

Call for Submissions

Special Guest Edited Issue of *Dance Research Journal*

Guest Editors: Thomas F. DeFrantz, Jasmine E. Johnson, and Eric Mullis

ASSEMBLY, GATHERING, BEING WITH DANCE

Assembly is an affair of appearance in which dispersed people find a common ground in public view. It is a process often interpreted as expressing self-determination and popular sovereignty. Dance, social, choreography, protests, and other forms of assembly are marked by actions which indicate shared beliefs about the body, the self, and broader social conditions. While spontaneous gatherings or carefully planned political protests might signal shared values through acts of popular will, such an interpretation may belie the complexities of group formation. In light of contemporary contexts—including the global pandemics of COVID-19 and anti-blackness—that have impacted the very conditions of assembly, we think even more pointedly about the processes and politics of gathering.

Assembly can be a strategy of turning the singular into the plural, or the crowd into the collective. The practice of gathering—whether in a classroom, at a protest, or online – is not simple or necessarily straightforward. While the presence of those gathered may be intentional, the politics of belonging shape how being together is diversely experienced. Who was able to attend the gathering? How do race, gender, sexual identity, class, disability, religion, place, and age impact who is welcomed, affirmed, or protected once assembled? How might the time signatures and spaces of assembly provide both occasion for new solidarities or openings for appropriation? Once the assembly disperses, where does that collective action go? How are its residues alchemized, condensed, or diluted?

Increasingly, gatherings are facilitated, framed, and disseminated by technological devices and artificial intelligence systems. What are the technologies that allow assembly? How have those technologies been crafted, and how are they deployed by people engaged in critical movement, through and beyond? How do dance studios materialize, and what sorts of shared rhetorics of corporeal agreement/disavowal are embedded in their operations? In our contemporary moment, in relation to all manner of previous events, how has protest continued to *dance*?

Possible areas of focus may include strategies of assembly in particular contexts (such as Native American powwows, vogue balls, multinational dance competitions, or public protests), gathering as both shared belief and disagreement, relationships between dance, place, and shifting cartographies of belonging, dance at/as protest, assembly, media representation, and public perception, and the possibilities and limitations of virtual dance assemblies.

Final deadline for submissions: March 1, 2022.

For questions and suggested readings, please email: Eric Mullis (mullise@queens.edu)

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Dance Research JOURNAL

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