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From Choreographic Tools to Production Infrastructure: The Paradigm Shift in Dance Creation with Generative AI

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Abstract
With the introduction of generative artificial intelligence (AI) into the field of dance, motion capture, model generation, human editing, and platform-based distribution are increasingly interconnected, giving rise to a new cultural production chain. Understanding this transformation merely in terms of AI as a "choreographic tool" fails to account for the ways in which data, algorithms, and platforms continuously reshape the conditions of creative production. Drawing on research on AI-generated dance, theories of the digital cultural industries, and the authors' own experience with motion-capture practice, this study examines generative AI dance creation across three dimensions: motion data, generative editing, and platform distribution. It argues that generative AI is expanding from a localized creative tool into a broader form of production infrastructure, without thereby acquiring the status of an autonomous creative agent. The resulting tensions are manifested in the computability and irreducibility of embodied experience, the lowering of participation barriers alongside the concentration of foundational resources, and the proliferation of content alongside the weakening of cultural context. Based on these findings, the study proposes several pathways, including contextualized data development, embodied participation, accountability and traceability, and tiered evaluation, to foster an industrial practice of generative AI-assisted dance creation that combines cultural depth with public value.

Keywords:
generative artificial intelligence; AI-assisted dance creation; digital cultural industries; production infrastructure; human–AI collaboration

Introduction: Why Generative AI Dance Creation Has Become a Digital Cultural Industries Issue

In this article, "generative AI dance creation" refers to creative practices in which generative artificial intelligence participates in the generation, editing, organization, and presentation of dance movements or bodily imagery (hereafter, "AI-assisted dance creation"). This concept does not include dance practices that use only digital lighting, stage imagery, or conventional motion capture without any generative processing.

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Digital cultural industries should not be understood simply as the use of digital technologies to package traditional cultural products. In the context of this study, the term refers to a process in which the means of production, modes of collaboration, and mechanisms of circulation of dance content are collectively reorganized through processes of datafication, modeling, and platformization. This article argues that when generative AI enters dance creation, improved creative efficiency represents only a surface-level change. More fundamentally, the sources of movement materials, the organization of creative workflows, and the pathways through which works reach the public are all being rearranged. Accordingly, analyzing the industrial transformation of AI-assisted dance creation requires looking beyond generation speed and output volume to examine how data, models, professional collaboration, and platform rules collectively shape the conditions of creative production.

The central issue facing generative AI dance creation is not simply whether a given model can generate coherent movements. Rather, it concerns how embodied experience is translated into computationally processable material, how creators retain their judgment when working with generated outputs, and how technological production remains connected to the cultural contexts of dance. Accordingly, this article treats motion data, generative models, and platform interfaces as interconnected components of a single production structure and examines how they collectively transform the means of dance production, creative relationships, and the boundaries of responsibility.

The term "production infrastructure" as used here does not exaggerate models into all-encompassing technological foundations. Rather, it refers to a set of conditions that continuously shape how cultural products are produced, edited, and brought before the public. In AI-assisted dance creation, this infrastructure includes, at a minimum, the collection and annotation of motion data, the generative and editing capabilities provided by models, and the ways in which platforms organize content visibility and user feedback. The author's participation in a motion-capture project involving one hundred participants revealed concrete challenges in the datafication of movement, including camera positioning, group formations, and error correction. This article argues that the paradigm shift brought about by generative AI in dance lies not in whether machines can "choreograph," but in the growing dependence of dance production on a technological system jointly constituted by cultural data, computational models, professional collaboration, and platform rules.

1 From Localized Tools to Conditions of Production: The Infrastructuralization of AI-Assisted Dance Creation

1.1 The Limits of the Tool-Based Perspective

Understanding AI as a choreographic tool helps preserve the central role of human creators, but it can also obscure the institutional conditions underlying the tool itself. Conventional tools are typically employed by creators within relatively well-defined parameters. Generative models, by contrast, have already absorbed extensive training materials and constrain the available range of choices through interfaces, parameters, and default settings. When creators input music or text, they may appear to be interacting directly with the model, but they have in fact already entered an environment structured by data classification, model architecture, and platform services. Whether a particular dance form has been adequately captured, whether certain types of

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bodies are disproportionately represented in the training materials, and what the system defines as "coherent" movement all exert influence beforethe specific act of creation even begins.

