

KIMERER L. LaMOTHE, Ph.D.
Philosopher/ Scholar of Dance and Religion
Dancer/ Choreographer

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EDUCATION

DEGREES

- 1996 **Harvard University, PhD**, Committee on the Study of Religion
Specialization: Theology in the Modern West, Philosophy of Religion, Religion and Dance
Dissertation: “With Dance in Mind: Reflections on Dance and Theology via Gerardus van der Leeuw and Martha Graham”
- 1989 **Harvard Divinity School, MTS**, Christianity and Culture
- 1985 **Williams College, BA *cum laude***, Religion; with substantial work in Political Economics
- 1984 Swarthmore College Spring Semester Abroad, Grenoble, France

DANCE TRAINING*

Graham Technique, Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dance, New York City, March 1993-
January 1994; Winter Intensive, January 1994; with Christine Dakin at Harvard University,
January 2001

Duncan Technique and Repertoire with Sylvia Gold, fall 1999

Marcus Schulkind, Modern, Ballet, Floor Barre, 1986-1997

Patric Lacroix, Haitian, Modern, 1990-1

Thom Molinaro, Stretch, Modern, 1986

Blondell Cummings, January 1985

Sandra Burton, Modern, Fall 1983, 1984

Harvard Summer Dance Program, 1984

Marta Renzi, January 1982

Regular practitioner of Hatha Yoga, Kripalu Yoga

Certified Danskinetics Instructor

*Since 1998, I have been inventing an original approach to modern dance that draws on the influences listed.

MAJOR WORKS

BOOKS

Acts of Faith: Ecstatic Dance in the World's Religions. In process.

Why We Dance: A Philosophy of Bodily Becoming. Columbia University Press, March 2015.

Family Planting: A farm-fed philosophy of human relations. UK: Changemakers, O Books, June 2011.

What a Body Knows: Finding Wisdom in Desire for Food, Sex, and Spirit. UK: Changemakers, O Books, April 2009.

Nietzsche's Dancers: Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, and the Revaluation of Christian Values. Palgrave MacMillan, February 2006. Paperback, 2011.

Between Dancing and Writing: The Practice of Religious Studies. Fordham University Press, November 2004.

CONCERTS

On Fire (2004). An original solo concert about how the activities of reading and writing shape our thoughts and feelings about the divine, featuring text by Rene Descartes, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Martha Graham.

Sponsored by the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University
Performed at Harvard University (May 21-22, 2004); Swarthmore College (as Artist-in-Residence Nov 1-3, 2004); and the American Academy of Religion Conference in Washington, D.C. (Nov 2006, selections)

Genesis (2001, recreated in 2009). An original solo concert, performed six months pregnant, enacting a story of creation that passes through the kinetic shapes of human experience—from a moment of emerging, through the shapes of desiring, pursuing, releasing, despairing, unfolding, circling, opening, and receiving.

Sponsored by the Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study
Performed at Radcliffe's Rieman Center (May 11-12, 2001); Boston's First Night (2001, selections); Winsor School, Boston (2002, selections), MA; Fort Salem Theater, Salem, New York (2009, edited version)

ARTICLES

"Transformation: An eokinetic approach to the study of ritual dance," in *Dance, Movement, and Spiritualities*, 1:1, January 2014, pp. 57-72.

"Can They Dance? Towards a philosophy of bodily becoming," in *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*, 2012, 4(1), 93-107. Also published in: *Dance, Somatics, and Spiritualities: Contemporary Sacred Narratives*, eds. Amanda Williamson, Glenna Batson, and Sarah Whatley, Intellect Press, 2015, pp. 131-150.

"I am the Dance: Towards an Earthed Christianity," in *Theology, Aesthetics, and Culture: Conversations with the Work of David Brown*. Ed. Robert MacSwain and Tracey Worley. Oxford University Press, 2012, 131-44.

"Ruth St. Denis," "Ted Shawn," Leonide Massine," "Jose Limon," and "Kurt Joos," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Supplement 2011, Vol. 2.

"What a Body Knows," monthly blog on topics related to dance, movement, and health at *Psychology Today*, www.psychologytoday.com, September 2009 to present.

“What Bodies Know About Religion and the Study of It,” in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. September 2008, Vol. 76, No. 3, 573-601.

“Expressing Life: Dancing towards a Feminist Philosophy of Religion,” in *The Subjective Eye: Essays on Art, Religion and Gender*. Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2006.

“Why Dance?: Towards a Theory of Religion as Practice and Performance.” *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion*. 17(2): 101-133.

“A God Dances Through Me: Isadora Duncan on Friedrich Nietzsche’s Revaluation of Values,” *The Journal of Religion*. April 2005, 241-266. WINNER 2006 Lippincott Award, Society of Dance History Scholars.

