EDITED BY

MELISSA

BLANCO BORELLI

The Oxford Handbook *of*

DANCE AND THE POPULAR SCREEN

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List of Contributors

Takiyah Nur Amin is Assistant Professor of World Dance at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

Inna Arzumanova received her PhD from University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism and is now a Lecturer at the University of Southern California.

Stephanie L. Batiste is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Black Studies and English at the University of California at Santa Barbara.

Harmony Bench is Assistant Professor of Dance at The Ohio State University.

Kathaleen Boche is a PhD candidate in the Department of History at Florida State University.

Melissa Blanco Borelli is a Senior Lecturer in Dance at Royal Holloway, University of London.

Derek A. Burrill is Associate Professor of Media and Cultural Studies at the University of California, Riverside.

Rosemary Candelario is Assistant Professor of Dance at Texas Woman's University.

Thomas F. DeFrantz is Professor of Dance and African American Studies at Duke University.

Sherril Dodds is Professor of Dance and Chair of the Dance Department at Temple University.

Colleen Dunagan is an Associate Professor of Dance at California State University, Long Beach.

Roxane Fenton is on the dance faculty at Santa Ana College and at California State University, Long Beach.

Mary Fogarty is Assistant Professor in Dance at York University (Toronto, Canada).

Victor Fowler is a noted Cuban teacher and essayist. He is a frequent collaborator in the most relevant Cuban cultural publications and his critical works as well as his poems have been distributed in Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua, England, France, Italy, Belgium, and the United States.

Cindy García is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Alexandra Harlig is a PhD candidate in The Ohio State University Department of Dance.

Chih-Chieh Liu is a post-doctoral fellow in music at the University of Hong Kong.

Raquel L. Monroe is an Assistant Professor in Dance at Columbia College Chicago.

Amita Nijhawan is Lecturer in Dance Studies at the University of Surrey.

Ariel Osterweis is Assistant Professor of Dance and Performance Studies at Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

Clare Parfitt-Brown is a Senior Lecturer in Dance at the University of Chichester.

Karyn T.D. Recollet is a member of the Department of Indigenous Studies at Sudbury University (Sudbury, Ontario).

Laura Robinson is Lecturer in Dance Studies at the University of Surrey.

Mary Simonson is Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies and of Women's Studies at Colgate University.

Philippa Thomas is a PhD candidate at Goldsmiths College and lectures at London Contemporary Dance School.

Susie Trenka is a PhD fellow and research assistant in Film Studies at the University of Zurich, Switzerland.

Alexis A. Weisbrod is an Associate Faculty member at Mt. San Jacinto College.

About the Companion Website

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Oxford has created a website to accompany *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and the Popular Screen*. Examples that cannot be made available in a book, namely the examples accompanying chapter 7, are provided here. The reader is encouraged to consult this resource in conjunction with reading the chapter. Examples available online are signaled with Oxford's symbol .

THE OXFORD HANDBOOK OF

DANCE AND THE POPULAR SCREEN

INTRODUCTION: DANCE ON SCREEN

MELISSA BLANCO BORELLI

This anthology seeks to establish a body of contemporary readings about dance in a popular screen context. It offers ways to engage with the multi-layered meanings of the dancing body in film, television, music videos, Internet sites such as YouTube, commercials, and video games by specifically utilizing methodologies from critical dance studies, performance studies, and film/media analysis. It does not pretend to be a comprehensive historical narrative of dance on the popular screen, but rather, it posits the significance of dance as an object of study. It demonstrates how dance on the popular screen might be read, analyzed, and considered through the different mediated bodies and choreographies. This collection aims to position the field of critical dance studies alongside film and media analysis in order to enrich, enliven, and further theorize the role that dance and screen bodies play in popular culture. The anthology positions the popular as a viable and valuable field of inquiry, instantiating popular dance studies scholar Sherril Dodds's claim that "popular dance constitutes a site of social and economic power that has the capacity to destabilize and transgress cultural norms" (2011, 3). Ultimately, it is this destabilization that allows the dance practices addressed in this volume to complicate our encounter with them through the popular screen.

Among the questions the anthology considers include: How do dance and choreography function within the filmic apparatus? What types of bodies are associated with specific dances and how does this affect how dance(s) is/are perceived in the everyday? How do the dancing bodies on screen negotiate power, access, and agency? How are multiple choreographies of identity (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation) set in motion through the narrative, dancing bodies, and/or dance style? What types of corporeal labors (dance training, choreographic skill, rehearsal, the constructed notion of "natural talent") are represented or ignored? What role(s) do(es) a specific film have in the genealogy of Hollywood dance films? How do the narrative and filmic conventions of Hollywood inform how dance operates in cultural meaning-making? What kinds of communities has social media and its reliance on the popular screen helped to develop? How does the experience of gaming through dance complicate notions of embodiment, sociality, and choreography?

The main motivation for compiling this anthology was not only an interest in dance on popular screens, but also the growing interest among students at both undergraduate

and graduate levels to do research on dance and its mediated representations. Because dance on the popular screen can be so heavily entangled in the zeitgeist, finding scholarly material on a recent music video, dance film, or YouTube trend poses a challenge. Furthermore, not all dance scholars engage with the popular, which leads to a dearth of material on popular screen dance. This poses a challenge to those interested in engaging immediately and discursively with popular screen dance. Often, I have found myself spontaneously theorizing a mediated dance spectacle during a lecture. I also spend research time surfing the Internet, voraciously reading blogs or watching the popular videos on VeVo or YouTube in order to get an immediate analysis on a controversial, topical, or popular screen choreography. Popular culture spills out into our everyday interactions and it is perhaps the most important site from which one might engage in dynamic discussions (with undergraduates particularly) about politics, class, sexuality, or consumer capitalism.

In my lectures, I often incorporate references to music videos, films, or celebrity culture in order to make the theoretical topic more relevant and accessible to my undergraduate students. For example, one of my favorite ways of elucidating Marcel Mauss's *Techniques of the Body* is through George Michael's *Flawless (Go to the City)* video.[1] Put simply, Mauss argues that there is no such thing as a natural body. All of us learn efficient ways of moving through cultural/social indoctrination, imitation, and repetition. To elucidate his point and demonstrate his anthropological training, he explains various types of everyday techniques: walking, sitting, and brushing one's teeth.[2] His analysis of bodily techniques informs dance studies with its focus on the moving body and the different dance techniques that shape dancing bodies. Taking Mauss's premise about efficient body techniques and applying it to the myriad of corporeal activities occurring in Michael's video offers a visible example of how bodies enact everyday choreographies.

Flawless (Go to the City) takes place in a hotel room. It begins with a white man performing his morning bathroom ritual at the toilet. Fortunately, we witness this masculine technique of the body from behind. Slowly, more and more people enter and exit the room, providing a stunning array of the different bodies that have inhabited the room before. One, then two, then three, five, ten, thirteen, twenty, twenty-plus other bodies join him. They remain oblivious to one another as the video cleverly attempts to show that they have all, at some point, *been* in that same hotel room before, albeit at different times. As the song progresses, these hotel room guests wash, walk, bathe, do sit-ups, dance on the bed, get dressed, brush their teeth; in other words, they perform different techniques of their everyday activities as well as corporeal gestures pertaining to their character (e.g., the yogi sits in lotus position on the far left of the screen, the detective looks in the corners and crevices of the room, the drag queen begins to apply her makeup for an upcoming performance, the Latina with the bamboo earrings talks on the phone). George Michael portrays the omniscient observer who walks around, sits on the bed and unobtrusively watches the encircling activities around him (Fig. 0.1).

As the camera gradually pans out to a wide shot of the entire room, the room has quickly filled with more than twenty people (Fig. 0.2).

FIGURE 0.1 Screen Capture, George Michael, *Flawless (Go to the City)* music video (2004). George Michael (center, dressed in black) sits on the hotel bed as the other guests' bodies engage in different activities around him.

FIGURE 0.2 Screen Capture, George Michael, *Flawless (Go to the City)* music video (2004). Wider shot of the activity going on around George Michael.

Suddenly, they all face forward and begin to dance in unison: step, side, step, touch, repeat to the other side, repeat backward, add a turn, then freestyle (Fig. 0.3). This sudden choreographic eruption presents an opportunity to watch these different bodies perform the same movement phrase differently. Not one person does it like the other. I cannot think of a better way to begin a conversation about the body and the effects that

FIGURE 0.3 Screen Capture, George Michael, *Flawless (Go to the City)* music video (2004). The ensemble choreography in which all the bodies execute the same 16-count phrase.

social inscription, dance training, identity, and representation have on it than that unexpected 16-count phrase.

Once the unison routine finishes, they break away from the group formation and continue with their personal tasks: looking in the mirror, buttoning a shirt, dancing around. One by one, they begin to exit the room until its first occupant, the white man in boxer shorts, sits back down to watch television and eat his dinner provided by room service. Does his ability to finally remain alone and enjoy the comfort of the room comment upon the type of access and privilege white male capitalist bodies have? Perhaps. Yet, what I primarily want to highlight in this example is the theoretical potential that popular dance on screen offers.

Sherril Dodds's book *Dance on Screen: Genres and Media from Hollywood to Experimental Art* (Palgrave, 2001) took on board the topic of dance on screen as a viable object of study. It set a crucial scholarly foundation for the significance of dance in screen contexts by establishing the analysis of dance on screen as critically and methodologically important. Dodds's monograph examines dance on screen from commercially popular films like *Flashdance* to avant-garde filmmakers working with concepts of dance and choreography for the screen. Many of the contributors in this volume cite her important work. Judy Mitoma, Elizabeth Zimmer, and Dale Ann Steiber's edited volume *Envisioning Dance on Film and Video* (Routledge, 2002) looks at a wide array of dance in both popular and experimental films. It also considers the ethnographic dance film/documentary and choreographers who have worked with film and the moving image.[3] This anthology continues the trajectory set up by these works but focuses exclusively on the popular screen.

