

November 23, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Dance Studies Association 2020 Book Awardee Announcement**

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The Dance Studies Association (DSA) announces the 2020 winners of the Oscar G. Brockett Prize for Dance Research, the de la Torre Bueno Prize, and the de la Torre Bueno First Book Award. These awards contribute not only to the visibility of the individuals and works honored, but also to the visibility of dance research and to our continuing drive for excellence in dance scholarship. The DSA is an international organization of dance scholars, educators, and artists that aim to strengthen the visibility and increase the reach of dance as embodied practice, creative endeavor and intellectual discipline.

**The Dance Studies Association is honored to award the 2020 Oscar G. Brockett Book Prize for Dance Research to Clare Croft's *Queer Dance: Meanings and Makings* (Oxford University Press, 2017) and Judith Hamera's *Unfinished Business: Michael Jackson, Detroit, and the Figural Economy of American Deindustrialization* (Oxford University Press, 2017). The two winners will share the 2020 award.**

The Brockett Prize is awarded each year to the best book in dance published during the previous three calendar years. The award carries a cash value of \$1000. DSA adjudicates the award, while the Oscar G. Brockett Center for Theatre History and Criticism at the University of Texas Austin provides the monetary prize. The Center initiated this DSA Award to honor Professor Brockett and to advance its mission of recognizing the finest scholarship in theatre, dance, and performance history. Scholarly books in any area of dance may be nominated. The author need not be a member of DSA or be primarily identified with the field of dance, so long as the publication itself relates to dance. The award is for works published in the previous calendar year (2019).

**The Dance Studies Association is honored to award the 2020 de la Torre Bueno® Prize to Anurima Banerji's *Dancing Odissi: Paratopic Performances of Gender and State* (Seagull Books/University of Chicago Press, 2019) and the de la Torre Bueno® First Book Award to Victoria Fortuna's *Moving Otherwise: Dance, Violence, and Memory in Buenos Aires* (OUP, 2019). A de la Torre Bueno® First Book Special Citation has additionally been issued to Hari Krishnan's *Celluloid Classicism: Early Tamil Cinema and the Making of Modern Bharatanatyam* (Wesleyan University Press 2019). These prizes are made possible by the generosity of Mary Bueno.**

The de la Torre Bueno Prize® is awarded annually to a book published in the English language that advances the field of dance studies. The de la Torre Bueno First Book Prize® is awarded annually to the best first book in dance studies published in the English language in the previous calendar year. Named after José Rollin de la Torre Bueno, the first university press editor to develop a list of titles in dance studies, the de la Torre Bueno Prizes have recognized scholarly excellence in the field since 1973. Each carries a cash purse of \$1000.

With the cancelation of the DSA 2020 in-person conference, awards will be celebrated through Digital DSA in early 2021. Programming will be announced in February.

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For full awardee citations see below:

**2020 Oscar G. Brockett Awardee:**

Clare Croft's edited volume *Queer Dance: Meanings and Makings* was commended by the award committee for its boldness in demonstrating and embodying the generative potential of coalitional and collaborative Dance Studies work on queer dance. Exercising curatorial and editorial prowess, editor Clare Croft gives fresh presence to non-normative conceptions of the queer – foregrounding investigations of a range of feminist queer-of-color practice, productively feminist-identified. *Queer Dance* is a model for scholarship that transcends theory/practice divides; designed to circulate across multiple platforms—including live performance, traditional print media, and digital multimedia. Not only theorizing coalition, the book itself performs coalition, bringing together seventeen thought-provoking essays with a website and a performance series offering full performance works linked digitally to the volume. As an important archive of twenty-first century queer dance, Croft's volume makes an important contribution to the digital arts and humanities, modeling a way for scholarly texts to be inclusive of the voices and works of dance artists and queer activists. As Croft observes in her strong introductory essay, the book makes the case for dance studies as itself coalitional, essentially joined in vital aspects with black studies, feminism, queer studies and queer performance. The Introduction not only stretches the reach of Dance Studies but the book as a whole advances feminist, anti-racist, and decolonial work in dance studies through complex theoretical, historical, and methodological interventions.

Croft's presence on this project goes well beyond that of a typical monograph editor, it includes curation of a queer dance performance series, securing high quality video documentation of those performances, and conducting extensive interviews with the dancers and choreographers about how their artistic practice embodies and extends queer theory. All these materials are included on the book's website, creating together with the volume, a rich resource for teaching, as well as an invaluable archive of queer dance performance in the early twenty-first century.

Authors, contributors, and artists that contributed to this anthology include Lou Henry Hoover, Sandra Chatterjee, Cynthia Ling Lee, Shyamala Moorthy, Emily Wilcox, Gu Jiani, J. Carter, Jennifer Campbell, Hannah Kosstrin, Thomas F. Defrantz, Justin Torres, Nic

Gareiss, Kareem Khubchandani, Peter Carpenter, Jennifer Monson, DD Dorvillier, Angie Ahlgren, Rocky Monroe, Patrick McKelvey, Martine Whitehead, Kevin Guy, James Morrow, Gina Kohler, Cleek Schrey, Doran George (in memorium), and Amy Guilmette.

