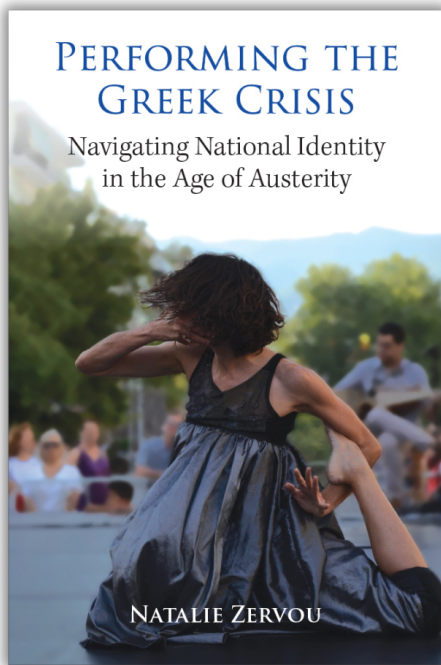




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PERFORMING THE GREEK CRISIS

NAVIGATING NATIONAL IDENTITY
IN THE AGE OF AUSTERITY

Natalie Zervou

Studies in Dance: Theories and Practices

Performing the Greek Crisis explores the impact of the Greek financial crisis (2009–19) on the performing arts sector in Greece, and especially on contemporary concert dance. When Greece became the first European Union member to be threatened with default, the resulting budget cuts pushed dance to develop in unprecedented directions. The book examines the repercussions that the crisis had on artists' daily lives and experience, weaving the personal with the political to humanize a phenomenon that to date had been examined chiefly through economic and statistical lenses. Informed by her own experience of growing up in Greece and including interviews and rich descriptions of performances, Natalie Zervou offers a glimpse into a pivotal moment in Greek history.

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"A delight to read and indeed a timely book. The beginning focus on the 'body in crisis' is a powerful entry point into a discussion of contemporary Greek dance, a topic that warrants more exposure within an international context."

—Ann Cooper Albright, author of *How to Land: Finding Ground in an Unstable World*

In Greece, dance (and in extension, the body) has historically held a central role in the process of national identity construction. When the crisis broke out, artists had to navigate their way through a precariously fluctuating landscape, with their bodies as their one and only stable referent. In Greece, dance has held a historical role in national identity construction of Greece as the cradle of Western civilization. As the financial crisis coincided with the European Refugee Crisis, dancing bodies became agents to advocate for human rights. By centering the analysis of the Greek crisis on the dancing bodies, *Performing the Greek Crisis* is able to examine the various ways that artists reconceptualized their history and reframed ideas of national belonging, race, citizenship, and immigration.

Natalie Zervou is Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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