“Reason, Religion, and Sexual Difference: Resources for a Feminist Philosophy of Religion in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” *Hypatia: Journal of Feminist Philosophy*. Vol. 20, No. 1, Winter 2005, 120-149.

“Giving Birth to a Dancing Star: Reading Nietzsche’s Maternal Rhetoric via Isadora Duncan’s Dance,” *Soundings* 86.3-4. Fall/Winter 2003, 501-23.

“Sacred Dance: A Glimpse Around the World,” *Dance Magazine*. December 2001.

“Why Dance Religion? The Case of Martha Graham,” *Radcliffe Quarterly*. Winter 2001.

“Play,” in the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Postmodernism: Disciplines, Terms and Figures*. Eds. Victor E. Taylor and Charles E. Winquist, London: Routledge, 2001.

“Passionate Madonna: The Christian Turn of American Dancer Ruth St. Denis,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 66/4. Winter 1998, 747-769.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Independent Scholar & Dancer, July 2005-present
Vital Arts Media: www.vitalartsmedia.com

FACULTY POSITIONS

Harvard University, Committee on the Study of Religion

Lecturer in the Modern West, 1997-2003 (on leave as Radcliffe Fellow, 2000-1)

Designed and taught courses for graduate and undergraduate students in the Modern West, Christianity, and the Comparative Study of Religion. Titles include:

*Acts of Imagination: Religion and Art in the Modern West**;

Nietzsche and Religion;

“Losing My Religion”?: Religious Experience in the Modern West;

Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche: Prophets of Postmodern Thought;

*Religion and the Performing Arts: The Case of Modern Dance**;

Martyrs, Mystics, Witches and Heretics: Alternative Christianities;

Sophomore Tutorial: Approaching the Comparative Study of Religion.

* Included movement workshops

Head Tutor, 1997-2003 (on leave as Radcliffe Fellow, 2000-1)

Managed the undergraduate program in the Comparative Study of Religion: interviewed prospective concentrators; set-up and supervised Junior Tutorials; facilitated teaching workshops for graduate students; guided juniors in selection of senior thesis topics; advised and served as reader for numerous senior theses; served as academic advisor for concentrators in Modern West and Christianity; participated in two faculty searches, and served on: Standing Committee on the Study of Religion; Doctoral Subcommittee; A.B. Subcommittee (as Chair); Curriculum Committee.

Radcliffe Institute of Advanced Study, Graduate Consortium of Women's Studies
Lecturer, Spring 2003

Designed and taught *Feminist Inquiry: Strategies of Effective Scholarship* along with Christina Gilmartin (historian) and Debra Kaufman (sociologist).

Harvard Extension School

Lecturer, Fall 2002

Acts of Imagination: Religion and Art in the Modern West

Brown University, Religious Studies Department

Visiting Assistant Professor, 1996-7

Designed and taught courses in contemporary religious thought, including:
Approaches to the Study of Religion;
Religious Experience: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion;
Theological Approaches to Biomedical Ethics: Healing Bodies;
Religion and Political Order: In Search of Perfect Community.

DANCE COMPANIES

Rhythm in Motion, artistic director Sharron Rose, 1988-92 (American modern dance combined with classical Indian, Middle Eastern, and Caribbean dance forms). Performed in Cambridge, MA; Watertown, MA; New York City.

Rae Dance, artistic director Stephanie Rae Parker, 1991-2 (Modern dance). Performed at Green Street Studios, Cambridge, MA.

Patric Lacroix Haitian-American Dance Company, artistic director Patric Lacroix, 1990-1 (Haitian vodoun dance blended with modern dance forms). Performed in Boston locations including The Strand Theater, The Science Museum, The Prudential Building; West Palm Beach, FL; Miami, FL.

Omega Liturgical Dance Company, "Earth Mass," Cathedral of St. John of the Divine, New York City, October 1989.

PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

"When Words Don't Get It: The Challenges of Writing about Ritual Dance," *Writing Dancing/ Dancing Writing*, Society of Dance History Scholars and Congress on Research on Dance Joint Conference, November 13-16, 2014.

"Why We Dance: A Philosophy of Bodily Becoming," Guest lecture for *Dance as Spiritual Expression*, a course taught by Gay Lynch at Dominican University, San Francisco, CA, December 3, 2013.

“Becoming a Bodily Self: Religious Experience and the New Materialism,” *Theology and Religious Reflection*, Annual Academy of Religious Conference, Baltimore, MD, November 2013.

“A Leap of Faith: Abraham as Ballet Dancer,” at conference in honor of Kierkegaard’s 200th Birthday, *The Individual, Action, Media, Anxiety*, Co-sponsored by the Center for Capitalism and Society and the Department of Religion, Columbia University, New York, NY, May 5, 2013.

