the contemporary condition of the body in relation to architectural space and technology.

Flamand’s Beginnings
Frédéric Flamand does not fit the typical definition of a choreographer, having previously studied in theater and visual arts rather than dance. He underwent intense physical training in the Jerzy Grotowski style, developing an interest in the gravity-bound Japanese dance in contrast to gravity-defying classical ballet.13 Flamand, in describing his earliest performance pieces, speaks more readily about the organization of space than the overall dance or specific movements. For instance, he describes this early work in terms of its black walls, white ceiling, four projectors, audience seated around the empty room (similar to Grotowski), and the use of props (wheels, metal tubes, and tables) to make “things in space with bodies and objects very much like Schlemmer.”14 As such, he is not so much a creator of movement as he is a maker of images with the body. Anna Kisselgoff maintains that he is essentially “a conceptualist whose collaboration with architects offers intellectual underpinnings for his mixed-media pieces.”15 Much of the movement is developed with and credited to the dancers in his companies, the Ballet National de Marseille since 2004, Charleroi/Dances, and Plan K.16

Unlike the classic definition of a choreographer’s work—creating or arranging dances and other stage work—Flamand’s movements and arrangements originally were not even on stage. As early as the 1970s, he sought out spaces unbound by the frontal relationship between spectator and performer, engaging architects to collaborate on performances that investigate the body, time, image, and space. He


2. Left: Early Flamand and Plan K work, Le Nu Traverse (1971), video still from film by Antoine Jacobs; right: Plessi-Flamand collaboration, Ex Machina (1994). (Courtesy of Frédéric Flamand/Ballet National de Marseille.)
and spectacle found in conventional proscenium theaters. His performances took to the streets and were more akin to political demonstrations or happenings. One such performance that captured wide attention, *Ex Machina* (1994), was made in collaboration with artist Fabrizio Plessi for an abandoned swimming pool (Figure 2). Others occupied the *Rafinerie*, a defunct sugar refinery in downtown Brussels where his company took up residence. From the beginning of his career, the work has conceptually been about the body in relationship to media, space, and machines. Removing the performance from the theater and relocating it in venues more akin to contemporary art, like his counterparts in the American postmodern dance world, immediately altered the way the work was to be understood. Flamand’s siting recontextualized the work so that its conceptual underpinnings became more important than user-friendliness, narrative, or entertainment.

Dance performance located outside the theater and interrogating architectural and public space has its own history as a subset of dance and performance art. Postmodern choreographers Simone Forti and Trisha Brown presented their work in galleries, lofts, parking lots, and other outdoor sites. Trisha Brown’s 1969–1970 piece, entitled *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*, performed exactly that. A year later, a related piece, *Walking on the Wall*, was performed in a Whitney Museum space. Other Brown performances took place on city rooftops (*Roof Piece*, 1971) and situated dancers on rafts floating in the midst of a Minnesota lake (*Primary Accumulation*, 1974). More recent examples include Elke Rindfleisch’s rooftop piece (*Overhead*, 2005) and Noemie Lafrance’s 2005 and 2006 *Agora* performances in the abandoned swimming pool of Brooklyn’s McCarren Park. For those working in performance, found sites provide an economic and expedient alternative to the official means of production, add shock value, challenge the boundaries between art and life, or, as Flamand often states, allow one “to escape the (straightjacket or) ghetto of the dance world.”

Thus, Flamand sought architect-collaborators owing to his desire to work free of this “straight-jacket.” Moreover, once his company Plan K had gained notoriety and invitations to tour, attempts were made to “take the [swimming] pool with them” or recreate it, but these were soon dismissed as ridiculous propositions. The company’s tradition of interacting with found space in a vital and critical manner required specific contexts to respond to, and as the pool could not travel, Flamand turned to architects to create contexts that could tour to theaters or found sites and provide a significant (physical and conceptual) site for the work.

