

Ultimately, Reed is attuned to the changing circumstances and execution of Kandyan dance, voicing both concern and hope in the concluding paragraphs of many chapters. For example, while noting the general waning concern for Kankariya's efficaciousness as the ritual is transferred from village contexts, Reed points to a small minority of practitioners who are interested in efficacy. Finally, a paradox central to the legitimization of Kandyan dance via university education mirrors a central debate of the field of dance studies itself, namely, to what degree do—or shall—we privilege theory over practice?

Debates among dancers about the relative value of theory and practice exemplify the ideological bases of certification, rationalization, and bureaucratization. . . . These debates hinge on classed ideological positions in which traditional dancers are associated with body, emotion, and instinct and the middle-class dancers with mind and reason. Many bevara dancers were marginalized by this emphasis on theory and the stress on a more academic approach. (163)

By raising the complicated issue of Kandyan dance's state-supported inclusion in the university system, Reed inadvertently brings to our attention our own complicity in relying on—and creating—discourse in an attempt to legitimize certain dance forms. We might ask ourselves, to what end are we, too, participating in secularizing, cementing, or evacuating the past and its choreographies?

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## Dance in the Renaissance: European Fashion, French Obsession

*Dance in the Renaissance: European Fashion, French Obsession*. by Margaret M. McGowan. 2008. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 352 pp., 82 illustrations, records of dance in the French Renaissance, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.00 hardcover.

doi:10.1017/S014976771100009X

Margaret McGowan is the Ferdinand Magellan of Renaissance dance scholarship. Her prolific bibliography has uncovered early ballet performances through recreations of libretti, accompanying contemporary criticism, and rare scenographic imagery. Among her best-known contributions are her textual accompaniments to the reprinting of the libretto from *le Balet comique* (Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1982) and the exhibition catalog for *The Court Ballet of Louis XIII* (Victoria and Albert Museum, 1986). Her published doctoral thesis from 1964, *L'art du Ballet de Cour en France, 1581–1643*, is widely regarded as the first important work in sixteenth century dance scholarship.

*L'art du Ballet de Cour en France* prioritized analysis onto the early dance performances that occurred in the sixteenth century courts of the Valois Dynasty, led by Francois I, Henri II, the Regency of Catherine de Medicis, Charles IX, and Henri III. Through investigation of these early dance pieces, McGowan identified the wealth of European performance practice models, scenographic methods, and the roles of the producing agent, performers, and spectators for this genre. *Dance in the Renaissance* is a revised, revamped, and reconfigured treatment of this work—an exclamation point at the end of McGowan's name as the expert on this field. Unlike *L'art du Ballet de Cour*, this text is written in English, making it instantly accessible to a wider audience. The primary topic in *Dance in the Renaissance* is McGowan's comfort zone—court ballet during the Valois dynasty—but also introduces coexisting popular and low art forms alongside the aristocratic models. McGowan's chapters on non-aristocratic performance are her most thrilling and further liberate scholarship about sixteenth century performance.

Through its clear writing style and imagery, the work is also both an entry-point for scholars unfamiliar with McGowan's formidable impact on dance scholarship and a restructuring of her past published works into a more unified, chronologically relevant format. In several instances, it provides more expansive clarification into her previous writing and allows her the opportunity to represent the century divorced from her past individually specific texts (such as museum exhibition catalogues), so as to fully represent her own context for this vibrant historical period in dance.

McGowan is an archivist's scholar. Her strength is in clearly establishing a context obtained through examinations of visual artifacts, contemporary accounts, journal entries, and court documents. To date, little of her work has been invested in dance theory, though readers will be surprised to see more analysis of sixteenth century dance discourse and practices in this work. Her research acknowledges the social role of dancing, insights into dance training, and a more meta-view of the sixteenth century performer and audience than in previous writings. Through her inclusions of all of the varied dance forms of the century, *Dance in the Renaissance* is highly successful in defining terminology in the naming and classifications of dance genres in the sixteenth century.

As in McGowan's previous texts, there are extended descriptions of scenographic methods (scenery, costume, and props) that accompany her recounting of the dance performances throughout the period. This writing is supported with a multitude of rare imagery of actual dancing (public and private balls, country fairs) in addition to a myriad of scenic and costume renderings. Chapter 3 of the book presents a comprehensive view into the logistics of staging ballet, including a rare look into the actual expenses, production schedules/rehearsals, and information related to musical accompaniment. At the end of the book, McGowan attaches an invaluable inventory of records of the official balls, *mascarades*, and ballets that were sponsored by the French court. *Dance in the Renaissance* also introduces new information on the varied forms of dance performance: balls, *mascarades*, ballets, and *carrousels* (horse ballets). Chapter 4 offers a fascinating short lesson on the Pyrrhic, an oft-described dance of the period (122). Unlike most texts dealing

with the sixteenth century, McGowan includes a vast amount of information surrounding country dancing/regional styles alongside her descriptions of courtly performance.

