



# Geographies for Moving Bodies: Thinking, Dancing, Spaces

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## Abstract

The body is well established as a research focus within contemporary human geography. Yet, the matter of how and in what ways bodies are geographical remains an open question. In this article, I address this question by examining work by geographers and others about the spaces of *moving bodies*. My points of departure are the twin claims that bodies move in more ways than one (spatio-temporally, kinaesthetically, affectively, collectively, politically and imaginatively) *and* that this movement is potentially generative of different kinds of spaces. These claims are developed through a discussion of dance. By drawing on work from a range of disciplines, I argue that research encounters with dance offer opportunities for thinking about three sets of issues: the relation between bodies and cultural geographies; the importance of affectivity in spatial experience; and the relation between the lived and the abstract. I conclude by outlining a series of pathways along which geographical research into the spaces of moving bodies might be developed further.

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## *Introduction*

The body – or bodies – has been the focus of geographical research for quite some time now. Evidence for this is easy to assemble: thus, bodies have figured strongly in aspects of humanistic geography (Bale 1996; Tuan 1977, 1986), Marxist geography (Callard 1998; Harvey 1998), feminist geography (Longhurst 1997; Rose 1993), and cultural geography (Cresswell 2006; McCormack 1999; Simonsen 2000). In such work, the meaning and identity of bodies has been mapped, re-mapped, de-stabilized, besieged (Crewe 2001), and critically interrogated in all kinds of ways (Duncan 1996; Nast and Pile 1998). At the same time, as part of a critique of the abstract tendencies of thinking and research, the importance of the participation of bodies in the cultivation of geographical thinking (e.g. in fieldwork) has become a recurrent theme within the discipline (see Dewsbury and Naylor 2002; Longhurst et al. 2008; Parr 1998).

In many ways, then, the discipline of geography has become more ‘embodied’ over the last two decades. Certainly, what was once a topic

on the extremities of the discipline is now very much part of its conceptual and methodological core. Indeed, the list of references above, and the years in which they were published, might even suggest that as an area of research, the body has been 'done' by geographers: or at the very least that as a research area it is becoming a little exhausted. Yet, to paraphrase the 17th-century philosopher Benedict de Spinoza (1989), there is much we still do not know about how the relation between bodies and geographies might be understood, experienced or experimented with. As we shall see, this question can never be answered with any degree of finality: this is because bodies remain elusive and paradoxical (Gil 2006), always excessive of attempts to define their essence.

If it is difficult – and indeed dangerous – to define what bodies *are*, there are some things we know bodies can *do*, even if our understanding of precisely how they do these things remains partial and fragmentary. First, bodies *move*: they walk, crawl, gesture, run, stumble, reach, fall and embrace. However, bodies move in more ways than one: yes, they move physically, but they also move affectively, kinaesthetically, imaginatively, collectively, aesthetically, socially, culturally and politically. Then, and second, we know that by moving in these different ways, bodies can 'produce' or generate spaces (Lefebvre 1991, 216; see also Gil 2006). That is, the quality of moving bodies contributes to the qualities of the spaces in which these bodies move. Put another way, spaces *are* – at least in part – as moving bodies *do*. Think, for instance, of the difference between a football pitch with and without a game taking place on it. The presence of moving bodies is not only a physical transformation of the pitch: it also alters the imaginative, affective, sonic and social qualities of this space.

This generative relation between moving bodies and spaces is the central theme of the present article. It is a relation that can and has been examined in a range of different contexts, including performance art (Abrahamsson and Abrahamsson 2007), consumption (Colls 2004), driving (Thrift 2004b), disability (Hansen and Philo 2007), mental health (Parr 1998), sport and leisure (Andrew et al. 2005; Bale 1996; Gagen 2004; Jones 2005; McCormack 1999; Spinney 2006), tourism (Saldahna 2006), and work and employment (Crang 1994; McDowell and Court 1994). For the purposes of this article, however, I want to focus on one such context: dance. Why dance? There are at least four reasons. First, and most obviously, dance is a particularly ubiquitous cultural and somatic practice that embraces a range of activities from the accessible to the avant-garde. Second, dance serves to crystallize key debates within contemporary cultural geography, particularly around the primacy of representation in geographical knowledge (McCormack 2002, 2003, 2005; Nash 2000; Thrift 1997, 2000). In turn, and third, dance raises questions with which many other disciplines are concerned, including anthropology, architecture, neuroscience, performance studies and philosophy: this also means that it provides opportunities for developing forms of interdisciplinary research into the

question of how, and in what ways, moving bodies can be and *become* geographical.

