



## Editors' Note

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Published online: 10 June 2022

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### To Our Readers,

In December 2021, we accepted the honor of co-editing the American Journal of Dance Therapy. We acknowledge its strong trajectory and key role in inspiring new research in dance/movement therapy. Special thank you to Laura Downey and Susan Kierr for their work as the previous editors of the journal, and to all our editor predecessors. Thank you to the Editorial Review Board (past and present), our peer reviewers, and all who have been foundational to the journal so far.

This journal was compiled as the world heads towards an endemic conflict and the threat of war, continued social injustice around the globe, and increased mental health needs as a result of the previous two years of the pandemic and its continuous unfolding impact. These shifts reverberate in our priorities and reflect the essence of how this profession can continue to contribute knowledge, skills and examples of resilience, overcoming and transformation. These events and our experiences as dance/movement therapists have shaped the overall vision and aims we have for this journal going forward. As co-editors, we uphold a strong commitment to scholarship in the field of dance/movement therapy and encouraging work to be developed in new areas. We would like to catalyze research that promotes diversity, equity and inclusion, and which continues to question, challenge and expand current views of health and wellbeing across the world.

The articles included in this issue indicate a return to the foundational principles of dance/movement therapy: three original papers, three papers from the ADTA conference proceedings and a book review. The journal also reflects an internal evaluation of our core motivations. The content of the original papers provokes interesting discourses in terms of how we continue to refine and deepen DMT training and development while remaining in contact with the roots of our profession. A return to the aspects of dance that continues

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to feed the practice is prominent throughout each manuscript, and exemplified in articles about contact improvisation and touch; a reexamination of Authentic Movement and its influences on training in Israel; and a personal exploration of the healing aspects of dance and the importance of inclusivity. The book review demonstrates the possibilities of interdisciplinary collaborations with psychotherapy and how we can continue to build common bridges within a wide gamut of professional networks.

Additionally, this issue includes conference materials from the 56th American Dance Therapy Association conference, *Dance/Movement Therapy: Ancient Healing, Modern Practice*, held virtually in October 2021. The Marian Chace Foundation 2021 Film Screening and Panel Discussion highlights the process of developing a dance/movement therapy film that demonstrates the important historical trajectory of DMT, and powerful DMT trailblazers who have influenced the field for decades. The Research and Thesis poster abstracts focus on resilience and insights from practice. The International Panel explores a global perspective on the roots of healing dance practices. All these contributions highlight sociocultural aspects that continue to enrich both our theoretical and practical frameworks.

We hope that you find resonance with the material contained within this issue and the call to celebrate the foundations of dance/movement therapy, explore new perspectives, enhance practice, and deepen our body of research.

Sincerely,

Thania and Aisha

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**Thania Acarón** (she/her) is a lecturer, performer, choreographer and dance/movement therapist from Puerto Rico, currently based in Wales, UK. She obtained her Ph.D. on the role of dance in violence prevention at the University of Aberdeen (2015). Dr Acarón holds a master's degree in Dance Education from New York University (2003) with Alternate Route Certification in dance/movement therapy since 2005 and advanced certifications in clinical supervision and private practice in the UK (R-DMP) and US (BC-DMT). Thania currently works as a lecturer in Arts, Health & Wellbeing and Performance at the University of South Wales in Cardiff. She has taught in over 10 DMT training programs around the world, and has supported the development of the DMT Latinx Network, LGBTQ+ ADMP Network, Queer Arts Therapies UK Network and Wales ADMP Hub. Acarón served the ADTA as part of the Alternate Route Educators and Students subcommittee between 2014 and 2018 and is a proud member of the Puerto Rican ADTA Chapter. She holds a strong research focus on diversity in therapeutic practice and offers international workshops on therapeutic work with the LGBTQ+ community, embodied decision-making, employee respite and violence prevention. To further consolidate this work, in 2020 she founded *The Body Hotel LTD*, a dance/movement therapy social enterprise which focuses on employee wellbeing and bringing DMT to underrepresented communities.

**Aisha Bell Robinson** (she/her) is a Board-Certified Dance/Movement Therapist and a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor currently based in Chicago, IL. Aisha is the Founder of Bella Consulting Group, LLC, which focuses on wellness, supporting organizations on their Diversity, Equity & Inclusion journeys, and providing training. Aisha was Part-Time faculty in Columbia College Chicago's Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling program, where she taught Social and Cultural Foundations, clinical

practicum, and served as a thesis reader and thesis advisor. Aisha also guest lectured in Family Counseling and Clinical Appraisal and Treatment Planning. She has served on the Standards & Ethics Committee for the ADTA, joining during the process of rewriting the association's ethical code. She also served on the BC-DMT credential task force. Aisha was a member of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) Planning team and DE&I Implementation team for Communities in Schools (National). Aisha's professional experience includes executive leadership, consultation, clinical practice, and national training on topics such as embodied practice, ethics, social emotional learning, management, and cultural competence. Aisha's research and clinical interests include families and adolescents, maternal mental health, and topics aligned with diversity, equity and inclusion. Aisha was recently published in the book "Dance/Movement Therapy for Trauma Survivors: Theoretical, Clinical, and Cultural Perspectives."