AI's role in dance therefore cannot be adequately summarized as simply "improving efficiency." Efficiency does matter: systems can rapidly generate candidate movements, complete localized transitions, or provide visual variations. Yet efficiency is not a neutral metric. It may shorten the time required for trial and error, but it may also encourage creators to organize works around movements that models can generate more readily. It can expand the production capacity of small teams, while simultaneously increasing their dependence on particular interfaces and computational services. Examining AI at the level of production conditions does not negate its value as a tool; rather, it situates the tool within the data sources, professional divisions of labor, and platform structures on which it depends.

1.2 The Formation of a Three-Layer Production Structure

The infrastructuralization of AI-assisted dance creation can be understood through three interconnected layers. The first is the motion data layer, in which dancers' postures, joint trajectories, velocities, rhythms, and bodily imagery are captured, segmented, and annotated to form training materials that models can access. The second is the generative editing layer, in which music, text, or an initial pose is processed by a model and transformed into one or more movement sequences or forms of bodily imagery, after which creators select, lock, complete, and rewrite the generated outputs. The third is the platform distribution layer, in which user retention, likes, comments, and remixes generated after publication produce new data feedback that, in turn, influences subsequent rounds of production. These three layers do not constitute a simple technological pipeline; rather, they represent a process through which power and value judgments are continually redistributed.

This structure also changes the boundaries of the dance product itself. Traditional stage works typically enter circulation as relatively complete performance forms. The outputs of AI-assisted dance creation, by contrast, may simultaneously take the form of motion datasets, demonstration samples generated by models, editable digital content, short-video segments, or performance content featuring virtual characters. A single movement sequence may be repeatedly reused, outfitted with different costumes, transferred across contexts, and assigned new names. As a result, the value of dance is co-created by data providers, technology developers, choreographers, dancers, and platforms, while being claimed and interpreted by different actors through processes involving data access, attribution, copyright arrangements, and the distribution of traffic and visibility.

2 Movement as Data: Reconstructing the Means of Dance Production

2.1 From Bodily Movement to Trainable Corpora

AI-assisted dance creation centered on movement generation first requires bodily movement to be made readable or translatable by machines. AIST++, for example, contains 5.2 hours of three-dimensional dance motion across 1,408 sequences, covering 10 dance types, together with multi-view videos with known camera poses. Building on this dataset, the same research also proposed FACT, a music-conditioned model for three-dimensional motion generation. Such studies demonstrate that movements traditionally transmit-

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ted through in-person instruction and embodied memory can be transformed into technical objects that are searchable, comparable, and trainable. It is through this transformation, this article argues, that data begins to acquire the characteristics of a means of dance production.

Yet being trainable does not mean being fully preserved. Motion capture can record joint positions, rotation angles, and temporal relationships, but it does not automatically encode the principles of force and exertion underlying a movement, the organization of breathing, the lineage of a dance form, or the performer's own understanding of the movement. Existing research has identified the challenges of dance digitization in terms of the quantification of multimodal materials, dependence on embodied expressiveness, and the degree of artistic standardization. Dance data, therefore, should not be treated as a natural resource detached from cultural context. The subjects selected for capture, the naming of movements, the segmentation of sequences, and the labeling system can all shape in advance how a model processes dance.

2.2 Technical Choices and Cultural Judgments in a Hundred-Person Motion-Capture Project

A light-and-shadow dance theater project in which the author participated provides a more concrete illustration. Before conducting the full-scale motion capture of one hundred performers, the project team first conducted small-scale formation tests to assess camera placement, marker recognition, and performer occlusion. During the preliminary tests, the dense formations resulted in minor skeletal trajectory drift and interruptions in movement. Rather than interpreting these errors directly as artistically meaningful instances of "algorithmic chance," the team adjusted camera positions, spacing between performers, and the layering of movements. At the same time, the residual relationships visible in the trajectories were incorporated as references for subsequent lighting and visual design. After calibration was completed, the motion capture of all one hundred performers proceeded successfully.