**Collaborations**

Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio, who were also working at the experimental margins of their discipline, were the first architects to collaborate with Flamand. Diller + Scofidio’s work explored specific “obsessions,” as Flamand refers to the perpetual investigation into, among many themes, the split between the body in relationship to media, space, and machines. Their mutual interest in his own and others’ work. For Flamand, working with one’s most intimate obsessions is critical for achieving the intensity in a performance that reflects our contemporary condition. Similar to Antonin Artaud’s plea for a theater of extreme action, gravity and danger in his “Theater and Cruelty,” Flamand explicitly instructs his dancers to work from their obsessions, to take risks. Not surprisingly, the collaborators he seeks are “visionaries of our time” who are not constrained by disciplinary boundaries. For Diller + Scofidio, the realm of performance is utopian in that it involves the architect from the earliest concept and the formulation of a problem to its solution. Regarding their collaboration with Flamand, Diller explains: “as our architecture is a critique of architecture and Fred’s choreography is a critique of dance, the collaboration had a good, wobbling foundation.”

The early commission-less years of Diller + Scofidio’s practice allowed them to discover and explore their obsession with the culture of vision and spectatorship through the media of performance and installation. They collaborated twice with playwright Matthew McGuire (*American Mysteries*, 1984, and *The Memory Theater of Giulio Camillo*, 1986) and conceptualized and designed the set for Susan Mosakowski’s *The Rotary Notary and His Hot Plate* (1987). The latter was an investigation into, among many themes, the split “canvas” and double entendres of *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (Large Glass)* by Marcel Duchamp (1915–1923). These projects were a means for them to “construct ideas”
through “structures that mediate how the viewer sees.”22 In The Rotary Notary, they challenged the conventional visual relation of elevational to planimetric information through a pivoting mirror, inclined at 45°. This reflective surface allowed the spectator to witness hidden actions occurring in plan as a floating elevation.

Just as literary texts or works of art had been catalysts for their previous performance projects, a manuscript laid the groundwork for Diller + Scofidio’s 1996 collaboration with Flamand, called Moving Target. In the uncensored diaries of the dancer Nijinski, the author asks himself, “What is normal?“ anyway.24 Questioning “normality” and conventions within their disciplines was already established as a mutual, recurring obsession and would serve as the project’s common ground. Diller + Scofidio used an enormous one-way mirror screen, or “interscenium” surface, to split the spectators’ gaze between the reflected and mediated upper “stage” and the real action on the “ground.”25

Similar to Trisha Brown’s Man Walking, Flamand’s dancers were displaced and rotated onto a vertical plane. This created the visual effect of doubling their number while de-emphasizing the performance stage (Figure 3).

The interscenium also revealed views of the structure of the dance through its plan while elevating bodies from the ground so that they appeared to float in the suspended screen space. Other (split) “personalities” were introduced via video projection as a means to explore the theme of the mediated, duplicated, and simultaneous body. This screen also referenced the psychotic or schizophrenic mind, presenting a second representation of the dance, not the real, grounded, “normal” version but rather its “pathological” image floating above.26 This doubling laid the groundwork for questions to be explored in their subsequent collaborations.

In EJM 1 (Man Walking at Ordinary Speed) and EJM 2 (Inertia), 1999, the work of Edweard J. Muybridge and Etienne Jules Marey served as the catalyst to explore “truth” or the disconnect between real and simulated presence of the body through technology. In EJM 1, for example, the stage was sparsely populated by few dancers and a series of vertical projection screens, proportioned to the upright dancer and propped up by hidden trolleys (Figure 4). Projected onto them were the images of the dancers found immediately adjacent, creating a dialog between the real and the simulated presence. The blackness of the set, and through this the disappearance of the screens as physical surfaces, reinforced the ambiguity of real and simulated, especially as simulated bodies multiplied. Although movement passages were invented in response to the split screen of Moving Target, in EJM 1, the dancers moved in specific relationship to the figures on the multiple screens. This provided opportunities for pas de deux and ensembles between a real dancer and one or several simulated bodies that “cloned” (identical duplication) and “copied” (unidentical duplication) the live dancers’ movements. Flamand also took advantage of mediation to shift the virtual dancers’ scale, temporally manipulate the action, and play with the virtual figure’s movement from screen to screen. This piece is evidence of a developing precision with which Flamand and his dancers responded to the technological opportunities devised by Diller + Scofidio.27

