

Abstracts

CHRISTY ADAIR AND RAMSAY BURT *Dance Britannia: The Impact of Global Shifts on Dance in Britain*

The music and dance of African Diasporan artists has impacted current dance practice in Britain, and their legacies are testament to the global circulation of artistic ideas. This paper discusses the British Dance and the African Diaspora research project which seeks to write Black British dance artists and their legacies back into history. It aims to understand the nexus of aesthetic, institutional, and conceptual problems that have rendered these dancers invisible.

Since the 1970s, a number of black British-based dancers has been teaching and producing performance work in a variety of dance styles. It was influenced by the context of anti-colonialism and the struggle for independence, which has been the motivation for the post-war generation of Caribbean and Asian artists who migrated to Britain. These historical and cultural contexts form the basis for our argument for new approaches to frameworks for analysis of the work of black British dance artists.

C. ALEXANDRA BLACKER *Cotillion Dance as an Embodiment of Class*

This paper suggests that social dance, specifically cotillion, teaches students to internalize and reflect ideas relevant to constructions of class. An examination of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century cotillion dance (also referred to as private balls, public balls, assemblies, and dance halls) shows a physical manifestation of class that can still be seen in the modern day dance world. This paper examines social dance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. I use historical references, specifically Elizabeth Aldrich's *From the Ballroom to Hell: Grace and Folly in Nineteenth-Century Dance*, Linda Tomko's *Dancing Class, Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Divides in American Dance*, and the Library of Congress Web site to foreground this idea before turning to some modern day case studies. Employing historical as well as interview-based methodologies, the paper combines interviews from present day cotillion directors with my own experiences in the cotillion and professional ballet communities. The paper concludes that social dance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries sets up a tradition still carried forth today—one that is more about classed aspirations and courtship and less about dance technique or physical ability.

KRISTA BOWER *The Choreography of Community Service: A Case Study*

This paper discusses a graduate thesis project aimed to serve underprivileged teenage girls residing in a foster care facility through engagement in a collaborative dance-making process with students from a university dance department. While the project focused upon the choreography of trained and untrained bodies as a vehicle for service, it also considers the *choreography* of

the foster care system (involving a continual negotiation of personal, relational, and environmental tensions) and the *choreography* of community engagement (including communication, planning, relationship-building, inclusion, reflection, and termination).

Additionally, the presentation examines links between embodiment and empowerment, analyzing how the trained and untrained dancers experienced a process of realization of self and others through the development of a corporeal work. The trained and untrained dancers in this project identified sources of personal disempowerment and objectification while also recognizing commonalities. Within the context of this project, participants formed connections between their unique histories and their bodies, asserting subjective agency and ownership as they revisited and shaped memories through embodied expression. The challenging transition from the choreographic to performative phase of this project is also discussed, in conjunction with a consideration of ways to ensure that the *choreography of performance* leads to empowerment rather than exploitation.

CLAUDIA BRAZZALE *The Economy of West African Dance in Italy*

Over the past decade, so-called African dance has become increasingly popular in Italy, growing in tandem with local West African diasporic communities and the national concern over immigration. Although the circulation of African dance provides West African migrants with an important form of self-identification and subsistence, it often revolves around problematic discourses rooted on the myth and romance with the primitive. Constructing and capitalizing on the fetishization of black bodies, African dance mobilizes complex economies of desire that rest on an orientalist fascination with the Other. While these economies reify racist stereotypes, they also enable significant communities of knowledge and interracial encounters.

TANYA CALAMONERI *Bodies in Times of War: A Comparison of Hijikata Tatsumi and Mary Wigman's Use of Dance as Political Statement*

How does the representation of bodies change in times of war? How can dance be political activism? This paper considers the dances of Hijikata Tatsumi and Mary Wigman in relation to their experiences of war, and explores their use/representation of the body as a political statement. In both cases, these artists sought to use dance to rescue the body from its subjugated social standing.

Mary Wigman's dance technique is influenced by German *korperkultur*, and had its birth in her work with Rudolph Laban and at the natural paradise of Hellerau. Wigman admired Nietzsche's desire to rescue the body from "despisers of the body," who saw the physical body as an obstacle that must be denied in order for the soul to reach salvation. For Wigman, the "sensuous dancing body" that Nietzsche referred to in *Zarathustra* "became the vehicle to an authentic life."

