



# performance and the global city

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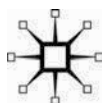
Edited by

D.J. Hopkins

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# Introduction: Borders, Performance, and the Global Urban Condition

*D.J. Hopkins with Kim Solga*

Every performance by Lux Boreal has a distinctive feel. Those pieces that might be regarded as most representative of the company's output all reflect a signature performance mode – call it 'dance theatre realism' – that consistently produces the same affective response: a sort of social vertigo; a not-unpleasant feeling of placelessness. Based in Tijuana, Lux is the most celebrated contemporary dance company in northern Mexico. While its body of work is eclectic and reflects the concerns and techniques of a gamut of choreographers, the performance practices most closely associated with Lux fuse expressive dance with behavioral gesture. Often, extended sequences are built out of quotidian, pedestrian movement: in *Falling Into Place*, choreographed by Allyson Green, the performers seem to be moving through a social landscape, parts of which resemble a kind of party in continual, lethargic motion (see Figure 0.1). Movement in *Falling Into Place* is alternately languid and frenetic – perhaps an embodied abstraction of the convection currents of friendship and affection – memorably punctuated by virtuosic leaps: a dancer drifting through a crowd suddenly locks eyes with another dancer and propels herself horizontally into the other's arms, rapidly accelerating from a stand-still to horizontal motion and then to a dead stop again, pausing for a moment in this cruciform embrace, then relaxing, parting, and drifting away, only to repeat the sequence. These tremendous sideways leaps, performed at some point by everyone in the piece, are executed casually, without visible effort, as if just another expression of feeling, like a hug or a handshake. These specific movement phrases, and the piece as a whole, evoke a melancholy perspective on interpersonal relations – are all these figures 'alone in the crowd',



*Figure 0.1* The company of Lux Boreal performing in *Falling into Place*, choreographed by Allyson Green. Photo by Tim Richards

desperate for personal contact, however brief and difficult to achieve? The virtuosity of the Lux performers brings a sense of levity (of levitation, even) to an often somber performance, while the complex, fractal beauty of Green's choreography averts mere gloom and offers instead a thinking-through of the body social.

Though *Falling Into Place* is lovely and thought-provoking to consider in visual and choreographic terms, it is even more instructive to locate the piece in its broader urban context. The company's performances are acutely reflective of the spaces in which its members live and create: namely, in the risk- and potential-laden border zones between Tijuana and San Diego, Mexico and the United States. We will return to this case study shortly, because we find the work of Lux Boreal to be in many ways typical of twenty-first-century performance practices in cities around the world.

### **New mobilities, new urban spaces**

In 2006, when our editorial team began work on *Performance and the City* (2009), we felt the need to justify our project and to argue for its urgency. We quoted Steven Johnson, writing for *The New York Times*,

noting that 2006 marked a 'fundamental demographic milestone' for humans everywhere: '50 percent of us now live in large urban areas' (Solga, Hopkins, and Orr: 1). At the time, that statistic felt new. Now, the understanding that our world is a 'city planet' (as Stewart Brand dubbed it) is everywhere apparent, and popular sources in print, on TV, and online take the world's urbanism as a given. The challenge now is not to help imagine and articulate an emergent discourse of urban performance studies, but to bring the exciting new developments within that field into conversation with the social, economic, and political forces that manifest within, and circulate around, 'global' city spaces.

Global urbanism appears to be the twenty-first century's 'manifest destiny': the exponential growth in urban development in non-English-speaking countries that was under way at the end of the twentieth century continues unabated in the second decade of the twenty-first. While many of the resultant 'world cities' (an expression first used critically by Patrick Geddes in 1915, which informed the now famous notion of the 'global city' defined by Saskia Sassen in the early 1990s) showcase marquee buildings and attractions designed to seem almost disturbingly familiar to world travelers and their tourist dollars, most also feature grinding social inequalities. Within the ever-expanding global city machine, global persons (including transnationals, migrants, tourists, 'local' citizens, and individuals of uncertain status, not yet citizens) daily encounter the barriers, limitations, frustrations, and opportunities raised by the global city's hallmarks of neoliberal governance and aggressive corporatism. Daily, these same individuals resist, redefine, and succumb in myriad ways to the meaning and power of urban space as a zone of political demarcation and economic delineation. In response to this new global urban reality, *Performance and the Global City* asks: How do citizens' daily practices serve to dissolve ('soften') or reinforce ('harden') the spatial and social strictures that delimit increasingly globalized urban spaces? How do new ideas of personal mobility serve to transform (for better or for worse) urban life? How might these new mobilities shape what Doug Saunders calls the 'arrival city' of constantly dissolving and re-forming edges? Alternatively, Tim Edensor and Mark Jayne caution against the impulse 'to over-romanticize' the mobilities of the twenty-first century city (23). Indeed, Wei-Wei Yeo sees the contemporary city as 'less a place where history is physically inscribed and architecturally intact than the site of an endless cycle of erasure and reconstruction' (247), one in which mobility is hampered for some almost as frequently as it is enabled or accelerated for others.