Critical dance studies emerges as the primary methodology through which to read the multiplicity of choreographies on the screen. Whether it is the now iconic backward

bend of Neo in *The Matrix*, or Baby's leap into Johnny Castle's arms in *Dirty Dancing*, dance studies provides tools to facilitate literacy in how bodies signify and this handbook addresses the lack of accessible scholarship on popular dance in film, television, music videos, the Internet, advertisements, and video games. I envision this anthology as a useful resource for students and teachers who can read through its pages, view the attached links, and see how analysis about dance on the popular screen might be done. After the following chapter summaries, which provide a cursory overview of the content in the anthology, I will provide some suggestions for students on how to engage with watching, analyzing, and writing critically about dance on popular screens.

Screened Histories

The anthology consists of five sections, with each focusing on a specific type of screen where popular dance takes place. The first section, *Screened Histories*, features films that tell a story of a particular dance history (the can-can in *Moulin Rouge!*, hip-hop in *Breakin'* and *Wild Style*); films that belong within dance film histories (*Dance Girl Dance, Stormy Weather*); or films that feature a dance (*Swan Lake* featured in *Black Swan*) that is part of a specific dance history. Clare Parfitt-Brown's "An Australian in Paris: Techno-Choreographic Bohemianism in *Moulin Rouge!*" examines the cancan in Baz Luhrmann's *Moulin Rouge!* and introduces the concept of "prosthetic memory," which facilitates a new way to read the dancing in the film (Chapter 1). Parfitt-Brown "is particularly interested in how the on-screen bodies, layered with historical and cultural references and set in motion by choreography and the camera, affect the bodies on the other side of the screen." Her analysis advocates an embodied spectatorship, not a passive ocular-centric one. This is of special interest to students of dance on the popular screen who can read this chapter and begin to consider what it means to be kinesthetically involved while watching dancing bodies on screen. How does this change our role as spectator and what new opportunities for embodied interactions with film does Parfitt-Brown set up through her analysis of *Moulin Rouge!*?

Mary Simonson's chapter about Dorothy Arzner's film *Dance, Girl, Dance* (1941) gets its title from a comment well-known columnist Hedda Hopper made about the film, namely that it was a different kind of ballet (Chapter 2). Simonson argues that "the evolving identities and careers of the film's female characters are as much a critique of national artistic identity as a critique of contemporary gender roles: in *Dance, Girl, Dance,* it is on and through the female body that American art—and our ways of experiencing and understanding it—is negotiated and defined." This film also engages with the hierarchies constructed between popular dance and ballet and how the female characters practicing these respective dances (Lucille Ball as the show girl, Maureen O'Hara as the ballerina) become archetypes of paradoxical femininities. Films about dance often establish these types of binaries between dance forms, and this chapter teases out the cultural signifiers of white femininities that continue to have currency.

Alexandra Harlig's chapter "emphasizes three different moments in social dance history where the popular screen had a similar impact, spreading locally or socially narrow forms across the country from their communities of origin to wider communities of practice" (Chapter 3). By focusing on the newsreels of Vernon and Irene Castle, as well as the Charleston and the Twist on American Bandstand in the 1950s, Harlig's chapter makes a case for the significant impact that film and television screens have on audience spectatorship and participation in dance. Harlig provides a historical overview of these three moments and ultimately argues that "through these cycles of dissemination, development, and re-mediation, geographically and socio-economically disparate groups became connected through embodied practice and the ritual of watching." Harlig's chapter helps to situate how watching dances on screen creates audience, fans, and community; it also makes clear the ways in which we experience dance on screen today, particularly the communities that emerge from learning similar choreographies via the screen (Gangnam Style, Beyoncé's *Single Ladies*, and the Harlem Shake, to name a few).

Ariel Osterweis's chapter operates in a two-fold manner (Chapter 4). First, it references the significance of *Swan Lake* within canonical ballet history. Second, it uses the virtuosity expected to perform the 32 *fouettés* of Odette's solo to begin a discussion on how dance, virtuosity, and ambition function in Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan*. Although the film is about a ballerina who longs to perform the challenging dual role of Odile/Odette in *Swan Lake, Black Swan* is not necessarily about dance. Instead, dance plays a secondary role to lead character Nina's psychological demise. It is dance though, particularly the virtuosic expectations of ballet technique and the perfectionist tendencies it creates, that drives Nina to madness. Osterweis demonstrates how a theoretically informed reading of technique, virtuosity, and ballet offers new insights into this popular and highly discussed film.

Singin' in the Rain (1952), another popular film featuring the iconic dance number of Gene Kelly frolicking in the rain, comprises Fogarty's chapter (Chapter 5). Fogarty sets out to "follow the sociological impulse to question how 'creativity' is assigned to particular artists, directors and dancers, and how certain societal factors contribute to the making of performances and importantly, to comparisons between performances." She examines the iconic dance number alongside its reiteration in a Volkswagen advertisement where Kelly's face becomes superimposed on a poppin', lockin', break-dancing body. Issues surrounding the value of popular dance, authenticity, and creative genius meander through Fogarty's discussion of Kelly's rain-soaked choreography and its refashioning for the purposes of brand marketing.

Stormy Weather (1943) features another famous dance on screen scene. Lena Horne looks wistfully through a window and the camera follows her gaze to reveal Katherine Dunham standing out in the rain. From there, a dissolve brings the viewer to an imaginary moment featuring one of the many memorable dance numbers in the film. Trenka examines the variety of dance numbers in *Stormy Weather* through issues of appreciation, appropriation, and assimilation (Chapter 6). She argues that "*Stormy Weather*'s fragmentary entertainment history self-reflexively and paradoxically—and to some

degree involuntarily—reveals Hollywood's strategies in the exploitation of black talent. Though carelessly anachronistic at times, the film's panoply of styles and stars self-referentially chronicles the history of black dance in white Hollywood in all its contradictory ambivalence." Her careful reading of a popular film that celebrates black cultural achievement despite the corrosive racial environment of 1940s America demonstrates how popular screen entertainments often act as palliatives to social ills, with dance functioning as the opportunity to temporarily forget (and idealistically correct) all wrongs. Trenka, along with the other contributors in this volume, reveals how the social component of dance, that is, the where, who, and why of people dancing, merits careful consideration.

Thomas DeFrantz's chapter traces a genealogy of hip-hop in films: *Fame* (1980), *Flashdance* (1983), *Wild Style* (1983), *Beat Street* (1984), *Breakin'* (1984), *Breakin' 2* (1984), and *Style Wars* (1985) (Chapter 7). He suggests that Hollywood subsumed these "breaksploitation" films as hip-hop became more mainstream by the 1990s, thereby paving the way for the dance and competition films of the 90s and 00s (e.g., *Save the Last Dance, Step Up, Stomp the Yard*). A hip-hop body emerges on screen and DeFrantz asserts that "the hip[-]hop body produced in Hollywood films is one that stands as representative of racial and cultural exchange, indicates the possibility of progressive group politics, and restricts structures of hierarchical, old-guard authority." By elucidating this history, DeFrantz positions black social dance forms, its innovators, performers, and practitioners as crucial components in the history of the Hollywood dance film.

The Commercial Big Screen

This section showcases chapters that analyze different aspects of commercial dance films through identity politics, commercialism, technology, and the politics of moving bodies. In these narratives cultural signifiers about race, gender, class, and sexuality (among others) appear, reappear, and circulate. In many of these films, the filmic apparatus perpetuates ideological binaries: high/low art, ballet/social dance, white/black (othered) bodies, and boy/girl (heteronormative) relationships. These films also construct dance and its practice as a form of self-discovery and individual expression. The scholars in this section highlight how these binaries, ideologies, and constructions shape the narratives, characters, and dance in their respective chapters. In so doing, they demonstrate the types of analyses a student might engage in when watching or researching the types of danced representations present in such films.

The classic Hollywood dance film, *Dirty Dancing* (1987) begins this foray into the commercial screen. Roxane Fenton and Colleen Dunagan's chapter explains how dance helps to shape Baby's transition from "baby" to woman (Chapter 8). By looking at how race, class, gender, and sexuality literally partner throughout the film, Fenton and Dunagan argue that the "film presents Baby's character learning and adopting normative notions of femininity as she learns to dance. Further, by changing her body, Baby moves

from a state of idealistic naivety to one of mature, sexualized womanhood." Fenton and Dunagan particularly examine how the camerawork and editing facilitate Baby's transition, thereby demonstrating how the camera can certainly function as a choreographer in dance on screen. They also point out that despite the film taking place in 1963, during the American Civil Rights Movement, these historically significant social upheavals make no appearance in the film. Baby's emerging womanhood, although occurring among the differently raced and classed bodies that dance in the sheds behind the resort, becomes the central narrative. Those brown and black bodies dancing alongside her and by extension enabling her to become more comfortable with her sexuality serve a narrative function. Through the activity of dancing, of moving one's body, the visible differences between Baby's body and theirs disappear. Dance in *Dirty Dancing* not only functions as a liberating practice for Baby, but as one that allows for the racial and class tensions that were taking place in 1963 to disappear. Once again, dance both highlights but ultimately erases difference, with Fenton and Dunagan unpacking these differences for their readers.

The erasure of difference reverberates throughout Cindy García's chapter on the sequel (or more precisely prequel to) *Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights* (2004).[4] (Chapter 9). García problematizes the representation of American and *Cubana* femininities in the film, arguing that Katey's white American body and its practice of Cuban social dance leads to the displacement of *Cubana* femininity in the film. Katey's relationship with Javier, the Cuban boy, and her dedication to learn Cuban dance so that she can be his dance partner in a competition at a local nightclub leads her to practice with a *Cubana*. García's chapter focuses on a brief exchange between Katey and the *Cubana* hotel employee who teaches Katey how to be more "feminine." Rather than focus on the heteronormative romance plot in this film, García's intention "to offer an alternate reading based on the homosocial interactions that occur in the periphery" points to how the multiple layers of signification in this exchange foreground the power relationships inherent in corporeal interactions between differently raced and classed bodies.

Inna Arzumanova's chapter on *Save the Last Dance* (another favorite essay topic for undergraduate dance studies students) explores how the interracial, heteronormative romance narrative told through dance hints to a post-racial logic (Chapter 10). This chapter questions how dance narratives enable post-racial fantasies to emerge where the racial stereotypes associated with the bodies dancing become elided, while gender and sexuality move to the forefront. Arzumanova argues that, "[i]n narrating the nation as a utopia of racial harmony and easy social and racial mobility, [*Save the Last Dance*] deflects from the current realities plaguing interracial coupling, obscuring subtle but mainstream racist discourse and the sustained effort to mark, identify and contain difference at all costs." Again, dance functions as the activity through which these tensions manifest. Arzumanova continues to suggest what other contributors in this section do; that the filmic apparatus positions dance as an innocuous, almost utopian activity that allows for transcendence from social realities. The social, that which inscribes our bodies with raced, classed, and gendered modes of being and moving, can be escaped by moving those very same raced, classed, and gendered bodies. This type of circular (and

perhaps even faulty) logic shapes how Hollywood dance films continue to erase the value of difference while at the same time highlighting it as a distinguishing characteristic among the variety of dancing bodies on the screen.

