

# Parading as a Means of Joyfully Choreographing a Future

## *Úmbal* and Second-Lining

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*Úmbal: Thirty-seconds to choreograph a community. The foundational moment of Úmbal occurs during a thirty-second audition. Unlike traditional auditions, Úmbal does not reject anyone. In under a minute, a participant's joyful and creative movements become part of the project's Step Library.*

*Second-Lining: When the procession pauses, paraders form mini-circles where individual dancers strut their stuff to the beat of the crowd, dipping and bobbing to the pounding of drums and the blare of horns.*

Parading manifests and celebrates belonging while animating political agency with choreographed movement in public spaces. Parades enable us to encounter one another face-to-face in a world that is increasingly cloistered. In the act of dancing together, we experience a communal joy. In this paper, I will compare two forms of parading: *Úmbal: Nomadic Choreography for Inhabitants*, which was constructed and performed by community members in Philadelphia at the 2019 Fringe Arts Festival, and second-lining, which is rooted in a longstanding tradition in New Orleans. Fringe

Arts hosts an annual three-week fall festival with more than one thousand independently produced performances. Both parading concepts were founded in communities of color to reclaim and transform urban spaces by making bodies visible in a collective. Although these parading models differ in their aesthetics and organizational structures, they share the nonviolent goal of mobilizing people. I will demonstrate how *Úmbal* paraders and second-liners dance politically as a means of joyfully choreographing a future. First, I will explore how *Úmbal* and second-lining parading concepts were formed in response to political and racial injustice. Then, I will introduce a model for distinguishing political dance from its communal form. Finally, I will look at how identity is constituted corporally in *Úmbal* and Second Line parades. I will frame my argument in relation to Hannah Arendt's *spaces of appearance*.

### ***Úmbal*: Nomadic Choreography for Inhabitants Connecting the Past with the Current Moment**

*"El cuerpo que se hace visible se hace poderoso."*  
Mariana Arteaga, choreographer

Protest resides at the core of *Úmbal*'s genesis. The ambulatory dance performance was borne out of an incident in 2014 when forty-three adult students disappeared while traveling from Guerrero, Mexico to the capital city to commemorate the anniversary of the 1968 Tlatelolco Massacre at the Plaza de las Tres Culturas. Since then, despite public outrage, thousands of people have disappeared or been killed by criminal gangs consorting with corrupt authorities, and the Mexican government continues to suppress protests with choreographed military and police interventions.<sup>1</sup> This ongoing political oppression led Mariana Arteaga, the creator of *Úmbal*, to ask, "What if we could rehearse citizens freedom" by "organizing ourselves to make a visible, collected body that...inhabits public space in a different way?"<sup>2</sup> Arteaga responded by designing an inexpensive and portable parade model: *Úmbal: Nomadic Choreography for Inhabitants*. In an interview with the founders of Fringe Arts in Philadelphia, Arteaga explains:

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<sup>1</sup> Mariana Arteaga, Raina Searles, and Tenara Calem, "Happy Hour on the Fringe: Conversation with Mariana Arteaga." Fringe Arts, June 24, 2019.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Hannah Arendt said freedom is rehearsed. That resonated with me. ... We have to practice our own freedom and we have to feel what that could be. That made me think of nomadic choreography. ... We need to be walking through the streets and dancing. ... Dancing for me is a way of recovering power...the power of joy to be able to confront things. ... this idea of collective joy...could lead us to little fractures that eventually come in some kind of change.<sup>3</sup>

Arteaga launched *Úmbal: Nomadic Choreography for Inhabitants* in Mexico City in 2015 and brought it to the streets of Philadelphia in September 2019. Regardless of national origin, she wants people, as a society, “to imagine ourselves living differently...to take care of the other in public spaces in different ways than a [military] demonstration.”<sup>4</sup> In Philadelphia, Arteaga hoped to establish new points of encounter, stating:

As a Mexican, I also reflect a lot about this immigrant condition and its relationship with the United States. ... What made me say I want to be in Philly is intention. We have to start from one point. It might happen, it might not happen, but that consciousness and then the process...gives us clues of how to better those bridges, to have the conversation.<sup>5</sup>

