

East Tennessee State University

Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University

Undergraduate Honors Theses

Student Works

5-2022

STEADFAST: CONNECTIONS FOSTERED THROUGH DANCE

Lily McKenzie

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/honors>



Part of the [Dance Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

McKenzie, Lily, "STEADFAST: CONNECTIONS FOSTERED THROUGH DANCE" (2022). *Undergraduate Honors Theses*. Paper 664. <https://dc.etsu.edu/honors/664>

This Honors Thesis - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact digilib@etsu.edu.

STEADFAST: CONNECTIONS FOSTERED THROUGH DANCE

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of Fine and Performing Arts Honors Program


By

Lily McKenzie

The Honors College


Fine and Performing Arts Program

East Tennessee State University



4/12/2022

Cara Harker, Faculty Mentor



04/12/2022

Dr. Scott Contreras-Koterbay, Faculty Reader

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Introduction.....	2
II. Inspiration.....	2
III. Connections Fostered Through Dance.....	4
IV. The Choreographic Process and Staging.....	10
V. Conclusion.....	15
VI. References.....	18
VII. Acknowledgments.....	20

I. Introduction

Steadfast is an expression of dance as an emotional and spiritual experience, as well as an exploration of the deep connections that may be fostered through the art form of dance. My personal experience, which will function as inspiration for this choreographic piece and performance, has led me to see dance as a means to connect with God when used as worship and a way to connect with other people and form meaningful relationships. Through the production and execution of this performing art, I hope to explore and experience these aspects of dance as well as my own personal journey. I learned a vast measure about myself in my four years of college that led to the development of who I am today. This composition is meant to mirror some of the emotions that I experienced in my time of growth; however, I don't want my piece to try to tell a story or follow a sequence of events. Instead, I hope this dance provides the audience with more of a deep, emotional, and spiritual dive into the places that my heart and soul went during this time-period. *Steadfast* means so much to me, and as the culminating artistic presentation in my college career, I want to use my growth as an artist and individual to display an array of emotions to the audience. The dance is a cry for help and surrender, but it also expresses the feelings of joy, love, and hope that one might feel when they make it through a valley and find themselves standing on a mountaintop. This ensuing written work is a narrative of the choreographic process and explanation of the inspiration behind the production of my thesis, *Steadfast*.

II. Inspiration

I find as an artist personal experience serves as the superior means of gaining inspiration for my creative work. Therefore, my inspiration for this composition is the journey of growth and restoration that I have taken, especially in these last four years as a student at East Tennessee

State University. As a freshman in college, I found myself in somewhat of a broken place. I would say my self-worth, value, and my confidence were in shambles. Ballet is notably a sport of perfectionism. For generations the dance form has been upheld by a very strict ideal of how the female body should look and the standard of taking very difficult movements and making them look effortless. Myself, being the very stubborn, perfection driven person that I am, allowed the constant obsession to be perfect to slowly turn into an insane amount of pressure to perform. I began having issues with the way I saw food that led to some disordered eating patterns. I was ashamed of my body and appearance because I didn't feel it aligned with what I had been told was ideal for relatively all my life. I have seen many women who grew up in the dance world and have similar experiences to mine. In fact, research shows that dancers have a three times higher risk of suffering from eating disorders, particularly anorexia nervosa and Eating Disorders Not Otherwise Specified (EDNOS), than non-dancers (Arcelus, Witcomb and Mitchell, 2014). With the sudden realization that I had a problem, I embarked on a personal journey of recovery and healing of poor body image, disordered eating, and self-confidence.

Dancing is my life. I dance as my profession, I dance when I am happy, I dance when I am sad, angry, passionate, you name it. In response to anything I face, dancing seems to be the right response. I think that is why it has become so restorative and spiritual to me. If I am overly emotional in either one extreme or another, I use dance as an avenue to get that extra energy and passion out of my body, and it restores me mentally and physically. Therefore, while dance might be seen as the cause of the problem I faced, it also became part of the solution.

