

“Hunna Collective: Historians who Dance”: Historical background, proposals, and definitions regarding Public History in the Dance field

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The “Coletivo Hunna: Historiadoras que Dançam” is a project that seeks to address themes related to the history of dances understood as “oriental” and “ethnic” by the Brazilian public. It is an initiative of four historians who also work as dancers, researchers, and professionals related to belly dance, tribal fusions, and Roma dances. Because of the many stereotypes and prejudices based on orientalist discourse that are often reproduced among the Brazilian dance community, we developed a Public History project that addresses the concepts of colonialism, orientalism, and anti-gypsyism. Our goal is to bring our academic or independently conducted research (but still based on our academic training in History) to social media platforms. We create and share critical and well-researched content on Instagram, Facebook, blogs, courses, and workshops, reaching a wide audience interested in dance, history, and its theoretical debates. We aim to bring discussions rooted in the humanities, particularly to dance practitioners and professionals, in a dialogical and critical manner. Therefore, our presentation will aim to introduce Hunna and its work, our theoretical and practical objectives, and the results of the work that has been developed so far. We will explain how we think and produce content for social media and courses, focusing on how we address the concept of orientalism and its understanding within the history of dance, connecting oriental history, historical theory, and dance studies, in order to engage in dialogue with dance practitioners and encourage possible similar works among academics.

Keywords: dance history; public history; orientalism; oriental dances; Roma dances.