This process demonstrates that data production is never simply a matter of transferring the body into a computer as it is. Decisions about camera placement, whether formations should be adjusted, which errors should be corrected, and which visual relationships can be incorporated into the work all require joint judgment by technical staff, choreographers, and dancers. More importantly, spatial relationships in group dance cannot be reduced to the mechanical aggregation of individual skeletal data. The meaning of changes in formation emerges from the distances, directions, rhythms, and collective dynamics among dancers. If a dataset preserves only the trajectory of each individual body, the relational structure that is most significant to a hundred-person performance may instead disappear.

Accordingly, transforming motion data into a cultural resource requires, at minimum, three additional categories of information. The first is provenance information, including the performer, dance form, time of capture, setting, and scope of authorization. The second is relational information, including the connections between movement and music, formations, props, and other bodies. The third is interpretive information, namely explanations provided by performers or researchers regarding the dynamics, cultural meanings, and restrictions on the use of particular movements. These additions increase the cost of data development, but they are also what distinguish dance data from general movement or sports data. Data stripped of context may be easier to standardize and circulate, but it may not necessarily support responsible cultural production.

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2.3 Rights Boundaries in the Assetization of Data

When motion data can be repeatedly used to train models and generate new cultural products, one-time image or likeness authorization is no longer sufficient to cover subsequent uses. A dancer's consent to participate in a particular capture session does not necessarily imply consent for their movements to be used in any model, any commercial project, or for indefinite style transfer. This is particularly important for traditional and folk dance, whose movement materials may embody collective memory and locally situated knowledge. Their digitization does not automatically make them public resources available for unrestricted use.

A more prudent approach is to move from authorizing a single "capture activity" toward governing the data lifecycle as a whole: specifying purposes and retention periods before capture; recording provenance and permitted uses when data are entered into a repository; maintaining version histories and usage records during model training; identifying the scope of synthesis when generated content is published; and providing performers or relevant cultural stakeholders with channels for access, correction, and withdrawal. Such a mechanism will not eliminate all disputes, but it can prevent data from losing its responsible stakeholders once it enters a technical system. For the dance industry, clarifying data provenance, authorization scope, and boundaries of use is not an administrative burden external to creative practice; it is a prerequisite for establishing the long-term credibility of digital cultural resources.

3 Generation and Editing: Reorganizing Creative Processes and Relations among Creative Agents

3.1 Probabilistic Generation and the Changing Formation of Movement Materials

Music-driven dance generation does not involve a model first "understanding" the emotional qualities of music and then devising movements as a choreographer would. Its basic mechanism is to learn musical features, movement units, and temporal relationships from training data and generate sequences that are statistically more likely under given conditions. Taking Bailando as an example, the study represents three-dimensional pose sequences as "choreographic memory" and uses an actor–critic GPT to organize movement units based on musical features. This technical approach suggests that algorithmic choreography first requires dance to be represented as operable units and then generates combinations within existing data distributions. It can provide movement materials, but it does not automatically explain why a particular combination is necessary within a work.

For artistic creation, the critical issue lies precisely in the gap between what is "more likely" and what is "necessary." Models are adept at producing movements with clear rhythms and smooth transitions, yet a work may require pauses, imbalance, resistance, or the deliberate disruption of established patterns. In the author's practice-based research using a music-driven system, movements were generated repeatedly from the same music and starting pose. The system quickly produced sequences that broadly matched the rhythm, but the directions of upper-body movement and patterns of turning repeatedly converged on a small number of high-frequency combinations. Only after key poses were locked, movement intervals were adjusted, and dancers tested the sequences in practice and subsequently reevaluated them did the materials gradually ac-

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quire a more distinct kinetic direction. The human contribution here is not simply to "polish" machine-generated material, but to re-establish a sense of necessity within probabilistic outputs.

