

Some might wonder about the inclusion of 340 notes that span slightly more than 20% of the entire volume. These notes provide a rich resource for those already advanced in using kinetography and for those interested in more extensive details of the system and its history. Like the rest of the book, the notes contain a wealth of visual examples and reference a vast array of sources and resources.

Because of the values of this text in introducing dance notation and Hungarian dance to a broad array of disciplines, an explanation of what Fügedi and his colleagues mean by “traditional dance” would have been helpful. Although used in many publications, there are frequent debates about what this phrase means, with implications often only suggesting such things as dances emanating from older time periods and dances considered indigenous to particular people and places prior to significant outside influences.

Those already involved with kinetography at advanced levels may differ in their own usages and perhaps even disagree with some of the choices made by Fügedi and his Hungarian colleagues. Native English-language speakers and writers may occasionally stumble over what they consider unusual word choices, misspellings, or grammatical errors. These are quite minor matters, however, in relation to the clarity of Fügedi’s explanations, and in no way detract from the book’s overriding excellence and contribution to dance studies. The depth and breadth of Fügedi’s knowledge, vivid descriptions, thorough analyses, and the manner in which he teaches concepts and tools for recording movement provide the basis for an understanding of the constantly moving nature of what makes something dance.

The first draft of this review was completed the evening before I heard of János Fügedi’s death. Words cannot express what I felt when I learned of his demise. I decided to not make any substantive changes to the review, but felt compelled to note my extreme sorrow. János was younger than I in years, but substantially older in wisdom, knowledge of kinetography and movement analysis, and depth of conceptual understandings of movement. I consider him both a colleague and mentor whose death leaves an unfillable void; a meticulous scholar who produced a significant body of important research results in numerous languages; a caring and sharing teacher and friend who leaves behind a legacy of kindness and insightful and well-reasoned debates that furthered personal and professional growth among his many colleagues and students from across the globe.



Kendra Stepputat. 2024. *Tango Dance and Music: A Choreomusical Exploration of Tango Argentino* (1st ed.). London: Routledge. 280 pages; 45 B/W Illustrations.

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Skinner, Jonathan. 2025. “Kendra Stepputat. 2024. *Tango Dance and Music: A Choreomusical Exploration of Tango Argentino* (1st ed.). London: Routledge. 280 Pages; 45 B/W Illustrations.” *Martor* 30, 190-92. [DOI: 10.57225/Martor.2025.12]

This book makes a substantial contribution to tango studies and slips into a rich vein of detailed, passionate, carefully written academic accounts from Marta Savigliano’s (1995) iconic *Tango and the Political Economy of Passion* and Julie Taylor’s (1998) poignant ethnography *Paper*

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Tangos, to Robert Thompson's (2005) flourishing *Tango: The Art History of Love* and Kathy Davis's (2015) feminist call *Dancing Tango: Passionate Encounters in a Globalizing World*. Each study brings a disciplinary angle to the tango orchestra and dance floor. Kendra Stepputat's orientation is around the choreomusical – concentrating on the dance as it reached Europe in different waves, and its distinct musicality or “danceability” as explored through a series of unique experiments.

Bound within a useful Introduction and Conclusion, there are three substantive chapters: a choreomusical overview of tango from 1900-2020 (45 pages); tango music and its danceability (75 pages); tango dance and its musicality (105 pages). Thus, the weighting of the volume is towards the dance and its musicality. This extends from Argentina to Europe as a translocal “music-dance practice” (p.3). Rather than delve into the migratory flows, or the postcolonial struggles the dance and music articulate, Stepputat shows her ethnomusicological strengths with essential details of the dance music: a 4/4 meter with harmonic progressions and average 120bpm speed to engage with. This confirms research I have read or heard about in the last few years on the therapeutic use of the dance – dance for health, healing and wellbeing with the tango walk used in the rehabilitation of cardiovascular medical complaints; Cardio-Tango, as it is referred to in France. More exotically, this can be seen in tango for democratising patient-carer relations in Buenos Aires's Borda Hospital with their “All of us are crazy for tango” program (when I visited, one patient thought he was General Galtieri defending the ward against my English incursion).