Hijikata's idea of dancers as "lethal weapons that dream" offered a view of bodies that were aware of personal agency and chose to step outside of usefulness for the elusive "advancement" of society. He explains, "in this sense my dance, based on human self-activation . . . can naturally be a protest against the 'alienation of labor' in capitalist society." Douglass Slaymaker's writing on post-war Japanese literature frames Hijikata's sentiment in the time: images of body as *nikutai* [flesh] were considered counterhegemonic because they defied the notion that the individual body belonged to the national body. Hijikata redirected the body's sacrifice away from productivity and toward the creation of art.

AISHIKA CHAKRABORTY *In Leotards Under Her Sari: An Indian Contemporary Dancer in America*

Traversing through disparate cultural and geographic frontiers, my paper maps the journey of a Bengali dancer, Manjusri Chaki-Sircar, who travels from India to America via Africa before putting her "roots" finally down in India, exploring the migration of body movements across the world. Spelling a new body politics, her dance inscribes the signature of her-self in moving

space(s); weaving varied patterns of life experiences; telling tales of displacements, exodus, and resettlements; and fashioning a global perspective of movement in a “global political moment.”

Situating Manjusri within a counter-centric discourse, my paper underscores the counter-hegemonic agency of her feminist choreographies that opened up “an other” genre of bodily idiom, turning the flattering feminine performance into a site for cultural politics. From the dynamic landscape of post-partitioned Bengal, I will trace how the idiom evolved, migrated, and altered, changing, by the end of the century, the face of Indian contemporary dance.

SALLY CRAWFORD *Shifting the Beat: Exploring Tap Dance Performance and Identity on a Global Stage*

The globalization of tap dance carries the possibility of hybridization as well as homogenization of the dance form. The transmission of tap dance to England during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries enabled individuals to learn repertoire for syllabus examinations and theatrical productions. In 2006, the implementation of the tap jam, an informal event featuring improvised tap dance and live music, introduced the concept of spontaneous musical and movement composition. The tap jams represent shifting cultural processes in global performances of tap dance. This paper will examine the application of global perspectives in how tap dance is performed and practiced in other countries. My discussion will draw from an ethnographic investigation of two tap dance communities located in Manchester and London, England. Utilizing examples from my fieldwork, I demonstrate how the tap jams in England act as a site for constructing individual performance identity, highlighting a move away from homogenized tap performance.

JILL FLANDERS CROSBY, BRAIN JEFFERY, MARIANNE KIM, AND SUSAN MATTHEWS *Secrets Under the Skin: Blurred Boundaries, Shifting Enactments, and Repositioning in Research-Based Dance in Ghana and Cuba*

This roundtable reflects on the processes of de-centering from multiple lenses and temporal placements inside the research and creative process. It is based on a collaborative, intermedia, and multitemporal contemporary performance/art installation informed by long-term ethnographic research of dance and ritual in Ghana and Cuba. Roundtable participants will excavate the process of conducting the research and creating the installation that continues to exhibit internationally at venues ranging from art galleries and libraries to rural research field sites. The installation offers a matrix of layered artistic exploration grounded in ethnographic inquiry that does not sit squarely inside a singular discipline. Inherently transdisciplinary, with multiple entanglements and porous boundaries, it offers “interpretive frictions” at the borders of ethnography, performance, material culture, research-based choreography, and embodiment of lived experience.

SINIBALDO DE ROSA *Samah—Kardeşlik Töreni: A Dynamic Bodily Archive for the Alevi Semah*

In this paper, the current practices and discourses surrounding the Alevi *semah* are analysed in a peculiar reflexive and embodied manner. The *semah* is comprehended here as a “dynamic structured body system,” which is differently recognized as *ibadet* (devotional practice), *dans* (dance), or *meditasyon* (meditation), and whose practice is alleged to support ideals of inter-religious peace and gender equity. Its analysis resorts to data collected during an intensive fieldwork that was carried out between 2008 and 2011 by following the experimental theater piece with the title *Samah—Kardeşlik Töreni* (*Samah—the Ritual of Brotherhood*) of the Ankara Deneme Sahnesi amateur group based in Ankara (Turkey). This play is the result of a re-elaboration of ethnographic data that were collected throughout the Anatolian peninsula since the early 1980s by a team of students and researchers affiliated with the Theatre Department of Ankara University. In this process of re-adaptation for the stage, the *semah* was singled out of its religious source (the *Ayin-i Cem* ritual) for which it started to display

a mirror image offering a condensed exposition of the Alevi rituals to an audience. This paper contextualizes these formal adaptations on the stage into the frame of the abrupt history of migration and urbanization in late twentieth century Turkey. Such historical processes played a major role in the current circulation of the semah in Turkey as well as abroad, resulting also in its perspective inscription as world intangible heritage.