Three years later, Jean Nouvel invited Flamand to collaborate on the Hanover Universal Expo 2000 “exhibition” concerning the future of work. This would prove a logical pairing as both share an obsession with projected imagery and industrial space. For Flamand, “each [collaborator] works with his own intimate obsession. Then we meet and see what happens.”28 Flamand was interested in the “difference between the body, which is fragility . . . emotion and sensuality, and this perfect technological world—a world of transparency that aims to make the body disappear or replace the body with its image.”29 As in his other projects, The Future of Work posed questions about the body in relation to a world of increasing mediated/technological images and prosthetic extensions. Nouvel used this project to continue his investigations into ambiguous layered space by employing industrial warehouse scaffolding, platforms, and projection scrims (Figure 5).

For both Flamand and Nouvel, The Future of Work bordered on an obsessive indulgence in multiplicity and repetition, expressing our contemporary culture of excess. It was performed daily for over five months and included 120 dancers per day, with several rotating shifts of 33 dancers, to create perpetual action within the nearly 100 m of scaffolding that wrapped the spectators. As an elliptical structure, it contained over forty bays, two layers deep, plus additional components creating stairs, ramps, slides, and screens. One of the performers referred to the sum total of this physical construction as an “orgy of energy and equipment.”30 The six hundred thousand spectators who experienced The Future of Work occupied the center space, having first circulated around and down the exterior face of the elliptical arena before entering into the central void and exiting through opposite ends. They were invited to indulge in as short or as long an experience as desired (Figure 6).

In the Nouvel collaboration, the displacements of the body went beyond the presence of mediated “others.” Whereas in Moving Target the other body had been a mediated displacement accomplished through optical games and projected live or prerecorded footage, in The Future of Work, the body was literally distributed in three dimensions, on a multileveled obstacle course, with no single ground upon which to dance. Nouvel spoke of this as a new space to discover: “a game of sorts,” full of constraints (holes, ramps, and cross bracing) to be negotiated.31 More significant displacements occurred with the collective body of the audience. The experience of the exhibition required a literal displacement, down the ramp, into the arena, and out again. Beyond this, however, Nouvel displaced the spectators from their typical designated
location in front of the scene (proscenium) into the center of the arena, surrounded by the performers. This ring configuration bears formal and programmatic resemblances to Walter Gropius’s *Totaltheater* (1927). Designed for Director Edwin Piscator, Gropius proposed an elliptical performance ambulatory around the audience. Piscator’s productions also used “vast crowds, actors mingling with the audience . . . motion pictures” and “the elimination of the proscenium to bring actors and audience closer together.”

Artaud also called for direct communication between actor and spectator, who “placed in the middle of the action, [would be] engulfed and physically affected by it.”

Certainly, the performers’ encountering the “masses,” through proximity and intermingling, was encouraged by the perimeter balconies of both Gropius’s *Totaltheater* and Nouvel’s elliptical structure. Most importantly, Nouvel reconsidered the space of the spectacle and that of the spectator.

The Flamand-Nouvel collaboration continued over the following year, developing *The Future of Work* two steps further. In a second iteration, *Body/Work* (2001), the scaffolding structure was split in half and flattened into two thick walls to occupy the opposite ends of a vast open space. Unlike the split configuration of *Moving Target*, in which the split occurred between the upper realm of simulations and the lower realm of reality, in *Body/Work*, the spectators’ attention is divided between a world in front and one behind. This demanded a different kind of participation from the audience—one of multitasking or choosing which half of the spectacle to experience.

This bracketing of the space with two scaffolds not only framed the performers but also caught the spectators between the two layers of the set. Flamand refers to this orthogonal grid as a normalizing devise, a Cartesian matrix allowing the measure of the immeasurable. From one dancer’s standpoint, “Fred has [always] explored supports for the body . . . braces, prostheses [that] tied up [the dancers so that] even without architecture . . . the body [has] its protheses and prolongations.” In this case, the scaffold is the body’s brace, or corset, restricting the movement while dispersing and multiplying bodies in a deep, ambiguous field. For Nouvel, this scaffold satisfied another desire—to make an installation from working materials that are capable of creating something conceptually mobile, in the sense that a scaffold is never intended as a permanent installation; it moves and transforms in relation to the work for which it is to be used. The scaffold also manifests the architect’s obsession with orthogonal matrices (trammes), not as form but as support for other phenomena—superposition of images, reflections, filters, and ambiguous depth of field.

