

Eye Witness

Elise Costello

Ballet is my passion. Through the movements of dance, my body and mind can become one. In this state, the actions are performed with muscle memory; there is almost a mindlessness that all athletes have to maintain in order to be able to lose themselves to movement.

My project allows me to fully understand what goes on in this semi-mindless state, and allows me to analyze it intellectually outside the arena of performance. I use a high-speed camera to capture and isolate the steps involved in each movement. I can use the images to study the particular muscles and motions that the body goes through in carrying out these everyday actions: these movements that are critical for developing the strength, stability and gracefulness dancers require.

One of my important antecedents is Eadweard Muybridge, who used photography to capture certain human and animal movements that are imperceptible to the unassisted eye. I am photographing myself in order to better understand how my body works in performing the actions of a dancer. My work explores the labor that goes into making ballet look effortless; at the same time, some of the movements that I have photographed are ones we all perform daily. I want the viewer to connect personally to the universal actions I photograph, while also understanding the intricacy of the dance movements I have explored.



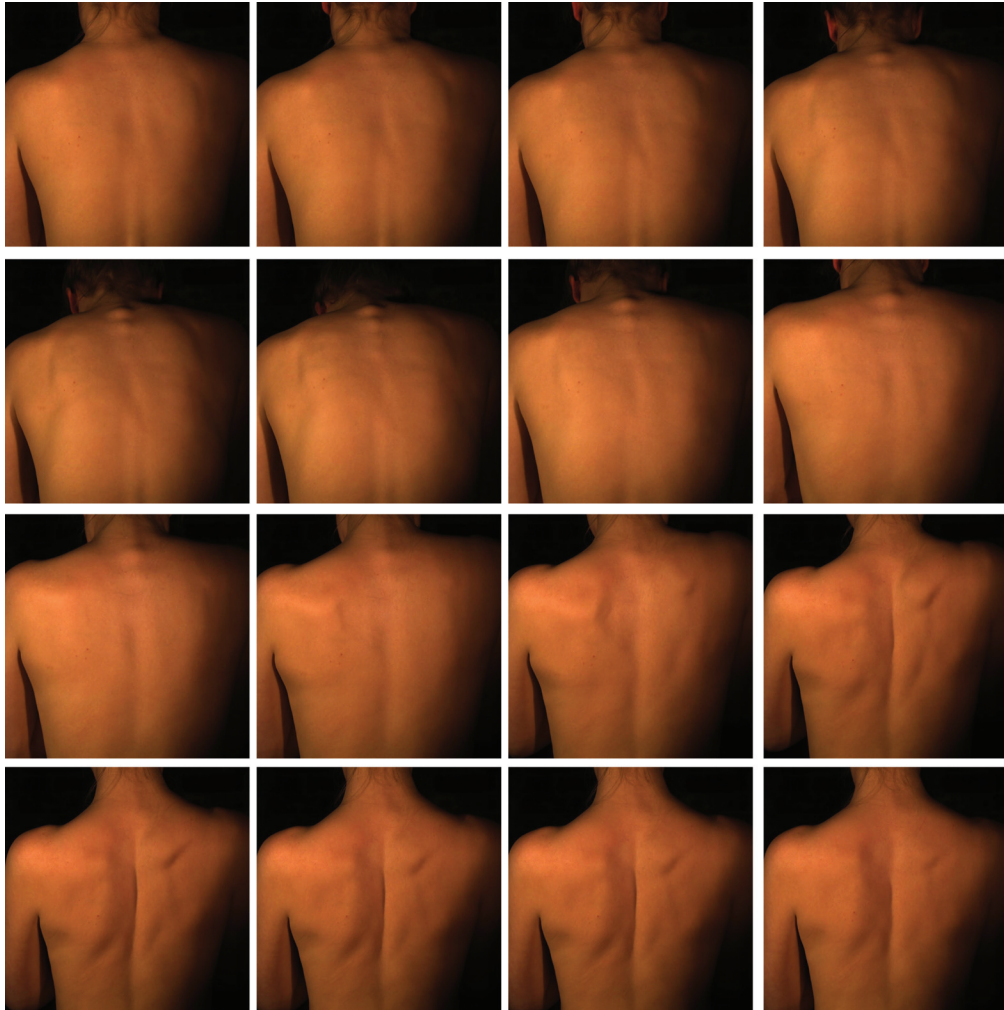
Rise
Digital photograph



Eye Open
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Hair
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