### *Dancing around Representation*

Where might a discussion of the relation between dance and geography begin? A convenient point of departure is the emergence of an explicitly choreographic vocabulary within parts of the discipline during the 1960s and 1970s. For geographers working in the humanistic tradition, this vocabulary facilitated an account of the 'life-world' that attended to the details of everyday habitual movement. For instance, as David Seamonn (1979) argued, these details could be conceptualized as an everyday place ballet with distinctive routines, repetitions and opportunities for inventiveness. A similar vocabulary was employed in the time geography developed by Torsten Hägerstrand and others. For Hägerstrand, the time-space pathways of everyday life could be understood from a choreographic point of view, and diagrammatically represented as such (for an overview, see Pred 1977). Yet, even if these conceptual vocabularies emphasized the experiential element of space and place, it did not absolve them from critique. Thus, humanistic geographers were taken to task for paying insufficient attention to the wider social and political contexts within which bodies moved, while the diagrammatic abstractions of time geography were challenged on the basis that they ignored the 'lived' experience of embodied difference (Rose 1993).

Such criticisms anticipate more recent discussions of dancing bodies within human geography, an important touchstone for which is the emergence of non-representational theory, associated closely with the work of Nigel Thrift (2007). Central to this work are a number of claims: that we do not always consciously reflect upon external representations – signs, symbols, etc. – when we make sense of the world; that thinking does not necessarily involve the internal manipulation of picture-like representations; that intelligence is a distributed and relational process, in which a range of actors (bodies, texts, devices, objects) are lively participants; and that affectivity is an important part of spatial experience. While not a 'theory of the body', non-representational theory has encouraged greater attention to the processes of embodiment through which everyday life is experienced (Harrison 2000). It has also stimulated efforts to experiment with how spaces are made and remade through practices that engage the capacities of moving bodies in diverse ways (see Dewsbury 2000; Latham and Conradson 2003; McCormack 2005; Wylie 2005).

This is not the place to undertake a substantive review of non-representational styles of work: more important here is the role dance that has played in the emergence and contestation of such work. For Thrift (1997, 2000) dance is interesting as a mode of popular cultural expression concerned with the experience and manipulation of space at a range of

scales and degrees of complexity. But it is also a repertoire of skilled techniques and technologies through which the process of thinking through the body is brought to the foreground of awareness and attention. Crucially, dance also complicates questions of representation, because it is so difficult to document: the very act of dancing always seems to evade attempts to set it down on paper. Dance can therefore be understood as a non-representational practice defined by the ongoing inventive enactment of its own impermanence and disappearance. This, in turn, complicates the political spaces of dance. For Thrift (1997), the inventiveness of dance could simply not be explained (or explained away) via theories of representational politics.

Thrift's arguments about dance moved against the conceptual and political grain of much cultural geography in the 1990s. In response, Catherine Nash (2000) argued that by foregrounding the non-representational dimensions of dance, Thrift ran the risk of paying insufficient attention to the social, cultural and spatial contexts within which specific dance practices were practiced: he therefore abdicated a thorough engagement with the politics of dancing bodies. Nash's critique was echoed and amplified by Gagen (2004), Revill (2004), and Cresswell (2006), each of whom – through detailed empirical encounters with movement practices – sounded a note of cautious scepticism about the ability of non-representational theories to grasp the politics of moving bodies. Clearly, there are contexts within which dance and choreography have been put to all kinds of dubious ends, perhaps most notably in totalitarian regimes (see Segal 1998). Yet, this fact does not foreclose the conceptual or political terms through which we might understand the spaces of which dancing bodies are potentially generative (see Žižek 2004). The politics of dancing or moving bodies are never given in advance – hence, the importance of Spinoza's (1989) claim at the outset: we do not yet know what bodies can do.