This walking dance—this “improvisation to music” (p.140)—born from the Diaspora to Argentina, and returned through the translocal, varies from professional stage dance to community practice and experimental engagement. In her opening overview, Stepputat traces the “whitewashing” (p.22) of this dance as it became codified, commercialised, commoditised, and moved slowly across the twentieth century from the mean streets to the soft-lit dance studios. Whilst it still retains an exotic appeal, and is still considered a New World dance, Traditionalists harp/accordion back to the Golden Age music of orchestras and composers and arrangers of around World War Two (1933-1955), whilst Moderns look to the experimental Tango Nuevo vanguard from the 1960s. Stepputat includes a post-1980s local and international revival of the art form in chronology that eventually drifts into a de-corporealised “neotango” blend of danceable music and body movement principles. Throughout this detailed and evocative chronology, Stepputat weaves in examples of the music, from the melodic Di Sarli and rhythmic D'Arienzo of the Golden Age to the heavy metal ballads of Metallica (“Nothing Else Matters”) that I used to practice to for hour after hour.

Chapter Three: “Tango Music and its Danceability” examines the criteria for what makes a danceable tango dance, improvised, rotating anti-clockwise through the *ronda* (dance space), open or closed with one's partner. It begins with a breakdown of the music from motives to phrases to melodies; their accents from arrastre drags to sharp *staccato* endings; and the vocabulary of interpretation that musicians and arrangers—and not only dancers—add to the compositions. There is exquisite ethnographic detail contained within the accounts of dirty players (“mugre”) with micro-timings and phrasings to add expression to the piece. Experienced audiences and dancers are attracted to the layers and suspense of the music. This is shown by way of interview with experienced dancers, instructors and DJs. New dancers, concomitantly, prefer simple, consistent, predictable pieces—the familiar whilst they are gaining experience of the dance. Stepputat established an online survey on music and danceability with 199 respondents ranking what they liked, enjoyed and found danceable, including versions of the music and some tracks made for the survey itself. The results of the survey and experiment show that dance experience plays significantly into music preference and that it changes as engagement develops. Tango improvisation relies on predictability for the less experienced dancer. Further to this, Stepputat's study stakes out new research trajectories into “harmonic comfort zones” (p.117) where dancers feel at ease and confident in their music and practice.

The final chapter, “Tango Dance and Its Musicality,” analyses the suspenseful walks, the posture



and its dissociations, the pivots and the torques of this dance and how they all give onto a style of tango that can belong to a distinct era. It also presents an innovative motion capture experiment with professional dance teachers such as Homer and Cristina Ladas. This gives the researcher the ability to compare and contrast walking to walking with music, and to refine details to heel speed, hip movement (lateral pelvic tilt), hip-shoulder dissociation angles, knee angle, gait cycle, acceleration and deceleration points in the dancing. Stepputat neatly links this technical detail with an evocative account of dance learning: the use of the free leg to mark out the beat, the passing of weight through the body with its mechanics, the confidence of the heel strike. This sophistication became standard dance research, one day, and will allow other dance scholars such as Brenda Gottschild (2003) to comment more assertively as to the pelvic roots of dance forms—broken in African models, and straight in European ballroom (and Traditional Irish Dancing) manuals.

This is a book that is a useful read and guide to the dance, as well as its music and how the two interact. It will help the tango DJ to identify the roots of their unconscious practice. It will also be a continual reference book on the music(-ality) and the dance(-ability) of tango. If there is a drawback it is the technical detail that one can become lost in, feeling less engaged and engrossed in the read than the other passionate studies of the dance. Is Stepputat too clinical in her explication of this magical musicality and mystical danceability? Each chapter, also, has extensive notes and References when they could have been deferred to the end of the book. These are quibbles, however, for a most exceptional tango study.

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Debarshi Prasad Nath, Ralph Buck, and Barbara Snook, eds. 2024. *Reflections of Dance along the Brahmaputra: Celebrating Dance in North East India*. London and New York: Routledge. 290 pages.

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Reflections of Dance along the Brahmaputra is a refreshing account on dances of India's easternmost states. An earnest effort to treat a wide range of movement traditions, this collection of essays expounds how community-led embodied practices draw on ancestral legacies and resources to give shape to dance in the twenty-first century. Interwoven throughout the text is the idea that community engagement is integral for the sustenance of dance not only in

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