Clare Croft is an Associate Professor of Dance, American Culture, and Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Michigan.

**2020 Oscar G. Brockett Awardee:**

Judith Hamera's *Unfinished Business: Michael Jackson, Detroit, and the Figural Economy of American Deindustrialization* is a shining example of Dance Studies in interdisciplinary perspective. Reading dancing as well as other forms of performance, the book explores the figural economies that circulate, prop, or resist the structural economy, particularly deindustrialization in the neoliberal, racialized capitalism of the United States. As capitalism, always racialized, shifts from factory to finance, Hamera watches how the shift plays across racialized bodies in figural practices, arguing that the two processes – figural and structural – co-constitute each other. Hamera pushes beyond general critiques of neoliberalism to theorize “the deindustrial” as a specific historical and political moment in the broader context of global capitalism. Her achievement is substantial, both personal and elaborately grand, it dismantles the political economy, revealing its real effects on the urban landscape of Detroit.

Deeply complex thinking about the interface between work, labor and performance in post-industrial USA is evident beginning with the ‘thin’-ness of Michael Jackson and ending with the ‘stuffed toys’ of urban art projects. Hamera's development of concepts such as “gestic space” provides new critical and analytic tools dismantling the projections and anxieties of disruptive and corrosive economic change. Analyzing media representations of Michael Jackson's performances of “fiscal deviance,” Hamera shows how structural racism shaped the “ideal neoliberal financialized subject.” She illuminates finance as itself as a performance genre, that offers “a mode of self-expression.” It is exciting to see Dance Studies applying its insights not only to theatre, interactive art, and media spectacle, but the broader financial systems in which dance, and other performance mediums, circulate as “the figural economy.”

Judith Hamera is a professor of dance at Princeton University's Lewis Center for the Arts with affiliations in American studies, gender and sexuality studies, and urban studies.

**2020 de la Torre Bueno® Prize:**

Anurima Banerji's *Dancing Odissi: Paratopic Performances of Gender and State* offers a multilayered argument about Odissi dance history, gender, and shifting relationships to the state. Neither adopting nor rejecting the two dominant narratives of Odissi dance history, she instead offers new histories that sit alongside the dominant ones. Her concept of paratopic performance (performances of difference alongside the dominant) has considerable critical potential. Banerji is especially attuned to what she calls “extraordinary gender” in Odissi, such as maharis and gotipuas. Also impressive is the book's genealogy of key postcolonial figures and institutions shaping Odissi beginning in the 1930s, including references to the film industry. Though some of this history has been shared in other publications, the richness of detail and depth of textual references—including Odia-language texts—demonstrate a rigor, comprehensiveness,

and clarity that makes for compelling reading and an exemplary historiographic model. *Dancing Odissi* is written in clear, elegant prose; indeed, Banerji's discussion of attempts to undermine Odissi make for especially exciting reading.

Anurima Banerji is Associate Professor in the Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance at the University of California, Los Angeles.

**2020 de la Torre Bueno® First Book Award:**

Victoria Fortuna's *Moving Otherwise: Dance, Violence, and Memory in Buenos Aires* is an impressive history of contemporary dance in Buenos Aires from the mid-1960s to the mid-2010s: a period including a series of brutal military dictatorships that saw tens of thousands of people violently disappeared, as well as a devastating economic crisis. Centered around Fortuna's idea of "moving otherwise," the book compellingly demonstrates how contemporary dance practices on and off the stage "[offer] alternatives to, and sometimes critiques, the patterns of movement and bodily comportment that shape everyday life in contexts marked by violence" (4). Fortuna demonstrates through careful archival research, extensive interviews, and insightful analysis of staged and political choreographies, the multiple levels of moving otherwise that dancers deployed in society, on stage, in prisons, and on the streets. Its strengths include its exceptionally deep and serious engagement with dance studies sources; its significant contribution to the intersection of dance, trauma theory, and politics; its use of both English and Spanish-language sources; its effective theorizing, and clear and compelling prose. Fortuna does an exceptional job of integrating political economic particulars and national politics in close analyses of a wide range of actors and, in so doing, expands dance studies understandings of both hemispheric contemporary dance and hemispheric dance modernisms.

Victoria Fortuna is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Reed College.

**2020 de la Torre Bueno® First Book Special Citation:**

Hari Krishnan's *Celluloid Classicism: Early Tamil Cinema and the Making of Modern Bharatanatyam* is an invaluable addition to scholarship on Bharatanatyam in the crucial period between the 1930s and 1950s, offering an impeccably researched and well-argued revision of the common recounting of this phase of the dance's history which has it that devadasis, if they kept dancing, went into film while Brahmin women dominated the stage, and discourses on caste and morality kept the two realms separate. Krishnan's archival work is impeccable: combining interviews with readings of key films and reconstructions of lost works using songbooks. Throughout, he is deeply attuned to gender, class, and caste, especially in charting devadasi genealogies in early cinematic works. He includes invaluable reflections on the complexity of working artists' lives in these crucial periods, and argues persuasively that specific dimensions of some lives undergird the cinematic invention of "classical" bharatanyam as a middle-class form.

Hari Krishnan is Associate Professor of Dance at Wesleyan University.

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