

## **IMMORTALITY AND THEATRE DANCE IN THE 1920S. DANCE PERFORMANCE OF ELMERICE PARTS AND HERMAN KOLT-OGINSKY**

The sociologist Chris Jenks understands transgression as that which exceeds boundaries or exceeds limits. The meaning of an act, Jenks explains, does not reside solely within the intentionality of the actor; indeed, in most instances it resides within the context of the act's reception.

In the 1920s the Estonian modern dancers Elmerice Parts and Herman Kolt-Oginsky caused a scandal with their dance performances. At the centre of the scandal was the use of 'erotic' or 'acrobatic' elements on stage. Soon after the first performances the local reviewers found themselves in a heavy dispute. Whilst some of them were convinced that the duo's dance performances were 'immoral'; the others praised the artists for 'rejuvenating' Estonian dance art.

My presentation consists of two parts. In the first part, I try to create an image of Parts's and Kolt-Oginsky's dances performances on the basis of the reviews. How did their dance performances look like? What kind of movements did the performers use? In the second part I go for the meaning and try to understand what the scandal tells us. Where did the borders between 'moral' and therefore eligible and 'immoral' that is ineligible art lie in Estonia in the 1920s?

### **Biography**

Anne-Liis Maripuu – a PhD student at the University of Tartu. Author of multiple articles dedicated to early modern dance in Estonia. Maripuu has organised a symposium on Rudolf von Laban and two photo exhibitions: *Dancing Free* (Tantsides vabaks, 2018) and 'Gerd Neggo: "Dance Only Is Sovereign"' ('Gerd Neggo. "Tants ainuüksi on suverään"', 2021, 2022). Her main research interest is early modern dance in Estonia and Germany.