As I began to grow as an individual, I also grew as an artist and a dancer. I came into the knowledge that I could dance "just for me." No longer did I always have to dance to appeal to others or an audience, but instead, I found myself more often dancing for my own joy in the

stillness of an empty studio. For the first time, I choreographed my own dances and was able to perform movements that felt good to my body and soul rather than steps given to me by another. This journey was not an effortless one, but rather an emotional roller-coaster. However, it is the act of remaining *steadfast: firm in belief, determination, or adherence* (Merriam-Webster Dictionary) while under trial that got me to the other side. I was inspired to create a composition which would serve to lead me into a deep dive of my innermost self and allow an audience to experience it with me. My desire was for the piece to exude a restorative feel. The feeling that yes life is hard, but we made it out on the other side. Yes, we have been through some things, but we didn't come out being burnt up and smelling like fire, we came out smelling like roses. I want it to be a piece that shouts we are overcomers!! A piece that restores hope. Because in my four years of college, God restored so many things to me that were taken away. My confidence was restored because I was reminded of my own identity as a strong and courageous woman. My love of dance was restored because my eyes were taken away from the idea of perfection. My self-worth and value were restored because I learned we don't have to be perfect to be valuable. All of us have inherent value in our own uniqueness, and that is something worth sharing.

III. Connections Fostered Through Dance

In my life, I have found dance to be a way to experience deep and meaningful connections with God, other people, and my own emotions. Dance serves the important purpose of creating connection, understanding, and intimacy my life, which is a characteristic right at the heart of the art form. Dance is a powerful tool for communication and interpretation. The universal desire to move has always been used by cultures as the fundamental component of the creation of the sequences of movements that we call dance (Jonas, 1992, p. 12). As Jonas explains in *Dancing: the Pleasure, Power, and Art of Movement*, whether it is “courtly dances;

wedding dances and funeral dances; dances of healing and dances of instruction; dances to arouse, amuse, or uplift onlookers; dances that usher in seasons and dances that appeal directly to the gods; dances that tell stories and dances that seek to create formal beauty that cannot be put into words: there is no end to the variety of purposes to which the dancing body can be put” (1992, p.12). Throughout the history of the art form, all varieties of dance have been used in a multitude of cultures to connect with the divine, to unite people together, and to celebrate self-expression.

Throughout history dance has embodied spiritual connection. Many find that dance opens the opportunity for connection and communion to God as an act of worship. In many religions and cultures, moving the body in dance is an act of worship by the people to God or the gods that they believe in (Zaluchu, 2021). For example, in both India and west Africa, dance is a pivotal element in the culture’s worship (Jonas, 1992, p. 37). In west Africa amidst the Yoruba, the dance form is very grounded into the earth, because the earth is considered to be “life sustaining.” Yoruba has belief in two realms of life: that which is visible, and we exist in, and the invisible realm of the gods, their ancestors, and other spirits. Dance is a sacred and powerful endeavor for these people because it is in dance that the two realms are actually able to converge (Jonas, 1992, p. 51). In cultures like these, there is no separation between dance and their spiritual beliefs. Instead dance acts as a spiritual mechanism for connection to the higher power that they believe in. However, in western culture, especially in some Christian backgrounds, dance seems to have altogether lost its spiritual connotation.

Worship fundamentally is our response to who God is or what He has done. Christianity establishes the idea of expression in worship to God (Merrill 2000). Most often, in the Western church we think of expression of worship as singing or making music. However, if we look at

worship through the lens of this definition, it can be acknowledged that worship is much more than just music. In fact, if an individual has belief in God, then anything that they do as a response to the God that they believe in can be considered worshipful. Although creative activities may more readily lend themselves to being seen as acts of worship, if done to glorify and respond to God, a career can be worship; schoolwork, painting, digital media, and even math, can be a form of worship. It really is inconsequential what the activity is as to whether it is considered worship or not and more deeply based on the intent of the individual's heart.