Like García, Raquel Monroe's chapter on *Step Up 2: The Streets* pays close attention to the peripheral character of the unnamed double-dutch-playing girl as a way to problematize the construction of white femininity as portrayed by the character of Andie (Chapter 11). Monroe shares her frustration as she recounts memories of when she was a teenager longing to see black female characters dancing as leads in films. For her, *Step Up 2* showcases white female exceptionalism in black social dance forms at the expense of black bodies. One notable moment in the film is when Andie reverberates her butt during a dance class. As Monroe articulates, "the filmic apparatus choreographs Andie's dancing as an integral part of her embodied cultural experience, yet shrouds the labor of the young black bodies with which she aligns herself. Taken from the playground and placed in other contexts, black girls' jiggling flesh transgresses, while Andie elevates her white flesh as an accomplished, aesthetically pleasing spectacle." Monroe's analysis complicates a seemingly benign dance gesture (coded as self-expression in the film's narrative) and shifts it into a space where discourses of race, power, and appropriation reside.

Discourses about race, space, and affect permeate Stephanie Batiste's chapter on the dance documentary *Rize* (2005). Chapter 12 titled "Affect-ive Moves," explores the dance practices of clowning and krumping as featured in David LaChappelle's film. Batiste states that "the creative acts of krump and clown dancing express young L.A. dancers' sense of self and community through kinetic affect, that is, through a complex expressive matrix of joy, disappointment, ownership, ecstasy, and danger that they embed in the dance." She continues further in the chapter to examine "krump's engagement with violence to reveal dancers' complicated relationship to this aspect of urban life." Furthermore, Batiste focuses on the affective ties to community and urban space that krumping and clowning provide. She writes, "for krumpers, dance and the body serve as sites for processing, absorbing, deflecting, claiming urban space, not over-simply resisting victimization to it. The dance practice carves out social space." Although the film, like others analyzed in this volume, is not without its problematic representational strategies, Batiste's cogent analysis of *Rize* demonstrates how to unpack multiple layers of meaning within a film that, on the surface, merely attempts to showcase an exciting urban dance form. Interesting to note is that one of the dancers featured in *Rize*, L'il C, is now a judge on the popular television dance competition show *So You Think You Can Dance* (which has a chapter dedicated exclusively to it in this volume).

Continuing with the theme of racialized bodies and their representation, Blanco Borelli's chapter centers around the mulatta body in the films *Sparkle* (1976), *Flashdance* (1983), and *Honey* (2003) (Chapter 13). Blanco Borelli's analysis of this mulatta film "trilogy" seeks to unravel how the Hollywood filmic apparatus engages with signifiers of raced sexuality and hierarchies of dance styles to enforce and reify mythic narratives about dance, dancing raced bodies, and dance-making. By establishing a genealogy of the mulatta body in a US context through dance and/or

performance films, these juxtapositions illustrate how the mulatta subject develops from tragic figure (through the character of Sister in *Sparkle*) to an independent and self-reliant one (in *Honey*).

The last chapter in this section does not focus on a dance film specifically, yet theories of the body inform it. Burrill examines the bodies in motion in *The Matrix* (1999) and in so doing sets up "how bodies on screen are not only imagined and choreographed, but also how they are rehearsed, captured, digitized, reproduced, bought, sold, presented and commodified" (Chapter 14). Explaining Neo's now famous corporeal gesture, Burrill states that "when Neo bends over backwards, it is a signal that the greater culture is feeling equally strained. But, at the same time, the attendant excitement is equally palpable. It is as if we are re-learning our bodies in our collision with the digital and the virtual. Considering that Neo dodges all the bullets save one, the scene is also a potent reminder that our bodies will always be subject to growing pains, mistakes and obsolescence, no matter how virtuosic our digital or real performance is or how seductive the mode of representation may be." In this statement, Burrill links the gesture of the backbend to our contemporary moment, where the many discomforts of global capitalism, technological advancement, and terror warnings keep our bodies alert. This chapter thus sets up a framework through which one might view specific movements, gestures, or everyday choreographies as symptomatic of our neoliberal condition. In other words, moving bodies, regardless of whether they are moving in time to music and dancing or moving in self-defense, materialize their social realities (even if, according to *The Matrix*, reality is an illusion).

Music Video and Televisual Bodies

The third section focuses on the impact that music videos have had on popular dance and its dissemination. Here, the anthology engages with the role that dancing plays in music video and television competition shows. Like earlier sections, these contributors focus on factors such as gender, representation, appropriation, capitalism, and the impact social media has by enabling multiple understandings of these televisual bodies and the dancing that they do. Takiyah Nur Amin's chapter on Beyoncé's video *Girls Run the World* makes a case for how the seemingly innocuous glamorized performance of Beyoncé actually articulates a complex historical-political matrix that surrounds black women's bodies (Chapter 15). Nur Amin pays particular attention to circulating images of Michelle Obama, nineteenth-century circulations, and constructions of black femininity in order to tease out the multi-layered problems operating subliminally within Beyoncé's video performance. She asserts, "The video, with its apparent pronouncement and celebration of women's empowerment circulates in a public sphere that is contextualized by long-standing historical discourses that render its message ironic and inert, especially when considered in relationship to the real business of 'runnin' the world."

Chih-Chieh Liu's chapter on the music video performances of Chinese-American superstar Coco Lee, particularly in her video *Hip Hop Tonight* (2006), calls into

question the claims of authenticity, naturalism and sexiness that circulate around Coco's performance (Chapter 16). As a transnational celebrity, Coco's body signifies in multiple ways. Liu argues "that Coco's dancing body is a symbolic battlefield: it is context- and media-specifically constructed according to Mandarin pop's logic of spectacle. This process is marked by a constant negotiation, resulting in a paradoxical formation which is full of contradictions." These contradictions become the crux of her analysis. Liu, like Nur Amin, demonstrates how to critically engage and expand on a short, polysemic text.

Notions of authenticity also revolve around Philippa Thomas's chapteron Beyoncé's 2009 hit song/video *Single Ladies (Put a Ring on It)* (Chapter 17). By looking at the original video and issues of choreographic authenticity, queer fan iterations on YouTube, and flash mob performances, Thomas "seeks to explore how cultural texts disseminated online are made and remade, challenged and championed; the mutability inherent to all texts becoming literally visible in this specific environment." What Thomas makes clear in this chapter is what she calls "the tangled politics inherent in cultural consumption," specifically by examining the complex web of "audience, authorship, authenticity, racism, gender and power."

Dancing televisual bodies continue to enthrall audiences, particularly in recent dance competition reality shows. Laura Robinson's chapter on UK television dance competitions focuses on the performances of race, masculinity, and virtuosity by UK hip-hop dance crews *Diversity, Flawless*, and *Animaniax* (Chapter 18). As she explains, her chapter "aims to equip the reader with the critical methods for exploring meaning within male group urban dance performances on the UK popular screen." Robinson demonstrates these methods by focusing on how the television show, operating within a market-driven consumer capitalist framework, represents the predominantly black British male dancing bodies. Discourses about spectacularization, black masculinity, and commodification of dance emerge.

Robinson's chapter partners exceptionally well with Alexis Weisbrod's chapter on *So You Think You Can Dance* (*SYTYCD*) (Chapter 19). Weisbrod claims that this "show alters and recontextualizes dancing bodies in order to make its images accessible for a wide audience. The result is not a legitimization of a pre-existing form of dance but, instead, a popularization of a new practice, a carefully constructed bricolage of dance that spectacularizes white and non-white bodies alike through a particular rhetoric." For Weisbrod, the judges' comments contain potent discourse. She "considers how the show's lexicon, specifically the words and rhetoric used by the judges, creates bodies and racially marks dance movement and genres as a tool for audience use as they read dance in the mediated space of *SYTYCD*." Weisbrod takes her reader through the organizational logic of the show, "and provides examples from the various seasons to showcase how *SYTYCD* continually constructs and legitimizes bodies and their technical dance training." For those students who are fans of the show, this chapter opens up a critical perspective without necessarily undermining the value and enjoyment of the show. More importantly, it also demonstrates how dance partners with language in order to construct many of the ideas crucial to this anthology: race, gender, nation, class, and heteronormativity.

Screening Nationhood

The inextricable link between dance and national identity shapes the different chapters in this section, which range from dances in Hollywood musicals of the 1950s, to post-Revolutionary Cuban films, to an American performance documentary, and to a Bollywood-inspired film. Kathaleen Boche's chapter on Western musicals and their choreographed numbers from the end of World War II through the 1950s analyzes some of the most popular western musicals from this period, including *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (1954), *Annie Get Your Gun* (1950), and *Oklahoma!* (1955). Boche focuses "on how improvisational ingenuity serves as a vehicle to express elements of American post-war whiteness through the dancing bodies of the frontiersmen and women in these films. The idea that necessity breeds creativity is not a new one, and it is also not a uniquely American one, yet this chapter seeks to demonstrate how these qualities manifested in the choreographies created and used in the musicals." What Boche's chapter makes clear is how film, dance, and choreography function as products of the socio-historical moment in which they develop. Furthermore, the ideologies of traditional gender roles, rugged individualism, and (white) American exceptionalism not only appear in these musicals as products, but served as potential guidelines for social choreographies by audiences who were restructuring their understandings of themselves and the world after the social, political, and historical upheavals created by World War II. In other words, not only are these musicals representative of their historical moment, but they also contributed to the appropriation and enactment of the aforementioned (so-called) American ideals.

