

**Tick and Talk of Common Time**  
**Audio Transcription; Programme, Research & Creative Process Notes**

...[audio transcription begins] ...

Title appears, **Pink text on Grey** - Tick and T-A-L-K Talk of Common Time

Tick and T-A-L-K: Talk of Common Time is an opus in five variations and five entr'actes.

The variations include both original and found footage of professional dancers, artists and day to day people doing viral TikTok dances.

The entr'actes show a live to tape performance in a studio where two dancers, Margaret and Justine, and two vocalists, Stephanie and Danielle, share moments of chance. The studio has concrete floors and white walls. The lighting is moody with subtle changing colours that create dramatic shadows and silhouettes. The vocalists speak into microphones, in conversation with the dancers.

By the way, I'm Danielle... .. and I'm Stephanie and we will be guiding you through the work.

The original footage was made in so-called Vancouver in various locations including Margaret's living room, city parks, dance studios and recorded zoom meetings. The people featured in this work are diverse in age, race and gender. They are dressed for comfort, each showing personal style. Detailed credits are shared at the end [of this audio transcription].

Throughout, video and editing effects include smaller frames layered over the mainframe like little windows that allow us to experience isolated dancers performing in sync. There are also some moments of high saturation, where the colour of the footage is hyperreal.

Each TikTok dance includes a choreographed sequence of movement that repeats. As the dances progress, the focus is less on the precision of choreography, and

more revealing of the performer's individual character while they indulge in the movement. And now ...

### **Tick and Talk of Common Time**

#### **VARIATION 1 composed by Mark Haney**

In a strong stance, they dance to the beat. On the spot they swing their hips to one side as they rotate. They strike triumphant poses, with clenched fists and hands outstretched. They are sensual, too, with fingers aflutter.

Composer Mark Haney describes their music as distant drum machine in an echo-y cave made of crystal with disco whale low pitches and a relentless bass beat; not necessarily pleasant

#### **First Entr'acte**

#### **VARIATION 2 composed by Nikita Carter**

In a strong stance, they dance to the beat. With pulsing steps, they move side to side, forward and back. They are fierce and indulge in moments of joy. Double pointer fingers call us in to repeat the dance again.

Composer Nikita Carter describes their music as Water Being.

#### **Second Entr'acte**

#### **VARIATION 3 composed by E. Kage**

Treading with intention, a shared reflection on loss and longing  
Tides of giving and receiving

Palms open, they push away and pull in  
Steady movement; they are embraced by the cycle  
Double pointer fingers call us in to a cacophony of beating hearts

Composer Kage describes their music as contemplative taiko drums with bells and vocals.

### ***Kage's English Lyrics***

Loss of a parent like the ground dissolving, beneath your feet, nothing to stand on  
Now I know how it feels, welcome to the club, hey!  
Among the books or skiing the slopes in the spirit world, you are there  
You inspire and influence from the library of beyond, ho!  
One day I promise to meet you there, when its time, when its my time  
As our physical realm will surely end, until then I will do my best, ha!

### **Third Entr'acte**

#### **VARIATION 4 composed by Sarah Sheard**

In a studio, a group of dancers, in unison; their steady and joyful movement  
clashes with the eerie soundscape.  
Found TikTok clips are treated with high saturation and hyperreal colour.  
A shared tension between two realities.

Composer Sarah Sheard describes their music as solemn, formal and eerie.

