

perspective that frames research design and methods as porous, creative, and fluid” (5). It will be of interest to faculty, emerging scholars, and especially to those graduate and undergraduate students who are engaged in the initial stages of their research projects. This anthology will become a pivotal source for them. I highly recommend this book to any novice researcher who wants to acquire the necessary guidelines for conducting their inquiries, and by doing so, strengthen this field by jointly embodying theory and practice.

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### LA DANZA: CUERPOS EN MOVIMIENTO A TRAVÉS DE LA HISTORIA.

By Idoia Murga Castro. 2023. Madrid: Cátedra. 336 pp. 23,50 EUR. ISBN 9788437646398. doi:10.1017/S0149767724000081

Writing a comprehensive dance history book is a very difficult task. Yet this publication type is an important part of our knowledge

re-production, providing insight into dance as a specific and unique art form with its own genesis and evolution. Before writing a dance history book, many queries await the author: What geographical span to choose? What period to start with and what period to end in? For whom will the publication be intended? Which sources to choose? What level of detail of historical context to report? What images to provide the reader? These are just a few of many possible questions, with no definitive answers, which remain the personal choice of the author, and are always open to interpretations. Spanish dance historian Idoia Murga Castro has offered her own answers in *La Danza: Cuerpos en movimiento a través de la historia (The Dance: Bodies in Movement Throughout History – Cátedra, 2023)*. Her large expertise, which enabled her to take on the challenging task, are proven by her previous publications, which include historical scholarly studies, books, book chapters and exhibition catalogues.

*La Danza* is a 336-page Spanish-language dance history book that spans from ancient Greece to the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century. The author’s focus is mainly on Euro-North American dance culture with occasional references to other geographical contexts, most often the Spanish-speaking countries of South America. A specific place is given to Spanish dance culture, in which Murga Castro does a great service to local dance historiography by placing domestic events in a global context. In this book, she adopts a chronological approach, and although Murga Castro covers a span of some 4,000 years in ten chapters, the distribution across them is not and cannot be even. The first five chapters deal with events up to the end of the 19th century and the last five chapters deal with the 20th and 21st centuries. The chosen chronological approach is particularly better suited to the first half of the 20th century, in which styles, trends and movements are relatively easy to distinguish. As the author moves closer to the present, however, there is sometimes a lack of distance from the historical period analyzed; due to this, for the last few decades the author opts for a more thematic approach, which she fully develops in the last chapter (“*La danza actual y sus fronteras difusas/Current Dance and Its Diffused Borders*” – the word current is used here to separate the contemporary from the actual).

Although the author follows a chronological narrative, this is disrupted by the beginnings of individual chapters. Instead of building on the previous period, Murga Castro chooses significant moments of the following one. These introductions are thus always an immersion into the very essence of the new paradigm, containing vivid descriptions of a particular style or movement in question. I very much applaud this approach, as it keeps the readership on guard, and they do not get lost in the transition periods. It is also noteworthy that the author does not list examples that a dance historian would expect at first glance, but rather chooses more novel representatives. For example, Chapter 6 on Modernism (“*Modernismo transnacional en el ballet europeo y Nacimiento de la danza moderna/Transnational Modernism in European Ballet and the Birth of the Modern Dance*”) is introduced with Bronislava Nijinska’s *Les Noces* (1923), not the revolutionary ideas of Isadora Duncan from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as one might expect.

The book is written in a clear language that occasionally gets entangled in complex sentences. However, the rich pictorial material adds to the clarity of the content – the book contains 95 colour photographs, paintings and drawings, often in full-page formats. The overall elegant graphic design of the book is complemented by the light green colouring of the chapter endings, in which the author offers a commentary on the sources used and possible references to other literature. In addition to this, there are also selected extracts from books, articles and other documents which provide insights into the topic through the lens of other personalities, often historical contemporaries – all the texts conveyed are in Spanish, often in the author’s own translations. This is a quite unique graphic and textual addition that ensures the dynamics of the reading experience, artfully structures the considerable amount of information and allows the book to reach a wider audience than encyclopaedic or dictionary-type publications.

However, if we consider for whom the book is intended, I believe that for study purposes it is too monographic in nature. It is not structured as a study book, there is a lack of highlighting, repetition, interesting facts provided while guiding the reader through the educational process. This is despite the fact that the content itself refers to the study material with its

high level of scholarship, whether it is the consistent citation of sources or the careful inclusion of the original names of choreographic pieces and their Spanish variants in parentheses. Including Spanish versions is a very important moment for the creation of a language-specific dance-historiographic culture and Idoia Murga Castro does a great deal for local historiography. For amateur readers, however, the high proficiency of the content may be demanding.

