

Editorial

Somaesthetics and Phenomenology – a Handful of Notes

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“What is the difference of somaesthetics and phenomenology?” This is the question a teacher of body philosophy encounters when s/he presents somaesthetics, the less known of these two approaches to the philosophy of the body.

The answer might look simple. Phenomenology, when focused on the body, has been the main academic tradition of philosophical body-consciousness. Phenomenologists have mainly aspired to stay academic and theoretical with an epistemological objective and the approach has not originally been established for practical use. Somaesthetics, a much later concept, has been right from the beginning fueled by an aspiration to lead theory and bodily practices into a dialogue – where both could enhance their (for the body often just tacit) knowledge with the help of the other. And if phenomenology, although later actively adapted in e.g. Japan and South Korea, is very (broadly speaking) Central European by its nature, somaesthetics, with roots in the pragmatist philosophy that developed in the United States, has right from its very beginnings, in the early 2000s, encouraged dialogue between different philosophical traditions, both ‘Western’ and ‘non-Western’.

However, the issue becomes complicated when looking at the communities working on and with the approaches. Some phenomenologists today are actually dancers, karateka and/or yogi, others apply phenomenology to e.g. robotics and interface and interaction design, and so actually put phenomenology into practice in a way somaesthetics has made programmatic for itself. Contrary, many who write about somaesthetics are actually classical academic philosophers in the sense that their main bodily practice is to sit behind a desk and drink (too much) coffee.

Both traditions take pride in their roots, phenomenology in the philosophical springs of the Brentano-Husserl connection (without forgetting the threads of reflections that have made e.g. René Descartes a central figure in the corpus), and somaesthetics in Dewey’s philosophy of experience and his moderately experimental attitude (without forgetting the way already Peirce and James built approaches to the body). Practically, many who are into phenomenology have not actually much looked at its very beginnings (although the interest in Husserl is somehow rising in importance again), and they start from Merleau-Ponty or Heidegger. The same way, for example Dewey’s original life work is for many somaestheticians known only through the work of later thinkers of pragmatism, most notably of course Richard Shusterman, the initiator of the discussion of somaesthetics.

What could a comparative and/or critical and/or synthesizing inquiry into the relationship of these two approaches bring forth? What are the key differences (historical sources, practical writing, applications) – and could somaesthetics and phenomenology profit from having more philosophical dialogue? What about their very origins? Pragmatism could historically be seen as an offspring of earlier continental philosophy that was imported to the new world through European diaspora. Dewey also went to China for a period and applied some of his Eastern learnings to his philosophy of art and phenomenology had already in Husserl an Asian

(Japanese) connection that became stronger with Heidegger (who, besides his dialogues with Japanese thinkers, started to translate *Tao Te Ching*). Has Asian thinking shaped the emergence of both philosophies in a way that unites them in some respect already quite early – and to what extent? The same could be asked about the continental European philosophies that were imported to Harvard, the birthplace of pragmatism, but served also as a background to the evolution of phenomenology. Peirce attacked Cartesians that dominated Harvard's philosophical atmosphere, but Husserl engaged in reinterpreting Descartes. Still the source is the same.

One of the original main sources for the birth and early development of phenomenology, the work (i.e. teaching and research) of psychologist and philosopher Franz Brentano, featured intense reflection on the unity of consciousness (see, e.g. Brentano 1995, see, e.g. 57). This same awe about the way we are able to keep focus and to feel mentally centralized, despite all fragmentation, despite being bombarded with random impulses, thoughts and multi-faceted stimulation – in other words, these 'problems of oneness and unity occupied [Edmund] Husserl throughout all the phases of his philosophical development' (Sawicki 2001). Husserl, like Sigmund Freud (another theorist of the mind), was Brentano's student, and the philosopher who appropriated Brentano's term 'phenomenology', which was originally reserved for descriptive psychology. Husserl used it for his new take on scientific thinking by adapting Brentano's view that being is intentional – and, e.g., challenging his students and readers to take up a new craft of philosophy by systematically dropping perceptual prejudices through reduction (see e.g. Husserl 1990), i.e. through taking away all uncertainties from our accounts of what we sense (which could of course also be read as also one new way to gain more focus for perception and experience).