Victor Fowler's chapter on several dance sequences in post-Revolutionary Cuban films also articulates a politics of national identity (Chapter 21). For Fowler, dance operates as a quintessential Cuban structure of feeling.[5] As the Cuban film industry began to develop under state-controlled support, the representation of Cuba as a pluralistic dancing society began to circulate in films post-1959. Like Boche, Fowler looks at several moments on celluloid that elucidate components of a national identity. Again, each film (*Cuba Baila* (1960), *Un Día en el Solar* (1965), *Los del Baile* (1965), *Memorias del Subdesarrollo* (1965), *Son o No Son* (1980), and *Solo Habana* (2000)) provides a window into a specific historical moment in post-Revolutionary Cuban history. The presence of the dancing Cuban body (whether male, female, white, mulatto, or black) functions as a discursive site that, according to Fowler, demonstrates something about the Cuban people: "their capacity to resist, and their stubborn hope."

Rosemary Candelario's chapter on *David Chapelle's Block Party* does not pretend to be about dance (Chapter 22). Like Burrill, Candelario analyzes the bodies in the film to make a case for how moving, gesturing, and speaking bodies generate critical discourse. In Candelario's case, the bodies of *Block Party* address a politics of the American nation, one that is multi-racial and, in this performative instance, utopian. Candelario writes that in "addressing the commodification of their bodies and their culture, the

attendees of the block party enact alterity, and in the process offer up a vision of a (utopian) national body as young, black, predominantly male, and significantly both urban and rural." Both the film and the block party "enact not a carnivalesque rehearsal of revolution, but a utopic vision of community." Candelario's analysis adroitly maneuvers through a variety of interdisciplinary theorists to demonstrate how theories of the body can inform film analysis. Regardless of whether bodies dance, theories about the body facilitate ways in which to read the signifying processes that bodies set into motion.

Amita Nijhawan's chapter on *Bride and Prejudice* (2004) looks to four dance sequences in the film to make a case for how dance mobilizes the social class and value that the different bodies in the film possess (Chapter 23). Nijhawan writes, "the dance sequences in *Bride and Prejudice* are not just glamorous interludes, but they are an essential tactic that delineates class structure within India, as well as between India and its economic others. Just like manners figure in Austen's novel to distinguish between the worth of various characters, in the film, dance sequences, bodily movement, and deportment demarcate lines of breeding, morality, and economic worth. It is the dancing bodies that tell us the difference between who is worthy and who is less so. In other words, the dances construct the class and moral hierarchy of the film." Again, the methodology of critical dance studies enables a rigorous analysis of dance on the popular screen. What this chapter makes clear is how cross-cultural exchange and, in Darcy's case, transformation, occurs through the physical practice of dance. Additionally, that shift into a new physicality has greater significance when read within the context of the relationship India has with itself and other nations.

Cyber Screens

The popularity of YouTube and video games provides new screens through which to consider the role of dance, particularly its practice and dissemination. In this section, some contributors examine choreographies made specifically for Internet viewing and circulation, while others analyze the significance of gaming and the impact that dance video games, specifically *Dance Central*, have on concepts of embodiment, choreography, and dance pedagogy.

Harmony Bench's chapter on Michael Jackson's *Thriller* video presents her interest in the deceased pop icon's body of work, specifically how it addresses notions community (Chapter 24). She looks to the numerous renditions of Thriller's choreography—the Cebu Filipino prisoners, the flash mobs set up after Jackson's death, the version in the film *13 Going on 30*—to articulate a politics of social belonging. Bench's interest lies in "the way dancers asserted a collective ownership over the choreography, which they deployed in both private and public settings." She goes on to argue that, "as a shared cultural artifact, 'Thriller' became a privileged site for articulating a collective sense of belonging that pushed against pervasive discourses of threat after September 11, 2001 and of insecurity amidst a euphemistically labeled 'global economic downturn'. Further,

through the rupturing effects of flash mobs, 'Thriller' also offered a way to resignify public spaces that had given themselves over to the fear and suspicion of a population caught up in the 'War on Terror.' " Bench makes explicit the connections that this globally popular choreography has with current geopolitical economic upheavals. Bench suggests that the participation in the choreography "offered American audiences a counter-discourse to the War on Terror and a failing economy, one that incorporated the monstrous in order to exorcise fear and promoted a mode of collective and affective belonging through performance." Social media facilitates the creation of online communities; communities that exist whether members are fans of a particular YouTube video, gamers, or possess shared modes of identity.

Karyn Recollet's investigation of contemporary Indigenous thought and cultural expression through hip-hop traces the relationship Canadian Indigenous communities have to hip-hop (Chapter 25). For them, hip-hop offers a performative and expressive space through which to dialogue and discuss their own conceptualizations and understandings of Native identity. Recollet explores "the significance of dancing 'between the break beats' where *between* spaces are portals to creativity and the life force that connects us all. [She] look[s] at the hip-hop crew as an important site for the reconfiguration of rich and complex Native identities and the expression of how *embodiment* functions to transcend colonialism." Recollet specifically examines the YouTube videos made by the indigenous media collective A Tribe Called Red (ATCR). By combining Hollywood images/scenes that feature Native bodies with electronic beats and pow wow rhythms (something they call "electric pow wow"), ATCR reconfigures indigeneity. Recollet states that "they are using these images as the dominant-cultural raw materials to create alternative identities through mash ups and the critical use of color, form and subject matter in film." Recollet's analysis points to how social media and the accessibility to a computer screen provides a necessary forum for communities (particularly historically marginalized ones) to contest, create, and circulate their perceptions about the complexity inherent in national (tribal) identity.

Burrill and Blanco Borelli's chapter focuses on another type of community: the gaming community, particularly ones that play *Dance Central* (Chapter 26). The structure of this co-authored chapter attempts to "mirror the relationship between the player's body and the player's brain, both working together during the game, yet often in conflict when in comes to that difficult (or simple) move." Furthermore, the two authorial voices relate to the two competing bodies in the new version of *Dance Central*, where players can battle over whose interpretation of the choreography receives the most points. To be fair, this chapter does not purport to performatively render a competition between Burrill and Blanco Borelli, but to draw on their individual research strengths in order to begin a discussion about how "*Dance Central* (as well as other games played with the body, on the Wii or the Xbox Kinect system, for example) enable[s] new ways of learning and embodiment through social choreographies, while at the same time de- and re-materializing the demonstrative visceral body of the choreographer." What does it mean for popular dance to literally dance alongside and through the digital? This chapter provides some thoughts and preliminary theorizations for further discussion. It is

the hope that students who have an interest in dance gaming may pursue this line of questioning further and establish exciting theorizations of their own.

Sherril Dodds's essay concludes this anthology with some insightful thoughts on the importance and relevance of new methods of inquiry into dance on the popular screen (Chapter 27). An advocate of popular dance as a rich site for analysis, Dodds states that popular screen dance "presents enticing moments of virtuosity, transformation, humour, fantasy and desire, concepts which should not be readily devalued." She makes a claim for the role that moving bodies play and the value that they circulate. Because of the significance of her book *Dance on Screen* to the field, her chapter contribution thus "revisits what might be central to the way in which we study popular screen dance, what ought we to value and what still requires some investment in our intellectual efforts." Dodds's reflection piece serves as a fitting conclusion to an anthology that owes an intellectual debt to her important monograph.

Final Notes on Watching and Writing Dance (on the Popular Screen)

Because popular dance on the screen continually shifts, develops, and changes (and dance fads come and go), it is crucial to have a theoretical framework set up from which to begin to analyze the plethora of choreographies, bodies, and filmic nuances that occur. As such, the chapters in this anthology provide tools through which a student of popular dance on screen can begin to engage with the practice. Each chapter can be examined to identify the rhetorical strategies the specific author utilizes to materialize the moving screen bodies on the page. Another useful tactic would be to identify how the specific author(s) utilize their respective theorists to support, undergird, and/or expand their analysis. In this way, students can begin to explore how dance theorizes identity politics, space, or nation and what theories emerge as productive ways into a particular set of moving images, choreography, or bodies. Furthermore, each chapter provides an avenue into the methodological diversity available for dance and performance analysis.

What do we do, then, after we watch dance on screen? Passive spectatorship belies the urgency of our critical engagement with these performances. As students of popular dance on screen, one of the most important ways to contribute to ongoing discussions, debates, and scholarship about popular dance is to think about the politics of its written representation and to conceive new ways of making the dance *dance* on the page. An introductory question such as, "What is the body doing?" allows the spectator to direct her focus to the body, its appearance, and movements. Another question then follows: How is the body doing "it"? Here, one would engage with active verbs to ascertain the movement(s) and then add adverbial qualifiers to indicate the quality of the movement. If, for example, the dancer juts her hip, how is she doing it? Is it a forceful

jutting? Or is it subtle? How about a seductive jut? Or a lazy jut? Or possibly even a static jut? Each of these four descriptions describes a different quality of movement. It is important to think about the specifics about the body movement and find the most suitable words that can best describe the complexity of the dancing body. Other elements to consider include the location of the camera. Where is it placed as this particular hip lazily juts out? Is it capturing her body in a full frontal body shot? Is the camera close-up, angled alongside her lazily jutting hip? The choreography of the camera, the camera as a body unto itself, where it looks and where it gazes from, contributes to the reading of the dancing as it progresses. A close-up of the seductive jutting hip, for example, might be sexualizing this particular body. If so, what other possible signifiers of sexuality might one identify? What histories of sexualized bodies is the filmic apparatus calling upon? By filmic apparatus, I mean the term that developed within cinema studies that argues that film is ideological due to the ideological nature of its methods of representation, such as the camera or the editing.[6] Other questions to consider include: What themes become evident as the dancing body continues to move around the screen? What cultural signifiers/representations and/or stereotypes are being circulated? What bodies tend to get associated with certain dance styles? What are the underlying historical, social, cultural, and/or political implications behind these representations? These are the kinds of questions the contributors to this anthology surely engage with as they carefully watch, write, and analyze.

Audiences engage with spectatorship in ideological ways, since we read and make meaning about what we watch from our cultural positioning and understanding of our social environment. Thus, as audiences who spend time watching a variety of popular screens on a daily basis (admittedly, some more than others), we must develop the analytical tools to understand the role that patriarchal capitalist ideologies can play in the way images get constructed, circulated, (re)invented, problematized, and commodified. When these images contain dancing and signifying bodies literally setting the multiplicity of ideological representations into motion, it becomes clear why popular dance on screen offers such a rich site for critical engagement and enquiry.

