

MOVEMENT MATTERS

AUGUST 2026– Curated by Anne Nelson



‘Spellbinding’: Lived Fiction by Stopgap Dance Company. Photograph: Christopher Parkes

Stopgap Dance Company: Visionaries of Movement Translation

Movement translation is the process of creating movement for one body or physicality and adapting it in the same textures and essences to be re-expressed for another body. As a composition technique, it can be explored through four core aspects: intention and energy, spine and direction, focus and detail, and rhythm and quality. Movement translation brings each of these core aspects together to create interest in uniform ensemble work, creating harmony among all dancers by allowing each mover to embody the same underlying dynamic movement within their unique physical range.

Helping to find relevant and personalized movement equivalents builds inclusive practice amid disabled dancers, non-disabled, those with non-typical dance bodies or even those managing injuries. Movement matters. And translating it from body to body presents the opportunity to adapt movement across many different mobilities, mechanics, and physicalities expanding what dance CAN be.

Founded on the belief that human diversity enriches art, Stopgap Dance Company in the UK performs as a global leader in inclusive contemporary dance and as a visionary of movement translation, inviting change in societal perceptions of difference and disability. At the heart of the company's mission is the drive to challenge traditional barriers in the performing arts. Stopgap creates works led by a diverse integrated group of deaf, disabled, neurodivergent, and non-disabled artists. Rather than fitting non-traditional performers into standard choreography, the ensemble uses movement translation, blending, and improvisation to show how different bodies, minds, and movement styles can build a shared, unified artistic language. During the creative process through improvisation games, the dancers observe and try on each other's movement styles and physicalities through the lens of the four core aspects. The process is filmed, edited, and pieced together by the director until the version that feels most united is found. Using this method has given a unique vision and style to their work, empowering nontraditional dance movement. Stopgap's Youtube channel, shares a miniseries on movement translation for inclusive contemporary dance featuring different groundwork sessions on how to translate shifting, inversions, turns, and two way translation.

 [How to Translate Shifting | TRANSLATION mini-series Part 1 | Groundwork | Home Practice](#)

Beyond the stage, Stopgap positions itself as a force for social change. By continuously refining best practices for accessibility in rehearsals, touring, and education, the company advocates for equity across the cultural sector—aiming to create a world where inclusion and diversity is celebrated rather than sidelined.

REFERENCES:

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Stopgap Dance Company. (2021, March 1). *How to translate shifting* | *TRANSLATION* mini-series Part 1 | *Groundwork* | *Home practice* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p5g9AqYl4W4>

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