As mentioned before, the book proves the expertise of the author. It is evident that she does not concentrate on nitpicking all the facts but seeks an ideal and balanced level of detail sufficient to bring the historical period into focus. Murga Castro carefully places the dance in a society-wide context, not exhibiting it alone on a museum pedestal, but rather weaving it vividly into the historical web. This approach is foreshadowed in the book’s introduction in which the author talks about dance as a socio-cultural phenomenon: “Our daily coexistence in the contemporary world allows us to easily distinguish the delicacy of a ballet dancer from the acrobatic virtuosity of a hip hop group or the strength of flamenco dancers, to cite some of the most recurrent identifications. Each of them emerges from a different historical, social, political and cultural context and has evolved in association with certain national, gender, class and ethnic identities. The study of these conditioning factors, their languages, codes, gestures and symbols allow us to critically understand how these identities are constructed and how what happens on stage is always a consequence of the encounter of the collective and the diverse.” (11–12, author’s translation). But in some parts, the author does not dive into a sufficient level of detail which I would have expected in a dance history publication. This is particularly the case in the first five chapters, which are sometimes too schematic at the expense of the overall context. On the other hand, this fact must be seen in the context of local dance historiography – Ana Abad Carlés wrote a book *Historia del ballet y de la danza moderna (History of Ballet and Modern Dance, 2004)*, which is more encyclopedic and thus complements *La Danza*. What to write about and what to leave out are those difficult personal and unrewarding choices of the author.

*La Danza* is an exceptional publication. Particularly noteworthy is the author’s approach

to the dance historical topic, which she explains in its broader, society-wide context, thus moving away from merely reporting on historical events. This becomes apparent already through the titles of the chapters, wherein a strict adherence to historical chronology gives way to a thematic organization. These titles not only serve as identifiers of particular historical epochs but also foreshadow the thematic trajectories the author intends to explore: Chapter 1: *La danza en el mundo antiguo entre lo cívico y lo ritual/ Dance in the Ancient World between the Civic and the Ritual*, Chapter 2: *De lo proscrito a lo codiciado: bailar en la sociedad medieval/ From the Proscribed to the Coveted: Dancing in Medieval Society*, Chapter 3: *Asombroso y espectáculo: la danza cortesana del Renacimiento al Barroco/ Astonishing and Spectacle: Court Dance from the Renaissance to the Baroque etc.* It is this approach that delineates a notable departure from other publications within the same genre. Each chapter encompasses the complexity of the historical period under examination, employing a nuanced analytical framework that oscillates between microcosmic factual detail and macrocosmic contextual interpretation, supplementing them with broader contexts that add plasticity to the overall picture.

Idoia Murga Castro's work brings an important contribution to dance, cultural and cross-cultural studies, and marks an important moment for the dance scholarship published in other languages than English. The book is for those with a keen interest in these fields, or it could serve as a signpost for professionals and active dancers who want a monographic publication in their libraries. After all, the author herself substantiated these aims by saying: "We hope that this proposal can function as an introductory map, to discover keys, contexts, relationships and contributions of each period of the history of western dance" (12-13, author's translation.) I wish a similar book will be published in the Czech language one day.

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## Young, Hirshini Bhana. FALLING, FLOATING, FLICKERING: DISABILITY AND DIFFERENTIAL MOVEMENT IN DIASPORIC PERFORMANCE.

NYU Press. January 2023. 320 pages. 17 b/w illustrations. \$32 paperback/\$89 hard cover/epub. doi:10.1017/S014976772400010X

In *Falling, Floating, Flickering: Disability and Differential Movement in Diasporic Performance*, Hirshini Bhana Young develops a theorization of differential movement and a politics of conjunction, proposing that "something more than either one of us emerges from the multiplicity of our sense-apprehensions and from our difference that forms the basis of our accountability for one another" (28). Utilizing the core thematics of falling, floating and flickering, Young gestures towards an important and generous shift in the field of dance studies, prompting the reader to consider who is dancing, and what a people-oriented study of movement can do. Differential movement, in this way, becomes an analytic for the active dance scholar to pause, consider the incessant drive towards verticality in what is perceived as dance, and move in 'Other' ways – what does it mean to move horizontally, to fall, to float, to flicker? Young describes the book's investment in dance studies as a "linger[ing] in the wings of dance studies to catch a glimpse of what differential movement might look like" (2). This 'backstage' work in dance studies, the 'lingering in the wings', offers an important opportunity to (re)consider who and what is 'center stage' in studies of 'dance,' gesturing towards a de-centering in the way we see who is dancing, and what movement can be dance. This monograph addresses and extends the collective work in black performance theory, "as a way to counter the abstraction that results from imperial violence and to remap the body as a messy, transgressive organization of parts unmoored from the typical" (1). In this way, Young does not present a "typical" study of 'dance' that disciplinary jettisoning may seek to ostracize. Instead, the text curates an urgent dialogue between black performance theorists and disability studies, not to correct 'omissions' from the field of dance studies (or their forementioned fields), but to reveal