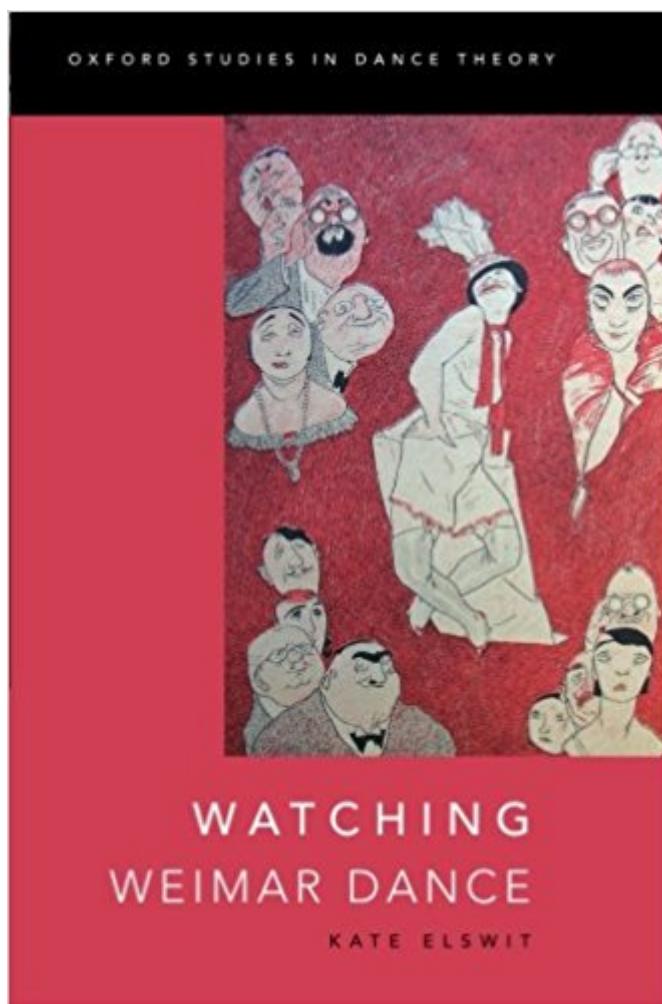


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# Watching Weimar Dance (Oxford Studies In Dance Theory)



## Synopsis

Watching Weimar Dance asks what audiences saw on stages from cabaret and revue to concert dance and experimental theatre in the turbulent moment of the Weimar Republic. Spectator reports that performers died or became half-machine archive not only the physicality of past performance, but also the ways audiences used the temporary world of the theatre to negotiate pressing social issues, from female visibility within commodity culture to human functioning in an era of increasing technologization. Archives of watching a range of performance artists, including Oskar Schlemmer, Valeska Gert, Kurt Jooss, Mary Wigman, Bertolt Brecht, Anita Berber, and the Tiller Girl troupes also revise and complicate our understanding of Ausdruckstanz as the representative dance of this moment in Germany. They further reveal how such practices came to be imbued with different significance in the postwar era as well as in transnational context. By bringing insights from theatre, dance, and performance studies to German cultural studies, and vice versa, Watching Weimar Dance develops a culturally-situated model of spectatorship that not only offers a new narrative but also demonstrates new methods for dance scholarship to shape cultural history.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Kate Elswit thinks across history, theory, reception and corporeality and in so doing rethinks Weimar dance for the 21st century." --Susan Manning, Professor of English, Theatre, and Performance Studies, Northwestern University "In Watching Weimar Dance, Kate Elswit takes the

traditional 'obstacles' of dance history - the fragmentary archive, ephemeral performances, and unstable objects - and transforms them into its very strengths. Approaching Weimar dance as a series of eventful and relational encounters, in which spectators contributed as much to the generation of meaning as the performers themselves, the book rediscovers modern dance both as a specific medium and as a forum shot through with broader issues of visual and corporeal culture."

--Michael Cowan, author of *Technology's Pulse: Essays on Rhythm in German Modernism* (2011) and *Walter Ruttmann and the Cinema of Multiplicity: Avant-Garde-Advertising-Modernity* (2014)

"Elswit provides an interdisciplinary framework that reveals new insights about topics of longstanding interest to scholars of Weimar culture, including expressivity and representation, the mechanization of bodies, and the commodification of art...this amply illustrated volume with extensive notes and references is a valuable new resource on modernist performance culture."--H.

D. Baer, University of Maryland - College Park"Groundbreaking... Kate Elswit's writing is lucid, and her scholarship impeccable... she cares passionately for the origins of the traces which she analyses (that is the dance themselves)." --Julian Preece, *The Times Literary Supplement*"Watching Weimar Dance is a stellar work of scholarship. Elswit tackles some of the central issues in how dance history is researched and narrated, and her points are all the more convincing because they are supported by meticulous research...Watching Weimar Dance should be a welcome addition to dance studies, German studies, and as a model for interdisciplinary scholarship on the body."--*Dance Research Journal*"In *Watching Weimar Dance*, Elswit has made an important contribution to the way we practice dance historiography."--*TDR: The Drama Review*

Kate Elswit is a Lecturer in Theatre and Performance Studies at the University of Bristol. She was awarded the Gertrude Lippincott Award from the Society of Dance History Scholars and the Sally Banes Publication Prize from the American Society for Theatre Research, and her essays have been published in *TDR: The Drama Review*, *Theatre Journal*, *Modern Drama*, *Art Journal*, *Performance Research* and in the edited collection *New German Dance Studies*. She also works as a choreographer, curator, and dramaturg.

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