Notes

1. George Michael, *Flawless (Go to the City)* http://youtu.be/QgGDcn46aW8 [accessed March 2, 2012].
2. Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body" in *Incorporations*, ed. Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter (New York: Zone Books, 1992).
3. Carol Vernallis's *Experiencing Music Video: Aesthetics and Cultural Context* (New York: University of Columbia Press, 2004) provides a good foundation for how to engage with the music video genre through media and film analysis. Dianne Railton and Paul Watson's *Music Video and the Politics of Representation* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2011) focuses on specific music videos to examine different modes of representational analysis, such as gender and race.

4. *Dirty Dancing* (1987) takes place in 1963. *Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights* (2004) takes place in 1958 prior to the Cuban Revolution. Patrick Swayze makes a cameo in *Havana Nights*, thereby showing the audience how he may have gained and developed his Latin dance skills before moving from Cuba to upstate New York.
5. Cultural theorist Raymond Williams coined the term "structure of feeling" to express how individuals create a common set of perceptions and values within their historical moment to understand and define their lived reality and cultural experience. Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (New York: Oxford Paperbacks, 1977).
6. Phillip Rosen, ed., *Narrative, Apparatus, Ideology: A Film Theory Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

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PART I

SCREENED HISTORIES

CHAPTER 1

AN AUSTRALIAN IN PARIS: TECHNO-CHOREOGRAPHIC BOHEMIANISM IN *MOULIN ROUGE!*

CLARE PARFITT-BROWN

The film *Moulin Rouge!* (2001) might be thought of as a historical and cultural vortex, drawing in, fragmenting, and recombining art and popular culture of the last two centuries to produce a bohemian-inspired, turn-of-the-millennium film musical. The production and consumption of this cinematic eclecticism have been considered by scholars primarily in musical and filmic terms.[1] This chapter, however, takes bodies as its starting point—those on screen and those watching the film. It is particularly interested in how the on-screen bodies, layered with historical and cultural references and set in motion by choreography and the camera, affect the bodies on the other side of the screen. This is an important consideration for an analysis of *Moulin Rouge!*, as critical reviews of the film suggest that it elicits a particularly visceral response in its spectators. José Arroyo, reviewer for *Sight and Sound*, described being "walloped by talent and frazzled by cleverness";[2] Peter Travers, writing for *Rolling Stone*, "felt mauled";[3] and *The Observer*'s Philip French was "targeted by a squadron of kamikaze bombers loaded with sugary marshmallow."[4] This chapter explores these physical experiences of spectatorship, focusing on the film's dance sequences. It argues that in these sequences, choreography and digital technology (including computer-generated imagery and editing) combine to allow spectators to physically experience on-screen bodies that are historically and culturally complex, distant, and "other." In so doing, *Moulin Rouge!* aligns itself with a bohemian tradition of cross-cultural and transhistorical self-performance, while reconfiguring that tradition for a twenty-first-century context.

"Not What It Was, but What It Felt Like to Be There"

The dominant mode of contemporary filmmaking is a cinematic naturalism that invites spectators to view realistic action as if through a keyhole or window. Baz Luhrmann, the director of *Moulin Rouge!*, has sought in his trilogy of "Red Curtain" films to break these naturalistic conventions by using non-realistic devices of dance and song to keep the audience aware that they are watching a film.[5] In so doing, Luhrmann encourages viewers to adopt a more active form of spectatorship.[6] In particular, he aims to induce a physical and emotional response in the spectator, like those described by the critics above.

> "You're constantly awaking the audience so they participate," Luhrmann says. "Just when you think, 'This is so cheesy, I'm going to throw up,' I'm going to kick you in the stomach. In that state, there's an agreement that they know they are going to be emotionally manipulated, and they surrender to it."[7]

Luhrmann acknowledges that this form of "audience participatory cinema"[8] is no longer common in Western feature-length filmmaking. Indeed, film historian Tom Gunning argues that although a participatory aesthetic characterized the early "cinema of attractions" from 1895 to about 1907, the rise of narrative cinema forced it "underground" into genres such as the musical, where it was contained within song-and-dance numbers separated by narrative sequences.[9] *Moulin Rouge!*, therefore, is intended as an experiment in transposing a cinematic language across time and space to a historical and cultural context in which it is no longer the norm.[10] Luhrmann cites Hollywood and Bollywood musicals as sources for his construction of a participatory film musical, while refusing to be defined by these totalizing modes of production, positioning *Moulin Rouge!* as an Australian film.[11]

Through the historically and culturally dislocated cinematic form of the film musical, spectators of *Moulin Rouge!* are invited to physically engage in an even more distant constructed past, a reimagined version of the Moulin Rouge of the 1890s. Luhrmann approaches this by seeking in his depiction of the cabaret not visual authenticity but sensory authenticity, that is, an evocation of how it would have *felt*. This involves translating the feeling of watching the cancan in the 1890s, for example, into comparable experiences in contemporary popular culture, through which the audience can physically connect with the past. Luhrmann explains, "we did come out of a historical reality, we just manipulated them [*sic*] to make some sort of code for us to understand—not what it was, but what it felt like to be there. That's quite a distinction. What the can-can was—a violent, sexy dance. What it would look like was a lot of leaping around in funny costumes. What it felt like was Fatboy Slim, people doing break-dancing, very funky. It's this kind of decoding, just helping the audience figure where they are in a given moment."[12] Elements of late twentieth-century hip-hop culture and the British

FIGURE 1.1 Screen capture of *Moulin Rouge!*, director Baz Luhrmann, (2001), "Zidler's Rap".

dance music scene of the 1990s are incorporated into the cancan number through the soundtrack (Fatboy Slim wrote *Because We Can* [2001] for the film), MTV-style editing, and the section entitled "Zidler's Rap," in which the Moulin Rouge manager, Harold Zidler, addresses the camera directly, flanked by female cancan dancers, in the style of a hip-hop music video (Fig. 1.1).[13] Luhrmann attempts to convey the exhilarating edginess of watching the cancan in the 1890s through these contemporary popular cultural references.

The film's choreographer, John O'Connell, similarly tried to convey a sensory experience, a taste or a feeling, rather than a particular historical image in the dance scenes. After extensive research, including reading books on the cancan, watching film musicals and Bollywood films, and learning Argentine tango and Indian classical dance, O'Connell brought these together "subliminally" in the rehearsal room, aiming "for the flavor of it rather than trying to recreate or recycle something."[14] By evoking familiar dance, music, and film cultures of the late twentieth century, *Moulin Rouge!* seeks to offer spectators a sensory encounter with a distant past beyond their living memories.

Media scholar Alison Landsberg uses the term "prosthetic memory" to describe memories transmitted by technologies of mass culture, such as cinema and experiential museums, which allow spectators to physically experience a past through which they did not live.[15] She argues that through films or museum exhibits about the Holocaust, for example, spectators can embody the memories of others, altering their subjectivity, and enabling empathy across boundaries of race, class, and gender. Landsberg and Luhrmann share a conviction that technological mediation does not foreclose, but rather allows the physical and emotional engagement of the audience with the film, by acting as a vehicle for the construction and transfer of memories. The notion of prosthetic memory provides a framework for thinking about how *Moulin Rouge!* creates a physical connection between spectators and the fin-de-siècle Parisian past.

A Bohemian Sensory Otherness

In pitching the play within the film, "Spectacular, Spectacular!," to the wealthy Duke, Zidler describes it as "the world's first completely modern, entirely electric, totally bohemian, all-singing, all-dancing stage spectacular." If Gilles Deleuze is right to assert that the play within the film often takes as its object the film itself,[16] then Zidler's hyperbolic assertion suggests that technology, bohemia, singing, and dancing are also fundamental elements of *Moulin Rouge!*. Zidler's statement implies that technology and bohemia are linked to song and dance in contributing to the spectacular qualities of the play/film, and therefore its relationship to the spectator. The next two sections will focus on the ways in which bohemia, dancing, and technology participate in the construction of prosthetic memory in *Moulin Rouge!*.

Luhrmann's previous theatrical direction of the opera *La Bohème* (1990) influenced the formative development of the *Moulin Rouge!* project:

> About ten years ago when we were researching *La Bohème*, the Puccini opera, and we went to the Moulin Rouge in Paris. . . . I was reminded . . . of a time and place—when Picasso was passing through there—when the popular culture of the 20th century was sediment that moved downstream from that place and time. It stuck with me. Finally, when we were looking for a place to set our Orphean world, it became not the idealistic bohemianism of 1830, but the commercialized bohemia of 1890/1900. This is a great reflection on us at this time, a time of incredible technological change, a time when the world is moving forwards and backwards. Armed with those three things, we had a starting point.[17]

Here, Luhrmann draws connections between the 1830s bohemian setting of *La Bohème*, the fin-de-siècle bohemianism at the heart of *Moulin Rouge!*, and the contemporary turn-of-the-millennium context. In particular, he notes the recurring theme of simultaneous nostalgia and innovation in these three historical moments. Perhaps, in choosing a fin-de-siècle bohemian setting for *Moulin Rouge!*, he recognized parallels between bohemian art and his own practice of scavenging from cultural history as a means of contemporary artistic reinvention. Indeed, bohemianism can be detected in Luhrmann's filmmaking not only as the cultural backdrop of several of his productions, but also as an artistic and cinematic philosophy.