According to Daniel Dennett, unity of consciousness is needed for survival. Unity of consciousness is, though, still over-emphasized, according to Dennett, as we are not as much in control of our consciousness as we might think, and nor are we even able to grasp it strongly enough to claim possession of it (see e.g. Dennett 1991). It might be that Dennett's comment to the phenomenologists is true, and that (to make a banal point) those who were able to focus better were more often able to pass their genes to the next generation, but, still, the way 'things' sometimes just 'come together' into focus, in a way that also *feels* remarkable, has perhaps been a *key experience* that has fueled the active, systematic introspection of both Brentano and Husserl. A pragmatist reader might also easily think that it shares some key components with Dewey's idea of *an experience*.

The way we are able, with all our fragmented impulses, thoughts and multi-faceted stimulation, to sometimes intensify and build focused experience, feeling not just mentally centralized but also somatically centralized, is a main tenet in Dewey's aspiration to theorize moments when all our fragmented memories, impulses, and mental and sensuous stimuli come together in *an experience* (Dewey 1980). He simply left the narrow intellect behind, and went for a broader unity, but also drags in the organic rhythms of the body – and accentuates memories, (aesthetic) skills and the active construction of the experience. One cannot of course equate consciousness and experience, but both threads of thinking share the same interest in mental focus.

Both phenomenology and pragmatism have mainly worked without empirical data, and they have focused on philosophical descriptions (and introspection), argumentation and speculation (which I have nothing against). If (the significantly later) Dewey described activities as different

as cleaning the house and gazing at paintings to make his point, while never particularly detailing the organic rhythms of the body that he mentioned several times, and not being interested in working out taxonomies of holistic experience, Brentano worked only, and restrictively, in the sphere of the mind. The body, though, gained increasingly focus in the work of the line of phenomenologists that starts from Edmund Husserl.

From Descartes's Masonry Heater to Heidegger's Hammer

Although the soma is not just 'bubbling under' in the life work of Edmund Husserl – the body as the 'lived here', a locus of sensations, embodiment and situatedness is already actively present in, e.g., his 1913 *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy* (1983) – in my personal reading of phenomenology, the body has always stood out in a remarkable manner first and foremost in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* [Sein und Zeit] 1927, in the philosopher's description of the tool/equipment [Zeug]:

The less we just stare at the hammer-thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is – as equipment. The hammering itself uncovers the specific 'manipulability' of the hammer. The kind of Being which equipment possesses – in which it manifests itself in its own right – we call 'readiness-to-hand'. (Heidegger 1962, 98)

Heidegger's tool/equipment is something that other philosophers like to mention when they present his lifework (Gianni Vattimo seems to pay most attention to it: See Vattimo 1973, 23-25), but the concept itself has not attracted analysis that would open up its somatic potential. It is not that Heidegger would in any way hint upon the bodily side of the example he started lecturing about in 1919, and which then became an integral part of *Being and Time* (1927).

Heidegger's issue is not the use of any single tool. He discusses the whole cultural network of reliable tools. 'Taken strictly, there "is" no such thing as an equipment. To the Being of any equipment there always belongs a totality of equipment, in which it can be this equipment that it is,' he writes (Heidegger 1962, 97). Using tools, one is not attitude-wise vis-à-vis the world of 'objects.' In use, the hammer becomes 'transparent'. We notice the role/meaning of it when it is, e.g., broken.