In conjunction with the Fringe Arts team, Arteaga mapped a parade route through neighborhoods comprising Puerto Rican, Mexican, Honduran, Cambodian, and Vietnamese immigrants as well as African Americans with dual goals of bringing new people to forgotten and abandoned spaces while redistributing power to residents.<sup>6</sup>

*Úmbal* was a relatively low-budget production funded by a grant from the William Penn Foundation’s New Audiences/New Places Program and promoted through free media outlets, including Twitter and Facebook, as well as in local fliers, newspapers, at dance

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

and arts organizations, and through neighborhood associations and networks. Little was required beyond volunteer dancers, public space, and a traveling sound system. Although participants of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities were initially recruited digitally, every stage thereafter was designed to cultivate face-to-face interaction. For example, in the first phase, the Step Library, community members were invited to open auditions where they performed and donated thirty seconds of digitally recorded and archived movement that exemplified their relationship to Philadelphia for use in the final choreography. Next, during phase two, the Weaver's Laboratory, Arteaga, along with a team of twenty-five step donors and local choreographers, knit the archived steps together into a loose framework for the parade processional. During the final phase of *Úmbal*, the general public was, again, summoned to audition for the processional as well as to attend weekly dance rehearsals over the summer at various public locations. Finally, on September 7, 13, and 14, 2019, dancers paraded for forty-five minutes on the streets of South Philadelphia to the music of Missy Elliott, Janelle Monáe, Bomba Estéreo, and Empress Of, culminating in a communal dance party in a park at the end of the route. Ellen Dunkel, an *Úmbal* performer, recounted the "large and enthusiastic" parade launch, stating:

We danced in a crowded intersection, created a 'rainstorm' of sound, 'flocked' like birds. ... We performed the Wobble down a narrow street...before running around the perimeter of Weinberg Park in a hand-to-hand daisy chain. ... Near the end, some children from the audience spontaneously jumped in."<sup>7</sup>

Forty-five steps were donated by nearly one hundred paraders who designed, developed, and performed this experimental open-source project.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ellen Dunkel, "I Shouted and Wobbled and Vogued and 'Flocked' on the Streets of South Philly Last Weekend, and it Was Art." *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 10, 2019. <https://www.inquirer.com/arts/uumbal-fringe-festival-mariana-artega-dance-collective-2019-20190910.html>.

<sup>8</sup> "Fringe Arts Announces Open Call to Participate in Large-Scale Public Dance Processional, *Úmbal*: Nomadic Choreography for Inhabitants." PhiladelphiaDANCE.org. <https://philadelphiadance.org/dancejournal/2019/>

## Second-Lining: Connecting the Past with the Current Moment

*"We gonna show the world that we still exist."*

*Ronald W. Lewis, president, Big Nine SAPC*

Second-lining grew out of benevolent societies known as Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs (SAPCs) in nineteenth-century New Orleans which, in addition to funding brass band processions at members' funerals, provided people of African descent with medical care, burial insurance, political networks, and social support.<sup>9</sup> As Jim Crow laws were legislated, African American and Afro-Creole musicians from the benevolent societies began parading through streets where lynchings had occurred to oppose racist laws, thereby asserting their right to move freely in public spaces.<sup>10</sup> Since then, nearly every Sunday, the poorest neighborhoods are transformed into grand street festivals where thousands of people mobilize to counteract ongoing poverty as well as class- and race-based segregation, thus casting themselves in different roles while strengthening their social fabric.<sup>11</sup> Anthropologist Helen Regis describes the scene:

One in every ten residents in New Orleans lives in a public housing project. In many neighborhoods, the unemployment rate is over 50 percent. ... Through the transformative experience of the parade, they become *owners of the streets*. ... Participants "play" with the stereotyped images of themselves which they receive from print and televised media. Specifically, they contest dominant representations of the city's low-income African Americans as either predatory criminals or helpless victims of a racist society. Clubs cultivate a dignified, respectable image of working people. ... Further, they display and strengthen family

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03/05/fringearts-announces-open-call-to-participate-in-large-scale-public-dance-processional-uumbal-nomadic-choreography-for-inhabitantsas/.