CIANE FERNANDES *Moving Studies: Somatic-Performative Research in a Wide Dance Field*

This is a presentation of the principles of somatic-performative research with application to the audience's research. The proposal has been developed over ten years of artistic-scientific research at the Graduate Program of Performing Arts of Federal University of Bahia, Salvador BA, Brazil. The approach associates Somatic Education and Performance in dance research, especially regarding inner impulse in relation to the environment and collective awareness in a micro-macro political attitude.

While quantitative and qualitative research deals with practice as an object of study, in performative research, practice is in itself a research method (Haseman 2006). Somatic-performative research is defined and organized by the *somatic practice* ("experienced body"), transforming the ephemeral nature of dance into the research's *modus operandi*. From the starting point of inter-artistic moving principles with/in the environment, the object of study becomes a creative, live, and relational subject. Therefore, studies and methods become contaminated by the subject's dynamic nature, melting any prejudice or *a priori* settings. In an unpredictable, autonomous, yet integrated, pulsing that destabilizes borders, discourses, and manners, dance becomes a spread-out medium of studies (rather than something to be studied).

As an integrated "soma," dance research constantly dis-re-organizes "the way we form things," subverting power relationships and discourses over art and the body. Somatic-performative exploration dilutes the separation and conflict between practice and theory, body and mind, art and science, dynamic multidimensional movement and fixed linear record, human and environment, place and non-place, matter and energy. In a connecting quantum *spacetime*, "being" is permanently perceived and reinvented as trans-cellular intelligence in movement or creative somatic wisdom in a "culture of becoming" with/in a "deep ecology."

SARAH GENTA *Endorsing the Self: Embodied Improvisation in Prison Arts Programs*

Michel Foucault, in *Discipline and Punish*, outlines a historical shift from punishment as public spectacle to punishment as "the most hidden part of the penal process." Examining the resultant changes, he recognizes the quieter, psychological control and bodily supervision that have replaced public torture in our system.

I observe this control of incarcerated individuals and then correlate it with terms that Danielle Goldman uses to describe dance improvisation: continued confrontation with constraint(s). She advocates that the practice of freedom, through improvisation, is a "mode of making oneself ready for a range of ... situations," and so is politically and socially powerful.

Citing multiple prison arts programs, I conclude that embodied improvisation both theoretically and practically addresses forces of oppression and confinement within the prison system by offering moments of creative self-direction and non-hierarchical interaction. I render this unique application an ideal artistic and actionable response to the framework of captivity.

RUTH HELLIER-TINOCO *Constructing "Old Spanish Days, Inc." in Santa Barbara, California, USA: Flamenco vs. Mexican Ballet Folklórico*

Old Spanish Days Fiesta, an annual five-day event held in Santa Barbara, California, since 1924, "... provides an education to residents and visitors about the history, customs, and traditions of the American Indian, Spanish, Mexican, and early American settlers that comprise the rich cultural heritage of Santa Barbara" (<http://www.sbfiesta.org>). Dance plays a central role, with

flamenco in the spotlight as the prime corporeal practice, constructing Spanishness through romanticized and revisionist historiography, and validating European colonization, migration, and diaspora. Although Mexican ballet folklórico is also featured, given the socio-political context in relation to people of Mexican heritage (recent and long-term) in Santa Barbara, I argue that deliberately privileging flamenco as the principal dance perpetuates problematic divisions, validating Europe and simultaneously undermining a Mexican presence.

PETRI HOPPU *The Polska: Featuring Swedish in Finland*

The paper examines the Swedish polska as a special case of movementscape in Finnish folk dance. The research is based on ethnographic fieldwork among Finnish folk dancers in 2013. Since the 1970s, the polska has been popular in Swedish folk dance, and this versatile dance form can be seen as emblematic to Swedish folk dance culture. During the last 30 years, Finnish folk dance groups have also eagerly adopted it: not only the dance itself, but a whole new style and embodiment of dancing with improvisation as an important element. Although there have been vernacular polska forms in Finland, as well, and folk dancers have danced them for decades, they have not been able to reach any higher status. Although Finnish folk dancers have adopted dances from other Nordic countries since the early twentieth century, the popularity of Swedish polska exceeds that of any earlier Nordic innovations in Finland.

