

The Dancing Public

Tonight, is for dancing	Feet dancing	Our bodies will be dancing
Tonight, is for dancing	Feet dancing	Our breath will be dancing
Tonight, is for dancing		Our sweat will be dancing
Tonight, is for dancing	The space will be dancing	Our cells will be dancing
	The floor will be dancing	Our spit will be dancing
	The platforms will be dancing	
Tonight, we'll be dancing	The lights will be dancing	Crowds will be dancing
Tonight, we'll be dancing		Masses will be dancing
Tonight, we'll be dancing	Lights dancing	Hordes will be dancing
Tonight, we'll be dancing	Lights dancing	Flocks will be dancing
	Lights dancing	
I will be dancing	Lights dancing	Animals dancing
My hands will be dancing		Barking dogs dancing
My fingers will be dancing	The trees will be dancing	Biting wolfs dancing
My eyes will be dancing	The branches will be dancing	Clawing cats dancing
My lips will be dancing	The leaves will be dancing	Brawling birds dancing
My tongue will be dancing	The grass will be dancing	
My larynx will be dancing		Animals dancing
	The sky will be dancing	Barking dogs dancing
My words will be dancing	The moon will be dancing	Biting wolfs dancing
words dancing	The planets will be dancing	Clawing cats dancing
words dancing	The stars will be dancing	Brawling birds dancing
words dancing		
	Stars will be dancing	Our minds will be dancing
My hair will be dancing	Stars dancing	Our thoughts will be dancing
My hair will be dancing	Stars dancing	Our feelings will be dancing
My hair will be dancing	Stars dancing	
My hair will be dancing		Laughter and dancing
	Our hearts will be dancing	Laughter and dancing
My tits will be dancing	Our hearts will be dancing	Laughter and dancing
My navel will be dancing	Our hearts will be dancing	Laughter and dancing
My hips will be dancing	Our hearts will be dancing	Laughter and dancing
My knees will be dancing		Laughter and dancing
	Blood will be dancing	
My feet will be dancing	Blood dancing	
Your feet will be dancing	Blood dancing	
Your feet will be dancing	Blood dancing	
Your feet will be dancing	Hot Blood dancing	
Your feet will be dancing	Hot blood	
Feet dancing	Hot blood dancing	
Feet dancing	Hot blood	

1374, somewhere in central Europe.
About 20 years after the plague killed
more than a third of the European population.

The Black Death.

An illness causing fevers, aching joints,
vomiting and swelling of the lymphatic glands.
An illness that attacks the immunity system,
and causes black spots to appear all over the skin.

The infected most often
died within less than a week.
Entire cities closed off
to contain the ill.

Quarantine invented
to prevent the illness from spreading.

Not far from how “mad” bodies
were locked up in asylums
all over Europe
in the centuries to come

1374 in city of Aachen during the Middle Ages.
Only two years after a natural disaster left
devastating effects behind.

A terrible flood

Water causing irreparable damage
to the agricultural crops,
leaving hunger and famine behind
in the areas surrounding the city.

A natural environment under attack

Poor and desperate peasants
revolting against the rising prices of crops.

1374 a dancing plague
breaks out among men, women, and children.
Their bodies are attacked by convulsions
and uncontrollable movements.

Endless dancing,
without a particular cause,
except the general hardship
and distress of the period.

A dancing mania,
spreading like a contagious fire.
Imitations of movement traveling
from one body to another.

These dancing manias
traveled through cities and streets,
crossing borders and lines

In the Middle Ages,
some believed the convulsive movements
were caused by demons.
That a curse had been cast
and that the uncontrollable bodies
were possessed by evil.

Others believed the tormented dancers
could only be saved by a saint:
Saint John’s Dance

1518, another dancing plague
breaks out in Strasbourg in Alsace.

Patient “zero” is a young woman
who has just given birth to a child.
Unable to feed her baby she one morning gets up
Grabs her child, leaves her home
and walks down to the river
There she dumps the baby in the water.

In a severe state shock,

caused by her own actions,
The woman starts convulsing violently.
Her naked feet are bleeding
from stamping the ground.
Her body and her clothes
are dripping with her sweat.

The people surrounding her on the bridge
One by one get pulled into her convulsive movements
The dancing spreads through their bodies

As the night falls
more than 50 citizens are all dancing,
and convulsing together with her.
They are all covered in sweat.

Others watch while
more and more
people join the dance

They are going to take it all from us
We'll lose our homes and our crops
We'll lose our food and our jobs
They are going to take it all from us

They are going to take it all from us
We'll drown and die in a famine flood
We'll be killed and they'll spill our blood
They are going to take it all from us

The number of convulsing bodies
is growing by the hour.
By the end of the 3rd day,
400 of the villagers are dancing
on the city square.