<sup>9</sup> Rachel Carrico, "Un/Natural Disaster and Dancing," *The Black Scholar* 46, no. 1 (February 2016): 28.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Helen A. Regis, "Second Lines, Minstrelsy, and the Contested Landscapes of New Orleans Afro-Creole Festivals," *Cultural Anthropology* 14, no. 4 (1999): 472.

connections, which are commonly denied low-income African-Americans in the media... creating a safe space for people from different neighborhoods and of different class, ethnic, and racial affiliations to come together in a celebration of conviviality and solidarity.<sup>12</sup>

Social Aid and Pleasure Clubs organize and finance the expensive all-day anniversary events, paying for marching brass bands, elaborate costumes, parading licenses, insurance, and police convoys required by the city. The Second Line constitutes followers, joiners, friends, family, and neighbors who participate in the procession by walking next to or behind the benevolent club referred to as the First Line.<sup>13</sup> Second-liners have become so prominent that the parade was renamed to amplify the importance of community participation.<sup>14</sup>

Unlike *Úmbal*, which is portable, relatively inexpensive, smaller in scale, and requires only several months of organizing, a Second Line parade consumes a year's worth of volunteer labor. Social Aid and Pleasure Club members attend weekly meetings and rehearsals, sponsor numerous fundraisers, and frequent the functions of other clubs as well as the weddings, graduations, birthdays, and funerals of their own members.<sup>15</sup> According to Regis, much of the power of the Second Line derives from the relationships between club members and joiners, noting:

At the height of my involvement...I was invited to two or three dances every weekend. In addition, nearly every Sunday is one club's anniversary parade, and several Saturdays a month feature the funeral of a well-known community member...this year-long calendar of intersecting social events creates the enduring social networks.<sup>16</sup>

Whereas *Úmbal* enlists volunteers virtually and then invites dancers to rehearse in public spaces over the course of a summer,

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 478–84.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 473.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 474.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

second-liners are recruited from their neighborhoods through informal lines of communication and remain engaged for years. Footwork training and rehearsals occur in club members' backyards and kitchens, as well as in schoolyards, churches, parks, and other public spaces.<sup>17</sup> Although the organizational structures and histories of *Úmbal* and second-lining differ, both parading models empower performers and joiners to transform their local communities with dance.

### A Model for Dancing Politically

*“[W]e have arrived at a situation where we do not know—at least not yet—how to move politically.”*  
*Hannah Arendt*

Public spaces are dynamic and change with the people who fill them. Without common experiences in public spaces, people risk becoming estranged, thereby relinquishing their collective political agency. The organizational structures as well as the performative aspects of *Úmbal* and second-lining mitigate the effects of sociospatial segregation which, according to sociologist Mark Gottdiener, “fragments all social groups, not just the least powerful, so that the local community loses the street and public areas of communion.”<sup>18</sup> Both parading models necessitate recurring face-to-face interaction in public areas where residents practice moving politically together.

Political theorist and philosopher Hannah Arendt defines public places where a body of people intentionally and consensually gather to speak and act as spaces of appearance; it is in these spaces where power may be generated through continuous action. Arendt defines power as

the plurality of actors joining together for a common political purpose...a human creation, the outcome of a collective engagement...based on consent. ... Power is derived from the initial getting together of people. ... It is sustained not

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<sup>17</sup> Carrico, 30.

<sup>18</sup> Regis, *Second Lines*, 477.

by economic, bureaucratic or military means, but by common convictions.<sup>19</sup>

Conversely, this space ceases to exist after bodies disperse. When people publicly congregate to act in concert, such as is the case with the parading models examined here, there is the potential for power to manifest and surge. Therefore, every time paraders assemble to rehearse or perform, they redistribute power in the spaces they occupy while simultaneously reclaiming those spaces for political agency.