### **Fourth Entr'acte**

#### **VARIATION 5 composed by Brady Marks**

In uniform, in unison, groups of dancers; in public, in a studio;  
They share a dance of quadrants; falling forward, back to the beginning  
Dancing is another way of walking

Composer Brady Marks describes their music as Amapiano Rhythmic Music

**Final Entr'acte**

**CREDITS for FIVE VARIATIONS**

***Solo Dancers***

Justine A. Chambers, Kate Franklin, Vanessa Kwan, Johanna Householder, Francisco-Fernando Granados, Angelo Pedari, Stephanie Bokenfohr, Margaret Dragu

***Modus Operandi Dancers***

Bridget Lee, Allie Shiff, Alesandra, Rianna Logan, Mia Pelayo, Emma Wallace, Brianne Chan, Abby Hunter, Natasa Kong, Emily Clarke

***Composers***

Mark Haney, Nikita Carter, E. Kage, Sarah Sheard, Brady Marks

***Dance Whip & Administration***

Kate Franklin

**CREDITS for FIVE ENTR'ACTES**

***Improvisational Dancers***

Justine A. Chambers, Margaret Dragu

***Improvisational Vocalists***

Stephanie Bokenfohr, Danielle Wensley

***A/V Designer and Camera***

Brady Marks

***Technicians***

Arman Paxad, Genki Ferguson

***Thank-you***

VIVO Media Arts Centre

Modus Operandi Dance School

BC Arts Council

DWI: Dragu Worker International

TikTok Dancers around the world

... [end of video and end of audio transcription] ...

The artists gratefully acknowledge they live and work on the traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples *sk̓wx̓wú7mesh* (Squamish), *sel̓ílwitulh* (Tsleil-Waututh), and *x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əy̓əm* (Musqueam) nations.

**BACKGROUND RESEARCH**

***Examples of early Viral TikTok Dances***

<https://youtu.be/613A9d6Doac>

<https://youtu.be/gYhm6PCUtSg>

<https://youtu.be/S9WD58vjwC8>

<https://youtu.be/B1Wnv69YhWU>

*Creation Process for Tick and Talk of Common Time -- by Margaret Dragu*

COVID-19 triggered the moving of my Fitness/Yoga personal/small group training from IRL to ZOOM allowing me to teach people around the world without leaving my living room. This was kewl. But I longed for more intimacy/connection with my participants so I added TikTok dance crazes to my lesson plans and began ZOOM recording my participants and me dancing together. This was popular and fun but at the end of the week (months, years) I still felt displacement, absence, and longing.

Historic dance crazes (Charleston, Jitterbug, Twist and Macarena etc.) were performed live in dancehalls/nightclubs or on TV shows like Ed Sullivan or Soul Train. On the other hand, TikTok dance crazes, while viewed by a large public on the internet, are recorded by individuals/small groups very privately in their living rooms or workplaces with the social aspect only being a possible future connection between the dancer(s) and their phone-scrolling viewers.

When I watch TikTok dance compilations (and even my own footage), I feel a rupture between public/private, and longing/desire. This rupture reminds me of art concepts and processes of John Cage & Merce Cunningham with whom I have had a 50+ year fascination.

The Merce Cunningham Dance Company was founded in 1953 at Black Mountain College. This was also the year I was born. Although my formative dance training is German Modern Expressionist Dance via Nikolais and Hanya Holm, the Cunningham-Cage art concepts always appealed to me. Cage-Cunningham created dance and sound independently, then employed chance operations and tasks to combine them in live performances inviting accidents, surprises and overlaps to occur. Their separate-but-together collaborations expanded the fields of dance, music, moving image, and visual art to dismantle hierarchies and create new forms of choreography and syncopation. Cage-Cunningham stated their work was rooted

in the scenic space of a “common time”. I am borrowing their term and bending their concepts for this interdisciplinary project called Tick Talk of Common Time.

For this project, I recorded dancers and artists from Vancouver (live) in dance studios, parks, walking paths, and my living room. National & international participants were recorded with me via ZOOM. I edited all this footage together to made 5 TikTok dances. I gave one dance video to each of the five composers. composer: They stripped off the popular music tracks and composed original music and soundscapes.

The 5 videos with original compositions were the immersive frame for 5 live-to-tape Entr'actes. Each entr'acte was an improvised 2 minute performance by a dancing duo and a vocal transcribing duo created in the moment for camera.