In the final iteration of the project, *Body/Work/Leisure* (2001), the audience was seated before the set. Made with limited involvement from


Nouvel’s office, Flamand reconfigured the eight tons of scaffolding into a triple-layered configuration within the confines of a traditional Italian (horseshoe plan) proscenium theater. The choreographer who rejected conventional theater space for industrial space ultimately found himself and his simulated industrial framework back within the most classic of proscenia.

In an interview, Nouvel reflected upon spatial ordering in choreography and architecture. “When the bodies are there, together, something happens that you want to hold on to.” They construct an ephemeral architecture. But the fugitive qualities of movement escape our perception as we have few concepts or words with which to categorize and perceive them, according to Sally Banes. This fleeting spatial order cannot be held (on to) nearly as readily as the physical one. Nouvel continues:

Something is made, which is of the same nature as spatial ordering. It’s similar to spatial and volumetric composition. Emotion is created with a substance: the body. For an architect there is always a moment [in dance] that makes one dream of architecture in the most basic sense of the term.

The desire to capture the fleeting quality of human experience in the built world was one theme of Calvino’s *Invisible Cities*. This book, with its meditation on cities as places of exchange and incessant transformation, provided the springboard for Flamand’s collaboration with Thom Mayne, *Silent Collisions* (2003) (Figure 7). It was created for the first Venice Dance Biennale, which Flamand curated around the theme “Body-City.” Mayne explained, the challenge:

was to develop strategies through which the architecture could be in tune with the urban environment without rendering banal or limiting the cacophony of the human experience. How could architecture be proposed as an evolutionary process rather than a fixed entity in time and space?

As an architect, Mayne explained that his interests lie:

in the way things are produced, because that is what we do, . . . in attempting to synthesize the way one sees the world—as one in which the straightest path between two points is a circuitous one, à la Calvino—and the territories that are useful as a generative process, . . . in the dynamic between [a multiplicity of] systems.

The physical resultant of this approach would structure both time and space through a system of folding panels that provided opportunities for movement, illumination, and projection. In their “normal” condition, these panels formed a series of half-arches that created a regular rectangular container within the Venice Arsenale Teatro alle Tese space. The panels could be reconfigured into different angular and broken shapes by raising and lowering points along the structure via networks of intricately controlled cables. Flamand orchestrated projections of text and images as place markers, as virtual dancers, and as literal references to the contemporary mode of navigating the world (the Internet).

Each configuration implied a distinct (invisible) city and context for the adventure of navigating
imaginary places. Mayne simulated the city of Isaura, described by Calvino as having a thousand wells, with illuminated inflated columns that filled the open space of the set. Another city, Tamara, was evoked through digitally projected instructions that referred to a city of permissions and interdictions. Through a carefully controlled shortening and lengthening of cables, and shifting illumination, the set took on characteristics of the crystalline butterfly wings defining the city of Marozia. With each of the chapters, the dancers were provided with a newly configured space to which they could respond. They engaged with the pinched conditions between panels, crouched and rolled under low arcades and folds, and celebrated the open space when the panels were hoisted away, developing a specific manner of movement in response to each spatial condition (Figure 8).

In Silent Collisions, the relationship between set and audience was again challenged. In the “black box” Teatro alle Tese space, the set-spectator-set sandwich devised by Nouvel (Body/Work) was turned inside out, placing the spectators on opposing sides of a platform, looking into this fractured arcade from both ends. Since the Bienale, Silent Collisions has been reworked for the classically trained Ballet National de Marseille and performed in more conventional theaters. Whether it is as successful in the frontal proscenium container cannot be attested to here; certainly, some of the wonder of looking through the set, as though through glazed urban arcades, will be lost with the conventional setting.