Worship is born from an emotional attitude of love towards one's God (Nelson, 2007).

Therefore, from this perspective it is easy to conclude that dance can be a worshipful pursuit if done with this in mind.

Yet as was mentioned earlier, in the western church, particularly in some Protestant churches in America, there is sometimes a separation between dance as a secular entity and the spiritual experience. Children who begin dancing at a young age, often start out learning ballet and add other dance styles to their repertory such as jazz, modern, tap, hip hop, and contemporary dance as they progress. Often the discipline and technique of the art form of dance are taught, but the spiritual expression that this movement can have is not mentioned. Smith (2008) suggests that the body's involvement in worship is as critical as that of the emotional and intellectual engagement: "Therefore, only when there is a connection between body, mind and spirit in God's worship is the real spiritual experience created" (Zaluchu, 2021). This statement suggests that even though not all churches agree with the concept of movement or dance in worship, if allowed to fully give oneself over to God, to give everything to Him, movement of the body should be embraced as an opportunity to connect to God.

Although I was never taught to use dance as worship, considering my belief in God, and my love of dance, in my freshman year of college the two forcefully began to combine. My body and soul themselves found that dance was supposed to be used as worship all along. At this point in my life, I was deeply wounded by the standard that some entities of “the dance world” place on young dancers. After graduating high school and beginning my journey in college, I did not attend regular weekly ballet classes and I welcomed this as an opportunity for me to stray away from the part of dance that had hurt me so badly in the past. However, I did have other types of dance classes and access to the studio where I worked as a teacher. I began immersing myself in worship music and found that praise and gratitude were catalysts for healing my heart because they changed my perspective. One day I found myself alone, in the silence of the studio about an hour early to teach my class. I put on one of my favorite worship songs and began singing, but as a dancer, an open studio is meant to be danced in. This was the first time I felt the freedom of unhinged dance with the intent of worship. There was no movement that was too bold in that moment. All technique went out the window and my body just moved directly from my spirit. The very desire to move seems to have been woven into my being. I experienced in a powerful way, dance that was not about what it looked like, but instead dance that was about giving my everything back to the One that I believe gave me everything. My body being able to move is a blessing and all of my movement comes from the one who created it. From my experience I argue that dancing is not just a physical activity, it is also a spiritual activity that has the capacity to fuel connection with God.

Yet another connection bred through the art of dance is our connection to other people. People have long since utilized dance as means for social interaction. In the Cook Islands, men and women social dance as a large group (Jonas, 1992, p.110). Jonas states, this type of team

dancing enhances the islanders' feeling of inclusion to a more vast "cohesive social group" (1992, p. 110). Waltz, a couple dance still danced today, originated in Vienna, Austria. In the seventeenth century Waltzes began being played in the Hapsburg court. While initially some criticized the dance for the closeness of the hold, it was very popular, being a great way for individuals of the opposite sex to be near and get to know one another (Fuller, 2021). These are just two examples of the social implications of dance. However, dance has an enormous capacity for creating and deepening relationships. Whether these relationships are partnerships or friendships built through dance, preexisting relationships that are strengthened by moving together, or even the special association between performers and their audience, dance unites people and intensifies human connection.

Partnerships and friendships, built through dance, have a special ability to create intimacy, through physicality, and emotional closeness (Ericksen, 1941 p. 21-22). While I do think all dance shares this common ability, different intensities or types of relationship may be built through different styles or dance. Ballet dancers for instance, commit choreography to memory, and may be able to dance a role easily with a number of partners. (Ericksen, 1941 p. 21) Jose Manuel Carreño, professional dancer with American Ballet Theater, said he was very comfortable exchanging one female dance partner to another guest artist in just a five-day time span when dancing the lead in sleeping beauty (Ericksen, 1941). However, ballroom dance partners learn together, and their performance requires a much more personal connection that is built over time. Partnership dance, particularly ballroom, requires a physical connection that is not normally found outside of a sexual relationship. Dancers, especially those dancing a competitive style of ballroom, are in very close physical contact when in "frame" (also called a "closed dance hold"). Two people, one acting as the leader and the other as the follower, must