If non-representational approaches to dance complicated understandings of the political spaces of moving bodies, they also raised questions about how bodies participate in the process and practice of thinking geographically. More specifically, they seemed to suggest that dance should be interesting to geographers precisely because it encouraged an expansion of the range of practices and processes of which thinking was composed. Put another way, dance worked as a reminder that 'ways of moving are also ways of thinking' (Sklar 2001, 4). In what follows, therefore, I wish to outline three ways in which encounters with dance can work to supplement and extend the spaces of geographical thinking.

### *Dancing Cultural Spaces*

The emergence of the body as a conceptual and methodological concern within the discipline raises many questions. For cultural geographers, one of the most important – and obvious – is the following: in what ways, and

how, are cultural geographies also corporeal geographies? That is, in what ways do bodies participate in the processes through which we make sense of the world, both individually and collectively? This question can be addressed in many ways, and through investigation of many practices. But dance, like sport, is particularly useful because it foregrounds the relation between the corporeal and cultural with particular intensity (see Dyck and Archetti 2003; Wacquant 2004). Of course, dance is not a singular practice, and precisely how it articulates the relation between the corporeal and the cultural will differ in each of the following: ballroom (Cresswell 2006), clubbing (Malbon 1999), Cajun (Stivale 2003), capoeira (Downey 2005), Indian dancing (Ram 2005), Irish dancing (Leonard 2005; Morrison 2001; Morton 2005), religious dance (Sklar 2001), rumba (Hensley forthcoming), samba (Browning 1995), and salsa (Sánchez-González 1999). Rather than consider each of these practices, here I want to focus on one – tango – about which much has been written in ways that complicate the relation between the corporeal and the cultural (Manning 2006; Meier-Sørensen 2003; Nash 2000; Savigliana 1995; Taylor 1998).

Tango is also interesting because obviously geographical processes of movement and displacement are central to its emergence and ongoing evolution. Originating during the late 19th century among immigrants in Buenos Aires, tango evolved from a range of sounds and rhythms, before being exported as a fashionable craze to Europe, Asia and the USA in the early 20th century. In the process, tango has become a set of related, but often noticeably distinct variations on a theme. As Erin Manning (2006) puts it: 'from Helsinki to Tokyo to Barcelona to Portland to Rome to Istanbul, tango continues to be danced, altered, exchanged and sent back, changed to Buenos Aires' (p. 4). Tangoing bodies, therefore, dance differentiation through performing geographies of movement and displacement across time and space.

Hence tango is a mobile, travelling movement practice. As such, its cultural meaning and imagined geographies are never stable. While tangoing bodies can be linked closely with the imagined geographies of Argentine identity, they also signify the processes of displacement and longing of which this identity is partially composed. But it is not just the meaning of tangoing bodies that changes. The very techniques, rhythms and movements of which the dance consists – what we might call its micro-geographies – are always being composed and recomposed, even if only minutely, each time bodies do tango. This fact has important implications for how we understand the politics of tango, and the kinds of political spaces in which tangoing bodies move. Certainly, these political spaces are not just symbolic or discursive. They also reveal a kind of corporeal micro-politics, insofar as they involve a process of subtle negotiation of relations between bodies. The upshot of this is that while tango can rehearse highly choreographed genderings of bodily movement in which, for instance, male always leads female, it can also facilitate ways of moving that do not fit neatly within these choreographies (see also Meier-Sørensen 2003).

For this reason, Manning (2006, xix) argues that tangoing bodies dancing together need to be understood as moving within a 'relational time space' whose cultural and political power cannot be reduced to the terms of representation. The point is not that everything can happen in this space, but that it affords the opportunity for modes of corporeal inventiveness in which new ways of relating might be engendered, or brought into being, each time a dance is enacted. This is not to say that all ways of dancing are similarly inventive. Some are more heavily policed than others, and this often depends on the cultural context within which dance is enacted.<sup>1</sup> Nor is it to say that inventiveness is the opposite of cultural context; on the contrary, the inventiveness of dancing bodies is facilitated by the generative constraint of the cultural contexts in which they move. The key point is that to dance is not necessarily to unthinkingly reproduce a given cultural identity: it is also a matter of actively reworking, albeit on a micro-scale, the tangible corporeality of this identity.