Besides generating power, Arendt asserts that collective political action can also engender happiness. During an interview, Arendt foregrounded protests in the 1960's to support her argument, claiming, "The students experienced what in true politics is always experienced: It turned out for them that acting is fun."<sup>20</sup> Arendt's statement centers the belief that happiness emerges from acting together to build something new. Arendt nuances her argument in *The Human Condition* where she compares political acting to dancing, writing:

Acting is embedded in the performance...as in the performance of the dancer or play-actor, the "product" is identical with the performing act itself. ... These occupations—healing, flute-playing, and play-acting—furnished ancient thinking with examples of the highest activities and greatest activities of man.<sup>21</sup>

Arendt characterizes dancing, or parading, as a particularly potent and strategic means of generating power in spaces of appearance. *Úmbal* and second-lining are premised on joyfully embodying public space for political action.

Political theorist Oliver Marchart builds on Arendt's theory of political acting to develop a model for distinguishing communal dance from its political form. According to Marchart, five conditions delineate dance as protest: human bodies, strategy,

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<sup>19</sup> Edward N. Zalta, "Hannah Arendt," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, January 11, 2019. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/>.

<sup>20</sup> Oliver Marchart, "Dancing Politics: Political Reflections on Choreography, Dance, and Protest," *Diaphanes* 2013, <https://www.diaphanes.net/titel/dancing-politics-2126>.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*



collectivity, conflictuality, and the blockade of circulation.<sup>22</sup> To recapitulate the first three conditions underlying Arendt's spaces of appearance, a collective of human bodies assembles publicly and acts tactically and consensually for a political purpose. Moving on, I will analyze the remaining two conditions: blockade of circulation and conflictuality.

Marchart's conception of antagonism refers to the condition of conflictuality through which a community of protest comes into being to confront a threat.<sup>23</sup> Although individuals may share contradictory views, they act en bloc around an agenda of equivalence.<sup>24</sup> For example, *Úmbal* was created to contest repression from police and military forces. Likewise, second-lining was conceived by oppressed people of African descent to defy racist laws and culture. During every rehearsal and performance, to counter antagonistic threats, *Úmbal* paraders and second-liners joyfully enact agonism. In so doing, parading as a form of protest may be viewed in a more sympathetic light by the general public, thus enlivening new conversations, alliances, and force.

The final condition, blocking streams of circulation, is both contingent on and rooted in antagonism. On the one hand, by crowding streets during performances, paraders and bystanders stop traffic and curtail commerce. On the other hand, police and military agents are deployed to open and direct pathways of circulation. This underscores the precarity of acting freedom under government surveillance and control. Political theorist Jacques Rancière identifies a crucial obstacle paraders must surmount, stating, "Politics, by contrast to the police, consists in transforming this space of moving along, of circulation, into the space for appearance of a [political] subject."<sup>25</sup> In response to this challenge, *Úmbal* paraders and second-liners crowd, obstruct, and disrupt space with visible bodies that expand and contract while dancing along officially permitted routes. For example, second-liners do not yield at intersections. They hold space by flooding traffic lanes and blocking intersections. As Regis summarizes, a Second Line parade "supersedes quotidian routines and traffic laws—it owns the

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> André Lepecki, "Choreopolice and Choreopolitics: or, the Task of the Dancer," *The Drama Review* 57, no. 4 (2013): 20.

streets.”<sup>26</sup> Moreover, the subversive nature of joyful dancing serves to disarm authorities who focus on “why” rather than “how” paraders and joiners enact freedom.

According to performance theorist André Lepecki, dancers may contest choreopolicing with insistent and persistent movements, thereby “tackling that which blocks, diverts and (pre)conditions” them.<sup>27</sup> Police control crowds by enforcing conformity; however, when a collective dances through streets, every change in step, tempo, and rhythm disrupts and denies conformity, thus privileging political action over police intervention. Whereas choreopolicing is designed to demobilize political action, careful choreographic planning facilitates the political to be (re)discovered and (re)produced in every body and every movement that forms the collective.<sup>28</sup> This surge of power builds long before the final performance, at every rehearsal and training, when dancers reaffirm their commitment to the political through movement. In short, both parading models meet the minimal requirements for dancing politically.