One of our goals in this volume is to explore performance's role in the processes of global city 'mobilization' – its power both to sustain and to interrupt.

We have begun this introduction with a discussion of a performance in the San Diego–Tijuana region because these two cities are locked together in a way that demonstrates the complexities and the inequalities of urban globalism, of what gets identified as a global city, and of how persons (rather than corporations) are and are not able to transgress the boundaries that surround them. We ask: What forms of performance reflect the greater vectors of globalization and reveal the ways in which seemingly abstract economic and social forces have a real-world impact on individual city-dwellers, their daily lives and movements? In the wake of the global city as *the* geosocial condition of this century, how can urban performance disrupt outmoded, unproductive national identities and work to constitute new ones? These are questions that we see Lux Boreal, among other artists and performers, working to answer.

### **Interventions in the urban scene**

The Lux Boreal company is, like the affect-rich pieces they perform, defined by constant motion. Founded in 2002, the company has since performed all over the world, but most of their productions are presented in the Centro Cultural de Tijuana and at various venues in San Diego, the city just across the Mexican border with the United States. The San Diego–Tijuana border region is part of a geography of conflict (Cruz, 'Allure': 56), a site of constant social tension and political struggle; architect and urban theorist Teddy Cruz regards it as one of 'the world's most contested thresholds' ('Global Border'). The border and its built spaces have seen unrelenting, escalating 'hardening' despite, or perhaps because of, the continuous movement of citizens and commerce across this international frontier.

Border issues have, in the last half century, become an integral part of American popular culture, in large part because of the USA's troubled relationship with Mexico; so much so that we cannot imagine anyone in the United States (or Mexico or Canada for that matter) being unaware of the incredible social pressure that bears on the San Diego–Tijuana border. From a US perspective, the San Ysidro crossing into Baja California is not 'just another border': it is the nexus for a host of political tirades, federal legislation, racist propaganda, police surveillance, humanitarian missions, and drug traffic (and its concomitant violence). In his insightful study of the soundscape of the San Diego–Tijuana border, Josh Kun

observes that ‘the checkpoint is a zone of state blurring where the state’s insides and outsides fold into each other. Rather than a limit or an edge, border checkpoints are fluid zones of inspection and political theatre’ (18). This particular checkpoint has also been the site and animating source of a great deal of popular performance – from Orson Welles’s border-noir *Touch of Evil* (1958) to a host of contemporary screen narratives like the acclaimed films *Traffic* (2000) by Steven Soderbergh and *Babel* (2006) by Alejandro González Iñárritu, and the current TV series *Weeds* (2005–12) – as well as the many social performances that take place daily as Americans, Mexicans, and plenty of others move back and forth, legally and illegally, across this hyper-animated line.

Significantly, in the San Diego–Tijuana region, as in many others around the world, borders and urban space are closely associated, conceptually as well as functionally. Richard Florida recently argued that these two cities constitute a transnational agglomeration, part of the SoCal megaregion (49–51); as early as 1990, Mike Davis described the area as an ‘urban galaxy ... clustered around two super-cores’, Los Angeles to the north and San Diego and Tijuana to the south (6). Economically, workers and factories in the greater Tijuana region provide cheap labor that fuels the economic growth of the computing, entertainment, and biotech industries to the north in California (Florida: 51), though it goes without saying that profits from these industries remain disproportionately in the United States. Thus, San Diego and Tijuana must be understood as two parts of a single urban unit, fused at their contentious border.

