

Bio

Efva Lilja is a Swedish artist working with choreography, visual art, films and writings, producing work in more than 35 countries around the world. 1985 to 2005 she was Artistic Director of the E.L.D. Company based in Stockholm. Since late 1990s she has worked with artistic research and been an active force nationally and internationally, working to improve conditions for artists to undertake research in their artistic practices. 2003 she was appointed Professor of Choreography and 2006-2013 the Vice-Chancellor of DOCH. 2014 she was the Expert Advisor on Artistic Research at the Swedish Ministry of Education and research. www.efvalilja.se

Abstract

Why Claim to be Dancing?

A group of kids are jamming up some moves in a Stockholm street, The Standing Man is standing in the Taksim Square in Istanbul, a woman is rolling over a floor in a New York gallery. They are all dancing. There is a lot of talk about what dance is, what it proposes to be or what it could be, but today it is not enough to talk about *what*, we must above all talk about *why*. This *why* demands political positioning and new methods for the practices of doing and thinking. As artists and researchers we act in a multi-cultural and diversified society with a seemingly endless chain of political crises. It is therefore crucial not to abdicate from responsibility, to push development forward and strive for power over the resources represented by our professions.

When someone claims to be dancing, the onlooker will judge this act based on a cultural and social understanding of what dance is. In my presentation I wish to elaborate on what increased commercialism does to the ownership of movements and expressions within the art of dance. I will talk about a politicized space on the one hand inhabited by producers and curators (the market), on the other by education and research that can strengthen intra-sectorial empowerment through knowledge production, peer sharing and methodological development (the production). I will talk about the relevance of research for the world of contemporary dance and its current practices; how we can develop our ability to think through action and by assuming the right to define words, movements and expressions in the way we find most conducive to what we wish to achieve. Dance.