The act of using the hammer is of course a somatic practice (although Heidegger does not underline this) – and it is polarized against the horizon of works of art, which Heidegger paints with sort of radical conservative (idealist) brushstrokes, reserving 'art' (aesthetically heretically) for works that have only a constitutive role in the local (Greek, German) culture, and which pull us out from our everyday to an unsafe position, to meet our existential 'abyss' (Heidegger 1971). While art might sometimes bring materials like stone in the spotlight of experience (Heidegger mentions Barlach's sculptures), it looks like there would be no somatic side to the appreciation of it, and in this sense Heidegger's art does not depart from e.g. Kantian ideals of disinterestedness. But the use of equipment does, although Heidegger does not work on it.

Human beings have used hammers for at least 3.3 million years (Harmand & Lewis 2015) and even the nailing hammer was created 3000 years ago. By using a tool that is so very much down-to-earth, is easy to use (not requiring much reflection) and insignificant, though important, and culturally ancient (I guess this is part of the point), one's cultural modality goes 'hands on' in-

depth when using it. The bodily engagement with a cultural product that transmits historicity takes one to the core and base of culture itself, and we can here think of culture in broad, shared terms: Heidegger's thinking was still, at this early phase of *Being and Time*, intended to explain *Dasein* without the restricted ethno-nationalism that marked *The Origin of the Work of Art*.

Heidegger polarized presence-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*) and readiness-to-hand (*Zuhandenheit*), and meant with the former concept phenomena in consciousness, but with the latter term he referred, for example, to tools (i.e. equipment, *Zeug*), like the hammer mentioned above. It is not that one could not mention Heidegger's list of tools which appear in his later work, i.e. 'equipment for writing, sewing, working, transportation, measurement' (Heidegger 1962, 97). The hammer just happens to be the most somatically laden of all of them and he chose it to represent the whole network of tools. A pen (in Heidegger's list) would have been the classical philosophical example ('I sit here in my office and look at my pen'). A needle would restrict the soma to very small movements and to the fingers only. But grabbing tools, e.g. a hammer – this major motoric action – is central for us and for monkeys. Even simply seeing someone grabbing a hammer activates our mirror neurons, whether we were to see it 'live' or on film (see e.g. Lankinen, Smeds, Tikka, Pihko, Hari & Koskinen 2016 or Ghazanfar & Shepherd 2011). The example is even, in a sense, a good example of cultural reduction, if one desires to look at it from that perspective. When one hammers, one mainly just hammers – and through that somatic act one dives under the surface of culture, both to the historicity of the tool as a part of a whole network of tools, that we rely on, a safe haven of pragma, and (this is something that Husserl the wannabe scientist would have liked) then also through the cultural layers, not to our existential abyss, but our biological roots. Husserl, though, wrote about something that could be considered to be close to tools in his "Renewal: Its Problem and Method" (1923-1924), where he discussed e.g. commodities (*Gut*) (Husserl 1988). For Husserl man's interest in building houses and producing commodities was about becoming immortal, which is, of course, a very different stance regarding Heidegger's in a sense down-to-earth discourse on the tool/equipment. Husserl was more, though, into discussing perception.

One of the sources of Husserl's at first quite lonely auto-wrestling with the issue of reduction is the work of René Descartes, whose 1637 *Discourse on the Method* (Descartes 2006) featured dreadful doubts about the existence of the body and 'outer reality.' (In his later work, Descartes, famously, also discussed in a practical spirit the way the mind and the body connect, but his early work really fed dualistic thinking.) Descartes's dysfunctional body-relationship – he enjoyed meditating in a masonry heater (or some kind of oven) but doubted dreadfully the existence of his body – led to a (neurotic) systematic questioning of what he saw. For example, he asked if he saw a house or just a facade, when he walked by (*ibid.*). Husserl turned this epistemological experimentalism – at least Descartes himself talks about all those years that he spend going beyond facades to really see what he saw (a whole house or just a façade) – into an initiative for a scientific method, where reducing transcendentalism and understanding critically that we 'fill in' the reality we perceive with our imagination (e.g. I am now taking it for granted that the cup on my right side is whole, and not just a (from the other side) broken one that my eye just cannot conceive) would make our scientific work clearer and better based. The *phainomenon*, things appearing to view, had, according to Husserl, to be understood as things in themselves so that we could arrive at a greater clarity about reality.