This border-straddling conurbation serves as a paradigm of global urban space and a stark example of its inequalities. As Ramón Rivera-Servera and Harvey Young have recently observed elsewhere in the Performance Interventions series, ‘the border exists’ because ‘it is (or has been) imagined as a construct with the capacity to prevent movement.’ However, Rivera-Servera and Young also rightly note that every border holds a rather more paradoxical status ‘as a site of tension between an impulse for stasis and a desire for controlled movement’ (2). Michael Dear and Gustavo Leclerc have theorized features of the global city through an analysis of the art that reflects transformations in the US–Mexico border region; they argue that ‘the spaces of the borderlands are among the most important *places* in the world today.’ Their rationale is that border regions are not only ‘the *genius loci* of radical shifts in demographics, economics, politics, and society, they are also pivotal moments in an evolving artistic mode of production’ (13). Their position echoes Melissa Butcher’s claim that: ‘Spatial transformation and

human agency [have] the potential to create fuzzy, flexible boundaries' (194). While borders continue to be real spaces enforced and contested by nation-states around the world, we take as axiomatic that the *idea* of the border has changed in concert with the idea of the city as a 'global' space, and that border performatives – like cities – are not what they used to be. Today, even the best-defined borders are porous and flexible, made 'soft' by the routine practices of citizens who daily perform their relationships with urban space. We see borders as concentrators of the mobilities that constitute a key feature of the global urban condition. Borders make explicit the 'peculiarly "theatrical" configuration of space' (Nielsen: 64) that can be seen as a latent characteristic of global cities: they enable mobility and also constrict it; they afford and dispossess; they facilitate both incredible wealth and disparate poverty; they are zones of control as well as sites for mundane yet disruptive performances.

Though Lux Boreal's work rarely is explicitly about the Tijuana region, over the years Lux dancers have conducted a number of site-specific performances at the US–Mexico border. Often performed in one or more parts of the built space of the border crossing, each *'Intervencion de la Escena Urbana'*, as the company terms the performances, serves to disrupt the strict spatial disciplines and the near-military security of the border's architecture. One representative performance on a pedestrian bridge featured goofy masks, popular dance steps, and some playful cross-dressing. (see Figure 0.2). These eye-catching, incongruous forms of pure play are juxtaposed with more thoughtful contemporary dance that turns conventional pedestrianism, if not on its head, on its side. Such urban art interventions can, in the words of Cruz, 'remind us that the contemporary city is still able to elude the absolute ordering devices that attempt to render it homogeneous and one-dimensional' ('Global Border'). These dances perform a kind of defamiliarization of site, at least for those in the audience who know what to look for; Diana Taylor argues that 'looking across borders is always an intervention' (183). With these performances on this site, Lux Boreal accomplishes something like what Taylor describes: their site-specific urban performance captures the attention of those simply crossing the border, re-creating them as an audience and, in so doing, makes the 'looking' of that spontaneous audience part of Lux's urban intervention.

These fleeting performances attempt to remind citizens of both nations that, while this may be a 'landscape' occupied by 'an army of immigration officers and paramilitary operations' (Cruz, 'Tijuana Workshop': 43) and a much argued-about fence, it need not be defined



Figure 0.2 Raúl Navarro and Eleana Jiménez Acuña performing in *Puente Móvil*, choreographed by Briseida López for Lux Boreal. Photo by Alex Bertheau

by them. Lux Boreal's dancers reveal the pedestrian performance tactics that are part and parcel of twenty-first-century urban space. Their work – their urban interventions as well as their performances in more conventional theatrical venues – suggests an approach to art making that can be seen as paradigmatic of this and other global metropolitan regions: a critical practice defined by mobility.

### Global cities, global theories

In many ways *Performance and the Global City* is an extension of *Performance and the City*, not a departure from it. That volume helped to set a theoretical foundation and establish new discursive terms for the field of urban performance studies; now, *Performance and the Global City* gathers momentum from the application of those terms in new, international contexts. The foundational claim of *Performance and the City* was that 'performance can help to renegotiate the urban archive, to build the city, and to change it' (Solga, Hopkins, and Orr: 6), and the central brick in that foundation, as we argued in that book's introduction, is a revaluation of the 'text of the city' metaphor, a concept still all too common in studies of urban space. Though this metaphor has

served as the crux of innumerable useful discussions in urban studies, performance studies, and beyond, we remain deeply suspicious of the idea of the city as text, as legible rather than as (or, *prior to*) performatic. 'The text of the city' is, ultimately, only a *metaphor for* rather than a *description of* the actual operations of urban space or individual subjects in that space. We asked in 2009: 'at what point does the idea of the urban "text" fail fully to account ... for the multiple physical, material, and psychic interactions between city and citizen ...?' (Solga, Hopkins, and Orr: 5). The answer we might offer now is: immediately. Or: as soon as the subject shifts from talking about art to talking about reality.