English scholar Mike Sell identifies two particular characteristics of bohemia, "theatricalized authenticity" and "exoticism."[18] Following Sell, it might be observed that these elements have often combined in the bohemian attempt to fashion an "authentic" existence through performances of historical and cultural otherness. For example, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec frequently performed gender and cultural cross-dressing in photographic portraits (a tendency referenced in *Moulin Rouge!* through the kimono he wears to echo the "Elephant Love Melody," evoking his costume in Maurice Guibert's photograph of 1892). Sell points out that *Moulin Rouge!* reproduces this practice of

cross-cultural performance, citing references to blackness and the Roma gypsies that surround Satine. All of the main characters have orientalized equivalents in the play "Spectacular, Spectacular!" (for example, the Duke is orientalized as the maharajah, played by Zidler), and Christian is doubly exoticized since his role as the penniless sitar player is played by the Unconscious Argentinean, notably in the tango scene. Taking into account the nationalities of the film's actors adds another layer of cultural complexity. For example, the Australian actress Nicole Kidman plays the French courtesan Satine, who plays an Indian courtesan in "Spectacular, Spectacular!." Sell points out that "the theatre of bohemian exoticism can be simultaneously a memory theatre, too,"[19] making the past as ripe for bohemian appropriation as other cultures. For example, Catherine Martin, production designer of *Moulin Rouge!*, costumed Satine to evoke the feminine icons of film history. According to Martin, "The first moment we see Satine she is a combination of Marilyn Monroe (*How to Marry a Millionaire* [1953]), Marlene Dietrich (*Blue Angel* [1930]), with a sprinkle of *Cabaret* [1972] and a nod to Rita Hayworth in *Gilda* [1946]."[20] These cross-cultural and transhistorical performances in *Moulin Rouge!* might be considered a form of what Sell calls "bohemian memory,"[21] the rediscovery and glorification of forgotten cultural artifacts, especially those disdained by bourgeois arbiters of taste and defenders of sexual, racial, gender, or class boundaries.

The purpose of bohemian appropriations of the past and other cultures in *Moulin Rouge!* is partly narrative; Luhrmann claims that in the tango scene, for example, "the synchronicity […] is really alive between a piece of existing culture [the 1978 song *Roxanne* by The Police] and our needs as storytellers."[22] Luhrmann reveals another purpose of his cross-cultural scavenging while reflecting on his collaboration with hip-hop artist Missy Elliot on the *Moulin Rouge!* soundtrack: "The great thing about the hip-hop folk is that they are fearless and culturally blind. […] Their ability to steal from culture without judgement, without a decision about what is right or wrong or good or bad, *it's just does it affect you emotionally or not*, that blindness to pretension gets me going."[23] Perhaps Luhrmann admires Elliot's ability to create an emotional connection with the listener by "sampling" across cultural boundaries because this reflects his own aspirations. Luhrmann layers *Moulin Rouge!* with historical and cultural references with which the audience may already be familiar (Bollywood, rap culture, the golden era of Hollywood) in order to facilitate their emotional and physical connection to a time and place with which they may be less familiar (the *Moulin Rouge!* version of fin-de-siècle Paris). The result is "a heightened or created world that is at once familiar yet exotic, distant."[24] In *Moulin Rouge!*, audience participatory cinema and historical/cultural sampling combine to offer spectators a mode of sensory, emotional engagement with a constructed past.

Luhrmann recognizes that physical encounters across cultural and historical boundaries have been the foundation of popular, bohemian-influenced entertainment since at least the International Exhibitions of the nineteenth century.[25] Like the fin-de-siècle Moulin Rouge, *Moulin Rouge!* offers spectators a form of cultural and historical tourism.[26] Film scholar Anne Friedberg contends that cinema, from its emergence to the

present day, has invited spectators to adopt a mobile, virtual gaze, allowing them to be virtually transported into worlds and bodies beyond their direct experience.[27] *Moulin Rouge!* makes visible, in both form and content, its inheritance of this notion of entertainment as a virtual, but sensory, encounter with culturally and historically distant bodies. It traces a complex ancestral web, from bohemia through the World's Fairs, the Moulin Rouge and early cinema, "underground"[28] into the Hollywood film musical, and across continents into Bollywood cinema, to a point of convergence in *Moulin Rouge!* itself. The film does not learn from and discard these ancestors, but accumulates them, leading to the sense expressed by a number of commentators that it is a museum film,[29] "a journey through the cultural history of film itself."[30] It is, however, as Brian McFarlane specifies, "not the kind of museum in which, say, the coins of the last 200 years are arranged neatly in glass cases (and very interesting, no doubt, for numismatists), but the kind to which you might take your children, feeling sure they and probably you will have a good time."[31] It is, in other words, an experiential museum of the kind described by Landsberg, in which visitors are invited to participate with their whole bodies, and in the process, perhaps, take on prosthetic memories. In *Moulin Rouge!*, bohemian memory becomes prosthetic memory; the cross-cultural/historical role-playing of the individual artist becomes a mass cultural technology for physically experiencing other worlds.

Techno-Choreographic Bohemianism

Deleuze writes that in some musicals, "dance is no longer the movement of dream which outlines a world, but now acquires depth, grows stronger as it becomes the sole means of entering into another world, that is, into another's world, into another's dream or past."[32] Film studies scholar Annette Kuhn has observed dance playing this role in the recollections of film spectators of the 1930s.[33] Several of her interviewees spoke of the moments in Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musicals when the dance number took the actors and spectators seamlessly from the "realistic" space of the narrative into the fantasy space of the musical number. Some interviewees remembered these moments as making them want to, and believe they could, dance. Kuhn summarizes their accounts: "The sensation imbues your body, and carries you out of your local picture house onto the familiar streets of your neighbourhood, and you are moved to dance along the pavement all the way home."[34] In these spectators' recollections, paradoxically, the non-naturalistic cinematic device of opening the dance into a fantasy space gave them the greatest sense of physical engagement with the film, making them want to dance themselves. As Walter Benjamin wrote of cinema in 1936 at the height of Astaire and Roger's fame, "The equipment-free aspect of reality here has become the height of artifice,"[35] that is, technological intervention is necessary to produce an unmediated experience of film. In these musical moments, dance and technology combine to break down the barrier between the spectator and the world of the film, inviting their physical engagement with the dancing bodies on screen.

Moulin Rouge! at first appears to treat dance in an opposite way to the Astaire and Rogers films. While Astaire was renowned for maintaining the integrity of the dancing body by using long takes and full-body shots, the editing of many of the dance numbers in *Moulin Rouge!* (by Jill Bilcock, Luhrmann's collaborator on all the "Red Curtain" films) deliberately breaks up the shape and rhythm of the original choreography and fragments the dancing bodies. This is most evident in the cancan number, which attempts to convey the exhilaration of Christian's first visit to the Moulin Rouge with a flurry of legs, faces and petticoats. Indeed, O'Connell was disappointed that the speed of the editing made it difficult to see his choreography.[36] Following in the tradition of Busby Berkeley and Gene Kelly, the choreography in *Moulin Rouge!* is no longer solely accomplished by a choreographer working with live bodies, but now also involves an editor working with the raw material of the rushes. For Luhrmann, this editing phase of the choreographic process can enhance the spectators' physical engagement with the characters and their emotional journey, rather than detracting from it. Therefore, in many of the musical numbers Luhrmann uses the opposite cinematic technique to Astaire—fragmentation of the body and rapid editing—to achieve the same effect, an unmediated, physical experience of the dancing bodies on screen. In fact, Astaire was not adverse to the technological manipulation of his dancing image to achieve this effect, and some of these techniques are echoed by Luhrmann, as shown in the example below. Therefore, despite Luhrmann's rejection of the full-body shot and the long take, his cinematic treatment of dance has more in common with Astaire's than it might at first appear.

The "Your Song" number in *Moulin Rouge!* makes evident the parallels between Astaire's and Luhrmann's technological manipulation of the dancing image to achieve the physical and emotional engagement of the audience. Christian woos Satine in her boudoir by singing Elton John's "Your Song" (1970). As they begin to dance, they spin together in a ballroom dancing hold, bringing to mind the ballroom-influenced style of Astaire and Rogers. This spin initiates a shift from the realistic space of the boudoir to a fantasy space in the sky above Paris (Fig. 1.2). Aurally, this shift is signaled by the replacement of Christian's voice with the operatic voice of Luciano Pavarotti, which appears to emanate from the man-in-the-moon (based on Georges Méliès's *Le Voyage dans la Lune* [1902]). Visually, the couple leaps from the window of the boudoir into the clouds, settling on a Parisian rooftop. Astaire had also evoked the feeling of being in love by using trick photography to dance in the air, dancing up to and on the Washington Square Arch in *The Belle of New York* (1952) and on the walls and ceiling in *Royal Wedding* (1951). In "Your Song," the aural shift into an operatic register combines with the couple's liberation from gravity to produce a sense of suspended reality, beyond the demands and complications of the underworld they have left behind. In this new world, anything is possible. Christian acquires an umbrella, skips with it in circles across the clouds, and hangs from the Eiffel Tower as if it were a lamppost, referring to another famous cinematic moment of love-inspired liberatory dancing: Gene Kelly's title number from *Singin' in the Rain* (1952). The final sequence of movement evokes Astaire and Rogers once again as Satine spins toward Christian, flaring her Rogers-esque dress, before Christian lifts her, still spinning, into his arms. As the song ends, the sky fades into the familiar surroundings

FIGURE 1.2 Screen capture of *Moulin Rouge!*, director Baz Luhrmann, (2001), "Your Song".

of the boudoir, where the couple are performing the same movement, suggesting that their emotions, rather than their physical bodies, had been dancing in the sky. The choreography of the scene invites the spectator to participate in the characters' emotional arc, rather than merely following their literal movements. And yet, echoing the Astaire and Rogers numbers in unrealistic fantasy spaces, Luhrmann chooses to convey this *genuine* emotion via a sequence which draws attention to its *artificiality* through obviously computer-generated imagery, unsubtle intertextual references, and juxtapositions of scale (Christian is half the size of the Eiffel Tower).

Luhrmann's comment on the use of a familiar pop song in this scene could equally apply to the dancing: "Now I have seen this scene with audiences all around the world.... And so there's this kind of laughter, realisation, unsettled, 'oh I can't believe it' moment. But [...] for all of the over-sentiment, actually you can hear the audience being drawn in and, as ridiculously romantic as it is, truly engage in the emotional feeling that's being generated between the two."[37] Unlike the 1930s audiences of Astaire and Rogers films, early twenty-first-century Euro-American audiences have been conditioned by the rejection of film musical artifice in the post-war era. Late twentieth-century teen musicals attempted to soften the jarring effect of the shift from narrative to musical number by using a non-diegetic soundtrack to avoid a non-naturalistic "bursting into song" moment.[38] Luhrmann, however, not only returns to characters singing, but intensifies the synthetic quality of this sequence, while retaining its function as a vehicle of uncynical, sincere emotion. This seeming contradiction exemplifies Luhrmann's cinematic philosophy of "The Big Lie that reveals the Big Truth."[39] In an act of Sell's bohemian "theatricalized authenticity," Luhrmann uses an unashamedly artificial technological device to convey apparently universal aspects of human experience.[40]

Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin have argued that this paradox is a condition of contemporary media culture.[41] They see in media technologies the convergence of two apparently opposite tendencies with long historical genealogies: hypermediacy, the desire to increase the layers and channels of mediation (Luhrmann's "Big Lie"); and

immediacy, the desire to create a sense of presence by erasing the traces of mediation (Luhrmann's "Big Truth"). These trajectories coalesce in new digital media that are defined by "remediation," "the representation of one medium in another."[42] In *Moulin Rouge!*, a film which makes extensive use of digital technologies in its construction of artifice, remediation is highly evident. In "Your Song," for example, *digital* technologies are used to reconstruct a cinematic illusion (dancing in the sky) associated with the era of *celluloid* film. Two media are merged in a cinematic choreography designed to *reduce* the audience's sense of mediation, to invite them to join the dance.