Heidegger, in Husserl's footsteps, with his example of the hammer turned phenomenology upside down in a sense to what lay beyond cultural perception. His 'reduction' was probably not consciously about our biological base, which I mentioned above, but in some sense about the

way we are ‘being culture’ through the act of using a tool. With this neologism I desire to apply the ‘being body’ and ‘having a body’ framework of Husserl to the use of the tool presented by Heidegger, and the way one connects in-depth and ‘loses oneself’ to culture through somatic action (not reflection, i.e. ‘having a culture’). As the tool seems to fascinate those philosophers who walk in Heidegger’s footsteps, but is virtually never applied or reflected upon further, one can speculate on whether the icebergs of somatic practice, and our primal sense of empathy that is connected to grabbing and seizing, have somehow made it lucrative, although it might be hard to build anything new on this idea.

Phenomenology, of course, found its body, more famously and in a more dominant manner in the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, who, Richard Shusterman writes (and quotes) in *Thinking Through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics* (Shusterman 2012), “powerfully foregrounds the body’s value while intriguingly explaining the body as silent, structuring, concealed background: ‘Bodily space... is the darkness needed in the theatre to show up the performance, the background of somnolence or reserve of vague power against which the gesture and its aim stand out.’”

In Merleau-Ponty’s sensitive, reflective inquiries, some of today’s ways of thinking about the body – e.g. seeing clothes as its extension – find their first expression. Merleau-Ponty also writes (I continue quoting Shusterman as he gives Merleau-Ponty a major role in building some of the fundamental thoughts that today define also somaesthetics): “The body is also mysterious as a locus of “impersonal” existence, beneath and hidden from normal selfhood. It is “the place where life hides away” from the world, where I retreat from my interest in observing or acting in the world “lose myself in some pleasure or pain, and shut myself up in this anonymous life which subtends my personal one. But precisely because my body can shut itself off from the world, it is also what opens me out upon the world and places me in a situation there” (ibid.).

Merleau-Ponty’s work explored the dialogue of the lived body and the world, where the body was not just a source of tacit knowledge but now also the locus of consciousness. He was followed by, e.g., Luce Irigaray and Jean-Luc Nancy, who took philosophizing through the body to new levels, exploring breathing, forgotten somatic potentials and morphologies of gender (Irigaray) and touch (Nancy), among many other issues. These names have made phenomenology, at least in the Western world, *the* philosophy of the body, although many phenomenologists have not accentuated the body at all.

From Peirce’s Pragmatist Reading of Descartes to the Global Nature of Somaesthetics

Another reading of Descartes stimulated the birth of pragmatism. The Presbyterian circles at Harvard and its environs added to the somatic skepticism of Descartes so much that the founder of pragmatism, Charles Saunders Peirce turned his gaze aggressively against the local (religiously laden) rationalists, and said to his students that upon meeting a Cartesian they should go and punch him in the face – and then ask if he still doubted the existence of his body (for more see Menand 2001). Peirce explored the body as, e.g., firstness, secondness and thirdness, firstness being the spontaneous, automatized level of bodily experience and thirdness, the other end of the triad, just reflection (for an introduction to this, see e.g. Mittelberg 2019). In his footsteps, William James conceived vital energy as one central particle in his view on religious experience. But only Dewey made the body present also through practice – as he trained in the Alexander technique – and then, various authors from Joseph Kupfer (Kupfer 1983) to Arnold Berleant (Berleant 1991) left traces (of e.g. sport and environmental thinking) in the holistic vision of

bodily life in pragmatism, all focusing in a way or another on Dewey's 'an experience', before Richard Shusterman created the concept and practice of somaesthetics, where both practice and theory had a major role.