learn to have awareness of their partner's movement and to clearly communicate their own movement back (Hardt, 2012, p. 51). Whether the two individuals already have a relationship or would only consider themselves acquaintances prior to their partnership, this creates almost instantaneous intimacy not just through the outward physical connection which allows for nonverbal communication of movement between the leader and the follower, but also a more progressive, emotional closeness as one learns to communicate verbally about their dancing (Erickson, 1992, p. 22). In addition, much of ballroom dance includes a weight sharing component which provides another element of trust building. One must learn to have confidence in their partner to be able to hold them while they are off of their own balance, catch them, or provide support etc. While at a competition or in a performance partners might act as though they are in a romantic relationship for the audience or judges. If they are not really a couple, this is all a part of the show. The two become comfortable with a larger amount of physical touch which aids in the amount of familiarity one has with their partner. Whether a relationship includes romance or remains a platonic one, dance partnerships can create a really strong friendship and bond.

I have experienced this type of friendship with my dance partner, but also other women I have danced with in groups. I began dancing with my teacher when I was 15 and the bond we now share as partners is truly special. There is a great level of trust that has been cultivated. It is trust in our dancing that comes from understanding the way that one another moves and knowing each other's ability. However, there is also trust to share things about our lives with one another because of the time we have spent together dancing and the vulnerability that creates between us. I have achieved similar vulnerability, trust, and friendship out of dancing as a group when there is necessity to unite to synchronize timing and movements.

Lastly one might experience connection in dance through self-expression to an audience. Dance houses the ability as an art form to portray one's ideas, values, and emotions (Carter & Hanna, 1985). As bodies create movement in time and space through dance an expressive vehicle is created with which one can embark in a creative dialogue with the audience (Stock, 2011). It is interesting because a piece of dance can convey so many emotions. It could be those that the choreographer meant to impart on the audience through the dance, emotions that the dancer superimposes on the choreography themselves, or even the emotion of a character one is seeking to portray. The expression of these emotions may give the creators a sense of connection to the audience, but at the same time connection comes through the inspiration of the audience through the visual representation they have beheld.

IV. The Choreographic Process and Staging

There are many variations of how one might begin the choreographic process. Perhaps one might create a dance and choose accompaniment that sets the aural environment for the performance. The collaboration of famed modern dance choreographer, Merce Cunningham and music composer, John Cage is a prime example where the music set the tone of the piece, but the performers did not dance rhythmically to the music (Copeland, 2004). I very much agree with Blom and Chaplin who suggest, "Ideally the sound score for a dance is the sound of the movement—what the dancer-choreographer hears as she creates her dance" (p.156, 1982). I want my movement to look like my music sounds. I desire that the two would "become one", as though song and dance are married to create a beautiful artistic display. They support and enhance one another (Blom & Chaplin p. 162, 1982).

The songs I chose for my composition were not songs I just enjoyed the sound of, but rather songs that had a deeper and more personal meaning to me. This music has helped carry me

through my life's journey and because of that, they are songs I know well. I know not only the lyrics of these songs by heart, but also the little nuances, rhythms and beats that they possess, because they have been listened to over and over. On my early morning drives, these were the songs I put on. Then they were the songs I put back on after a long day to drive home. They were the songs that met me and sang to me when I needed a good cry, but also the ones that day after day were my encouragement. I want to mention that yes, my songs might be considered worship songs because as I mentioned, dance is a very worshipful art form to me. They produced just the inspiration that I needed to take a deep dive into my past experiences, but I also found them rhythmically and stylistically interesting to choreograph to. The song choices mirror my emotional journey of healing, each song piecing together my own experience.

