

So You Think You Know Dance?

SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW DANCE?

Fundamentals of Dance

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INTRODUCTION

The Creation of this Book

This textbook was created as part of the Interactive OER for Dual Enrollment project, facilitated by [LOUIS: The Louisiana Library Network](#) and funded by a \$2 million [Open Textbooks Pilot Program grant from the Department of Education](#).

This project supports the extension of access to high-quality post-secondary opportunities to high school students across Louisiana and beyond by creating materials that can be adopted for dual enrollment environments. Dual enrollment is the opportunity for a student to be enrolled in high school and college at the same time.

The cohort-developed OER course materials are released under a license that permits their free use, reuse, modification and sharing with others. This includes a corresponding course available in [MoodleNet](#) and [Canvas Commons](#) that can be imported to other Learning Management System platforms. For access/questions, contact [Affordable Learning Louisiana](#).

If you are adopting this textbook, we would be glad to know of your use via this [brief survey](#).

Review Statement

This textbook and its accompanying course materials went through at least two review processes:

- Peer reviewers, coordinated by Jared Eusea, River Parish Community College, used an online course development standard rubric for assessing the quality and content of each course to ensure that the courses developed through Interactive OER for Dual Enrollment support online learners in that environment. The evaluation framework reflects a commitment to accessibility and usability for all learners.
 - Reviewers
 - Anne Branscum
 - Lisa Abney
 - Casey Merrell
- The Institute for the Study of Knowledge Management in Education (ISKME) collaborated with LOUIS to review course materials and ensure their appropriateness for dual enrollment audiences. Review criteria were drawn from factors that apply across dual enrollment courses and subject areas,

such as determining appropriate reading levels, assessing the fit of topics and examples for high school DE students; applying high-level principles for quality curriculum design, including designing for accessibility, appropriate student knowledge checks, and effective scaffolding of student tasks and prior knowledge requirements, addressing adaptability and open educational practices, and principles related to inclusion and representational social justice.

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[illegible]

Learning Objectives

With this chapter, you will begin working toward:

- Demonstrating a culturally informed dance aesthetic.
- Identifying the purposes of dance.

“Dance evaporates—everything goes...we just have this little hint. The deterioration actually adds to the meaning of it.”

— Dancer and film director Connie Hochman, on trying to capture the ephemera

Introduction

There are many definitions of dance, with people defining dance in their own way. In this chapter, you will consider your personal definition of dance. You will learn the purposes of dance. You will reflect on your experiences and upbringing to determine their influence on your dance aesthetic.

- Poetry, prose, and music are arts that exist in time. It is through the manipulation of rhythm and tempo that these arts are created.
- Painting, sculpture, and architecture are arts that exist in space. It is through the design of space that these arts are created.
- Dance is the only art that is a creation in both time and space.

How do you define dance?



Fig. 2: [Children dancing, Overture Center for the Arts, Madison](#) by [Ali Eminov](#) licensed [CC-BY-NC 2.0](#)

Elements of Dance

Dance can be studied in terms of its raw materials. We can describe movement thoroughly by breaking dance down into its basic components. A complete understanding of the building blocks of dance allows us to analyze, interpret and speak about dance in a thorough and understandable way. To increase dance literacy and appreciate dance as an art form, we must look at the elements of dance. Through the manipulation of these elements by the human body, dance happens. The elements of dance will be discussed in more detail later in Chapter 2. To describe dance, it is useful to analyze it in terms of these Elements of Dance:

- Body
- Energy
- Space
- Time

Purposes of Dance



Fig. 4: [THE SUIT_BALLET BLACK, BARBICAN](#), Choreographer; CATHY MARSTEN by [Lowry](#) licensed [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

Dance can be studied in terms of its purpose and function within a culture. Cultures impact how people engage with the world, as environmental influences, societal behaviors, and attitudes are intertwined within the development and shaping of dance forms. In this respect, dance is a carrier of culture. The purposes of dance include:

- Religious Dance / Dance to Please the Gods
- Social Dance / Dance to Please Ourselves
- Performance Dance / Dance to Please Others

Religious Dance

The earliest dances were likely religious in nature. Some religions embrace dance and use it as a part of their rituals. Other religions have eschewed dance or banned it for a number of different reasons.

The ancient Greeks and Africans used to dance to solidify their community. Ancient Greek dance, as well as ancient African dance, was divinely inspired. Everyone participated in religious ceremonies as cultivated amateurs and upstanding citizens. A big part of the program was processions and circle dances. The realities of the cosmos ruled the symbolism of the dances, and references to the sun, moon, and constellations figured into the movements.

Types of Religious Dance

1. Dances of Imitation
2. Medicine Dances
3. Commemorative Dances
4. Dances for Spiritual Connection

Dances of Imitation

Particularly in primitive and indigenous cultures, dances of imitation are performed. Dancers imitate animals and natural phenomena to embody specific qualities, like channeling the prowess of an animal. The dances serve various purposes, often promoting favorable outcomes, such as good weather and hunting.