McGowan's work has been defined by a strict adherence to primary source material. Commendably—and frustratingly—her work has rarely engaged in discourse with competing dance scholarship on the sixteenth century. Yet despite her own confession in the Introduction that “the picture of Renaissance dancing must remain tantalizingly incomplete” (8), the reader is actually given so much information of the particulars of court dance, and kept unaware of any discrepancies therein, that one wonders what has been left out. In her examinations of Valois court ballet—especially in the vagaries of authorship attribution—McGowan's own theories, largely unmodified since the publication of *L'art du Ballet de Cour en France*, read as finalized narration on the events. Could her position as the leading scholar in the field have afforded her silence in interacting with the disparate other theories, cementing her own perspectives as rote?

Fifty years have passed since the publication of *L'art du Ballet de Cour en France*, and generations of scholars have used McGowan's work as a starting point for forging new inroads into this period. The subsequent works of Roy Strong and Robert Knecht—as well as later contributions by many others—have since refocused attention onto the Valois court performances as more blatant vehicles for political metaphor than McGowan envisioned in her 1964 work. Additionally, many scholars now laud the shadowy Catherine de Medici as one of the primary figures of authorship for the entire ballet movement, unlike McGowan's assessment of Catherine as a mere dance enthusiast, a point that she continues in this current work (151). For readers who are aware of the discourse inspired by *L'art du Ballet de Cour en France*, McGowan's *Dance in the Renaissance* does at times seem to have been written in a vacuum. Though readers may respect her attempts to keep sixteenth century scholarship limited to sixteenth century artifacts—excusing her detachment from the modern scholarship that she directly inspired—it is impossible to read her descriptions of Valois spectacle in 2011 without hearing opposing scholarship respond to her original accounts. Because the author does not

refute or support these post-1964 writings, the book's chapters on *le ballet de cour* (ironically, her sweet spot) do not age well as an expansive critical record of the genre. Though the work stands alone as an example of best practice historical scholarship, it has none of the critical sparkle and intrigue to which this specific enclave of dance has grown accustomed. As a raving disciple of McGowan's oeuvre, I was thrilled at the possibility of her casting the final words on the ongoing critical debates surrounding the sixteenth century in France. Alas, none are to be found.

However, most readers will not crave this level of discourse, and the highly informative archival information, vast imagery, and concise narration of *Dance in the Renaissance* undeniably form a highly innovative, important work. It is a necessary acquisition for any reader of performance history.

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## Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance

Entangled: Technology and the Transformation of Performance. by Chris Salter. 2010. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. 460 pp., 78 b/w illus., foreword by Peter Sellars, preface, acknowledgments, notes, glossary, references, name and subject indices. \$40.00 cloth. doi:10.1017/S0149767711000106

Chris Salter's *Entangled* is the most recent in what seems like a flood of monographs addressing some dimension of new media or technology in/and/as performance. In the period between 2005 and 2010 alone, Matthew Causey, Steve Dixon, Gabriella Giannachi, Christopher Baugh, Johannes Birringer, Susan Broadhurst, Susan Kozel, Sue-Ellen Case, and Rita Raley,<sup>1</sup> among many others, published single-author books in this growing interdisciplinary field, which abuts theater and dance studies, visual and performance arts, performance studies, digital humanities, and philosophy. Salter explains in his introduction that performance "is becoming one of the major paradigms of the twenty-first century, not only in the arts but also in the sciences" (xxi). As such, performance has already begun to shape

the discourses of science and technology in terms of "embodiment, situatedness, presence, and materiality" (xxi). We can therefore expect more scholarly work in this area, as performance becomes the measure of technological efficacy and the use of media and technology in performance becomes more and more mainstream.

Salter is a multimedia artist and assistant professor of design and computation arts at Concordia University. Although he situates *Entangled* in proximity to the field of performance studies,<sup>2</sup> he differentiates his project from other authors in that and affiliated disciplines, avoiding arenas of inquiry such as online communities and video games that have become familiar components in analyses of digital performance (xxxiv). Because his is a technological history of performance rather than an explicitly "performative" analysis of technology, Salter narrows the scope of his project by defining performance conservatively, even as he opens up the term to a broad range of practices, including scenography, architecture, projected images, and robotics, in addition to the more traditional performing arts of theater, music, and dance: "Although the work here spans diverse areas [...] the common thread that links such a polyphony of practices together is their physical, real-time situatedness involving collective co-present spectating, witnessing, and/or participation within the framework of a spatiotemporal event" (xxxiv). In this regard, Salter's work is not so different from the above-mentioned authors writing in the area of digital performance. What might set Salter's project apart is his desire to correct the "technical sloppiness" he finds in analyses of technology in performance (xxxvi). Unfortunately, Salter does not utilize his technical knowledge to advance new readings or interpretations. Indeed, he states from the outset that he is not interested in a hermeneutics of technology and that he focuses instead on "what [technology] does, how it does it, and what the repercussions are across the artistic practices that utilize it" (xxxv). In Salter's text, this Deleuzian maneuver reduces technology to its functionality—Salter speculates very little on what technology does *to* or *for* performance or to us as performers and spectators. He does, however, provide an astute historicization of technological performance in the long twentieth century, tracing