### *Affecting Rhythms*

An important element of the emergence of non-representational theory within geography is a growing interest in affectivity (i.e. in phenomena such as emotion, feeling, mood and passion). While dance has no monopoly on affective experience, it nevertheless provides a vehicle through which to think about the spaces in which bodies *move* in an affective sense. That all bodies move in this sense is obvious. As Brian Massumi (2002) observes, 'when I think of my body and ask what it does to earn that name, two things stand out. It moves. It feels. In fact, it does both at the same time' (p. 1). Yet, it is one thing to think about an individual body as something that both moves and feels at the same time. What happens however when you add other bodies into the mix? How do you account for the affective complexity this generates? Furthermore, where might we locate the affective dimension of a room full of moving dancing bodies? Is it in the bodies of individuals, or between them, or both? And what kind of vocabulary might we use to describe this affective quality – emotion, mood, passion or feeling?

As geographers and others have argued, understanding the affective spaces in which bodies move requires developing a differentiated conception of affectivity (Anderson 2006; Massumi 2002; McCormack 2003; Shouse 2005; Thrift 2004a). Important here is the distinction between affect, feeling and emotion. Affect is a kind of vague yet intense atmosphere; feeling is that atmosphere felt in a body; and emotion is that felt intensity articulated as an emotion. By way of illustration, think about an occasion when you have entered a dance venue of any kind – it could have been a drum and bass club or an afternoon tea dance. Regardless of what kind of dancing might have been taking place, the affective quality of the space in which bodies move is never only something personal – it is a product

of a complex mix between music (although music is not necessary for dance), light, sound, bodies, gesture, and, in some cases, psychoactive substances of various kinds (see Malbon 1999; Pini 1998). What is clear is that this affective intensity is felt – you can feel it in your gut (whether you like it or not is a different matter) – and that this felt sense can be modulated by changes in the level of those factors listed above. The extent to which this felt sense is an emotional one depends on the degree to which it can be articulated: so if an interviewer asked you how you felt after your dance, you might articulate this feeling through identifying a specific emotion – ‘I feel happy’. And this designation would make sense because we have a collective – if vague – understanding of what it means to feel an emotion such as happiness.

Important here is the claim that the affective relations within and between these moving bodies are poorly understood if framed by theories of representation. Affectivity does not move through bodies in a process of representation. It moves too quickly for that. It is resonant, contagious and visceral (Connolly 2002). And you know that this is true, because you know how a room of moving bodies feels before you could ever put that ‘knowledge’ into words. If not through representation then, how might the affective spaces of which moving bodies are generative be conceptualized? One way is through thinking about the *rhythmic* relations between bodies and spaces. An interest in the relation between rhythm and the spaces of which moving bodies are generative is not necessarily new, as the writing of Henri Lefebvre on rhythmanalysis illustrates (Lefebvre 1991, 2004). For Lefebvre, rhythmanalysis is a technique for inventive engagement with and through the sensory experiences of everyday life. The body plays a crucial role in this kind of engagement – it acts as a kind of metronome through which the individual can sense the diverse and sometimes discordant rhythms of which everyday life consists (see Evans and Jones 2008; Simonsen 2005).

While Lefebvre’s work has most often been used to think through the space times of the urban, for my purposes here what is more important is his unelaborated yet inviting claim that the sphere of experiment ‘par excellence’ of rhythmanalysis is music and dance (1991: 205). For Lefebvre, such experimentation would allow us to develop an understanding of what he calls the ‘animated’ spaces of bodies. Unfortunately, Lefebvre only hints at what this experimentation might involve. There are, however, examples of work that illustrate what it might mean to use rhythm as both conceptual and corporeal orientation for thinking through the affective spaces of moving bodies. Charles Stivale’s (2003) study of Cajun dance and music provides a useful example in this respect (see also McCormack 2002). Drawing on extensive participatory experience, Stivale argues that the affective ‘event’ of Cajun dance (what he calls its palpable sense of ‘thisness’) is composed of many rhythms. These include the complex relations between musicians, dancers and spectators; the movement of the

couples on the dance floor as they continuously adjust to one another, to other couples, and to the presence of spectators; and the wider social and cultural constraints that set certain limits on what counts as 'Cajun'.

