

## RESEARCH PROJECT

**Project name:** Itinerant Histories / Dancing Bodies: Unlocking the narratives of immigration lawyers working with child & youth refugees through dance

**Description:** this research project stems from a geographer, choreographer, and three immigration lawyers working with child and youth refugees. This project aims to explore child migration from an often untold perspective.

Immigration lawyers occupy a unique liminal space within the migration system: they are listeners to stories of violence, navigators of intractable legal processes, and agents with deeply ambivalent roles, whose desire to unmake borders regularly collides with their responsibilities to the very law-making institutions that continuously reinforce borders.

Lawyers working with children face additional pressures due to the highly affective dimension of their engagement, especially in recent years of harsh border enforcement and family separation. The project explores these tensions by creating a space for lawyers to unlock embodied narratives of itinerance. The process draws on feminist dance autobiography techniques and comprises three stages, all documented on film:

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- Individual dance-movement-therapy sessions
- Interviews with danced and spoken narratives
- A group danced and spoken encounter

In the context of the so-called 'refugee crisis', this project builds alternative readings of child migration through immigration lawyers' eyes and bodies. It also contributes to the geographical scholarship around dance/the body[1] and its more recent focus on the (geo)politics of migration within dance studies and geohumanities[2].

[1] McCormack, Derek P. (2008) Geographies for moving bodies: Thinking, dancing, spaces. *Geography Compass*, 2, 1822–1836.

[2] Scolieri, Paul (2008) Global/Mobile: Re-orienting dance and migration Studies, *Dance Studies Journal*, 40/2, 80-91

Rogers, Amanda (2017) Advancing the Geographies of the performing arts: Intercultural aesthetics, migratory mobility, and geopolitics, *Progress in Human Geography*, 42 (4), 549-568

**Principle investigators:** Dr Negar Behzadi

**Aims:** to explore child migration from an often untold perspectives