### Embodied Identity Formation Along *Úmbal* Parade Routes

*Father to a toddler auditioning for Úmbal's Step  
Library: "Do you want to say what your name is?"  
Toddler stomps, twirls, jumps, shakes his head, says  
"No," and continues to dance.*

Whereas *Úmbal* paraders and second-liners vary in their virtuosity, performers take an active role in shaping choreographic material into a real-time composition. Dancers move within the choreographic framework formulated at rehearsals; however, during the parade, individuals make moment-to-moment artistic choices that are woven into the emerging performance tapestry. These extemporaneous gestures invite and encourage joiners and bystanders to copy, repeat, and improvise. This choreographic process serves two functions: first, it effectuates a dynamic event in which audience members and performers become one collective force along the route; and second, through movement, dancers (re)connect themselves to the spaces they inhabit. The final

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<sup>26</sup> Helen A. Regis, “Blackness and the Politics of Memory in the New Orleans Second Line,” *American Ethnologist* 28, no. 4 (2001): 757.

<sup>27</sup> Lepecki, 18.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

production manifests vitality and force as participants, to include paraders, joiners, and bystanders, corporally inscribe themselves into the performance.

Arteaga intentionally developed a parade model that grants each performer a corporeal voice, declaring:

If we are going to do a collective statement...I'm not going to tell others to dance my steps because then they're only talking about me. ... The choreographic construction should not only be lived by me...but by the citizens.<sup>29</sup>

As outlined in Arteaga's three-step schema, for the Step Library, dancers selected unique music and performed distinct movements which reflected their relationship to Philadelphia. When viewing the digital archive, I observed dancers claiming space and reshaping their identities in various ways. For example, Katie, a middle-aged woman in a wheelchair, danced with her upper body to Paul Simon's "You Can Call Me Al." She began the thirty-second clip moving her shoulders, one-by-one, up-and-down. As Katie gained momentum, she raised and lowered both shoulders in unison. Halfway through the audition, Katie complicated her gestures by shifting both arms back and forth across her chest with a downward-facing scissor movement. Shortly thereafter, with a technical precision that complemented her jubilation, Katie raised her arms above her head, filling that space as her hands swayed back and forth. She concluded her audition with a smile and a giggle. By the end of the clip, Katie held space beyond the confines of her wheelchair that extended overhead and across the periphery of her chest and midline. For someone who lives in a world surrounded by people from above, whose view is of buttocks and feet, and whose face is hidden, it must be liberating to be visible and to capture space other people steal every day.<sup>30</sup>

During another audition, Arteaga partnered with a blind youth named Adán to dance to merengue music. This was an ideal choice because the corresponding left-right steps mimic marching. Adán entered the studio with his head facing downward and his back to the camera. The dancers shared a few pleasantries, Arteaga

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<sup>29</sup> Arteaga, Searles, and Calem.

<sup>30</sup> Fringe Arts, "Katie," April 15, 2019, video, 0:34, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnQHi8SZ3Yk&list=PL0hpadWnRjYEnySGHNiyex5Nm\\_\\_BdHc8&index=29&t=0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnQHi8SZ3Yk&list=PL0hpadWnRjYEnySGHNiyex5Nm__BdHc8&index=29&t=0s).

laughed, and, in a gesture that demonstrated Adán's trust in his partner, he opened his hands for her to take. Arteaga placed her hands on his palms and guided him to the center of the dance floor. Arteaga's warm gestures matched her encouraging words, commenting with a smile, "Vente para acá." Adán took a few paces forward and began to synchronize his movements with the music, stepping left and right while shifting his hips up and down. Within a few seconds, Adán was mimicking the flow, tempo, and rhythm of Arteaga's rapid yet predictable step, hip, and arm movements. The pronounced swing of Arteaga's arms and hips helped Adán feel and then echo his partner's footwork. Arteaga bent and straightened her knees, causing her hips to shift up and down while her upper body remained level. Adán cued from Arteaga's rib cage slides which corresponded to her alternating footwork and hip drops. Once Adán was able to follow the footwork confidently, he assumed the role of the lead dancer, stepping away from Arteaga and shimmying independently. The pair reunited; Adán took her hand and led as Arteaga did a one-handed spin. Both dancers sang and moved with abandon before clapping, bowing, and exclaiming, "Gracias!" By the end of the clip, it was as if the dancers and the audience had forgotten that Adán is blind. In less than one minute, Adán claimed the role of lead dancer and for a moment, perhaps, inhabited a body that experienced the world in novel ways.<sup>31</sup>

*Úmbal* permits paraders to perceive beyond what is "recognizable by car."<sup>32</sup> As bodies expand on the street, dancers "feel the certainty of freedom...see new possibilities about the way we relate to and inhabit the world."<sup>33</sup> Arteaga's performance schema enables participants, including dancers, joiners, and bystanders, to sense the contours of the space they occupy collectively as well as their distinct power in it.

