

Editor's Note

The body is the resonant center of the articles included in the Winter 2007 (39.2) issue of *Dance Research Journal*. Authors investigate how bodies, properly clothed and coifed, dancing the right dance, and presented through the appropriate media, emanate social messages that become means of selling products and securing political power. Other authors, in the course of exploring dance teaching, discuss bodies as both emergent and resonant of the past, as agents of change and repositories of history.

The issue begins with an article by Colleen Dunagan entitled "Performing the Commodity-Sign: Dancing in the Gap." Dunagan explores a series of advertising campaigns for the Gap that feature dance, explaining the ads as situated in a "gap" between advertising and performance that helps generate personalities for Gap products. Ads based on the musical *West Side Story*, for example, use the staging of dances and associations with the musical to provide jeans and khakis a Jets- and Sharks-like stylistic difference.

Senta German, in her "Dance in Bronze Age Greece," surveys images of dance from Crete and the Greek mainland, cataloging the range of bodily positions depicted and speculating about who the dancers were and what these dance representations might have meant to people who saw them in wall paintings and used them in rings and seals. German suggests that these images created associations with palace-sponsored rites of passage and group marriage ceremonies and were, therefore, visual reminders of political authority and of individual responsibility toward the elites who held power.

Eeva Anttila ("Searching for Dialogue in Dance Education: A Teacher's Story") studies an emerging dance culture within a Finnish elementary school. Anttila describes her research as autoethnographic—"a way of placing the self within a social context." Interested in reflecting on her own values as well as using dance to support children's paths toward "inner authority, autonomy, and responsibility," Anttila structures her remarks around the central theme of dialogue. Among her findings is that developing personal authority and social skills and awareness in children is related to inner, somatic awareness. Anttila suggests that "sensing and dialoguing with our own bodies may lead to sensing and understanding and respecting others' bodily existence and their bodily integrity."

Gunn Engelsrud, a Norwegian dance scholar, explores "Teaching Styles in Contact Improvisation: An Explicit Discourse with Implicit Meaning." Based on her participation in and observation of contact improvisation classes, Engelsrud describes three ways of teaching contact improvisation that suggest different belief systems about the body and its role in contact: a "natural" body whose inborn knowledge must be tapped through the

dance, a “trainable” body who can work toward improved performance, and an “enlightened” body whose performance depends upon understanding contact as a philosophy.

This issue also includes what I hope will be the first of many critical commentaries about dance performance and dance media: Candace Feck’s “Gloss, Grit, Dance/Story,” a review of Lloyd Newson’s 2004 film *The Cost of Living*. While relaying the story told in the film, Feck deftly delivers an analysis of Newson’s socially astute use of varied bodies, movement vocabularies, recurring images, and use of the camera to focus and heighten audience response. Clay Daniel’s report of his reconstruction of Charles Weidman’s *Christmas Oratorio*, “Reconstructing Weidman: A Dancer’s Perspective,” concludes this section. Daniel’s work is valuable for his careful discussion of Weidman’s dance and because he makes clear that a community of dancers is still teaching and performing Weidman’s choreography, opening the door for further performance and research. I hope that authors interested in publishing critical commentaries on dance performance or dance media or reporting on special projects will contact me at the *DRJ* office. Reviews and Reports is followed by a collection of book reviews written by Barbara Sellers-Young, Rebecca Rossen, Joshua Chambers-Letson, Amanda Hamp, Suki John, and Karima Robinson.

I look forward to two guest-edited issues of *Dance Research Journal*. Paul Scolieri will edit a collection of articles from the upcoming fortieth anniversary Congress on Research in Dance conference, *Choreographies of Migration: Patterns of Globe Mobility*, held in New York City in November 2008. A following issue will be edited by Mark Franko and will feature a collection of papers about “Dance, the Disciplines, and Interdisciplinarity.”

Welcome to new *DRJ* staff members Loren Groenendaal and Tricia Zweier, MFA students in the Department of Dance at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG). After only a few weeks of work, they are already making wonderful contributions to *DRJ*. Thanks go as well to Julia Edwards and Madeleine Reber, who leave *DRJ* to pursue other duties at UNCG; Rebekah Kowal, Reviews Editor; Editorial and Advisory Board members; and the authors and readers of *DRJ*.

I look forward to your correspondence—

Ann Dils
Editor, *Dance Research Journal*