The first song *Man of Your Word* by Maverik City Music (released in 2020) displays the hope I felt when I realized that healing was available, that things could change for the better and I decided that I was ready to take a step towards something new. At this point I had not faced the battle yet, but I had already had a shift in my perspective. The second dance performed by my sister and I is danced to the song *Steadfast* by Gateway Worship (released in 2018). This song displays what I felt in the midst of the battle to regain my confidence and restore my relationship with my body and food. This song is the trudge through hardship where I wanted to give up, but I knew I must persevere in order to reach the other side. The middle song *Come and Tear Down the Walls* by Revere and David and Nicole Binion (released in 2020) is the cry for surrender and help. This song represents the time in my journey when I had already been fighting what felt to be an uphill battle for a long time. My energy was low, and I was emotionally and mentally weak from trying to make a change in my life. At some points I just felt like I couldn't fight anymore so I let go and surrendered everything, but it was that point of surrender that acted as the driving

force to get me over the mountain I was trying to climb. The fourth song, is No doubt About It by We the Kingdom (released in 2020), danced by my dance partner. This song speaks of humility and my personal realization that I was and still am not perfect and there was more change and growth that needed to happen in my heart and mind. The lyrics say, “I’m not yet where I’m going But I’m a long way from where I was” and these lyrics perfectly mirror what I had in mind to convey because this dance is also me looking back on how far I had come in my journey and feeling a sense of accomplishment and joy from that. Lastly is the song Child of Love by We the Kingdom (released in 2020). To me it is the culmination of my experience. It is complete abandonment, freedom, and joy. It is when I reached a place in my journey that I could confidently say “this is who I am, because this is who I was created to be by God.” Through all these songs I also tried to channel the emotions that I felt from the song and incorporate them into the movement.

After deciding what music would accompany my piece, next came the choreographic work of my thesis performance. Blom and Chaplin state that after a score is chosen before the dancing begins “listen to it a zillion times.” Improvise freely to it. Get a feeling for the whole and play with any nuances or themes that intrigue you” (p. 167, 1982). Considering that I was already so familiar with all of these songs, half this task had already been completed. However, I continued to listen closely to find particular points in these songs that sparked my creative interest. I would sometimes just sit down, close my eyes, play one of the pieces of music, and imagine the scene that I wanted to set in the room when the dance was performed. I imagined if it would consist of a group of dancers, a duet, or a solo. I imagined what large movements might pair well with exciting parts in the music. This might be considered as finding the “high point” of the dance as described by Blom and Chaplin which as a result helps create a beginning, middle,

and end in the choreographic work (p. 24, 1982). In addition, I began to improvise to each of the pieces of music. Much of that improvisation became the source of my choreography for these dances. For each dance I would play the song, improvise, find movement that I liked, and then add it to the sequence I was creating. However, for certain portions of the performance, I did not choreograph prior to working with the other dancers that would take part in the dance. For instance, the first dance, “Man of Your Word” is a group dance with six dancers including myself. Some of the movement I already had set prior to our group rehearsal, but on certain portions I wanted the opinions of my fellow artists and the ability to try things together and see what we could make work. The process was the same as this dance for the other two group dances, “Come Tear Down the Walls” and “Child of Love.” In the duet with my sister “Steadfast”, and the ballroom dance number that my partner and I dance, “No Doubt About It” all was collaborative work. I had ideas that I suggested, but I allowed complete freedom for them to propose certain movements as well. This was due to the fact that I wanted the interaction between dancers to really experientially support my ideas behind dance being a strong means of connection and relationship. I found working with my sister and my ballroom dance partner on choreography to be very rewarding. There is such great personal connection which initiates so much creativity. When you know a person well personally and as a dancer as I do these two individuals, there is a great chemistry in collaborative work, and the choreography comes very naturally.

