

## ARTS CORNER

# Dances of Seduction

### FJ Ortiz de Frutos

Dermatologist and accidental bard.

Terpsichore, the muse of dance, and Erato, the muse of love poetry, rarely visit the same people, but both are divinities that hold enormous fascination for the scientist, a rationalist little blessed with the emotional intelligence for, or even interest in, the so-called world of arts and letters.

When such a person runs into them in the unpredictable labyrinths of fate, they feel deeply affected in a manner similar to how Saint Paul must have felt when he fell off his horse on the road to Damascus. Nothing is the same thereafter...

Placing the powers of the word, music, and movement at the service of Eros is, on occasion, an irresistible temptation.

### Merengue

By the merest chance,  
the clock-maker of life  
made us with our hands  
in the same position.

You approached me.  
I smiled at you recklessly  
whilst your eyes welded  
themselves to mine.

You took my hand  
and my steps led me  
to the vortex of the Universe,  
up to the place where  
time comes to a stop  
and where light is bent  
into an arc.

You swayed like corn  
being caressed by the wind.  
We were a double star  
spinning on effortlessly  
as that was how we were meant to be.

Fresh. Fruit-bearing. Sensual.  
Quintessence of a woman.  
Magnet to the inner compass  
of my passion-tension-attention.  
Secret-revelation.

Maybe three minutes had passed  
without the stroke of time,  
but when you let escape  
your furtive, backward thanks  
I was left startled  
like birds in an eclipse.

### Bachata

Even as I first approached her,  
I already knew  
That she was composed  
of the very substance  
that lies at the heart  
of a thousand stars;



Figure 1. Poster from the film Billy Elliot.



Figure 2. Dancing feet.

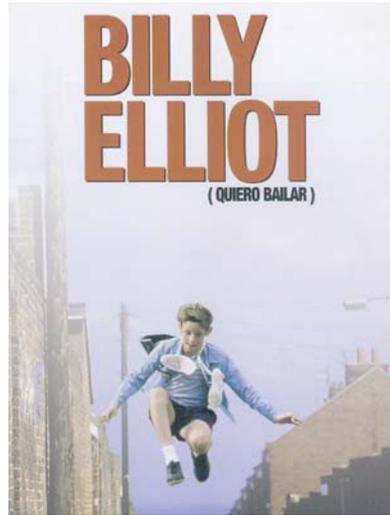


Figure 3. Poster from the film Billy Elliot.

that the pupils of her eyes  
were made of night,  
although from their core  
came a flow of light  
like a lighthouse beam  
stabbing through the gloom,  
or that to her hands  
I would be sealed  
though they would not burn.

What I did not imagine  
was that at that time  
her body barely disguised  
movements of a panther,  
that her lips would mark  
the slight frontier  
that sometimes stood between  
desire and amity,  
or that two bodies  
can be like reeds  
swaying to the beat  
of the very softest bachata breeze.

### Salsa

It was only an instant,  
but it was enough...  
Her trillions of gems of light  
made solid and incarnate  
forged an alliance  
with the drum rhythm,  
metal vibrations  
and chordal percussions  
managed, for a moment,  
to make time slip  
and appear to halt.

But just long enough...  
Enough so the wisdom  
of fifty thousand generations  
could release the word desire  
to scout round her hips,  
so a glimpse could be seen  
of the rim-threshold of pleasure  
scarcely ajar  
through her vestal smile  
dancing there barefoot,  
with the strength of the earth,  
the wind and the tides.

Enough to convert me  
to more agent than subject,  
horoscopal tiger able  
only to devour her image,  
so that her arms  
transformed into a port  
from which I would never venture,  
so rather than making her  
feel she were a queen,  
I would feel the most fortunate  
man in the universe.

## Dance

*"In her head is coiled  
a yellow snake,  
and it dreams of dancing  
with beaus of other days."*

*Dance.* Federico García Lorca

There is a beautiful and complicated literary device or trope known as synesthesia. It consists of joining two images or sensations from different sensory domains, like, for example, when the color green is described as *chillón* (shrill).

The same term in a physiological context refers to a secondary or associated sensation produced in one part of the body as a consequence of a stimulus applied in another part—like when a blow to the finger produces a headache.

Does that explanation make sense? I think it does.

Francisco Javier Ortiz de Frutos, dermatologist and accidental bard—as he defines himself—has managed to allow the reader to feel the curious phenomenon of synesthesia in both its senses in the lines transcribed here.

How can it be, that when reading his sensual and well-formed poems, we can hear music as though the words were

notes on a stave? How can it be, that when reciting his verses aloud, we relive the movement of bodies willingly enslaved to the melody? What explanation can there be, that when sounding the lines, we find that we are dancing, though our feet are rooted to the spot?

This sensual minstrel has managed to bring together dance and word. I am sure that our skin can feel his success.

An anonymous street philosopher once wrote:

“Work like you don’t need the money, love like you’ve never been hurt, and dance like nobody’s watching.”

I think Francisco Javier Ortiz de Frutos would unashamedly endorse this advice. And so would I after reading his work.

A GUERRA TAPIA