



Motionhouse

# CHARGE

ELECTRIFYING DANCE CIRCUS

## SCENE 13: LOSING TOUCH

### Questions

What images and sounds return in the film and soundtrack?

Two dancers move in unison. Where have you seen these movements before?

How do the dancers interact with the ion channel image?

Are they still lively when they roll out onto the stage?

What movement image do the dancers repeatedly return to?

Watch the film closely: how many surreal, psychoanalytical images can you identify?

Try to trace out the spatial pathways – are they a tangled mess?

Only one image is held still against the mayhem: what is it?

What does Becci do at the end of the scene? What is Danny doing? And which characters re-appear in spotlights?

SIGNIFIERS	DESCRIPTION	EFFECTS
VISUALS	Filmic electrical images morph into a giant representation of an animated ion channel	Initially comedic Despair, confusion, horror Disorientating & plummeting

SIGNIFIERS	DESCRIPTION	EFFECTS
	<p>Giant image of Becci rotating with her hands covering her face, turns to a brain dissection showing multiple rotating rooms. Shifts in plane, sudden downward slippages, surreal images, doors opening, closing, locking, duplicating.</p>	<p>sensations. Psychoanalytical disturbance</p>
SOUND	<p>The throb and buzz of electrical sounds return as a regular percussive beat &amp; rhythmic figure play out interspersed with melodic string fragments. Lightning storm music is reprised with sharp jagged strings playing a repeated, syncopated riff</p> <p>Sounds of doors closing and locking The bass pedal note moves upward, ascending higher and higher to culminate in a cymbal roll before hitting a dramatic low sustained note – the pedal note from the opening duet</p>	<p>Complexity, busyness, disorientation.</p> <p>Furious energy, dramatic and swirling &amp; ready to explode.</p> <p>Building to a climax, memories being locked away forever. A note of doom.</p>
MOVEMENT	<p>Frank &amp; Franketta dance a unison duet reprising electricity-driven, jump-starting movement material from scenes 3 &amp; 5.</p> <p>1 by 1 dancers jump into the ion channel and roll out, only to fall flat to the floor</p> <p>Central image is of hands covering faces &amp; clutching heads; movements are reprised from other scenes: Aerial towers (standing on shoulders) The Franketta duet &amp; the circular running in Hive City. One moment of stillness in the midst of wild activity: Becci, Chris &amp; Danny invert into headstands with flexed feet, as though hanging by the strop.</p> <p>Dancers react to activity &amp; movement in the film; mirroring, struggling, falling, leaping, dangling &amp; dropping. Disembodied torsos, legs and arms appear stretching sideways into the space</p>	<p>Reference back to Frank – a reminder that we are electrical beings.</p> <p>The ion channel is the spark of life but these impulses tumble out and don't move.</p> <p>Horror film – an enactment of memories swirling around, merging together and being spoiled in nightmarish fashion and mixed up with Frankenstein; a reminder of where the confusion stems from – a malfunction in bodily electricity.</p>

## Summary of meaning, mood and significance

The warmth of the heartbeat gives way to electrical impulses firing and fizzing to bring the story back to the present. Frank and a female dancer reprise movements from the Frankenstein monster sequence in reaction to surges of electricity in the soundtrack. The film zooms in to the microscopic level of cellular structures in the body and a giant image of an ion channel looms across the set. This is the centre piece of the science: a reminder that we are electrical beings and our lives are wholly dependent upon and driven by electricity.

One by one the dancers jump into the channel, and we see them pass through it and roll out at the other end, only to splat uselessly onto the floor. We have zoomed in to the interior of the brain and are being shown the fault in the ion channel that is causing parts of the brain to fall dark and silent, with the consequent loss of access to memories. It is now clear why Becci and Danny are suffering: one of them is forgetting each and every moment of the life they have lived together; the other is losing a partner.

In the extended climactic sequence that follows, the live action is at times indistinguishable from the happenings in the film and things reach a surreal and disorientating peak. A giant projection of Becci's head rotates against the set, her hands covering her face in dismay. Repeated rotations see her brain become pixilated, compartmentalized, as it transforms into multiple rooms in a tower block, surrounded by soft plumbing. There are stairwells, doors within doors, some locked, others opening and closing in nightmarish fashion. Tension builds with the music and sound effects and disembodied torsos, arms and legs protrude unnaturally from walls. The film swings around, slips and plummets, shifting perspective so that the dancers fall sideways, are swallowed up in the set, dangle, leap and drop from great heights and hang dangerously out of windows.

The movement on the floor echoes the madness of the film. The dancers repeatedly clasp their heads in their hands and turn on the spot as though trying to still the pain and confusion. In the midst of this frenzied activity, first Chris, then Becci and Danny invert into headstands, this time with straight legs and flexed feet in an echo of Becky hanging from the strop.

The music hits the same dramatic low, sustained pedal note from the opening scene and Becci begins to climb the strop. Below her, Danny staggers, clutching his head in his hands (is this pain or anguish?) He finds the end of the strop; hangs on to it and, at full stretch, begins to swing wildly and silently from one end of the set to the other, momentarily

managing to grasp hold of each platform. Is he desperate not to lose his wife or mad with the isolation and loneliness of his memory loss? Behind them, the dancers briefly people the reassuring image of the family photograph. Then, with a heartbreaking sense of loss, they leave the picture one by one and it fades and disappears. Only three images remain: One is of their daughter, Naomi, huddled in a foetal position where the egg was projected; The second is of Martina and Chris – Becci and Danny as a young and carefree couple – in the Paris hotel. And in the top left corner, the picture of a child on a swing. As these flicker and fade to nothing, we catch a last, fleeting glimpse of Frankenstein's monster slipping out of sight on the upper platform, where the child was last seen.