Reflections on the Process
One critical variable for the success of these three collaborations with Flamand was the clear understanding in all the participants’ minds of their particular (and often mutual) obsessions. Performance, which focuses specifically on the body’s relationship to space, provides an open ground for architectural experimentation. Stripped of many constraints of normative building, it fosters exploration and demands clear vision. As spectators, we expect to be moved by emotions and sensations beyond our daily lives, and thus, performance demands more than neutral interests; it is a place where obsessions can be more readily indulged. Probing institutional codes and conventions, deviance, and mutation (among others) do not fall within normative architectural concerns; yet these are constants within Diller + Scopidio’s practice. Their collaboration across disciplinary lines created a laboratory for probing the conventions of visual perception, for digitally hybridizing real and virtual dancers. Nouvel claims that his critics have fully psychoanalyzed him and identified his obsession with Cartesian matrices, filters, reflections, and ambiguities in perceived depth. These have been played out in real time and explored to excess with Flamand and his dancers. Silent Collisions allowed Mayne to explore dynamic and fluctuating space in ways that real buildings rarely permit.

Each of these collaborations also created a specific (physical and conceptual) context against which Flamand could test another manifestation of the contemporary body (Figure 9). Anyone less at home with his/her own obsessions might not fare so well on the wide-open “wobbly foundation” as Diller puts it.

In each collaboration, the wobbly ground was a concept connected to each collaborator’s obsession, facilitated by a manuscript or given theme. This gave identity to the in-between and overlapping concerns, creating a third element that was neither strictly the choreographer’s nor the architects’ turf. Rather, it was some shared terrain belonging to neither one fully, without the other. Flamand, as general instigator, acknowledges that he is ultimately responsible for finding or making the link between what (obsessive theme) he discovers in the architects’ work and the possibility for the body to enter into a dialogue with those themes. Nevertheless, these projects situated both choreographer and architect equally outside of their familiar roles as creative director and in so doing made for true collaboration.

The collaborations also went beyond mere opportunities to, as RoseLee Goldberg puts it, “construct ideas.” Once their common ground had been created, both parties benefited from choreography’s rapid feedback loop. The iterative process has no lag time through improvisation and testing on the spot. Right away, it is clear if it works, is interesting, or “flat.” Diller commented:

There was a great satisfaction in theater, that you put it up in front of an audience . . . and hear the response. You could really just see your life pass in front of you when something goes wrong, but at the same time, you see the response.”
Architects always dream and speculate about the life that will animate their designs, but they rarely have a means to test it in real time. The development process in performance creates an opportunity to see how the body interacts with and challenges the space, hopefully in ways the architect could never anticipate.

These collaborations were not collages, as had been the case in the collaborations between Merce Cunningham, John Cage, and Robert Rauschenberg (Travelogue, 1977); each artist worked separately and with minimal discussion until the parts were overlaid for the performance.45 Neither were Flamand’s projects conventional ones in which a décor was designed to fit preexisting dances. Design and choreographic development occurred simultaneously and in dialogue, resulting in sets flexible enough for improvisational reconfigurations. Nouvel’s employment of a modular assembly, organized into a clear spatial and conceptual construct, provided room for on-site manipulation during rehearsals. Flamand proposed several modifications, adding and subtracting within the logic that Nouvel had established, tweaking the space and movement together to achieve a tighter relationship. Similarly, the Mayne set allowed for, and even necessitated, playful interactions and multiple transformations. This also applied to the Diller + Scocfidio sets, in either their mobility or their transformability through rear and front projection, facilitating multiple spatial qualities and images.

The improvisational aspect of integrating architectural construction with the ephemeral bodily construction of space extends, for the architect, the process of invention beyond its usual ending—beyond drawing, modeling, fabrication, and installation processes. Improvisational design during rehearsal allows for an encounter between the “completed” construction and the dancers’ bodies that extends and adjusts the potential of the architecture. In these three collaborations, the spaces and artifacts offered a network of possibilities and variations, not as fixed entities with only a limited means to interact. Actions of rearrangement, rotation, sliding, unwinding of parts, and interactions with projection and illumination provided plenty of room for play. Indeed, these collaborations were positive and productive for all involved, as validated by repeat performances and a reassembling of the teams to create remakes and new works.