What extends this new volume beyond the first is, at face value, its introduction of the word 'global' – along with its related invocation of the vexed concept of the 'global city'. Doreen Massey argues that 'at the beginning of the twenty-first century, and in a world in which the neoliberal hegemony seems ... assured', the global city 'faces different issues, and poses politico-theoretical challenges that are new' (25). In response to these emergent challenges, *Performance and the Global City* does not simply bring international perspectives to discussions of urban theatre and performance; rather, we aim to demonstrate the enduring value of performance as an interdisciplinary tool for understanding a wide range of built spaces, socioeconomic conditions, and art practices across different incarnations of the 'global city' worldwide – in other words, the value of performance as a tool for interrogating the very challenges that Massey invokes. Thus, alongside many contemporary urban theorists, this volume uses the word 'global' in a dual sense. A *global city* or *world city* can be understood as one whose citizenry is 'remarkably cosmopolitan', or as one whose urban culture produces internationally recognized 'foci for particular spheres of activity' in, for example, the arts, culture, education, faith, or other social practices (Massey: 38, 36). However, the most common understanding of what makes a global city *global* is that city's status as an influential transnational center for business and finance – global cities are thus cities *in globalization*. In the context of this conception of the global city, we seek to understand how performance functions to enable and to disable ground-level experiences in spaces that have been overdetermined, and in some cases literally *taken over* by transnational capital and the neoliberal government policies that support it. These perspectives on the global city – as a site of the cosmopolitan; as a site of the culturally elite; as a site of private enterprise, ownership, and influence on a grand scale – are of course not mutually exclusive; indeed, as the chapters that follow reveal, they are never easily extricable.

Like Massey, Saskia Sassen identifies two different registers at which globalism works. The first is comprised of the most readily apparent 'institutions and processes', such as 'global financial markets', that 'constitute what is typically thought of as the global'; the second includes 'processes that do not necessarily scale at the global level', but yet are crucial in as much as they 'insert localities' – 'subnational' and even individual operations – into the machinery of the global ('Introduction': 3). These two registers operate simultaneously to create the individual city dweller's street-level experience of globalism.

We take as a given that cities are complicated transnational 'social structures' (Harvie: 6) central to the growth of globalization (Massey: 9); as such, every global city sits at the center of a network of political, economic, and cultural connections, connections that lead to other global cities. Thus, while San Diego and Tijuana together offer a clear-cut example of the interconnectedness of global cities, their adjacency only makes explicit the connectedness inherent throughout the global urban: Richard Florida can claim that New York City and London are essentially part of the same metropolitan region – 'NyLon' (46) – and Sassen can argue that 'in many regards New York, London, and Tokyo function as one transterritorial marketplace' (*Global City*: 327). As James Ferguson has convincingly argued of the much talked about 'global economic flow': 'the "global" does not "flow," thereby connecting ... contiguous spaces; it *hops* instead, efficiently connecting the enclaved points in the network while excluding (with equal efficiency) the spaces that lie between the points' (47). For better or worse, the 'enclaved points' in this network are cities. Cities are the geographical nodes that provide material access to, and serve as economic concentrators for, the uneven flow of the global. In light of these and similar claims, the chapters in our volume ask: How can performance reveal the impact of the abstract forces of globalism on the individual urban denizen? At what point might performance – intentionally or inadvertently, for better or for worse – aid or support those forces in the achievement of their goals? Alternately, what performances can model resistance to the often unjust inclusions and exclusions that impact the residents of global cities?

The overdetermined language of the 'global city' is the site of one of this book's principal engagements; another is the even trickier challenge posed by the word 'global' and its academic correlatives – east and west; Western and non-Western; global North and global South. In pressing against this tumultuous, politically troubled language we join work already undertaken by a number of scholars in critical race studies, postcolonial studies, and urban studies – including Edensor and

Jayne, editors of *Urban Theory Beyond the West: A World of Cities* (2012). In their volume, they set out to problematize 'theoretical agendas ... laid down by the "Western" academy' and to expand the discourses of the urban beyond 'a small number of cities mostly located in North America and Europe' (1–2), in order to extend the discourses of urban studies beyond a seemingly canonical itinerary. Though neither their examples nor their methodologies are drawn from performance or theatre studies, Edensor and Jayne's theoretical perspective shows a great deal of consonance with these fields. They write: 'The urban imaginary is ... stimulated by the individually and collectively lived experience of the city, (re)produced by tourists, middle-class consumers, entrepreneurs, planners and architects, slum-dwellers and suburbanites, police officers, taxi drivers, street vendors, and students as they work, dwell in, and move across urban space' (24). In their impulse to critique stale disciplinary shibboleths and to focus on lived experience, Edensor and Jayne trace many of the same engagements in their volume as we do. For example: While Edensor and Jayne praise Dear and Leclerc for developing a transnational urban theory 'that incorporates multiple shifting and intersecting spatialities in continual flux, a melding of "non-Western" and "Western" practices and processes', they also criticize Dear and Leclerc for failing 'to critically engage with the efficacy of such labels' (2). That said, Edensor and Jayne have a problem with labels, too.