EVADNE KELLY *The Political and Religious Tensions of Fijian Dance in Canada: Renegotiating Identity Through Affect*

Recent performances of *meke*, a “traditional” Fijian song-dance genre, in Canada indicate a renegotiation of identity among Fijians in diasporic communities. However, due to religious and political anxieties involving Fiji’s colonial history, not all Fijians in Canada will participate in *meke*. To explore this, I draw from archival research and fieldwork conducted in Western Canada and Viti Levu, Fiji (2011–2012). Additionally, I take inspiration from the anthropological theory of affect, whereby the body has the ability to be affected (to feel/sense) and to affect others (causing others to feel/sense). I argue that experiences and expressions of powerful feeling states in and surrounding *meke* performance are important in terms of renegotiating Fiji’s past colonial and present post-independence realities while negotiating new connections and relations in multicultural Canada.

TANJA LONDON *occupation*

Occupation is a screendance that explores a state of “uprootedness” in the context of the events of the Iraq War and the World Financial Crisis. The film utilizes the metaphor of a historic building and its astonishing relationship to its foundation to illustrate the second wave of erosion of American democracy after 9/11. The film features three movers: two dancers and one building. In 2009, this five million-pound building underwent an engineering feat when it was raised eleven feet off its foundation and moved in one fell swoop. Interleaved footage of the dancers and the building in motion illustrates their correlation—a mounting tension that speaks to democracy in the U.S. being shaken, uprooted, and redefined underneath people’s feet. Dizzying changes silence oppositional voices occupying public spaces. Pursuing everyday occupations equals prevailing war in the name of democratic values. But do we still live in a democracy?

LÚCIA MATOS *The Current State of Dance Micro and Macro Policies in Brazil*

Cultural policies, understood as acts of intervention, not only from the State, but also from social groups and institutions, trigger devices that highlight the complexity of the cultural system and power relationships. These acts, developed in a participatory manner, can contribute to the global re-politicization of collective life.

Regarding Brazil, we can assert the search for common spaces has grown in importance under president Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva’s administration (2003–2010), when cultural policies

suffered a significant change with the implementation of an inclusive and participatory model. This led to sectorial policies and the creation of public spaces for the representation of civil society. The field of dance took an active role in this process through its associations and regional forums, leading to the creation of a Dance Sectorial Collegiate and a Dance Federal Plan.

Despite some progress that has been made, cultural policies in Brazil are still under the strong influence of a neoliberal approach, which centers its efforts in economic development with a focus on public funding to culture and the creation of funding laws. A participative construction of public policy for dance would be based on agreements between civil society and government, going beyond the financing of arts through grants. The area of dance in Brazil needs structuring programs and actions that would collaborate with the organizational and productive modes of people and groups that are working to develop the area. Thus, this paper discusses cultural policies of dance by pointing out the consequences of “fast-cult” dance production and identifies spaces of resistance and micro-politics, generated by Brazilian artists who are seeking sustainable development and collaborative modes of production in dance.

CHUYUN OH *Performing Post-Racial Asianness: K-Pop’s Appropriation of Hip-Hop Culture*

Drawing on theories from performance studies, dance studies, and critical race studies, this paper explores the ways in which Korean pop (K-pop)’s appropriation of hip-hop reveals a complex moment of global cultural flow. Western audience reception of K-pop is likely limited to framing K-pop either as a form of contemporary minstrelsy or a postcolonial mimicry, e.g., making fun of African American culture or a bad copy of American pop. This perspective, however, understands K-pop through the lens of American culture and only considers external signs of the performances. It fails to capture the local context in Korea, such as how and why the performers appropriate hip-hop, such as the process of embodiment and training process to learn hip-hop movement, rhythm, and styles, etc. By analyzing K-pop singer G-Dragon’s (GD) music videos, this paper argues that Koreans’ appropriation of American culture is neither minstrelsy nor postcolonial mimicry. K-pop’s chameleonic racial and gender hybridity reveals incommensurability of contemporary Asian-ness, which I have called post-racial Asian-ness as non-racialization.

MARTA ROBERTSON *Floating Worlds: Japanese and American Transcultural Encounters in Dance*

The repurposed metaphor “floating worlds,” from Japanese woodblock prints, highlights political junctions when transcultural American and Japanese dance collide and reconfigure. The first “floating world” is an “Ethiopian Concert” presented by Commodore Matthew Perry’s Japanese Olio Minstrels in celebration of The Treaty of Peace and Amity (1854). The second challenges nostalgic Western notions of an “Old Japan” through the aggressively westernized Tokyo School of Music, where modern dancer Michio Ito trained for an opera career. Third, a post–World War I Peace Festival in Washington, DC, which included Ito’s “eccentric dances,” documents an early Japanese diaspora within mainstream America. The final “floating world” conversely locates transcultural America outside of the United States through Ito’s “Spirit of ’76” spectacle, staged for Occupied Forces following his unjust deportation to Japan. I apply analytical concepts of transcultural historians to imagine a global past that is less recognized, but no less nuanced, than the global present.