I would say that the cultivation of this project was initiated long before I even began working on my thesis, as my choreographic style was being molded into what it is today through my dance education. The style of my choreography was shaped by my dance education prior to and within my time as a student at East Tennessee state University. First and foremost, my

artistry is shaped by my ballet background. I began dancing ballet at such a young age, that it is a very comfortable movement for my body. Although my choreography is not ballet, shapes derived from this classic dance form will always find their way to the surface when I dance or create dances. In addition, there is certainly an aspect of modern dance within my choreographic style. I took modern dance as I was growing up; however, my first semester of college I took a deeper dive and began learning about the most influential choreographers and dancers who shaped what modern dance looked like in America. I fell in love with this style of movement and have used it in my own work. In particular, I love incorporating movement of the spine into my choreography. Ballet instills mostly upright and controlled posture, but much of my movement adds in contraction through the back and more movement through the spine as modern choreographer Martha Graham (Jones, p. 207, 1992). I wanted all of my movement to have a very organic feel. Most of these movements are ones that ‘felt good to my body’ rather than being things chosen by the way they looked or the lines they created. I wanted to compose a production of movement that is as though I and my dancers are alone in the studio dancing for fun rather than for an audience. In addition, I played with lots of other choreographic elements to add interest to the pieces. In several places I integrated some foot stomping into the choreography. In this case the dancers’ physical movement provides noise and rhythm in accompaniment to the music (Blom & Chaplin, p. 160, 1982). Other choreographic devices I worked with were movement in canon, repetition, variation, and mirroring. Canon is a use of music timing in which one part of the movement sequence is completed by one dancer or group followed by another dancer or dancers later in time. The amount of time that the first group is ahead of the next can be varied (Smith-Autard, 2000). For example, in *Child of Love* I complete a movement, followed by two more girls with the same movement several counts later, and then

the last group several more counts later. Repetition another Choreographic device was used meaning some movements like ‘throwing of the arms in an upward direction are seen many times over in one piece and throughout the entire dance suite. Variation was also employed in the dances, in which the content of a dance that has already been used is incorporated again but in a different way (Smith-Autard, 2000). Lastly in the *Steadfast* dance number, my sister and I used the element of mirroring. Mirroring is a technique where dancers face one another and mimic exactly what the other is doing (Clark, 2009). These choreographic elements apply to all of the dances except for “No Doubt About It” which is a ballroom dance show number that mostly consists of movement patterns that would be considered Viennese Waltz with only a small portion that is free-flow, modern movement.

After dance movements had all been set to music, there were many hours of rehearsal that took place and the creative process of staging the dance suite began. I had to determine what costuming would look like or myself and the six other dancers in my production. I chose to have a costume designed and created by a friend and we worked together to decide that something flowy would really compliment the movement style. I also chose a rich olive-green color of fabric because I hoped the green would add to the theme of growth and new beginning in the dances. Another small detail in the production that might seem insignificant was the footwear of the dancers. It is not usual that dancers wear socks in a show, but along with the movement being more organic and earthy than classical dance forms, I wanted the footwear to look and more comfortable and relaxed. Lastly, I felt that warmer lighting would play into the theme and give the production an overall warmer, more hopeful ambience.

V. Conclusion

The production of *Steadfast: Dance as a means of Connection*, not only pushed me as an artist and an individual, but it is an accomplishment that I am most proud to have completed as an honors student at East Tennessee State University. On the night of February 24th, 2022, I along with six other dancers performed five dance pieces that I choreographed and staged (the dance suite was sixteen minutes in length). I aspired to create a choreographic work that not only showcased and supported my research on the ability of dance to foster connection, but also impacted the audience. I believe that both goals were accomplished.

My research was backed by the depth of relationship I now have with all of the dancers from my thesis performance. Having the ability to dance with my sister and partner, two people that were already incredibly dear to me, in addition to the four other beautiful dancers that I grew to know and love in the five months of preparation for the show, was an experience I will never forget. I had not met four of the dancers that participated in *Steadfast* prior to the first rehearsal and yet we became a team of close friends from dancing together. I shared some of my journey with them as we practiced together and soon, they also began opening up to me and the others about their own personal journeys. Our similar experiences in the dance world allowed us to ban together as sisters all affected by similar situations. This I believe helped us to better portray the emotions of the production because in some way they were real, tangible feelings for each one of us. For myself, this dance was a representation of dance as freedom, creative expression, and emotional healing as I hope it was also to the rest of the dancers and each and every individual in the audience. I feel that my choreography, along with the hard work I and my fellow dancers put into *Steadfast*, created an experience for the audience that portrayed my emotional journey and gave them the opportunity to experience subsequent emotions of their own.