3.2 Editable Generation and New Forms of Professional Division of Labor

Another study on dance generation employs a Transformer-based diffusion model and enhances editing capabilities through mechanisms such as joint-conditioned control. Its evaluation considers physical plausibility, beat alignment, movement diversity, and user experience. Editability brings AI closer to actual choreographic workflows: choreographers need not accept a complete generated output, but can instead fix certain movements, ask the system to complete transitions, or redefine conditions at critical points. The model thus becomes not merely a one-time generation tool, but a material environment that can be repeatedly invoked and revised.

At the same time, professional roles are reorganized. Data providers influence the kinds of movements to which a model has access; developers determine the interfaces for generation and editing; technical personnel translate artistic intentions into parameters; dancers physically test and evaluate the results; and choreographers organize structures from among the available alternatives. Creative agency therefore takes on a distributed character, but "multiple participants" does not mean "no one is responsible." With regard to authorship, within existing artistic institutions, authorship of computer-generated works generally remains associated with those who use or develop the systems, because authorship is connected to social action and the assumption of responsibility. On this basis, this article argues that unexpected algorithmic outputs do not absolve creators or other responsible parties of cultural and ethical responsibility once a work enters the public sphere.

More broadly, machine creativity and human creativity should not simply be positioned as opposites. Instead, their distinct roles within collaboration should be examined. In dance creation, the key question is not whether a machine should hastily be designated a "choreographer," but what decision-making authority each participant holds: a model can expand the space of possibilities; dancers can reject kinetic connections that do not hold up in embodied practice; choreographers need to articulate why a particular result is retained; and platforms should assume responsibility for synthetic-content labeling and rules governing dissemination. Agency is not determined by the quantity of movements generated, but by the capacity to pose questions, reject outputs, and assume the obligation to explain creative decisions.

3.3 Embodied Validation Is Not a Post-Generation Remedial Procedure

What distinguishes dance from general audiovisual content is that movement ultimately remains connected to embodied experience. Even when a work is performed entirely by digital figures, audiences continue to assess weight, speed, balance, and risk against their experience of real bodies. Generative AI can simulate the external form of movement, but data-driven outputs cannot automatically determine the artistic treatment of breathing, gravity, exertion, or emotional direction. Embodied validation should therefore not be understood merely as checking whether a movement is "physically performable by a human"; it should also examine how generated material acquires meaning through a specific body.

For works intended for live human performance, this can take the form of an iterative cycle of generation–rehearsal–feedback–regeneration. Dancers can document points at which center of gravity is disrupted, exer-

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tion lacks a clear basis, or breathing conflicts with movement, while also preserving new movement possibilities that emerge from model errors. For works involving virtual bodies, creators need to articulate the artistic purpose of forms that depart from physical laws. Suspension, liquefaction, or bodily deformation can function as artistic languages, but unprocessed model distortions should not simply be presented as avant-garde experimentation. The value of embodied validation lies in bringing generated results back into lived experience, allowing technical and artistic judgments to continually correct and reshape one another through rehearsal.

4 Platformized Circulation: Product Forms and Public Participation in AI-Assisted Dance Creation

4.1 From Complete Works to Mutable Cultural Commodities

AI-assisted dance creation does not enter platforms only after the generation process has been completed. The duration of short-form videos, vertical-screen composition, recommendation mechanisms, and engagement metrics often shape creative decisions in advance. From the perspective of platformization, the platformization of cultural production can be understood as the penetration of platforms' economic logics and infrastructural capacities into the production, distribution, and circulation of cultural content. From this perspective, cultural commodities within platform environments tend to be modular, mutable, and continuously remade in response to user data. This framework helps explain why AI-assisted dance outputs increasingly take the form of short segments, templates, and editable materials rather than appearing exclusively as complete works.