Interestingly, not many have taken Shusterman's practical call so seriously that they have come out with their own practices – and only theoretical debate has flourished in his footsteps, even that often only lightly connected to Dewey. On the other hand, practically engaged phenomenology has recently been emerging, for example, in artistic research (see e.g. the experimental work of Esa Kirkkopelto, e.g. 2017) and in connection with disabilities and robotics¹.

It might be, though, that both phenomenologists and pragmatists have taken too much for granted that the dualism of the mind and the body is the fault of Descartes. As Daniel Dennett writes, "if we look carefully at the ideology of folk psychology, we find it pretty much Cartesian – dualist through and through" (Dennett 1998, 84) and one can ask if this would have been the case even without Descartes. Whether one would live a holistic life or not, or aim at holistic harmony, there are also strong moments of experience for all of us, moments when we experience the split. These moments, reflected upon in the first part of the 'having a body' and 'being a body' division of phenomenology, are often perhaps less conceived of as pleasant, as most people who aim for well-being work through yoga, food practices and sport to experience the body-mind creature as a whole. On the other hand, while commenting on folk psychology (and folk physics), Dennett also reminds the reader that people's reflective ideas on their beliefs and practices do not mirror the practices and experiences always particularly well, so that one should not take the discourse too seriously (Ibid. 85).

Somaesthetics kicked off with Richard Shusterman's attempt and model of combining bodily practice with philosophy, so that one could, through an interaction of these practices, make them learn from each other. Of course, in some sense, this is not news in China, Japan or India, where philosophical reflection has always consciously been a part of holistic systems of art, health and religion – but one must remember that academic (Western) philosophy is another issue. One could perhaps say that combining academic philosophy with practical exercises is truly news.

Although thoughts on the body and philosophy had in many, sometimes very somaesthetic ways, already appeared earlier in the work of Shusterman, the original manifestoesque text, *Somaesthetics: A Disciplinary Proposal* was published in 1999 and set out a challenge, asking whether theoretical American thinking could produce a tandem with practical exercises, and what a pragmatist body philosophy could be like. It set the tenet for basing a new philosophical practice and practical form of philosophy on John Dewey's pragmatist legacy, which Shusterman re-popularized in aesthetics (it never ceased to be a living classic in art education) with his 1992 *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art*. This book brought aesthetic experience (back) into the center of Anglo-American academic aesthetics. As Shusterman was very global in his approach, not just taking part in philosophical debates in Germany and France, but also studying and learning in Japan and China, the landscape of the new debate became immediately very much a global phenomenon. This definitely makes somaesthetics a different plane of thinking (and doing) from phenomenology. Although there are interesting combinations of, e.g., phenomenological thinking and Buddhism (see Parkes 1987), the old "main ingredient", a product of the Central European scholarly scene, remains quite unmixed with these friendly approaches.

¹ See e.g. some of the names and (titles of) presentations at the Phenomenology of Changing Life-Worlds conference in Konstanz in 2018 (organized by Yvonne Förster). Young phenomenologists seem to be quite open-minded for practical applications: [Phenomenology Program Förster3.pdf \(yvonnefoerster.com\)](#).

There are some noteworthy offsprings of Shusterman's work to mention in somaesthetics, in this sense, such as the 2020 *Somaesthetics and Yogasutra* by Vinod Balakrishnan and Swathi Elizabeth Kurian (see also Fiala and Banerjee, 2020, for a great take on Indian dance tradition), without forgetting Richard Shusterman's (ed) *Bodies in the Street: The Somaesthetics of City Life* (2019), which includes witty articles by noteworthy philosophers and art educators like Pradeep Dhillon (who writes about somatic religious rituals in Varanasi; see Dhillon 2019), and others such as takes on somatic performance in Iran (Fakhrkonandeh 2019). It is not that phenomenology would not have been applied globally, but that the tenet has been more open to other *approaches*, i.e. other theoretical roots and cultural realities, in somaesthetics. Catherine F. Botha's (ed.) *African Somaesthetics: Cultures, Feminisms, Politics* (2020) has also rapidly taken somaesthetics as a frame and a partner in dialogue to Africa, a continent that is seldom a visible entrant to the world of academic philosophy. In phenomenology one does not usually see phenomenology happen in a sense or another in another traditions, but in somaesthetics this is a typical way of thinking.

