

Editorial

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Ngā mihi nui ki ngā hoa, ki ngā kaikanikani, ki a koutou. Warm greetings to you all, our growing community of dancers and dance researchers. Welcome to Volume 7 of *Dance Research Aotearoa*.

Volume 7 features five academic articles, including the 2023 ‘online first’ article by Jose Rodriguez and Declan Patrick alongside contributions from Alison East, Yanling Sun, Gabriel Baker, Karen Barbour, Allison Jeffrey and Marianne Clark. This scholarship spans a breadth of topics and encompasses research arising from both recent doctoral studies and ongoing investigations in diverse fields of dance.

Identifying a thread of connection to Spain, Rodriguez and Patrick investigate national identity and the evolution of both Colombian and Filipino folk dance. They discuss how dances survived processes of colonisation, and how surviving allowed dancers to declare differences and to subsequently construct hybrid and independent identities. Alison East focuses on ecosomatic dance and discusses both the theoretical and practical processes of remembering relations with other-than-human kin. East describes a specific ecosomatic workshop and a sensory tuning process through the skin to an environment, as a way to practise empathy for others and the world. Yanling Sun investigates the ways in which somatic practices have been integrated into dance education and professional practice in Aotearoa, offering a case study of somatic dance in the South Island of Aotearoa. Sun concludes that there has been an uneven pattern of engagement in somatic practices in schools and private dance studios, despite the initial inclusion of somatic practices in tertiary dance programmes from the 1990s. Gabriel Baker researches the role of touch and haptic encounters in local environments. Working with Pākehā dancers, Baker shares the rich observations and insights that arise when attending to sensory dimensions of dancing and explores ways in which haptic encounters function to unsettle colonial privilege. The final article from Karen Barbour, Allison Jeffrey and Marianne Clark expands thinking about wellbeing values of somatic dance

for women. Engaging with Te Whare Tapa Whā offers the researchers a way to more fully understand fluidity and wellbeing for women transitioning through stages of life.

Dance Research Aotearoa was established 15 years ago to be an annual online journal of internationally accessible, peer-reviewed scholarly dance research. Launched in July 2013 during the Tertiary Dance Educators' Network New Zealand Aotearoa Festival, the intention of *Dance Research Aotearoa* was to grow a body of literature undertaken by dance researchers working in Aotearoa, Australia and the South Pacific. In some cases, submissions were also welcomed by international dance researchers with topics beyond this scope, when the research connected with the dance community and readership of the journal. The journal welcomed authors engaging with qualitative, interpretive perspectives and research methods and authors drawing from performative, pedagogical, kaupapa Māori, indigenous, practice-based, ethnographic, Pasifika, critical, cultural studies, phenomenological, postmodern, feminist and other qualitative methodologies, were all encouraged to submit.

Successful in this endeavour, *Dance Research Aotearoa* has published research articles, critical reflective essays and creative representations of research including narrative, autoethnographic, performative and poetic submissions. A “looking back” feature incorporated a reprinted historic article with new responses from expert commentators. It has been an honour as editor to read the scholarship published in the journal to date, and to work alongside colleagues and students as authors, peer reviewers, editorial board members and co-editors.

The previous volume 6 was published in January 2021 and there was a subsequent hiatus in *Dance Research Aotearoa*. As with many endeavours, the global COVID-19 pandemic disrupted academic research and substantially hindered dance teaching and performance. While many “pivoted” to teaching online with remarkable dexterity, the impact of “lockdowns” and periods of isolating at home, the embodied tension created by vaccination debates, and the disruption to education and performing arts in general, led to an unprecedented level of exhaustion in the field of dance. In the years that followed, I experienced and witnessed this level of exhaustion reflected in reduced capacity to undertake research, as well limited energy for the collegial roles of reviewing and editing necessary in sustaining an academic journal. It is with determination, and much gratitude to authors and peer reviewers, that this volume is possible. My thanks also to Nikki for again undertaking the careful processes of proof-reading and layout for the journal, and to Beth for her support in publishing this volume.