Throughout their substantial introduction, they disavow the 'Western'/'non-Western' binary and helpfully take to task the urban studies research that has promulgated these obsolete terms. Unfortunately, they ultimately preserve that same binary because they do not fully address the issue of nomenclature: rather than using their volume to displace the discourse of urban studies in the direction of more geographically specific, theoretically focused language, Edensor and Jayne continue to use the same terms, merely framing them within quotation marks. In this usage, the scare quotes function as an apology for the tacit condescension and latent colonial intent behind these words, but they nevertheless still preserve intact some of that same condescension and intent.

The distinction between 'Western' and 'non-Western' cities is, as Edensor and Jayne understand, uncritical and inaccurate; the search for replacement language is similarly fraught with the risk of replicating old binaries. In our volume we try hard to avoid both; the languages of 'West' and 'rest' are encountered with critical care and sustained attention, as in Susan Bennett's astute chapter on the deliberate performances of 'Western' urban livability at World Expo 2010 in Shanghai. Other

contributors avoid the binary entirely by offering their own localized definitions of urban concepts – see, for example, Silvija Jestrovic’s innovative redefinition of ‘world city’ in her rereading of Sarajevo under the siege – or by pursuing research that considers networks of linked performance in cities around the world, as do Paul Rae and Simon Jones in their mapping across multiple urban landscapes – from global Singapore to small cities in the United Kingdom – of a suite of performances about commuting. Further, many of our authors demonstrate what Edensor and Jayne usefully term ‘relational thinking’, inviting a view of the global urban that disavows ‘hierarchies and categories’ and remains instead ‘open to multiple spatial imaginaries and practices’ (16, 18). Co-editor Kim Solga and Theatre ISÔKO Artistic Director Jennifer H. Capraru demonstrate such a relational geography: they trace the production of a post-genocide play in Kigali, Rwanda along with its transfer to Toronto, where it entered – uncomfortably – the global circuit of festival production.

Throughout *Performance and the Global City*, we see global city spaces as the incubators of alternative theatre and performance communities, creating durable – if often intangible – structures for reimagining the functions and goals of contemporary local, national, and transnational communities. But even as we acknowledge that cities can provide a valuable concentration of creative capital, we realize that they are not, and never have been, uniformly safe spaces, and that the idea of the ‘global city’, as well as much of the performance it provokes, is marked by, and imbricated in, the violent impact of neoliberal policies. Thus, the chapters in this collection are not simply laudatory of ‘global city’ performance; they seek to interrogate the greater impact of global urban performatives both large and small, micro- and macro-scaled. Some of the performances our contributors discuss – such as those carried out as research by Nicholas Whybrow’s students in Venice; or the emotional labor staged as part of Theatre ISÔKO’s *The Monument*, directed by Capraru and explored in her chapter with Solga; or the inner-city artworks developed by Joubert Park Project and Trinity Sessions in Johannesburg, and discussed by Loren Kruger – provide hope for positive change, a space to imagine and even design a truly ‘global’ global city; others – including some of the artists and works discussed by Jason Bush, Susan Bennett, Paul Rae and Simon Jones, and Philip Hager – reinforce existing, contentious divisions and inequalities. All require our sustained attention as we unpack the impact that performance is having on the development of the global city.