This kind of dance space is certainly not defined by one overarching rhythm. Nor, by rhythm, does Stivale mean a kind of rigidly ordered metre. Rhythm is not 1,2,3 . . . 1,2,3 . . . 1,2,3. It is more lively and chaotic than that, a kind of background flux and flow composed of many elements – sound, image, gesture and lyric – from which, at certain points, various patterns of order emerge (see also Miller 2004). Rhythmic and affective spaces are therefore ephemeral, but no less important because of this. Indeed, developing an understanding of the production, experience and (sometimes deliberate) manipulation of these spaces is one of most important aspects of thinking through moving bodies. And integral to this thinking is a necessary effort to take up and be taken up by the affective rhythms of which these spaces are composed. Stivale calls this a process of 'becoming Cajun', but for geographers interested in thinking through moving bodies, any number of other 'becomings' could be explored (see also Manning 2006; McCormack 2002; Revill 2004).

### *Dancing, Thinking and Abstraction*

As Stivale's account suggests, dance also raises interesting questions about how the kinaesthetic experience of thinking with moving bodies complicates the participatory nature of qualitative research (see also Geurts 2002; Paterson 2007; Sklar 2001). As suggested at the outset, one of the implications of an interest in the body within geography has been a concerted effort to make more explicit the embodied qualities of geographical knowing and, in doing this, to take seriously the claim that space and place are always 'lived' through bodies. This effort is also a result of the critique by cultural and feminist geographers of more 'abstract' modes of thinking. Often associated with the influence of the philosopher René Descartes, abstract thinking assumes that the mind is distinct from the body, and that it can extract and distance itself from the messiness of the world through rational systems of representational thought (for a discussion, see Longhurst 1997). In the process, abstract thought renders the body an object, and also ignores the lived differences that shape the experience of being embodied.

In many ways then, dance would seem to provide the perfect empirical context within which to both affirm the 'lived' nature of space and to develop this critique of abstraction. More specifically, any attempt to make sense of the fleshy, affective, experiential qualities of dance would seem particularly badly served by techniques such as drawing, diagramming and writing: this, indeed, is exactly the kind of critique made by feminist geographers (most notably Gillian Rose 1993) of the diagrams used by time geographers. More recently, cultural geographer Tim Cresswell has

also considered these questions as part of a discussion of the geographies of mobility in the contemporary Western world (2006). He pays particular attention to systems of movement analysis and notation, including that developed by Austro-Hungarian dancer and choreographer Rudolf Laban (1879–1958). For Cresswell, these systems are interesting and problematic because they function to arrest and abstract movement: that is, they take living movement, extract it from the body, and render it reproducible through forms of notation and inscription. And in doing so, they serve to alienate individuals from the experience of their own lived movement.

Cresswell's argument echoes debates within dance and performance studies about attempts to capture something – movement – that cannot be described. How does one describe something that describes itself through its own enactment? But thinking about this question might not lead inevitably to a critique of abstraction as something working against an understanding of lived experience, and for at least three reasons. First, movement notation can sometimes be a useful supplement to qualitative and ethnographic techniques (see Farnell 1999; Sklar 2001). Second, these techniques are not just about notating or capturing movement: thus for Laban notation is one part of a system of kinaesthetic architecture intended to facilitate different ways of experiencing 'lived' body space (Kuppers 2003; McCormack 2004; Merriman forthcoming). Then, and third, these techniques offer opportunities for choreographic experiments that complicate a critique of abstraction.