“Transformation in American Modern Dance,” Guest lecture for *Masterworks*, a course taught by Erica Dankmeyer, Dance Department, Williams College, Williamstown, MA, February 19, 2013.

“On the Path: The Life of a Dancer,” Guest lecture for *Dance as Spiritual Expression*, a course taught by Gay Lynch at Dominican University, San Francisco, CA, November 27, 2012.

“Awakening Soul: Isadora Duncan’s Dance Philosophy,” *Isadora Duncan Birthday Celebration*, Judson Memorial Church, New York, NY, May 26, 2012.

“To Dance is a Radical Act,” Guest lecture for *Dance as Spiritual Expression*, a course taught by Gay Lynch at Dominican University, San Francisco, CA, November 17, 2011.

“I am a dancer... and a philosopher,” Keynote lecture/performance for *Constructing Identity: Imagination and Memory*, Oneonta State University, Oneonta, NY, May 5, 2011.

“Hebron Hollow Homestead: A Study in Agri/Culture,” Lecture to students from Green Mountain College, Hebron, NY, April 14, 2011.

“Missing in Action: The Fate of Bodily Movement in an Age of Affect,” Keynote speaker for Humanities Center symposium, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, April 1, 2011.

“What Can a Body Know?” *Across the Threshold: Creativity, Healing, and Being*, Duke University, Durham, NC, March 19-22, 2009.

“I am the Movement that is Making Me,” *INVENTION-IN*, Brockport, NY, June 20, 2008.

“The Religious Impulses of early American Modern Dance,” Society for Dance History Scholars Annual Conference, Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, NY, June 13, 2008.

“Finding Wisdom in Desire,” Green Mountain College, February 12, 2008.

“My Life in Dance,” Williams College Dance Retreat, August 31, 2007.

“The Practice of Art and the Study of Religion,” Session organizer, Dancer, and Respondent, American Academy of Religion, Washington, D.C., November 2006.

“Dance and Spirituality,” United Methodist Church, Granville, NY, February 25, 2006.

“The Practice of Art and the Study of Religion,” *Enacted Religion Colloquium*, University of North Carolina, Charlotte, November 28, 2005.

Guest lectures in two classes, Artist-in-Residence, Swarthmore College, November 1-3, 2004.

“What We (Un)learn When We Learn How to Write: Reading Nietzsche’s Images of Dance,” Conference on the *Ethics and Epistemologies of Ignorance*, University of Pennsylvania, State College, PA, March 26-8, 2004.

“A Feminist Nietzsche,” Humanities Center, Harvard University, February 12, 2004.

“Exercising Great Reason: Isadora Duncan on Friedrich Nietzsche’s Ideas of Bodily Being,” Society for Women in Philosophy, American Philosophical Association, December 30, 2003.

“Giving Birth to a Dancing Star: Friedrich Nietzsche and Isadora Duncan on Religion, Dance, and Motherhood,” Feminist Theory and Religious Reflection Group, American Academy of Religion, November 22, 2003.

“Dance in Christian Culture: Towards a Theory of Religion as Practice and Performance,” Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, October 30, 2003.

“Dance: ‘A Theological and Ethical Necessity,’” *Symposium on Worship and the Arts*, Boston Theological Institute, September 29, 2002.

“On Fire: Dancing for Life,” Talk and performance, Winsor School, September 5, 2002.

“Dancing Religion: Word, Body, Sex, and Spirit in the Work of American Modern Dancer, Martha Graham,” *Feminist Liberation Theology Luncheon Series*, Episcopal Divinity School, October 21, 2001.

“Straight from the Source,” Video Interview for Radcliffe Institute Web site, 2001.

“Dancing Religion: The Technique and Choreography of Martha Graham,” Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, May 9, 2001.

“Putting Reason in its Place: The Call to Ethical Action in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*,” *Workshop on Gender and Philosophy*, MIT, March 8, 2001.

Session coordinator and respondent: *Ecstatic Dance*, the second of a two-year session for the Comparative Religious Studies Section, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Nashville, TN, November 21, 2000.

Session co-coordinator and presenter with Julia Foulkes: “Dancing into the Liberal Arts,” *Dancing in the Millennium* Conference, Washington, D.C., July 19-23, 2000.

“Being Body,” a sermon accompanied by a dance, offered alongside a class discussion and movement workshop, Hollins College, Roanoke, Virginia, February 19-21, 2000.

Session coordinator, presenter, and dancer: “Translucent Bodies, Radiant Souls: Isadora Duncan Renews Religion through Dance,” for the first of a two-year session on *Ecstatic Dance*, Comparative Religious Studies Section, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November 1999.

“Where Christians Dance,” World Religions, Concord Carlisle High School, December 1998.