### Embodied Identity Formation Along Second Line Parade Routes

*"Dance for New Orleanians not only presents a form of entertainment...but also serves as a canvas on*

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<sup>31</sup> Fringe Arts, "Adán," April 15, 2019, video, 1:05, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P89yEW6Sz5A&list=PL0hpadWnRJjYEnySGHNiyex5Nm\\_BdHc8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P89yEW6Sz5A&list=PL0hpadWnRJjYEnySGHNiyex5Nm_BdHc8).

<sup>32</sup> Mariana Arteaga, "Interview with Marian Arteaga." Fringe Arts, <https://fringearts.com/tag/mariana-arteaga/>.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

*which to paint identities.” Rachel Carrico,  
performance theorist*

On any given Sunday, if you follow the sound of music in New Orleans, you will find “back of town” neighborhoods animated with joy.<sup>34</sup> Streets pulsate with brass sounds and stomping feet. The music of the Second Line keeps participants rollin’ and strollin’ while imbuing the route with an exultant energy. Once tubas sound, ropes unfurl, dancers claim their spots in the procession, and the party begins. The Second Line

is not meant to be taken in visually by spectators.  
... It is to be entered. Participants are like  
streams joining a river, flooding the streets of the  
city with music and dancing bodies, engulfing all  
in their path.<sup>35</sup>

On the parade route, second-liners embody wealth and beauty in bejeweled costumes while carrying brightly colored umbrellas, banners, and flags decorated with intricate beadwork. As dancers and musicians move through the streets en masse, they demand respect and attention. Their solidarity is palpable and communicated through movement. Paraders remind the world that they exist by “chanting, playing cowbells and tambourines, rapping on glass bottles, walking and strutting” and most notably, by dancing. They “spill onto sidewalks and front yards, snake between parked cars, and even scale roofs and overpasses...with high-knee stepping, scissor-like footwork, and buck jumping...dramatic leaps, drops, and stunts.”<sup>36</sup> In footwork, dissent and defiance are enacted; and it is nearly impossible to police five thousand paraders who are perilously close and in motion.

Second-lining has been characterized as choreographed improvisation. Although the basic forms remain consistent, innovations persist. Footwork is arranged to move paraders forward while matching and responding to musical rhythms.<sup>37</sup> Within that framework, however, individual expression is

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<sup>34</sup> Regis, *Second Lines*, 475.

<sup>35</sup> Regis, *Blackness*, 757.

<sup>36</sup> Carrico, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Rachel Carrico and Esailama G.A. Diouf-Henry, “Flying High: Function and Form in New Orleans Second Line Dancing,” In *Freedom's Dance: Social, Aid and Pleasure Clubs in New Orleans* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 2018), 139.

“prized.”<sup>38</sup> The subversive nature of second-lining is disguised in “stolen and styled” steps.<sup>39</sup> Dancers observe others’ movements, imitate them, and then tailor footwork to reflect their unique styles.<sup>40</sup> In this process, the dancer’s identity is (re)formed. Tyree Smith, Secretary of the Family Ties SAPC, exclaims:

Oh my god [second-lining] was hard! It was hard because at first I couldn’t keep up. ... I was off beat...so I started going on the regular...and I just started watching people. And I was like, ‘Oh, I got that move. ... OK, I can do this, I can do that’. ... I just kind of put all that together and kind of created my own style with a little swag from this person, a little swag from that person. That’s where I came from. That’s what created me. From everybody else. It’s always basically stealing. That’s all you’re doing, it is stealing different moves.<sup>41</sup>

Moreover, second-liners become mentors to youth during the impressionable adolescent years. Washington, a parader who has volunteered in numerous after school programs, summarizes the formative role of second-lining, stating, “You teaching ’em how to be responsible citizens as well. You teach ’em...once you an Indian, you get as much respect as the next person.’ Then you turn around and teach ’em to respect [others].”<sup>42</sup> Training begins at a young age in kitchens and at family gatherings where children are encouraged to dance. Ongoing mentoring helps shape second-liners into community members while enfolded dancers of any age and physical capacity into the social fabric.

