and disorientation. In welcoming her own disability as transformative, she challenges the medical tradition of language and procedural habits that emphasize the correction of bodies toward normative values, often through aggressive treatments. She also comments on the dance field's fetishizing of the classical body, one which, even inadvertently, can reinforce the cultural binary separating disabled and able.

"Strategic Abilities" evidences Albright's adroit weaving of autobiographical content and engagement with dance as a site of cultural critique, and demonstrates how she uses those threads to disorient herself and her subject matter in the interest of viewing them anew. Her work offers an alternative narrative and expanded historical and cultural perspective to those viewpoints limited by reductive cultural representations or the untenable chasms between body and mind, scholarship and practice, that so many in the field are keen to bridge.

Molly Shanahan
Temple University

Note

1. Albright's 2013 article "Falling," in which she advances this vein of her research, appears in *Performance Research*.

Works Cited

Ahmed, Sara. 2006. *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Albright, Ann Cooper. 2013. "Falling." *Performance Research* 18(4): 36–41.

Refrains for Moving Bodies: Experience and Experiment in Affective Spaces

by Derek P. McCormack. 2013. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 280 pp., 17 illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. $84.95 cloth, $23.95 paper.
doi:10.1017/S0149767715000145

In 1957, Guy Debord delivered his *Report on the Construction of Situations*, his famous manifesto for the Situationist International Movement.[1] In the section of this address with the subheading "Towards a Situationist International," Debord envisions an experimental affective orientation toward city space, arguing "spatial development must take the affective realities that the experimental city will determine into account," and continues on to propose "a theory of states-of-mind districts, according to which each quarter of a city would tend to induce a single emotion, to which the subject will consciously expose herself or himself" (2006, 96–7). In *Refrains for Moving Bodies: Experience and Experiment in Affective Spaces*, geographer Derek P. McCormack undertakes a rigorous analysis of the potential of experimentation in space and affect, revealing Debord's briefly articulated vision to be a rich area of research with implications for dance and performance studies, affect studies, urban studies, and geography, as well as their theoretical and practical intersections.

Although McCormack never links his work to Debord's, his introductory chapter summarizes the project, following Debord's one-time-fellow situationist, Henri Lefebvre, as a desire to understand how bodies and spaces produce one another. McCormack argues that this undertaking requires a focusing of attention on affect, which he views as key to apprehending the overflow of meaning that stems from an understanding of bodies and spaces as processes, always in excess of their materiality. It is vital for McCormack that space is both understood and referred to with respect to its rhythmic and durational aspects, hence McCormack, following Deleuze, refers to specific moments in a particular space as "spacetimes." This term is used throughout the text. Within this fairly broad conceptual architecture, McCormack then foregrounds rhythm, atmosphere, and refrain, which he argues provide "ways of grasping the consistency or intensive 'thisness' of affective spacetimes without necessarily reducing these spacetimes to the status of containers for moving bodies" (5).For McCormack, these experientially oriented ideas—rhythm, atmosphere, and refrain —emphasize the "distinctively felt qualities of space," and he draws heavily upon LeFebvre, Deleuze, and Félix Guattari to ground these concepts within established theoretical frameworks. This is deliberate, for McCormack's proposition that these terms be understood as both conceptual

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0149767715000145 Published online by Cambridge University Press

and empirical is the primary thread weaving through the remaining chapters. In McCormack's words: "Conceptual matters of concern can sensitize thinking to the affective qualities of spacetimes in ways that generate opportunities both for renewing the promise of experimenting with experience and, in turn, for thinking with concepts" (9). Of the three, rhythm and refrain emerge as the most potent conceptual links between the somatic, aesthetic, and spatial, since McCormack's model for experimentation relies on the affective potential of spaces for thinking anew when durational and rhythmic qualities are engaged and attended to.

As a geographer, McCormack's defines his fieldwork process as a "learn[ing] to be affected" such that "experience becomes a field of variation in which to experiment with the question of how felt differences might register in thinking" (11). After the requisite problematizing of the very category of experience and critique of representation, McCormack delves into such a practice of "experimenting experience" by participating in and analyzing a range of practices and performances—dance, sports-casting, music videos—creating a scaffolding for a forceful call for experimenting with affective experience. While McCormack writes with a sense of political urgency, the work tends to stay in the realm of potentiality, wherein the "ethico-poltical" impacts of his experimentation for actual moving bodies are never fully articulated.