Traditions Shaking Hands

Some phenomenologists have taken the opportunity to publish through the platform offered by the community that has gathered under the multi-disciplinary umbrella of somaesthetics. Authors such as Madalina Diaconu (Diaconu 2019), and the work of Tonino Griffero (who also has a text in this special issue); see also e.g. the work of Timo Klemola (Klemola 2004), whose mix of phenomenology and artistic research has been also open for somaesthetics) exemplify how easy it is to come in from the 'other side', and this also remains one of the differences: phenomenology has never created a space for discussing just the issues, like somaesthetics. Even though they are sometimes about the same thing, i.e. the phenomenology of the body is relatively often about the same issues as somaesthetics (the latter has of course learned much from the former), the way phenomenology has a strong exegetic tenet makes it mostly impenetrable for most people, who do not have a rigid philosophical education. In somaesthetics, maybe at least partly following the way most scholars who use the tag do not really dive deep into its Deweyan roots, but also following the very basic idea of staying down-to-earth and learning from all traditions that has always marked pragmatism, it is all the opposite. This school of thought has been able to transform into a relatively global platform of discussion for anyone who is ready to enter its looser, but also more multi-disciplinary, discourse. Authors in somaesthetics mostly come from different backgrounds. In this sense, it would not be totally wrong to answer those students who ask what is the difference between phenomenology and somaesthetics by saying that somaesthetics is a platform and phenomenology is a rigid school of thinking. There are less scholars in somaesthetics who study in depth its Deweyan roots. Phenomenology is sometimes a tag word too, of course – one that brings together different approaches. I recall throughout my years of study that there were people writing about a variety of issues, always adding that they worked in the phenomenological tradition, though their work had little to do with any roots of the school of thinking. These were often and still are often of course ignored by the strong exegetic wing of phenomenology that dominates the atmosphere in phenomenology to an unfruitful extent in many universities. This type of a purist margin is lacking in somaesthetics.

The accent on aesthetics, the arts, and experience in some sense marginalizes somaesthetics in the broad field of philosophy, where phenomenology roams just as much in the territories of epistemology and philosophy of science. (This might of course change.) Artists have actively

taken part in building the discussion of somaesthetics (Jean-Francois Paquay, Sue Spaid, Olafur Eliasson), and this is something that perhaps institutionally separates it again from the phenomenology of the body, and the same can be said of the way different themes lead, through the basic research done, to practical bodily reflection, not the Husserl archives.

As phenomenology often seems just to dig deeper into its textual origins, to the extent that joining the discussion craves for years of reading, somaesthetics might, in my opinion, have actually use of more and deeper discussion about its theoretical base. For example, the way Dewey reflected on the organic rhythms of the body and the way the body took part in *experience* (and especially *an experience*) is something that could offer more on the topic, than what we have seen so far, but most commentators have not really delved into the roots of what originally constituted Dewey's pre-somaesthetics.

As phenomenology has mainly stayed as a (broadly speaking) Central European tradition that sometimes has dialogue with 'others', somaesthetics has, like already mentioned, in reality become something substantially global, and also something that has as its main purpose to be applied to new issues all the time. In Shusterman's *Thinking Through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics* (2012) he discusses the roots of today's body philosophies (and aesthetic practices) not just in Europe, but in Asia, e.g. China and Japan, which have an immense tradition of philosophical thought and practice on the issue. Although the tradition of phenomenology has had a great many fantastic body thinkers, such as Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Luce Irigaray, in reality it took decades before it started to have effects through applications that we can see today (see, e.g., the already mentioned work in artistic research by Esa Kirkkopelto, or in fashion studies by Yvonne Förster, see e.g. Förster 2018).