Within this production cycle, likes, viewing duration, and comments are not merely feedback external to the work; they may directly inform the prompts, camera choices, and movement selections of the next round of production. Users participate in reproduction by changing costumes, swapping faces, engaging in duet formats, and transferring poses, while the boundaries of the work continue to shift. Platforms provide ordinary users with low-barrier interfaces for entering dance production, but they also determine what is more likely to be seen through ranking systems and templates. Movements that can be quickly recognized, segmented, and imitated are more likely to achieve greater circulation efficiency, whereas kinetic development and group relationships that require sustained viewing to become meaningful may be placed at a disadvantage.

4.2 Expanded Participation and Unequal Resources in New Mass Arts and Literature

Wang Yichuan uses the term "internet-born mass arts and literature" to describe its contemporary form in the internet era and identifies characteristics including artistic nativeness to the internet, equality, the integration of creation and reception, public appreciation, and the mutual penetration of everyday life and art. AI-assisted dance creation reinforces this integration of creation and reception: viewers can immediately rewrite existing materials, while users without professional training can generate bodily imagery with the assistance of models. From the perspective of cultural rights, this article argues that such changes expand access to cultural expression and should not be dismissed simply on the basis of professional standards.

Yet open access to publication does not mean that the conditions of production have become equal. Ordinary users often rely on general-purpose models and platform templates, whereas professional institutions

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may have access to customized datasets, technical teams, computational resources, and rehearsal facilities. Although both may publish content through the same interface, the resource structures underlying their production are fundamentally different. Moreover, users continuously generate preference data while creating content, enabling platforms to optimize recommendations and reinforce their own governing rules. The democratization of AI-assisted dance creation therefore involves a dual movement: on the one hand, opportunities for expression expand; on the other, dispersed creative practices are reaggregated through model defaults and platform metrics.

This is also why research on digital cultural industries cannot rely solely on content volume as a measure. An increase in the number of works may indicate a change in production barriers, but it does not in itself demonstrate greater cultural diversity. Models can rapidly produce superficial variations in costumes, settings, and bodily imagery, while camera rhythms, movement intensity, and narrative structures may converge toward similar patterns. When platforms rely primarily on immediate user engagement as a signal of value, technological novelty can easily displace formal judgment. The public significance of new mass arts and literature ultimately lies not in eliminating professional standards, but in enabling more people to encounter, discuss, and revise those standards.

5. Governance and Value Pathways for AI-Assisted Dance Creation during the 15th Five-Year Plan Period

5.1 Building a Culturally Contextualized Dance Data System

The long-term development of AI-assisted dance creation depends first and foremost on data quality. Yet "high-quality" data should not be measured solely by resolution, the completeness of joint data, or sample size. The development of dance datasets in China requires the joint participation of dance scholars, tradition bearers, choreographers, dancers, and technical personnel. In addition to pose trajectories, datasets should document movement dynamics, rhythmic structures, regional contexts, costumes and props, and performers' interpretations. The basic unit of data should also not always be an isolated movement; wherever possible, the relationships before and after a movement and its functions within formations, music, and narrative should be preserved.

The data system should also support continuous correction. Misclassification of dance forms, cultural conflation, or stereotyped movements that emerge during model generation should be fed back into the annotation process for joint revision by cultural stakeholders and technical teams. Data-collecting institutions cannot relinquish responsibility once data have been entered into a repository, nor can users equate interface access with unrestricted rights to modify or repurpose the data. Only by establishing mechanisms through which provenance can be traced, uses can be restricted, versions can be tracked, and objections can be submitted can dance data evolve from a one-time accumulation of resources into sustainable cultural infrastructure.

5.2 Establishing Collaborative Production Standards with an Explainable Process

AI-assisted dance creation projects can maintain different levels of process documentation according to their intended uses. Research, performance, and commercial projects should retain records of model versions,

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data sources, key prompts, human modifications, and embodied validation. For works intended for general audiences, creators should at minimum indicate which components were generated by AI and which were subsequently modified by dancers or choreographers. Process disclosure does not require creators to make all technical details public; rather, it ensures that the chain of responsibility underlying a work can be understood.