The city council
starts wondering what to do....

What to do in this situation
What to do in this situation
What to do in this situation
What to do in this situation

The city council meets to search
for a potential solution
A cure that would prevent
the endless dance
from further escalation.

They decide to hire musicians
to accompany the dancers,
hoping the music will alleviate their tormented bodies.

At the city square,
the musicians install themselves around the edges
to surround the dancers with their sound.
They play bagpipes, tambourines and violins.

The music doesn't help to calm the crowd.
It just incites the masses even more

They think that they can cure us from evil possession

They think they can rid us of violent aggression

They think that they can control our boiling blood
They think they can steer us clear of the mud

They think they can feed us before we drop
They think they can hit us until we stop

They think that they can handle our barking noises
They think they can pray to silence our voices

They think they can diminish our convulsive dance
But they miss the point, they miss the trance

They wonder from where this epidemic came
They refuse to see it as a societal chain

They know they must prevent this terrible threat
Only they would be blamed if we dance ourselves dead

Multiple doctors from historical times
Re-evaluate and keep changing their minds

Dr. Hecker said it was a mental disorder
Superstition and spirits pushed us to the border

Bacchantic leaps in the wildest dance
Screaming foam and fury, was our only chance

The stress of the time
The death of plague
Made it all much worse
We could only break

Dr. Charcot is quite another story
He directed a madhouse in all its glory

He made us hypno-perform every week
100's of doctors just having peek

The Salpetriere was its name
It used to be a prison before what it became

Hystero-epileptic attacks
Closely connected to dance-maniacs

As the head of this asylum, he lost his mind
Invented hysteria and kept us confined.

Passionate attitudes put on display
Contortions, delirium and all it can convey

At the graveyard of the Saint Medard
He watched a convulsionist become a star

It must be a disorder of the imagination
That's what causes the disorganization

Fake and feigned theatrical acts
Become so real in a hysteric attack

He think he can cure us by giving us drugs
He thinks he can secure us by locking us up

1878 it didn't stop
But one of his patients had had enough

Enough of repeating his fake theories
Enough of referring to all his iconographies

Enough of believing he was right
Enough of acting out night after night

Let her have an uncontrollable attack
Let her throw her head front and back

A delirious night full of dangerous dance
A room full of people in a deepfelt trance

**1930's
in the States
depression is great
depression is great**

Exhausted bodies
lying around
Exhausted bodies
to that sound

Walkathon Marathon
the struggle persists
People dancing
for weeks and weeks and weeks

**1930's
in the States
depression is great
depression is great**

Agonized bodies
Dancing to survive
Pulverized muscles
Would give anything to thrive

Winning couples
Losers go astray
Dancing bodies
Pain and suffering on display

**1930's
in the States
depression is great
depression is great**

Depleted bodies
lying around
Depleted bodies
to that sound

Endless dancing
everyone competes
Bodies dancing
for weeks and weeks and weeks

**1930's
in the States
depression is great
depression is great**

Anxious bodies
Dancing to survive
Crumbled muscles
Would give anything to thrive

Dancing all night
Dancing not to die
The winning price is high
The winning price is high
The winning price is high
The winning price is high

**1930's
in the States
depression is great
depression is great**

Knees dropped to the ground
Teams taking shifts
Knees dropped to the ground
Afraid to go adrift

Bodies dancing
All night long
Bodies bouncing
To that song

Knees dropped to the ground
Everyone resists
Bodies dancing
For weeks and weeks and weeks

A dancing plague
in a desolate place.
A clandestine rave
or a ritual of escape

A faraway forest,
or a flock of trees
An uttermost darkness
Or a need to be appeased

A silent rave
or the sound of voices
A cry of relief
An excess of joy
A grunt,
A beat,
Or the result of choices
A spreading plague
Or a flame to enjoy

A burning heat
or an explosive fire
A crowd in motion
An excess of desire
A feverish organ
A burning pain
A body left by its mindless brain

A collective feeling
Or a frightening madness
A rhythm in your mind

Or a deepfelt sadness

An exorcism
of a past relation
A search for freedom
Or a form of creation

A loud music
Or a scream of ecstasy
A loss of control
An angry howl
A bark,
A bite
Or an animal growl
A contagious illness
On a spotted soul

The sound of feet
or how stamping is grounding
A feeling of hot blood
desperately pounding

A levitation
Or a floating in midair
A view of the trees
An emotional repair

A sea of bodies
becoming a mass dance
Or letting yourself go
and feel the trance