

# Moving Through Conflict: Dance and Politics in Israel

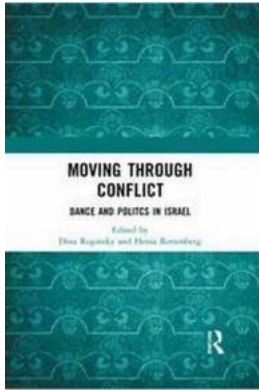


Israel, a country rich in history and diversity, has long been a hub for cultural expression. Among the various forms of art, dance stands out as a powerful medium for exploring and expressing Israel's ongoing conflicts and political struggles. Through the language of movement, dancers are able to transcend barriers and bring people together, creating a unique space for dialogue and understanding.

## **Dance as a Reflection of Society**

In Israel, dance has evolved beyond being just a form of entertainment; it has become a way of expressing societal tensions and political nuances. Israeli

choreographers often use dance as a tool to address the complex realities of life in the region, shedding light on the issues that divide society.



## Moving through Conflict: Dance and Politics in

**Israel** by David Leavitt (1st Edition, Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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Political conflicts, rooted in the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict, have been a recurring theme in many dance productions. Dancers use their bodies to depict the struggles, hopes, and frustrations experienced by the people on all sides of the conflict. The physicality and emotionality of dance allow for a direct and immediate connection with the audience, evoking empathy and challenging preconceived notions.

### Engagement with Political Topics

Israeli choreographers are known for their boldness in tackling sensitive political topics through dance. They engage with controversial subjects such as land disputes, cultural appropriation, and the Israeli military, sparking conversations that may otherwise be off-limits in public discourse.

One example is the renowned Batsheva Dance Company, founded by Martha Graham and Baroness Batsheva de Rothschild. Led by artistic director Ohad

Naharin, the company has pushed boundaries by exploring themes of power, identity, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The production "HORA" received significant attention for its daring exploration of the effects of militarization on Israeli society.

## **Fostering Dialogue and Understanding**

While dance can be a medium to highlight divisions, it also has the power to bring people together. Collaborative projects involving Israeli and Palestinian dancers have emerged, providing a platform for mutual understanding and empathy.

One notable example is the "Bridging the Gap" project, which brings together dancers from various backgrounds and encourages them to create choreographies together. This project not only showcases the talent of Israeli and Palestinian dancers but also demonstrates that artistic collaboration can bridge political divides and foster connections on a human level.



## A Means of Healing and Transformation

Through movement and expression, dance becomes a means of healing for individuals and communities affected by conflict. It offers a space for processing emotions, transforming trauma, and finding hope amidst adversity.

The Vertigo Dance Company, known for its innovative approach to contemporary dance, has implemented various programs aimed at addressing trauma through movement. "Vertigo 20" was a production celebrating the company's 20th anniversary, focusing on themes of conflict, memory, and reconciliation. The performance not only highlighted the impact of conflict on individuals but also showcased the power of dance as a catalyst for personal and collective healing.

Moving through conflict, dance in Israel serves as a potent tool for sparking conversations, bridging divides, and promoting healing. By harnessing the power of movement, dancers create a space where diverse perspectives can coexist, fostering dialogue and understanding.

As Israel continues to navigate its complex political landscape, dance remains an art form capable of transcending boundaries and bringing people together. Through this medium, artists are able to address uncomfortable truths, question social norms, and ultimately contribute to a more inclusive and compassionate society.

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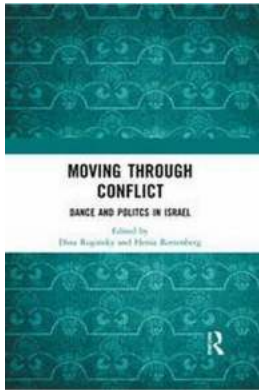
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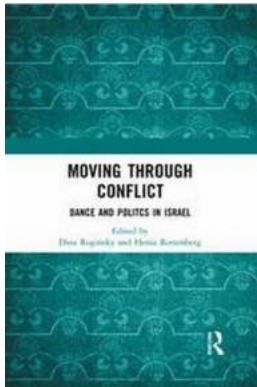


Moving through Conflict: Dance and Politics in Israel is a pioneering project in examining the Israeli–Palestinian conflict through dance. It proposes a research framework for study of the social, cultural, aesthetic and political dynamics between Jews and Arabs as reflected in dance from late 19th-century Palestine to present-day Israel.

Drawing on multiple disciplines, this book examines a variety of social and theatrical venues (communities, dance groups, evening classes and staged performances), dance genres (folk dancing, social dancing and theatrical dancing) and different cultural identities (Israeli, Palestinian and American). Underlying this work is a fundamental question: can the body and dance operate as nonverbal autonomous agents to mediate change in conflicting settings, transforming the "foreign" into the "familiar"? Or are they bound to their culturally dependent significance – and thus nothing more than additional sites of an embodied politics?

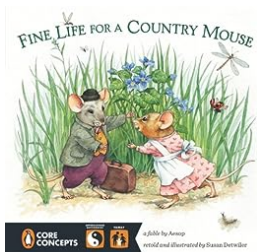
This anthology expounds on various studies on dance, historical periods, points of view and points of contact that help promote thinking about this fundamental issue. It will be of great interest to students and scholars of dance studies,

sociology, anthropology, art history, education and cultural studies, as well as conflict and resolution studies.



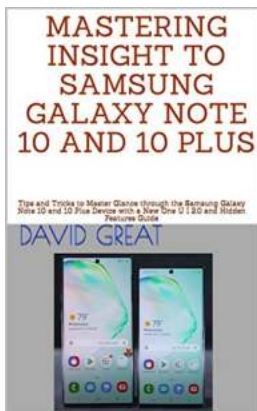
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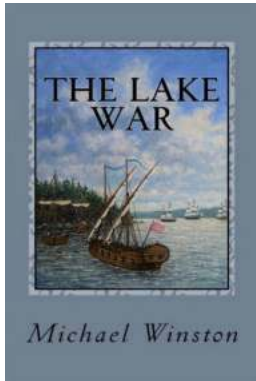
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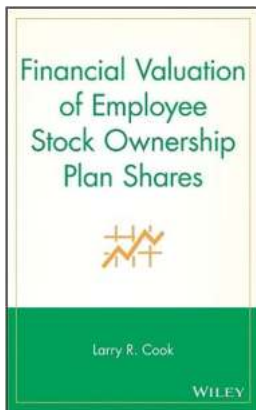
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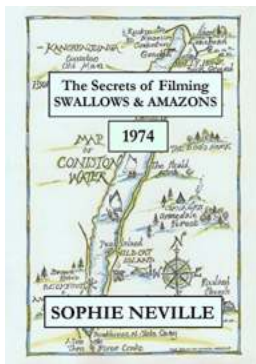
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