As already noted on the practical side of somaesthetics, interestingly, testing out different body practices has been something notable in some seminars and artistic acts, but reflection on practical somaesthetics has stayed in the background, at least until now. That is probably partly due to the fact that not many have taken part in Shusterman's practical somaesthetics sessions, which might leave students of the discipline thinking that they have not really mastered the basics, even though there seems to be no tight formula attached to it.

Concluding the Discourse

I hope the notes made here shed light on some of the shared origins of the traditions and classics (e.g. Descartes) that form the base and root of the phenomenology of the body (and its applications) and somaesthetics, and I have attempted to sketch out the way these two approaches work on a multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary and theory vs. practice (or an attempt to mix the polarity) scale. As a personal note I could add, that although I read more phenomenology, for myself I have found somaesthetics a better working philosophical environment, as I am more interested in applications of philosophy and global interests, but the text corpus of the tradition is still quite narrow in scope, partly due to the fact that it is still very much new in comparison to the over a century old tradition of phenomenology. The development of phenomenology is not, at the moment, as fast as the development of somaesthetics, which seems to cross lines both in relation to philosophical schools (somaesthetics has been intertwined recently with, e.g., Marxism and Patanjali alike) and finds followers in a variety of disciplines, who will take its learnings to the practical challenges of, e.g., tech, cooking and martial arts – and this happens much faster than it ever happened in the much more introverted and exegetic tradition of phenomenology. On the other hand, phenomenology is a deep, and already very detailed and broad theoretical base,

which somaesthetics cannot ignore, and some of its main learnings come from the tradition. Time will show how the interaction, distance and mashing-up of these approaches and platforms will continue to develop. I am not really interested in keeping them differentiated, and I myself would never 'support' either of them alone, but simply find them clusters of routes, communities and methods for understanding the body, which keeps perplexing me both as a locus and as a site of knowledge and experience.

The authors of this issue seem to share my view, at least to some respect. Tonino Griffero compares Hermann Schmitz's new phenomenology and Richard Shusterman's somaesthetics in his "Corporeal Landscapes: Can Somaesthetics and New Phenomenology Come Together?". Griffero notes that both approaches transgress disciplinary boundaries and take a critical stance towards Western ideas of the body. Griffero compares Shusterman's somaesthetics and Schmitz's new phenomenology in terms of the central theme of the lived body. He writes, e.g., that both approaches share to some extent an idea of intercorporeality and bodily styles. Carsten Friberg's "Practical Phenomenology? Does Practical Somaesthetics Have a Parallel in Phenomenology?" asks if we can find a practical phenomenology which would be analogous to practical somaesthetics? Friberg's answer is mainly negative, though he writes that "it may prove to be more of a difference in what we can expect from the practical dimension between them than an absence of practice in phenomenology". He also claims, that both traditions have insufficient descriptions/answers to what is "practical". Nicole Miglio and Samuele Sartori write in their "Perceptual and Bodily Habits: Towards a Dialogue Between Phenomenology and Somaesthetics" about the synergies of the traditions based upon their notions of "habit". The authors reflect on the nature of habit in the work of Merleau-Ponty and Dewey, and then attempt to compare critical phenomenology and Shusterman's somaesthetics, and to find analogies in their ways of discussing the transformational dimension of habits. The issue features also Ruth Anderwald's, Leonhard Grond's and Maria Auxiliadora Gálvez Pérez's dialogical essay "Getting Dizzy: A Conversation Between the Artistic Research of *Dizziness* and *Somatic Architecture*", where the authors, inspired by somaesthetics, discuss (aesthetic) dizziness (*Taumel*) as a concept together with what they call "somatic architecture". Many practical and theoretical points emerge in the discussion. I hope the issue as a whole stimulates thoughts about synergies of philosophical traditions, which have, throughout history, stayed unrewardingly differentiated for political, geographical and stylistic reasons.

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