In *Moulin Rouge!*, mediation paradoxically produces an immediacy between dancing bodies on screen and the bodies of spectators, allowing the latter to experiment with "other" physical identities. This might be considered a form of virtual bohemianism, a historical and cultural role-play facilitated by cinematic spectatorship. Dance functions here to unite on-screen and off-screen bodies, counterbalancing hypermediacy with the sensation of presence. This aesthetic might be called "Techno Boho," following Australian journalist Sacha Molitorisz's coining of the term to describe one of the style tribes of Sydney,[43] the city in which *Moulin Rouge!* was filmed and where Luhrmann bases his production company, Bazmark. Molitorisz describes the Techno Bohos as "a thriving subculture of new Bohemians, who make music, films, visual art and mixed media installations."[44] According to Molitorisz, female Techno Bohos often wear burlesque or vintage clothes, embodying the past in a way reminiscent of *Moulin Rouge!*. However, in *Moulin Rouge!* it is specifically the combination of dance and technological remediation that allows spectators to become virtual bohemians. The expanded term "techno-choreographic bohemianism" might, therefore, be more appropriate for this aesthetic in *Moulin Rouge!*.

The End of History?

The erasure of historical, cultural, and bodily boundaries through techno-choreographic bohemianism in *Moulin Rouge!* has proved unsettling to a number of critics. Media scholar Jim Collins has summarized critical responses to films that exhibit such "hyperconscious eclecticism": "hyperconscious eclecticism is a sign of (choose one): a) the end of "Narrative"; b) the end of "the Real," "History," etc.' c) the end of art and entertainment for anyone other than overstimulated promiscuous teenagers; d) a sign of all-purpose moral and intellectual decay."[45] All of these criticisms have been leveled at *Moulin Rouge!*. This section analyzes these critiques in relation to the effects of techno-choreographic bohemianism on narrative, history, memory, and the body in the film.

In *Moulin Rouge!*, the bohemian performance of authenticity becomes digitally remastered as postmodern hyperreality,[46] a term defined by Umberto Eco as a cultural condition of the proliferation of the "absolute fake," in which "absolute reality is offered as a real presence."[47] This term resonates with Luhrmann's notion of "real artificiality," which refers to the amount of labor necessary to construct the artifice of the

real.[48] Eco notes that America's hyperreal museums commit the "original sin of 'the levelling of pasts,' the fusion of copy and original."[49] A number of theorists have noted this tendency in twentieth-century culture,[50] and particularly in twentieth-century film. Deleuze describes the coexistence of "sheets of past" in film as a type of time-image, a cinematic form in which time is no longer produced as narrative by the characters' actions, but made directly visible, allowing multiple temporalities to be experienced at once.[51] The spectator is opened up to "a whole temporal 'panorama', an unstable set of floating memories, images of a past in general which move past at dizzying speed, as if time were achieving a profound freedom."[52] Deleuze argues that this can produce in film a "crystal-image" in which the actual and the virtual, present and past, constantly transform into one another.[53]

This sense of time is palpable in *Moulin Rouge!*, particularly in Satine's opening number. As she is lowered into the Moulin Rouge dance hall on a trapeze, Toulouse describes her as "the sparkling diamond." She sits on the rotating trapeze, her costume and jewelry twinkling like a crystal turning in the light (Fig. 1.3), and her spoken lyrics, tying together love, death, and jewels, predict her own demise. On the word "die," the camera cuts momentarily to an image of her lifeless body, forming what Deleuze would call an "internal circuit,"[54] a moment of simultaneity, between this moment, Christian's opening announcement of her death, and her actual death in the finale. She is costumed to evoke past female cinematic icons (as listed earlier) whose images jostle with the contemporary star image of Kidman to form deeper circuits that dive in and out of the spectator's visual memory. Satine's pale skin, deliberately enhanced by blue light, becomes a ghostly surface on which images of past female bodies play. In deed, Luhrmann considers that Kidman's "white reflective skin" identifies her physically with 1950s Hollywood actresses such as Marilyn Monroe, whose skin allowed them to "shine in the frame" despite limited lighting.[55] Sell argues that her "luminously pale" skin also alludes to Edouard Manet's painting *Olympia* (1863).[56] Like the nude prostitute in *Olympia*, Satine

FIGURE 1.3 Screen capture of *Moulin Rouge!*, director Baz Luhrmann, (2001), "Sparkling Diamonds".

is contrasted physically with her black companion, the Moulin Rouge dancer Chocolat, while sharing in his highly saleable exoticism. In Satine's first moments on screen, her body has already become a "crystal-image" with many temporal facets, reflecting both her own future within the film's narrative, and the history of white, female bodies in Euro-American visual culture.

These historical references proliferate in the song-and-dance number that follows Satine's entrance. She sings "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend," echoing Monroe's rendition in *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953), and O'Connell's choreography at times echoes Jack Cole's, such as the framing of Kidman/Monroe by a sea of suited men. Lyrical reference is also made to Madonna's *Material Girl* (1985) music video, which itself imitates Monroe's performance. This complex web of quotation not only layers the sequence with multiple temporalities and media forms—celluloid film, music video, and digital film—it also evokes Madonna's famed manipulation of historical, ethnic, and sexual identities in performance. Viewers are reminded of this through the performance by the Moulin Rouge dancers of face-framing arm movements reminiscent of Madonna's *Vogue* (1990) video, while they sing the lyrics of *Material Girl*. The choreography for *Vogue* was influenced by the gay African-American and Latino club practice of voguing, with its poses derived from photographs of Hollywood stars such as Monroe and Dietrich. Madonna disregarded copyright issues in these appropriations,[57] instead treating the movements and images as recombinable signifiers through which to construct her public profile. Through Madonna, Monroe is positioned as one of a number of historical female archetypes that can be embodied by performers for both artistic and commercial purposes. Indeed, Satine later discusses with Zidler which model of femininity she should adopt to encourage the Duke to invest: "wilting flower, bright and bubbly or smoldering temptress?" However, like bohemian role-play, Satine's performances of femininity are combined with a desire for authenticity, summed up in her ambition, first stated in this scene, to become an oxymoronic "real actress." Here, Sell's bohemian "theatricalized authenticity" and Eco's postmodern "absolute fake" coincide, highlighting the bohemian lineage of Luhrmann's postmodern approach to the film musical.

Satine's opening number exemplifies how *Moulin Rouge!* creates a prosthetic memory of fin-de-siècle Paris by recombining familiar fragments of visual and musical culture into a new sensory universe. Even before *Moulin Rouge!* was released, Luhrmann proclaimed, "We've reinvented the musical. . . . We've given it a postmodern form. We've taken all the culture of the last 100 years, torn it up, and pieced it back together to make our own world."[58] This can be considered a form of postmodern pastiche, a mode of cultural production that, film scholar Richard Dyer argues,[59] allows film spectators to inhabit and feel the emotional pull of images of the past, while being aware of their historical and cultural construction—precisely the purpose of Luhrmann's bohemian strategy of "real artificiality." During Satine's "Sparkling Diamonds" number, spectators may be drawn into the immediacy of the performance, much of which is filmed from the point of view of the male patrons with whom Satine dances, while recognizing the collage of historical quotations that comprise it. This positioning of the spectator both inside (physically and emotionally involved with) and outside (retaining critical distance from) the

cinematic image is facilitated by the film's slippery refusal to remain ideologically bound by any single cultural form, whether Hollywood, Bollywood, or MTV.

The effects of this method on the representation of history in *Moulin Rouge!* have been scathingly critiqued by English scholar Lael Ewy:

> At best *Moulin Rouge* is a lot of fun. At worst it represents the erasure of history. *Moulin Rouge* is set in the Paris of 1900—at least ostensibly it is. The actual Paris of 1900 is the Paris of Satie, the Paris of Ravel, of Debussy. The actual Paris of 1900 is the Paris of Matisse, and at least for part of the year, the Paris of Picasso. . . . What we get in *Moulin Rouge*, though, is a Paris of 1900 filtered through the myopia of late 20th Century pop culture, especially pop music. We get an anachronistic melange of Madonna and Elton John, of Nirvana and Olivia Newton John. In other words, it isn't the Paris of 1900. It isn't even close.[60]

Ewy echoes the lament of many detractors of postmodernism that contemporary culture signals the "end of history."[61] The linear flow of history as a meaningful narrative is disrupted by the postmodern appropriation of images irrespective of chronology. However, Jacques Derrida "wonder[s] if the end of history is but the end of a *certain* concept of history."[62] Ewy's historical model derives from the humanist tradition of the Enlightenment, in which the past objectively exists, and therefore historical accounts either reveal its essence truthfully, or obscure it. In this framework, history is linear—it should not be repeated or manipulated after the event. This type of history has been challenged in the twentieth century, notably by Benjamin's reconceptualization of the historian's subject matter as "the constellation which his own era has formed with a definite earlier one."[63] This conception of history as a set of moving prisms through which images of the past are refracted in ever changing ways has been adopted and developed by postmodern historiography. It also reflects the way history is used in *Moulin Rouge!*.