In the first several chapters, McCormack focuses on laying the conceptual groundwork for the remaining chapters, many of which read as stand-alone essays. He does this by way of an analysis of his experiments with artist/scholars Petra Kuppers and Kanta Kochhar-Lindgren, which took place in a corridor at the Chisenhale Dance Space in London. As a dance scholar and practitioner, I found myself reading quickly through these chapters, anxious to get to a description of what actually happened in that corridor on a corporeal level. Yet after reading these chapters several times, I was not able to grasp the extent of the experiments beyond walking up and down the corridor, nor was I left with a sense of the affect produced or shared "as a distributed and diffuse field of intensities"(3) by such experimentation. I understand affect to be a profoundly physical concept—revealing the embodied entanglement of sensation, emotion, and thought as experience of and among bodies. From a dance studies perspective, this understanding of affect can participate in undermining any lingering dualistic notions that consciousness can somehow be unlinked from the body/bodies.

The potential to bring dance studies' long engagement with the problematics of representing movement (as embodied, affective, ephemeral, subjective experience) in written text remains relatively unexplored by McCormack, despite its significant practical and theoretical entanglement with his own representational concerns. While the corridor experiments could certainly be augmented through the employment of dance studies' descriptive strategies for evoking kinesthetic sensation, McCormack seems more interested in "the potential for a corridor to facilitate thinking" (32). Indeed for McCormack, this experiment does lead—via the writings of pragmatists William James and John Dewey—to an examination of the category of experience *as* experimental. A very brief description of McCormack's almost meditative walking, paired with Kupper's rhythmic speech, leads to a consideration of Emile Jacques-Dalcroze and Adolphe Appia's 1913 collaboration on a production of Gluck's *Orpheus and Eurydice*. For McCormack, the composer and the director's mutual interest in the potential of rhythm in performance in relation to Lefebvre's rhythm analysis foregrounds "the transformative potential of bodies moving rhythmically" (51). McCormack's choice of this historical example, while allowing him to draw conceptual connections between the philosophical projects of Dalcroze, Appia, and Lefebvre, leaves few traces of empirical evidence of affective experience. Furthermore, in the concluding paragraphs that return to the Chisenhale corridor, McCormack's description of a sense of "expectancy" (63) reads as a brief afterthought so mired in abstract language that Kupper's presence as an affective moving body does not register as all that important to the outcome of McCormack's experiment. Her body and its affective capacity are effectively erased. It is of note, however, that McCormack's rhetorical transition to rhythm in these chapters serves to support his use of the concept of the refrain throughout the text.

As a reader less experienced with the theoretical projects of Deleuze and Guattari, I found a clearer concept of refrain in Jane Bennet's (2001)

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0149767715000145 Published online by Cambridge University Press

articulation in *The Enchantment of Modern Life*, for example, as a repetitive "sonorous stream to compose [one]self amidst the chaos of the cosmos" (2001, 167). This, however, should not necessarily be seen as a weakness in *Refrains for Moving Bodies*. McCormack's deployment and elaboration of the refrain return throughout the book, themselves acting as a refrain for reading. While Chapter 3 presents the term "refrain" primarily in theoretical terms as "a patterning of spacetime always open to an outside" (83) and "the distinctive way in which heterogeneous elements hold together as a matter of expression" (81), later chapters ground the concept in McCormack's own affective experiences. For instance, during a Dance Movement Therapy session described in Chapter 4, the refrain as "an affective complex" is understood as a point of shared reference. In one session described by McCormack, a variety of sticks, poles, and rods are introduced into the space as movement props. When someone begins to use one such prop as a light saber, multiple session participants spontaneously enact scenes from *Star Wars*. McCormack's clear and vibrant analysis in Chapter 5 of sportscasting during the Gaelic games focuses on the qualities of speech that rouse Irish football fans. His focus on rhythmic patterns leads to the conclusion that "commentating is a matter of the refrain insofar as it allows accent to become musical, to wander from home on sonorous lines" (137). With each rhetorical return, the concept of the refrain unfolds, revealing the potential that McCormack finds so compelling. In essence, the refrain *as* refrain performatively opens up possibilities for readers to consider the concept anew at each encounter.

While McCormack spends ample time questioning the problems and limits of representation given the felt qualities of affect that seem to exist outside of language, his writing is most engaging when he does not allow this critique to steer him away from representation, for his descriptions of his own affective experiences are rich and eloquent. In particular, his discussion of football commentating caused me, a reader with no interest in competitive sports, to get swept up in my own imaginings of the Gaelic games.

I was surprised that McCormack's engagement with dance practices, with the exception of his analysis of William Forsythe's choreographies and improvisation practice, did not reach very deeply into the concerns of contemporary experimental practice. As a dance scholar and practitioner embedded in Philadelphia's experimental dance community, I saw tremendous potential for the application of his approach to more contemporary choreographic concerns. For instance, in a recent article in *Dance Research Journal* entitled "Current Trends in Contemporary Choreography: A Political Critique," Alexandra Kolb (2013) questions whether the radical democratic politics of the 1960s dance avant-garde invoked in the recent resurgence of participatory choreographies in the U.S. and the U.K. still hold. McCormack's affective lens might locate the power and even the political potential of such works in their concern with experimenting with experience and perception, rather than in their democratic rhetoric. Instances in which McCormack uses a term like "thisness," familiar among the community of experimental dance practitioners of which I am a part, function forcefully to suggest that this type of geography might share common abstract language with contemporary choreographic practices. Indeed I found myself recalling long rehearsals as both a choreographer and dramaturge, trying to articulate the "itness" of a piece in order to make it more "itself."