“Passionate Madonna: The Christian Turn of Ruth St. Denis via ‘Stabat Mater’ by Julia Kristeva,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA, November 1996.

“Response to *Escape from Paradise: Evil and Tragedy in Feminist Theology* by Kathleen Sands,” New England American Academy of Religion, Worcester, MA, March 1994.

“Out from the Shadow of the Word: The Religious Significance of Dance in Works by Friedrich Nietzsche and Martha Graham,” American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Washington D.C., November 1993.

“*The Birth of Tragedy* by Friedrich Nietzsche and *Clytemnestra* by Martha Graham: The Tragic Dance of Eros,” New England American Academy of Religion, Boston, MA, April 1993.

PERFORMANCES AND RESIDENCIES

Director, Author, Singer and Dancer, *Earth Bound: A Concert of Music and Dance*. Fort Salem Theater, Salem NY, August 23-24, 2014.

Director, Dancer and Singer, *LaMothe/Gee Family in Concert*. South Granville Congregational Church, Granville, NY, July 28, 2013.

Director, Dancer and Singer, *Thanks!* A LaMothe/Gee Family Cabaret, Fort Salem Theater, Salem, NY, November 24, 2012.

Choreographer, *Once Upon a Mattress*, Long Trail School, Dorset, VT, October-December 2012.

Lecturer/Dance Teacher, Three-day dance residency at St. Johnsbury Academy, St. Johnsbury, VT, February 20-22, 2012.

Lecturer/Dance Teacher, Week-long dance residency at Long Trail School, Dorset, VT, October 24-28, 2011.

Singer/Author, *All About Love*, Solo cabaret performance, Fort Salem Theater, Salem, NY, July 24, 2008.

Director, Dancer & Singer, *LaMothe, Gee, & Family*, Fort Salem Theater, Salem, NY, November 3, 2007.

Choreographer/Dancer, “Chair Dance,” Fort Salem Theater, Salem, NY, July 20-22, 2007.

Dancer, “Mother” and “Revolutionary” by Isadora Duncan, for “Ecstatic Dance,” Comparative Religious Studies Section, American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, Boston, MA, November 1999.

Choreographer/Dancer, ARTS First, May 1999, Harvard University; Choreographers’ Ink, May 2000, Harvard University

HONORS AND AWARDS

Society of Dance History Scholars, Gertrude Lippincott Award for best article (in English) in dance scholarship, 2006

Fortieth Anniversary Fellowship, Religion & Arts Initiative, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School, 2003-4

Radcliffe Fellowship, Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University, 2000-1
Certificate of Distinction in Teaching, Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, 2000
Mellon Foundation Dissertation Completion Fellowship, 1995-6
Center for the Study of World Religions Dissertation Fellowship, 1994-5
Excellence in Teaching Certificate, Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard, 1994
Mellon Foundation Dissertation Start-Up Fellowship, 1993
Harvard University Scholarship, 1990-1994
Phi Beta Kappa, 1985
Graves Essay Prize in Religion, Williams College, 1985
National Merit Scholar and Fellow, 1981-1985

COMMITTEES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Editorial Board, *Journal of Dance, Movement, and Spiritualities*, published by Intellect, 2012-present
Herb Alpert Award, Selection Committee for Dance, along with Elizabeth Streb and Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Santa Monica, CA, January 2014
Faculty Advisory Council for the Arts, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, Spring 1999-2001
Fellowships Selection Committee, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, 1998-9
Chair, Women and Religion Section of the New England Regional American Academy of Religion, 1993-1997
Congress on Research on Dance
Society of Dance History Scholars
American Academy of Religion
American Philosophical Association
Society for Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy
Society for Women in Philosophy

REFERENCES

Sondra Horton Fraleigh, eastwest@q.com
Professor Emerita, The College at Brockport
Department of Dance
350 New Campus Drive
Brockport, NY 14420
585 395 2219
<http://www.brockport.edu/dance/people/sfraleigh.html>

Gay Lynch, gay_lynch@prodigy.net
Advisor to the Dancers, LINES Ballet BFA Program
Assistant Professor, Humanities
2010 Teacher of the Year
Dominican University of California
50 Acacia Avenue
San Rafael, CA 94901
415 482 3542
<http://bfa.linesballet.org/faculty/profile/gay-lynch/>

Diana Eck, dianaeck@fas.harvard.edu
Committee on the Study of Religion, Harvard University
Professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies
Harvard College Professor
The Study of Religion
12 Quincy Street
Cambridge 02138
617 495 5781
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ACTIVITIES

LaMothe lives with her life partner and their five children, ages 5 to 19, on Hebron Hollow Farm in rural New York. When not writing or dancing, she is helping her children take care of two horses, two oxen, three cows, four cats, eleven chickens, and a large garden.