The work of the contemporary choreographer William Forsythe provides an interesting point of orientation here, in part because he extends and modifies the kind of systems of movement analysis designed by Laban, and the kinaesthetic architecture on which they are based. For Forsythe, the point of using this architecture in the choreographic process is not to 'depict any concrete or existing space'. Rather, it is about the generation of 'a *potential* space – as the piece forms, an architecture emerges.'<sup>2</sup> Importantly, Forsythe does not dismiss a geometrical vocabulary of points, lines and planes because they are too abstract. Instead, he actively encourages his dancers to understand dance as series of transformations in movement space generated along various lines and planes. This is best illustrated in *Improvisation Technologies: A tool for the Analytical Dance Eye*. In this CD-ROM, Forsythe provides examples of how dance movement sequences can be constructed using a series of progressively more complex processes and transformations in points, lines and planes. Here, the movement of the body provides surfaces of orientation through which to develop and experiment playfully with a kind of choreographic drawing. As he puts it,

You can establish a line with a gesture . . . I can establish a line by making a crumbling gesture. I can establish a line on the floor with little hops. I can establish it by rubbing it into the floor . . . by making little tiny dots, or between two dots . . . I could probably smear it, slide it, tap it, swat it, kick it. A line or a point is there in space and how you establish it or how you manifest it is

really up to you. It is very important that this part of the process remain extremely playful and extremely imaginative. Don't restrict yourself to strict drawing of lines like you're drawing with a knife or a pen for that matter. You have to use the surface of your body and your imagination about how lines could form and how you could manifest these things with your body. (Forsythe 1999)

Forsythe's work reminds us that the drawing of a line is not necessarily an abstraction that alienates movement from itself. Nor does it make the space of moving bodies any less 'lived'. Indeed, it might very well allow us to inhabit and experiment with making and remaking lived spaces in different ways. Finally, it also points to the overlap between the geographic and choreographic, particularly if we think about both as techniques for describing and generating space through the drawing of lines.<sup>3</sup> After all, as Gunnar Olsson (1991) asks: 'what is geography, if it is not the drawing and interpretation of lines?' (p. 181). The challenge of thinking about the relation between this vision of geography and the choreographic practice outlined above is not necessarily to get beyond the abstract: it is instead to rethink the livedness of abstract space and the abstractness of lived space (Massumi 2002).

### *Conclusion*

To undertake geographical research into moving, dancing bodies is not only to think *about* these bodies: it also involves thinking with and through the spaces of which these bodies are generative. To make this claim is not to advocate a kind of 'just-do-it' vision of geography in which we all have to get up and dance.<sup>4</sup> Equally, it should not be caricatured as an overly optimistic or normative vision of what bodies can do, nor a claim that all bodies are 'able' to do everything in the same way: again, because bodies move in more ways than one, to move does not necessarily imply physical displacement. Indeed, understanding precisely what it means to speak of bodies in movement and/or in stillness is an ongoing concern of geographers (Bissell 2007). Hence, as I have suggested here, thinking with moving bodies involves a sustained effort to work through the conceptual, empirical and political challenges and opportunities afforded by these bodies (see also Lepecki 2006). To conclude, therefore, I want to point to just four areas in which this work might be taken further.

First, there is much scope for further research about how moving bodies articulate the corporeality of cultural geographies. For instance, more work remains to be done on the relation between moving bodies and moving images. While images are often understood as representations of bodies (see Dodds 2004), the power of *moving images of moving bodies* goes beyond the representational (see Hansen 2006; Portanova 2005).<sup>5</sup> As geographers and others have argued, understanding the affective power of these images is especially important, particularly insofar as it contributes

to our understandings of the affective dimensions of contemporary cultural and political economies (Bennett 2001; Gibson-Graham 2006). Similarly, much more work could be done on how moving images of moving bodies allow rhythms, movements and affects to emerge, circulate and travel across time and space. Think, for instance, about the contagious nature of highly choreographed music videos such as 'Here It Goes Again', by the band OK GO, which became an Internet phenomenon through *You Tube*, and has subsequently been used in a commercial collaboration between Nike and iTunes.<sup>6</sup>