During a parade, second-liners can be seen “spinning on one leg, dragging a toe behind, crisscrossing the feet, jumping back on the heels, dropping down to a squat, or jumping several feet into the air...no two people exact the same steps.”<sup>43</sup> This “do-watcha-wanna” choreography serves multiple purposes.<sup>44</sup> On the surface, it

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Carrico, 31.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Regis, *Second Lines*, 479.

<sup>43</sup> Carrico and Diouf-Henry, 139.

<sup>44</sup> Carrico, 29.

conveys inclusivity to a group of people who have been excluded; however, it also points to a more subversive form of “opacity,” or unknowability, as a means of defying domination.<sup>45</sup> Carrico describes opacity in relation to second-lining, stating:

Refusing to define bodily expression as a clear object of knowledge, do-watcha-wanna adherents keep second-lining out of the realm of Western understanding. Without a codified technique, it is difficult to funnel second-lining into formal systems of knowledge transmission, like dance classes. By espousing do-watcha-wanna, second-liners ground the practice in black social-ritual spaces, maintain ownership of cultural knowledge within the community, and reinforce the importance of informal settings.<sup>46</sup>

Embodied knowledge endures beyond the anniversary parades and is transmitted via family, friends, and neighbors at social events and rehearsals throughout the year.

While on the parade route, second-liners impart their know-how in mini-circles where do-watcha-wanna choreography comes alive as performers

widen into a ring...clapping, shouting and playing cowbells...and where children’s footwork skills are honed, as they step into the temporary circle and perform their best moves to the supportive yet demanding comments of onlookers, who are often family and friends.<sup>47</sup>

Adult dancers amplify their corporeal voices by entertaining the crowd with call-and-response choreography in which one person initiates a movement phrase and another responds with the same or different phrase.<sup>48</sup> This embodied banter fosters an ongoing dialogue and after each “conversation,” dancers and onlookers leave wiser and happier than before. Second-liners live as they dance, moving as a collective while giving voice to the individual.

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 34.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Carrico and Diouf-Henry, 140.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 137.

In conclusion, *Úmbal* and second-lining performers incarnate freedom joyfully. Both parading concepts were founded in communities of color to reclaim and transform urban spaces by making bodies visible in a collective. Although both models differ in their aesthetics and organizational structures, they share the common goal of mobilizing people to dance politically. Second-lining creates a sense of belonging for a community of people who have been abandoned socially, politically, and economically by white New Orleans. While practicing and performing, paraders weave themselves into the social fabric of their communities and recast themselves into roles that would not be possible in their everyday lives, thereby locating themselves in “a joyous space of power, dignity, self-reliance and freedom” that transcends their daily struggles.<sup>49</sup> The metamorphic experience is mapped forever on their bodies. As dance ethnographer Helen Regis describes, “After four hours of second-lining, this place was remembered by the blisters on my feet, the fatigue in my calves, and the echoes in my ears of a tuba’s driving rhythm and of conversations with fellow paraders.”<sup>50</sup> Similarly, with the collective input of *Úmbal* parade participants, Arteaga opens conversations that build bridges across borders on the streets of Philadelphia. Finally and perhaps most importantly, whenever paraders gather to rehearse or perform and then disperse, they are reminded of the fragility of their freedom in spaces of appearance. Performance theorist and choreographer André Lepecki summarizes:

Whatever this moving accomplishes and brings into the world at any given moment will be always provisional and incomplete. Thus the necessity to start again, to insist, no matter what, on the urgent challenge posed by the endless not yet. ... Anything else would be conformity.<sup>51</sup>

This call to action enjoins paraders to show-up again and again and again. And they do—in parks, community centers, streets, and playgrounds, day after day and year after year. The promise of the future rests in *not yet*.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Regis, *Second Line*, 480.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Lepecki, 26.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*