McCormack's concluding chapter on "the participatory" focuses on the possibilities proposed by experimental fieldwork within the social sciences and new modes of sharing research. The suggestion that academic conferences be held not as a collection of highly rehearsed presentations, but as a series of open-ended conversations while moving through corridors, seems just the sort of performative undertaking dance studies might put into action.

Dance studies' languages of and approaches to corporeality, kinesthesia, and empathy have been deployed in our field with a great degree of specificity (Foster 2011; Hamera 2007; Kwan 2013) and would therefore seem particularly apt for inclusion in McCormack's analyses of affect in dance. McCormack's assertion that "affect is by no means confined or contained by the physical limits of bodies" (3), while germane for thinking through shared affective experiences, ultimately downplays the importance of the body to his project. This positions "moving bodies" as a means of moving toward conceptual thinking, rather than

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0149767715000145 Published online by Cambridge University Press

as thinking itself. While McCormack's project does underscore the importance of engaging affect through the study of movement in geographical and spatial thinking—a concern I share deeply—a more thoroughly interdisciplinary engagement between dance studies, affect studies, and geography might push McCormack beyond the realm of potentialities and keep the experiences of bodies at the forefront.

Laura D. Vriend
Temple University and Bryn Mawr College

Note

1. Debord's manifesto was published in pamphlet form as *Rapport sur la construction des situations et sur les conditions de l'organisation et de l'action de la tendence situationniste internationale* by Debord and the Lettrist International. The translation of the text I am using here appeared in *Participation*, edited by Claire Bishop (2006). This version, in turn, used the translation found in *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents*, edited by Tom McDonough (2002).

Works Cited

Bennett, Jane. 2001. *The Enchantment of Modern Life: Attachments, Crossings and Ethics*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Debord, Guy. 2006. "Toward a Situationist International."In *Participation*, edited by Claire Bishop, 96–101. London: Whitechapel.

Foster, Susan Leigh, 2011. *Choreographing Empathy: Kinesthesia in Performance*. New York: Routledge.

Hamera, Judith, 2007. *Dancing Communities: Performance, Difference and Connection in the Global City*. Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kolb, Alexandra, 2013. "Current Trends in Contemporary Choreography: A Political Critique." *Dance Research Journal* 45(3): 31–52.

Kwan, SanSan. 2013. *Kinesthetic City: Dance & Movement in Chinese Urban Spaces*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

McDonough, Tom. 2002. *Guy Debord and the Situationist International: Texts and Documents*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Tango Nuevo

by Carolyn Merritt. 2012. Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press. 218 pp., photographs, notes, bibliography, appendix, glossary, index. $24.95 cloth.
doi:10.1017/S0149767715000157

Writings—be they books, memoirs, diaries, articles, poems, or travelogues—on the subject of tango have become nearly as abundant, and quite frequently as clichéd, as images of the fedora- and fishnet-clad tango dancing couple used to market tango in its renaissance over the past thirty years. Given tango's popularity as both a symbol and site of exoticism, passion, and machismo, approaching the topic from a fresh angle is no easy feat. Nor is it a trivial task to present a serious academic study of tango that does not destroy its appeal through exposition of the mechanisms by which tango seduces its devotees. Carolyn Merritt meets this challenge beautifully in *Tango Nuevo*, an insightful ethnography of tango in Buenos Aires at the height of the tango *nuevo* boom, 2005–2007.

Although even dancers most often cited as its founders—Gustavo Naveira, Olga Besio, Fabian Salas, and Chico Frúmboli—often deny its very existence, tango *nuevo* can be described as a new analytical approach to the study and teaching of tango that, through its systematic investigation of the principles and basic building blocks of tango technique, led to rapid innovations in vocabulary and style. The resulting dance is often characterized by a more open and flexible embrace that requires both partners to maintain their own axis (center of balance); athletic movements requiring extreme torsion; more frequent use of off-balance moves; incorporation of vocabulary from ballet, contemporary dance, and other social dances; and more fluid conceptualization of gender roles. During the mid-2000s, tango *nuevo* was often practiced by younger dancers than the tango had attracted in decades, with the youth popularizing casual dress and electronic tango music.

The birth of tango *nuevo* is frequently traced back to the Cochabamba investigation

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0149767715000145 Published online by Cambridge University Press