Second, the mobilising by dancers and choreographers of geographical concepts and themes is also a topic worth pursuing.<sup>7</sup> For instance, in a series of recent research–creation projects, the dancer and researcher Sarah Rubidge draws on vocabularies that have obvious resonance with the concerns of geographers. In *Sensuous Geographies* (see Rubidge 2007), Rubidge collaborated with composer Alistair McDonald on the design of an 'immersive interactive installation' in which the motion of participants generated different sound traces, resulting in a dynamic space of sound and movement.<sup>8</sup> In another project, *Global Drifts*, developed in collaboration with Hellen Sky, Rubidge explores similar themes, albeit at a much larger scale. As she puts it, *Global Drifts* can be seen as a way of 'articulating the corporeal and physical transformations ('accents') that take place when cultures, architectures, pieces and sites engage with each other, and the accompanying notions of connectivity, constituted a choreographic cartography' (Rubidge in press).

Third, as this suggests, there is a great deal of scope for the development of collaborative research between geographers and dancers, performers and choreographers. While there is a well-established tradition of geographers dialoguing and collaborating with visual artists (e.g. Nash 1998), less work between dancers and geographers has been undertaken.<sup>9</sup> There are some exceptions (see McCormack 2004; Somhdahl-Sands 2006): but much more could be done. Future collaborations might allow geographers to revisit and rethink a range of disciplinary debates. For instance, how might working with choreographic developments in technologies of motion capture allow us to rethink and reanimate some of the diagrammatic abstractions of time geography? (see, for instance, DeLahunta and Zuniga Shaw 2006). And how might this allow us to extend the repertoire of methodological techniques available to geographers interested in researching moving bodies?

Finally, thinking with and through dance might allow us to make more of the kinds of political and ethical spaces in which geography has particularly heavy disciplinary investment and interest. For instance, how might dance allow us to develop more diverse and differentiated understandings of the kinaesthetic and affective dimensions of urban publics and communities (see Hamera 2007)? Equally, as *Endangered species* (2008), a recent piece by the choreographer Siobhan Davies suggests, might not dance work as a thinking space within which to articulate

matters of environmental, scientific and political concern?<sup>10</sup> Clearly, dance cannot allow us to think about everything, and we need to be mindful of the specific contexts within which it is practiced. Yet, its particular value, one that this article has tried to outline, lies in the distinctive opportunities it affords for cultivating geographies through, with, and *for* moving bodies.

### Short Biography

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### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> For a depiction of exactly such a space, see William Trevor's wonderful short story about dance and rural Ireland during the 1950s – *The Ballroom of Romance* (1972).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.kaiserworks.com/ideas/forsythe1.htm>

<sup>3</sup> See also *It's a Draw/Live Feed* (2003) by Trisha Brown; <http://www.fabricworkshopandmuseum.org/exhibitions/tbrown.php>

<sup>4</sup> For a critique of the primacy of movement and intention in certain geographical accounts of the body and mobility, see Harrison (2008) and Bissell (2008).

<sup>5</sup> For instance, I have two favourite clips to which I turn when I want a lift. One is from the Laurel and Hardy film *Way out West* (1939), in which this cinematic odd couple engage in an impromptu dance outside a saloon (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Arajua9lxYA>). The second clip is the closing scene from *Beau Travail* (1999) by the French director Claire Denis ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8e5g\\_wXJf1I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8e5g_wXJf1I)). For me, watching both clips has a similar effect to listening to a favourite song – it amplifies (or sometimes dampens) the affective quality of experience (see Anderson 2006).

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NINJQ5LRh-0>

<sup>7</sup> See also *Geography* (2007), by the Scott Powell Dance Company; <http://www.scottpowell.org/geography.html>

<sup>8</sup> In their collaboration Rubidge and McDonald implicitly reference themes discussed in Paul Rodoway's *Sensuous Geographies* (1994), a volume that anticipates elements of non-representational theories. For information about *Sensuous Geographies*, see <http://www.sensuousgeographies.co.uk/>

<sup>9</sup> For a discussion of similar themes between Tim Cresswell and artist Ergin Çavuşoğlu, see [http://www.situations.org.uk/\\_uploaded\\_pdfs/ErginCavusoglu.pdf](http://www.situations.org.uk/_uploaded_pdfs/ErginCavusoglu.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.siobhandavies.com/index.php/parent/67/item/414>

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