ODILON JOSÉ ROBLE, JÉSSICA BONVINO E SILVA, AND MAISA AMSTALDEN *Capoeira as an Emerging Possibility to Decentering Contemporary Dance Experiences (Workshop)*

Capoeira is a Brazilian art, expressed by game, fight, and dance. Its movements comprise a wide range of possibilities, alternating planes, turns, balances, supports, and floor-work, pointing to its relevance for technical processes in dance. However, capoeira is also deeply marked by an aesthetic that goes beyond the movement itself. Values, beliefs, habits, and Brazilian customs

are rooted in its practice. Authors such as Frigerio show characteristics such as theatricality and malice, noting that a certain ritual role of capoeira seems to be more important in practice than a combative efficiency. In the Unicamp Physical Education Faculty, a survey is being developed in which capoeira serves as contribution to the dancer's work. Besides the physical skills, we are identifying the formation of an aesthetic expression corresponding to this identity in the process of capoeira, which sent us to the concepts of "kinesthetic transit" and "resonance." Our proposal for this conference is to present our practical research that understands capoeira, including its rituals, theatricality, and values, as an emerging possibility to decentering dance experiences, due to this traditional phenomenon as not being exclusively a local practice anymore, but also a possible source to contemporary dance in the current cultural interchange.

SAHAR SAJADIEH *Choreographing Response: Online Game of Shopping and the Digital Puppet Master*

It's a game! Who is on the other side, a human or a machine? You don't know! All you know is the items you have been watching for a while and the possibility of buying them cheap or losing them to the others. In this paper, I explore the performativity of the texts and digital features of online shopping Web sites and the impact of the existence of the other tele-shoppers to motivate you to push on the "checkout" button and "place an order." Now the main question becomes: Who is the real choreographer of the movements in this game?

ALBA PEDREIRA VIEIRA *Creative Process and Transformative Dance in Brazil*

This paper explores dance issues focusing on the creative process as it relates to transformative dance, embodiment, and power relations from an embodied perspective. I will illustrate the complexity of the Brazilian dance context in relation to similar as well as diverse aspects in a globalized society. The focus is on transformative dance as intimately related to values from an embodied perspective that defies contemporary thoughts on power relations between choreographers and dancers. This way of thinking and acting poses implications and challenges that might lead toward transformative dance through new ways of approaching self, world, body, power, and knowledge. Emphasizing the multiple dimensions of dance composition and research on dance in Brazil, the presentation is also intended to enrich, exchange, and mutually comment on ideas and issues raised.

RUPING WANG *Dancing Religion: When Traditional and Pop Cultures Collide*

Dao is one of the important religions in Taiwan. When religious views set guidance for people's ways of living, temple festivities reflect trends of the time. When traditional rituals frame the procedure of a festival, allowing space for including and embracing popular cultures plays a key element for its vitality. This research will introduce the evolvement of temple festival under the influence of economic structures in Taiwan, and it will utilize Techno Nezha as an example to further investigate the relationships of the religion, the culture, and life in Taiwan.

LISA WILSON *Balancing the Tide of Globalization: Maintaining Afro-Caribbean Cultural Power and Indigenous Identity in the Dance Studio*

Historically, during the first wave of globalization, then known as colonialism, efforts were made by colonizers to silence indigenous cultural expressions as a means of establishing power and control. In this current wave of globalization, which is marked by an aggressive technological revolution that has facilitated greater connectedness and spread of the more dominant North Atlantic aesthetic values and practices across the globe, Afro-Caribbean traditional cultural expressions face the potential risk of being obsolete and powerless in the dancing lives of young studio-based dancers in the Caribbean. This paper presents findings of a qualitative study into measures taken by Caribbean dance teachers (n = 6), from Jamaica, Grenada,

and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, to promote Afro-Caribbean movement aesthetics and practices in their dance studios with young people. I will argue that such measures are important to the empowerment of the Afro-Caribbean dancing body and to safeguard against colonial structures in post-colonial Caribbean dance education.

© 2014, Congress on Research in Dance