Through the architects’ discussions of their collaboration with Flamand, there is a sense that they enter into a world that is highly unpredictable, where they cannot anticipate what is going to happen, how exactly they will work together, or what the end result will be, a destabilizing circumstance they are interested in experiencing a second or third time. One of Nouvel’s associates, Hubert Tonka, stated during a discussion of their collaboration with Flamand:

I would say that the experience we had with Fred was . . . purely metaphysical . . . . I don’t know why I am here . . . . However, we like Fred’s work . . . . his attitude towards life . . . . towards art and . . . . towards us . . . . He never fails to listen, but he does exactly what’s in his mind. And after a while, we realize that his mind resembles ours!46

Flamand, the choreographer, is obsessed, with conceptual concerns that, as architects, we also share.

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Notes
7. Flamand has collaborated with Diller + Scofidio (before they were DS + R) between 1996 and 1999, Jean Nouvel (2000–2001), Zaha Hadid (2000 + 2007), Thom Mayne (2003), and Dominique Perrault (2005), and the Campana brothers in 2007.
9. Rudolf Laban created his first system of movement notation, Schrittzanz, in 1927. He continued to develop these notation systems, integrating industrial recording techniques, into his “kinetography.” In America, the system referred to as labanotation is the application of Laban’s principles of movement notation to stage dancing. See S. Thornton, A Movement Perspective (London: Macdonald and Evans, 1971), pp. 59–67. Labanotation resembles a musical score, and it records the movements of specific body parts as well as relative movement in space. It does not readily convey patterns, groupings, or placement on the stage.
16. Flamand founded the dance-theater group Plan K in 1973, which would experiment with the integration of video, visual arts, and dance. In 1991, Flamand was invited to take on the direction of the Ballet Royal de Wallonie, which he would rename Charleroi/Danses, and in 2004, Flamand was appointed as general director of the Ballet National de Marseille. www.voiceofdance.org/Insights/insights.trans.col.cfmLinkID=3800000000000247 (accessed December 20, 2007).
17. Flamand was invited to take on the direction of the Ballet Royal de Wallonie, which he would rename Charleroi/Danses, and in 2004, Flamand was appointed as general director of the Ballet National de Marseille. www.voiceofdance.org/Insights/insights.trans.col.cfmLinkID=3800000000000247 (accessed December 20, 2007).
18. Ibid.
25. “Unlike the prosenium that separates the audience from the narrative space of the stage, the interscenium, composed of a 45° mirror/projection screen over the stage, splinters the gaze of the audience and allows for a plan view of the stage in which dance patterns and structures are more clearly visible.” See Diller Scofidio and Renfro Web site, http://www.dillerscofidio.com/moving-target.html (accessed December 20, 2007).
26. Ibid.
27. “‘Using Muybridge and Marey as points of departure, the works look at ‘imaging,’ specifically in relation to the stage. While the veracity of Muybridge’s scientific means has been disputed, his camera was, nevertheless, understood as an instrument of truth.’ Photography was assumed to be a faithful documentation of the world until the advent of digitization. The staging apparatus takes as its theme the fine line between truth and doubt, between what is seen and what is known, between live stage action and forms of ‘mediation.’” See Performance Anthology: DVD. (Diller Scofidio + Renfro, 2003), see Diller Scofidio + Renfro Web site, http://www.dillerscofidio.com/moving-target.html (accessed December 20, 2007).
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid.
34. Le Chorégraphe et l’Architecte.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
40. Ballet National de Marseille, Dossier Presse Silent Collisions, pp. 3–5. Available at www.ballet-de-marseille.com/dp/DP2%20silent%20collisions.pdf (accessed March 5, 2008). The original text is in French and “based upon” a text by Thom Mayne. The press release does not make clear to what extent it is a closely translated text, a loose interpretation, from interviews, conversations, or some other nature. The translation is by the author.
42. Silent Collisions, directed by Ludovica Riccardi; choreography by Frédéric Flamand; set design by Thom Mayne. DVD. (Koln, Germany, 2004).
43. Le Chorégraphe et l’Architecte.
44. F. Flamand and E. Diller, in conversation with Joseph Grima.
46. Le Chorégraphe et l’Architecte.