Robert Burgoyne has argued that contemporary commercial films have the capacity to question the linearity and reality of history by using digital technology to create prosthetic memories.[64] Burgoyne notes that while Landsberg is optimistic about the political potential of prosthetic memory and its effects on conceptions of history, some critics find this tendency in contemporary film troubling. He cites the example of film historian Thomas Elsaesser, who fears that "the burning in of memories via the media—burned in to the point that they create *symptoms in the spectator*—speak not to empathy and new social alliances but rather to cultural obsession, fantasy, and trauma."[65] This suggests that the challenge of cinematic prosthetic memory to the integrity of history is also read as a challenge to the integrity of the body. If memories can be manipulated, then what of the bodies that rely on them for their sense of continuity and reality? This resonates with the testimonies of *Moulin Rouge!* critics at the beginning of this chapter who experienced the film as a physical assault. Indeed, some critics posit a direct connection between the film's disruption of linear time, its bodily impact, and its manipulation of memory. Journalist Peter Keogh writes,

> If we assume he knows what he's doing, then Baz Luhrmann's goal seems to be the *end of cinema as we know it*: i.e., a coherent art form that provides pleasure and meaning.

> How else explain Moulin Rouge, a film that takes beautiful actors, sets, costumes, and production numbers, fuses (or diffuses) a century and a half of pop culture from Verdi to MTV, photographs it all like a freak show, and chops it into confetti? This is the *Memento* of movie musicals, stroboscopically edited into three-second segments *without apparent logic, cohesion, or continuity* and designed to cater to—or induce—*short-term memory disorder*.[66]

For Keogh, the disregard for linear history in *Moulin Rouge!* pathologically infects spectator's memories. Even some critics who recommend the film pathologize its effects on spectators' memories. For example, Stephanie Zacharek writes, "Luhrmann is a tricky director. I'm not sure how he does it, but his movies have a way of reshaping themselves in your memory after the fact—it's as if they have viruses built into them that spring to life a day or so later, mysterious microorganisms that go to work in your brain to smooth out a movie's flaws and heighten its most sensual or exhilarating moments."[67] Zacharek characterizes the prosthetic memories implanted by the film as technological or biological viruses, infiltrating the body in which, presumably, "authentic" memories, histories, and identities normally reside.

English literature and cultural studies scholar Grace Kehler has noted the frequency of metaphors of disease in reviews of *Moulin Rouge!* and links this to the imagery of prostitution in the film.[68] Satine reproduces the stereotype of the consumptive nineteenth-century prostitute; like Marguerite in Alexandre Dumas' novel *La dame aux Camellias* (1848) and Violetta in Giuseppe Verdi's opera *La Traviata* (1853), Satine must die in order to restore the health of society. Kehler cites Lynda Nead's argument that the prostitute's threat lies in her status as an unobtainable commodity that can be perpetually resold. The consumptive prostitute, therefore, embodies the temptations of consumer culture, as well as its threat never to deliver what it purports to sell. Conscious of its own role as a commodity, Kehler argues, *Moulin Rouge!* constructs itself as a nineteenth-century prostitute—exotically alluring, but dangerously diseased.

I propose that the connection between *Moulin Rouge!* and the stereotypical nineteenth-century prostitute is not just the sale of an impossible commodity, but also the sale of a physical encounter with other bodies, cultures, and histories, in an artificially constructed environment (the brothel or the cinematic image). This is the basis of the fin-de-siècle commercialized bohemianism that *Moulin Rouge!* takes as it subject matter, but it also becomes a structuring principle of the cultural economy of the film itself. It is experienced by the spectator as a violent attack on the "authentic" integrity of the body and its memories, and therefore rejected, like Satine, as pathological.

In this identification of the body of the film with the body of Satine, *Moulin Rouge!* rather undermines its own philosophy. While the film ostensibly encourages an openness to other bodies, it renders its embodiment of this encounter in the character of Satine, and thus itself, diseased. When Satine dies, so does the possibility of a bohemian embodiment of other times and places, leaving its audience only with Christian's disembodied, typewritten words. Thus, *Moulin Rouge!* reinforces the nineteenth-century humanist morality that pathologized the figure of the prostitute,

and which informs critics' rejections of the film's seductive, technologically constructed physicality.[69]

By constructing its own techno-cinematic bohemianism as a contagious disease, *Moulin Rouge!* implies that the derivation of pleasure from viewing the film is tantamount to the psychiatric disorder of masochism. This is evident in critic Steven Aoun's response to the film: "In your face doesn't even begin to describe the experience. The film is more like a rabid dog that suddenly leaps at your throat. So, why did I enjoy being knocked to the ground and thrashed about? Well, apart from confessing my own tendency toward masochism, *Moulin Rouge!* also cries out to be loved. The film is nothing less (or more) than an attempt to revitalize the musical in a cynical and jaded age. Only a sadist could delight in resisting its infectious entreaty."[70] Landsberg's notion of prosthetic memory, however, rehabilitates the potential bodily violence of film viewing.[71] She states that although "prosthetic memories, like an artificial limb, often mark a trauma," they nevertheless create "the conditions for ethical thinking precisely by encouraging people to feel connected to, while recognizing the alterity of, the 'other.'"[72] Therefore, spectators who enter physically and emotionally into the artificial, historically and culturally eclectic world of *Moulin Rouge!* might open themselves not only to historical, mnemonic, and bodily violence, but also to cross-cultural and transhistorical encounters, engagements, and identifications. This has always been the trade-off implicit in bohemianism, one that Luhrmann reinterprets for the postmodern age.

Perhaps the most audacious historical leap made in *Moulin Rouge!* is between the bohemian tradition of "theatricalized authenticity" and postmodern forms of cinematic prosthetic memory. The film implies a parallel between the bohemian experience of otherness offered by the Moulin Rouge to its customers and the experience of physically participating in a technologically constructed past that is offered to spectators by the film itself. The film musical form provides Luhrmann with a bridge between these two contexts. In its song-and-dance numbers, the film musical retained and developed early cinema's non-linear, spectacular, audience-engaging characteristics, which had much in common with live entertainment of the 1890s.[73] This capacity to physically engage spectators also makes the film musical a powerful vehicle for conveying prosthetic memories, although it does not feature in Landsberg's argument. In the song-and-dance numbers in *Moulin Rouge!*, Luhrmann's "real artificiality" reaches its apogee, and the continuity between bohemian memory and prosthetic memory is most evident. These moments, beyond the limitations of narrative time and place, are also the height of the film's historical and cultural juxtapositions. In these scenes, the film's direct appeal to the bodies of spectators to enter physically and emotionally into Luhrmann's constructed world is most urgent. The film offers spectators two ways of interpreting these physical onslaughts: as pathological attacks on the body, or as opportunities for experiencing, empathizing with, dancing in other worlds, a possibility that underpinned the bohemian tradition, and is reinvigorated for the twenty-first century by *Moulin Rouge!*.

Notes

1. For example, Robert A. Morace, "Delirious Postmodernism: Baz Luhrmann's Moulin Rouge." (Paper presented at Film Musicals: From the Classical Era to Postmodern Cinema, University College Cork, September 19–20, 2003); Patricia Pisters, "'Touched by a Cardboard Sword': Aesthetic Creation and Non-Personal Subjectivity in *Dancer in the Dark* and *Moulin Rouge*," in *Discern(E)Ments: Deleuzian Aesthetics/Esthéthiques Deleuziennes*, ed. Joost de Bloois, Sjef Houppermans, and Frans-Willem Korsten (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2004), 151–169; Katherine R. Larson, "Silly Love Songs: The Impact of Puccini's *La Boheme* on the Intertextual Strategies of *Moulin Rouge*!" *The Journal of Popular Culture* 42, no. 6 (2009): 1040–1052; Mina Yang, "Moulin Rouge! And the Undoing of Opera," *Cambridge Opera Journal* 20, no. 3 (2010): 269–282.
2. Jose Arroyo, review of *Moulin Rouge*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, *Sight and Sound* 11, no. 9, September 2001, 50–52.
3. Peter Travers, review of *Moulin Rouge!*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, *Rolling Stone*, June 1, 2001, http://www.rollingstone.com/movies/reviews/moulin-rouge-20010509.
4. Philip French, review of *Moulin Rouge*, directed by Baz Luhrmann, *The Guardian*, September 9, 2001, http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2001/sep/09/philipfrench1?INTCMP=SRCH.
5. Luhrmann cited in "Behind the Story," accessed April 17, 2002, http://www.clubmoulinrouge.com/html/member/background_orph.htm (site discontinued).
6. Luhrmann cited in "Red Hot Music: An Interview with Baz Luhrmann," accessed April 3, 2003, http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/tg/feature/-/249299/ref=br_bx_2_1/026-25374 (no longer online); Luhrmann cited in Jason Frank, "Interview: Baz Luhrmann, Director," accessed April 3, 2003, http://www.gamesfirst.com/articles/jfrank/baz_interview/baz_interview.htm.
7. John Horn, "The Land of Baz," *Newsweek*, May 27, 2001: 58.
8. Luhrmann cited in "Red Hot Music."
9. Tom Gunning, "The Cinema of Attractions: Early Film, the Spectator and the Avant-Garde," in *Early Cinema: Space, Subjectivity and Narrative*, ed. Thomas Elsaesser (London: British Film Institute, 1990), 57.
10. Luhrmann cited in Rebecca Murray, "Baz Luhrmann Talks Awards and "Moulin Rouge," accessed April 3, 2003, http://romanticmovies.about.com/library/weekly/aa030902a.htm.
11. Luhrmann cited in "Red Hot Music"; Luhrmann cited in Geoff Andrew, "Baz Luhrmann (I)," last modified 2001, accessed May 19, 2010, http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2001/sep/07/1; see also Diane Sandars, "Highly Hybridic, Mostly Palimpsestic: Innovative Uses of Music Video in the Recent Australian Musicals, *Moulin Rouge* and *One Night the Moon*" (Paper presented at What Lies Beneath, The University of Melbourne, November 6, 2003); and Tara Brabazon, *From Revolution to Revelation: Generation X, Popular Culture and Cultural Studies* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2005).
12. "Interview with Baz Luhrmann," last modified May 30, 2001, accessed April 3, 2003, http://www.themoviechicks.com/may2001/mcrrtbaz.html (no longer online).
13. See Brabazon, *From Revolution to Revelation*, on the use of popular memories of musical sub-cultures in this number.
14. John O'Connell (choreographer, *Moulin Rouge!*), interview with the author, May 30, 2005.
15. Alison Landsberg, *Prosthetic Memory: The Transformation of American Remembrance in the Age of Mass Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
16. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (London: Continuum, 2005), 73.