## Performance in the wake of the global city

Complex perspectives on meaning-making in a global context inform the divisions that we have developed for the volume. Many of our contributors necessarily underline the precarity of urban living in rapidly globalizing city spaces, where Rustom Bharucha observes ‘the stark reality of millions of people who continue to live outside of modernity not ... by choice but because of the poverty that continues to be thrust on them by the agencies and collusions of the state and the market’ (8). The first part of our book, ‘Mobilities and (In)Civilities: The Global Urban Borderlands’, explores provisional responses to some of the challenges of living amidst the precarities heaved up by emergent global urbanization. The four chapters here focus in particular on the tensions, risks, dangers, and possibilities manifest along urban border zones, be they borders among inner-city communities (for Loren Kruger in Johannesburg), between or among cities within a megaregion (for Jean Graham-Jones in Argentina and Susan Bennett in China), or between radically different and distant cities linked by the urban theories and practices of global, ‘creative’ living (for Bennett, as for Solga and Capraru as they move between Kigali and Toronto). Each chapter in this section takes up a specific performance, or series of linked performances, of urban ‘civility’ in order to think through how the act of making the work intersects with specific acts of building (or rebuilding) communities in cities where becoming global is still very much in process, and thus where the borders between ‘local’ and ‘global’, and the citizens and experiences they each privilege, are still very much in contention.

In Part 2, ‘Transacting Bodies/Embodied Currencies: Subjects and Cities’, four further chapters trace the ways in which the hunger for capital and the impulses toward exchange and market valuation not only determine human experiences of the global city, but also open doors for those seeking to exploit those impulses for both personal and community-based gain. Focusing on the ways in which ‘performance’ both enables and complicates two particularly fraught modes of global urban citizenship – that of the tourist, and that of the commuter – these chapters consider the quotidian performativity that drives the global city at its most basic levels of operation (in the subway, in the entertainment district, or on the cultural or heritage tour), as well as the varied responses that live artists are making to the physical and emotional labor of individual urban subjects as demanded by what we might call ‘global city performativity’. This part of the book also features its

most eclectic mix of disciplinary perspectives, with two ethnographers (Jason Bush and Melissa Butcher) in dialogue with three artist-scholars (Nicolas Whybrow, and Paul Rae and Simon Jones). The result is four chapters that explore the nuances of touring, commuting, and performing (for) global city subjectivities from angles at once social-scientific and eminently personal, theoretically sophisticated yet broadly immersive. Acting as models for the multiple ways in which urban performance studies is practiced today, these chapters articulate the experiences of walking, exploring, performing, and studying the global city from perspectives both top-down (analytical) and ground-up (experiential).

Sometimes, for urban theorists, the 'global city' can feel like an intellectual war zone; in truth, it often *is* a war zone. Our book's final part, 'Citizen Stages: Acts of Dissent in the Global City', explicitly considers what it means to 'occupy' a city that is trying to impose a new, global order from the top down. Focusing on four cities that have been the sites of mass protests, mass ethnic violence, and even literal war in recent memory, these chapters act as manifestos, calls to arms, and memorials for the millions of human beings who put their bodies on the line every day in the name of a better, more humane vision of their home cities. While Ana Martínez and Silvija Jestrovic reflect on how performance-driven citizen actions – in Mexico City in 2001 and Sarajevo in 1984 – struggled to define the terms of each city's emergent global identity along more ethnically, culturally, and economically inclusive lines, Nesreen Hussein and Philip Hager, in chapters commissioned especially for this volume, speak from the midst of two immediate moments of profound change: the ongoing Euro zone economic crisis and the Arab spring, as felt on the streets of Cairo and of Athens. How performance works – and how and when it fails to work – to help generate sustainable and positive change for those citizens at the forefront of these tumults is their heartfelt, though sometimes melancholy, subject.

Our previous volume, *Performance and the City*, consciously positioned New York City as central to that book's concerns. In the years immediately following 9/11, New York seemed like a paradigm of urban space: fraught with trauma, marked by memory, and newly representative of global spaces worldwide. *Performance and the Global City*, and its last part in particular, sets out deliberately to query the centrality of North American and European cities at the heart of our understanding of urban performance economies and live-art driven urban change. To paraphrase a tone-setting statement in Loren Kruger's chapter, we intend for the work in this book to highlight the profound potential of urban perspectives from beyond northern North America and Central-Western Europe

'to transform the ways in which we typically understand the notions of innovation, creativity, and cosmopolitanism as inherent to the modern *northern* city, while also challenging that city's unique status as *the* site of aspiration to the good life' (see p. 21 in this volume). Taken together, the chapters in this volume chart the contours of a contemporary urban imaginary not limited to an Anglocentric ideology, nor to a perspective circumscribed by divisions of north and south, us and them. As Gayatri Spivak reminds us: 'Whatever our view of what we do, we are made by the forces of people moving about the world' (3). Such a vision of citizens in constant circulation mobilizes this volume: the people of our world are the true subjects of *Performance and the Global City*.

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