It seems timely, after 15 years, to review what the journal has achieved, (acknowledging many changes to the academic research and publishing landscape that I

will not belabour here). This journal has published a diverse collection of 50 pieces of dance scholarship. Additionally, the journal reveals some of the history of significant dance events and gatherings in Aotearoa over the last 15 years, and the contributions of local and international scholars to our community. I recognise with appreciation colleagues and researchers published in *Dance Research Aotearoa*: Linda Ashley, Raewyn Whyte, Ojeya Cruz-Banks, Liz Melchior, Alison East, Katerina Teaiwa, Barbara Snook, Deborah Bright, Ralph Buck, Miriam Marler, Gabriel Baker, Sue Cheesman, Sophie Williams, Janinka Greenwood, Stephen Bradshaw, Jack Gray, Alys Longley, Swaroopa Unni, Christina Houghton, Barbara Snook, Ruth Way, Rose Martin, Sherry Shapiro, Sofia Kalogeropoulou, val smith, Jennifer Nikolai, Karen Schupp, Rachel Pedro, Kym Stevens, Stephanie Hanrahan, Natalie Schiller, Caroline Broadhead, Angela Woodhouse, Larry Lavender, Carol Brown, Rebecca Wood, Merophie Carr, Courtney Richmond, Kaylee Bird, Lara Rangiwhetu, Garrett Winters, Nevil Pierse, Philippa Howden-Chapman, Declan Patrick, Jose Rodriguez, Yanling Sun, Karen Barbour, Alison Jeffrey and Marianne Clark.

In the spirit of celebrating the tenacity and excellence of dance researchers and the diversity of our gatherings, I offer a brief summary of the six previous volumes below.

Volume 1 in 2013 gathered five submissions from dance scholars engaged in contemporary forms of ethnographic research and participating in the Contemporary Ethnography Across the Disciplines Conference (CEAD) hosted at The University of Waikato in 2012, sharing ethnography at home and abroad. A commentary “looking back” on dance education in schools was also featured. Members of the Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research (WMIER) at The University of Waikato and colleagues from the Tertiary Dance Educators’ Network New Zealand Aotearoa (TDENNZ), supported the journal establishment and celebrated the journal launch.

Volume 2 in 2014 published six submissions arising from the Dancing Critically: Pedagogy, Performance, Praxis Conference hosted at The University of Waikato in July 2013 by TDENNZ. At the conference, contributors from Aotearoa, Australia, India and Norway presented. A highlight was the keynote by Katerina Teaiwa, and her discussion of dance “remix” in Oceania was published in this volume.

Volume 3, published in 2015 with the late Linda Ashley as special editor, followed the symposium, Atarau - A Beam of Light: Illuminating Indigenous Terrains of Intercultural Dance in November 2013, co-hosted at the Whitireia Performance Centre and Te Papa Tongarewa in Wellington. The symposium ran as part of Kōwhiri’s Atarau

Festival of Contemporary Indigenous Dance. Alongside the four articles, a discussion “looking back” at Māori contemporary dance was featured.

Volume 4 in 2016 with guest editor Rose Martin included articles arising from three dance research events held in Aotearoa in November 2015. The Dance and Social Justice Symposia were held at The University of Waikato and The University of Auckland. Following both was The Moving Communities International Conference on Community Dance hosted by The University of Otago in Dunedin. A highlight in this volume was the work of Emeritus Professor Sherry Shapiro from Meredith College, North Carolina, United States of America, who presented her work as the 2015 Fulbright Visiting Scholar. This volume included 10 articles and a book review.

For Volume 5 in 2017, Alys Longley joined as special issue editor. The volume featured articles arising from The Undisciplining Dance Symposium hosted by Dance Studies at the University of Auckland and TDENNZ in June 2016. The symposium attracted 80 presenters, including many international presenters from Europe, United States of America, the United Kingdom, Brazil, Hong Kong and Australia. Alongside the six articles in this volume, Jennifer Nikolai wrote a specific “looking back” piece that celebrated Linda Ashley who passed away in this year, and recognised her legacy and contribution to dance in Aotearoa.

Volume 6 in 2020 reflected a gathering of dance scholars on the occasion of the Leap Dance Symposium hosted by the School of Performing Arts at the University of Otago in November 2019. During this event we recognised the legacy of the inspirational Dunedin dance elder Shona Dunlop MacTavish, who passed away in 2019; the retirement of dance leader Alison East; and the end of an era as the Dance Studies programme at The University of Otago vacated the Union Street dance studios in Dunedin. Nine articles were published in this volume.

Dance Research Aotearoa - 15 years of a growing body of dance literature, in 50 publications and by 50 authors. Always openly accessible to everyone through the online format, this collection evidences the reach of our research with some articles being downloaded more than 3,000 times! Of course, this collection reflects only a small portion of the diverse, enticing embodied scholarship of our dance community. I welcome enquiries about future volumes, offers to contribute as a guest editor or reviewer, and efforts to share this collection. Kōkiri!

Ngā manaakitanga,
Karen Barbour