I was overwhelmed with joy by all of the support I received from family and friends as I completed what feels to be my final piece of artistic work as a dancer at ETSU. However, even though it may be my final piece in this chapter, a new one is about to begin. Although I don't know everything that is to come, what trials I might face or what new hurts I might have to overcome, dance will always be there to foster beautiful relationships with others, allow me to express my emotions, and to be a mechanism for my restoration and healing.



Pictured left to right: Paige Gleason, Olivia Campbell, Katie Greene, Lily McKenzie, Ella McKenzie, Olivia Jones. Video Link: [Steadfast Dance](#)

References

- Arcelus J, Witcomb GL, Mitchell A. Prevalence of eating disorders amongst dancers: a systemic review and meta-analysis. *Eur Eat Disord Rev.* 2014 Mar;22(2):92-101. doi: 10.1002/erv.2271. Epub 2013 Nov 26. PMID: 24277724.
- Blom, L. A., & Chaplin, L. T. (1982). *The intimate act of choreography*. University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Carter, C. & Hanna, J. (1985). The Performer-Audience Connection: Emotion to Metaphor in Dance and Society. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism.* 44. 87. 10.2307/430546.
- Clark, H. (2009). *Dance as the spirit moves: A practical guide to worship and dance*. Destiny Image Publishers.
- Copeland, R. (2004). *Merce Cunningham: The Modernizing of Modern Dance*. Routledge.
- Ericksen, J. A. (2012). *Dance with me: Ballroom dancing and the promise of instant intimacy*. New York University Press.
- Fuller, J. (2021, November 1). Waltz history. CentralHome. Retrieved January 20, 2022, from <http://www.centralhome.com/ballroomcountry/waltz.htm>
- Hardt, S. (2012). *Moving as two: A guide for ballroom dancers looking for balance, power, freedom, and harmony in partnership*. Hardt.
- Jonas, G. (1992). *Dancing: The pleasure, power, and art of movement*. Harry N. Abrams.
- Merrill, E.H., 2000, 'Remembering: A central theme in biblical worship', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 43(1), 27–36.
- Nelson, T.J., 2007, 'Sacrifice of praise: Emotion and collective participation in an African-American worship service', *Sociology of Religion* 57(4), 379. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3711893>

Smith, J.K.A., 2008, 'Teaching a Calvinist to dance', *Christianity Today* 52(5), 42–45, viewed 14 September 2020, from <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2008/may/25.42.html>.

Smith-Autard, J. M. (2000). *Dance Composition* (4th ed.). Routledge.

Stock, Cheryl (2011) Creating new narratives through shared time and space:

Performer/audience connection in multi-site dance events. Caldwell, L (Ed.) *In Time Together: Viewing and Reviewing Contemporary Dance Practice: Refereed Proceedings of the World Dance Alliance Global Summit 2010*. World Dance Alliance-Americas, United States, pp. 1-14.

Zaluchu, S. E. (2021). Dancing in praise of god: Reinterpretation of theology in worship. *Theologia Viatorum*, 45(1). <https://doi.org/10.4102/tv.v45i1.86>

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge all the people who helped to make this possible for me. First to my dancers who contributed so much time and dedication, I couldn't have done it without them. I would especially like to thank my partner and teacher Darian Chancellor who has had such a huge impact on the dancer and individual that I am today. Second, I would like to thank my faculty advisors Cara Harker and Dr. Scott Contreras-Koterbay for their mentorship and guidance on this project. Lastly to my friends and family for supporting me through this journey and experience, particularly my mom, dad, and sister Ella. I am so grateful for everyone's love and support.