

production, or inside a royal court, or central to a religious ceremony was probably not thought of during the races and rock-throwing competitions by the Parthenon.

And maybe this separation is because dance is considered a performing art. So the question is, can dance ever not be considered as art? In other words, can dance be dance without being art? I'm not even going to give an opinion on this because this question could probably be eternally debated. It is certainly subjective as it depends on an individual's definition or perspective on art. And in the end some might believe that dance could be an art AND a sport, thereby making this an unnecessary distinction. In any case, when I think about this whole topic, the pivotal question seems to be whether dance can depart from the realm of art and enter the realm of sport.

For further investigation, I'd like to press on, though, and assume that dance can be a sport, whether still an art form or divorced from that identity. And so the next question is, can dance be competitive? Can it be judged? For this answer, one only has to look to the myriad of dance competition shows on TV (DWTS, SYTYCD, ABDC, etc.). Without regard to the integrity of those shows (surely a topic of later discussion), it is clear to see that many believe that there can be winners in dancing.

So then is dancing not an Olympic event because there is no extra factor, like skates and ice? Is it that moving around on solid ground with friction is too easy or not athletic enough to be a sport? As a dancer, of course I would rise up against the idea of dance being easy. (I'm envisioning the t-shirts from my youth emblazoned with "If dance was any easier, it would be called football.") So, while others may contest it, I'm going to quickly move past this point to...

Would dance just be too impractical to be an Olympic event? To me, the only way dance could be fairly judged would be if it were separated by genres/techniques, gender, and number of performers. Yet this would make for a hundred possible categories of competition, far more than any other current Olympic event. And if only select techniques were included, like ballet and tap, then many would be left out, making for an incomplete representation of the form as well as many angry dancers worldwide. So is dance just too broad and complicated to fit in easily as an Olympic event?

Lastly, even if all of these things could work out – dance could be included, separated from art, considered a sport, considered athletic and competitive, and fit in as an event – maybe those in the dance community just don't want it to be an Olympic event. On one hand, it would broaden the audience for dance and bring many into appreciating the form. But on the other hand, it could take the focus away from dance's ability to be art, to be expressive, to be transcendent, to be culturally important. Maybe since dance can be so much more than sport, we have no desire to reduce it to such. And so perhaps for any number of these reasons, or for many other reasons, dance has never been and is not currently an Olympic event. Yet, I'm sure that won't stop me from continuing to wonder why, especially in another 4 years when the next Evan Lysacek and Kim Yu-Na take to the ice.