Within production teams, data, models, choreography, performance, and publication can each be assigned to specific points of responsibility. When a work involves the name of a particular dance form, community knowledge, or performers' likenesses, the party responsible for final publication should assume the obligation to verify the relevant materials and respond to concerns. Model developers and platforms should likewise disclose known biases, synthetic-content labeling practices, and available channels for appeals. Human–AI co-creation cannot recognize human contributions when claiming innovation and copyright benefits, only to shift responsibility to the algorithm when misrepresentation or infringement occurs. The longer and more complex the technological chain becomes, the more specifically responsibility needs to be assigned.

5.3 Connecting Artistic Value and Industrial Development through Tiered Evaluation

AI-assisted dance creation requires evaluation, but a single metric should not be expected to encompass all of its forms. For movement-generation models, evaluation may consider beat alignment, physical plausibility, diversity, and editability. For artistic works, evaluation should additionally consider bodily expression, formal structure, cultural provenance, and whether human choices form an internally coherent relationship with these elements. For collaborative projects involving the broader public, evaluation can further consider participation processes, public exchange, and cultural accessibility. Tiered evaluation can prevent the single standard of professional stage performance from dismissing grassroots experimentation, while also preventing the claim that artistic judgment is unnecessary simply because "everyone can generate" content.

In the author's view, a feasible evaluation procedure can operate at two levels. The first addresses provenance, authorization, synthetic-content labeling, and physical safety as common entry requirements across different types of projects. The second then considers, according to the purpose of the work, technological necessity, formal creativity, cultural responsibility, processual agency, and public engagement. View counts may reflect dissemination outcomes, but they should not substitute for artistic value. Visual stability and movement coherence may indicate technical completion, but they cannot alone demonstrate that a work is artistically successful. Only by considering complete works, creative documentation, embodied validation, and public feedback together can evaluation within the digital cultural industries adequately balance efficiency with cultural quality.

From the perspective of the integration of culture and technology during the 15th Five-Year Plan period, what is truly worth developing in AI-assisted dance creation is not merely the capacity to mass-produce visible content, but the ability to establish production mechanisms that accumulate cultural knowledge, support professional collaboration, and expand public participation. Only when technological systems are subject to cultural context and accountability standards can they evolve from a short-lived trend into a stable form of cultural production. Dance studies, in this process, should not merely provide movement materials; they should also participate in data classification, model evaluation, embodied validation, and public interpreta-

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tion, thereby bringing artistic knowledge into the design of the underlying infrastructure.

Conclusion

The impact of generative AI on the dance industry can no longer be adequately described as simply "adding another choreographic tool." Motion data have become a means of production, models have become environments for generating and editing creative materials, and platforms have reconnected dissemination feedback to the creative process. Together, these elements constitute the infrastructural conditions of AI-assisted dance creation. The resulting paradigm shift is therefore not a one-way replacement of the human body by algorithms, but a redistribution of creative power among dancers, choreographers, data providers, developers, and platforms.

This transformation is characterized by both openness and constraint. Low-barrier tools expand opportunities for participation, while data, computational resources, and platform rules may create new forms of concentration. Models increase the efficiency of generation, but they may also turn high-frequency movements and short-term visual stimulation into default choices. Movements can become digital assets, but without clear provenance, authorization, and cultural interpretation, their wider circulation may also increase the risk of misrepresentation. Industrial innovation in AI-assisted dance creation therefore cannot be separated from questions of cultural responsibility.

The contextualization of data, embodied participation, process explainability, and tiered evaluation proposed in this article do not constitute fully validated industry standards. Rather, they form an analytical framework developed on the basis of existing research and observations from practice. Its limitations are also clear: different dance forms, institutions, and platforms operate under different production conditions, and specific rules still need to be tested across a wider range of projects. What can be established, however, is that as dance enters the era of large-scale models, artistic research should not evaluate outcomes only after technological processes have been completed. It should also participate in the formation of the data, interfaces, and platform rules that shape those processes. Only in this way can AI-assisted dance creation move beyond a short-lived technological demonstration and develop into a digital cultural industry practice that combines creative vitality, cultural depth, and public value.

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