

Editor's Note

Even in the most eclectic issues, the collected writings in *Dance Research Journal* reveal current concerns in dance studies. One strong thread in this issue has to do with studying movement communities as social and cultural entities with particular values, purposes, and histories. Through ethnographic study, or by looking at prominent texts and interviews with key community members, authors in this issue make clear that movement (from ballet technique to the techniques of passive resistance) is made meaningful through the positionings of its practitioners (needy or affluent; marginalized or empowered; resisting or defending the status quo) and the social meanings that adhere to the communities they form (playful and experimental; charged with political purpose; hardworking professionals). Other authors discuss movement communities as social networks—as ways to find like-mindedness and achieve goals—as well as conveyors of movement traditions. One value of these examinations is that they provide an experiential counterpart to what we know of performance through observation and reflection. Another strong thread in this issue is critique of dance performance and media. The writings of these authors suggest that in witnessing contemporary performance, we must be prepared to accommodate intertextual references and account for the visual and editorial exigencies of film.

The first article is Jennifer Fisher's "Tulle as Tool: Embracing the Conflict of the Ballerina as Powerhouse." Another product of the research Fisher did for her 2003 book, *"Nutcracker" Nation: How an Old World Ballet Became a Christmas Tradition in the New World*, this ethnographic study provides a reassessment of the social meanings of ballet and ballerinas. I follow this with two critical commentaries on William Forsythe's work. Both authors discuss Dana Caspersen as a co-creator of and powerful figure within the ballets and films discussed, thereby continuing Fisher's reassessment of how we see and experience contemporary ballet and ballet dancers.

These critical commentaries are also important for their discussions of current critical methods in studying dance and dance film. Ann Nugent ("William Forsythe, *Eidos: Telos*, and Intertextual Criticism") builds an analysis of Forsythe's complex *Eidos: Telos* by establishing conceptual building blocks, or architexts, and exploring these in a mixture of interpretation and description weaving between "the work," as established through multiple iterations of the piece, the forty-page program, commentaries by other critics, and reference to other ballets. Steven Spier ("Inside the Knot that Two Bodies Make") focuses on the 1997 film *From a Classical Position*, danced, directed, and edited by Forsythe and Caspersen. Spier wants to understand Forsythe and Caspersen's collaborative process,

and he uses description and movement analysis, along with interviews and comparisons with other collaborative projects, as means of understanding their work.

Danielle Goldman's "Bodies on the Line: Contact Improvisation and Techniques of Nonviolent Protest" follows. Goldman's article is a series of readings of the political and social meanings of verticality and horizontality, going with and resisting the flow of movement, as experienced in contact improvisation and as part of nonviolent protest. Especially rich is Goldman's attention to shifting perspectives on the value of resistance and how it was enacted throughout the twentieth century. The articles conclude with Rebecca Loukes's "Body Awareness in Performer Training: The Hidden Legacy of Gertrud Falke-Heller (1891–1984)." Loukes provides information about Falke-Heller's life and work, especially as a performer and then teacher of body awareness for Ballet Jooss at Dartington Hall in the 1930s. This issue also includes book reviews and a long-overdue tribute to Selma Jeanne Cohen written by George Dorris.

I look forward to seeing you at the Congress on Research in Dance's 40th Anniversary Conference, which will be held November 8–11, 2007, at Barnard College in New York City. Co-sponsored by the Department of Dance and Forum on Migration at Barnard and the Limón Institute, the conference title is "Choreographies of Migration: Patterns of Global Mobility."

Many thanks to those who make *Dance Research Journal* possible.

Ann Dils
Editor, *Dance Research Journal*