Medicine Dances

Shamans, as spiritual leaders, serve as intermediaries between the human and spirit worlds. Both men and women may be Shamans. The religion is animistic (attributes a spirit to all things), and rituals address medicine, religion, a reverence for nature, and ancestor worship. On the summer solstice, Shamans perform a fire ritual at night. The Shaman drums carry the ancestral spirits of the Shaman.

Commemorative Dances

Dances are created to remember a special day, event, or meaningful moment. Some commemorative dances are very old. Maypole dances have early pagan roots. It is a celebration of the rebirth of spring. The Second Line is a West African form of dance that is a ritual to celebrate the life of the recently departed. After the slaves were brought to the New World, this dance became more of a celebration for parties and Mardi Gras festivals.

Dances for Spiritual Connection

In some cultures, the dancers seek to suppress their ego to find oneness with God. In others, dance may be used to connect with dead ancestors spiritually. Some religions use dance to tell their origin stories and preserve their heritage.

Social Dance

In social dance, we establish a connection with others. Social dance can be sorted into four general categories based on the purpose of the dance.

Types of Social Dance

1. Courtship Dances
2. Work Dances
3. War Dances
4. Communal Dances

Courtship Dances

In cultures where marriages are arranged, men and women do not engage in courtship dances. In other cultures, dance may serve as simple flirtation or involve more complex rituals.

Work Dances

Some dances are centered around the work that groups perform. Dances that mimic work routines were used in past times to help build unity and continuity among the crew.

War Dances



Fig. 6 “War Dance, Bawomataluo Village, South Nias” by ILO in Asia and the Pacific is marked with CC BY-NC-ND 2.0



Fig. 5 “Social Dancing” by Steve Smith Destinys Agent is licensed CC BY-NC 2.0

Dance has always been used in conjunction with training for war. Several cultures throughout history used dance as grounds for war preparation. The Greeks participated in pyrrhic dances and used weapons to mimic war tactics in preparation for battle. Capoeira was created by enslaved Africans in Brazil, using dance as a guise for practicing fighting. The Māori of Aotearoa/New Zealand dance the Haka as an intimidation tactic that instills warriors with ferocious energy. In South Africa, the Indlamu dance was inspired by Zulu warriors during the Anglo-Zulu wars, was derived from the war dances of amabutho (warriors), and was mainly used to motivate the men before they embarked on their long marches into

battles barefoot. Today, cultures continue to pass down these traditions to new generations as tradition.

Communal Dances

Communal dances are often a part of festivals and parties. Dances like springtime's Maypole dance and the Jewish hora bring a whole community together to share happy times. Communal dances also can be a way for a community to share grief and memories, like the Table of Silence performed at Lincoln Center every year to commemorate 9/11.

Performance Dance

Performance dances are presentational and often are entertainment for an audience. Some amateur dancers put on shows, but there are also professional dancers with highly polished techniques.



Fig. 7 “[Ballet de Moscú 2011](#)” by [ExpoMeloneras](#) is marked with [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

Types of Performance Dance

- Ballet
- Modern
- Tap
- Jazz
- Musical Theater, Film, and Television
- Hip-Hop

Dance Aesthetic



Fig. 8 [African dance](#) by [a2050](#) is licensed [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

Your **aesthetic** is that which you find pleasing or beautiful. It includes your tastes and preferences, your “likes” and “dislikes.” Your perception of dance will be informed by your aesthetic, which might result in subjective judgments about the dances you see. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge when these biased opinions emerge to be receptive to the dances you are witnessing and objectively respond to them. By keeping an open mind, we can better our understanding of the uniqueness of each dance as an art form.

Cultural Traditions

Culture is made up of the shared values, beliefs, and customs among a group of people and contributes to a person’s dance aesthetic. The rhythms of West Africa or Argentina that you grew up listening to can also play a part in shaping rhythmic tastes. Dance is an important way that the lore and traditions of a culture are preserved over time as they are passed down from generation to generation.

Different religions incorporate dance into their worship. Some religions include it as an intrinsic part of their ritual and even link dance to the spiritual experience. Other religions eschew dance altogether. Your religious upbringing and experiences may influence your dance aesthetic.

The program on **safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in formal and non-formal education** is a UNESCO initiative that recognizes that

- education plays a key role in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage.
- intangible cultural heritage can provide context-specific content and pedagogy for education programs and thus act as a leverage to increase the relevance and quality of education and improve learning outcomes.

UNESCO considers dance an intangible cultural resource. UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage division recognizes the following in its [summary report on education](#): "The creative process of intergenerational transmission is at the center of intangible cultural heritage safeguarding."

Family Influence

Different generations may prefer different dances. The dances your parents and their friends do are probably different from what you and your friends like. Maybe you have a grandparent who can teach you some older dances.

Media

Do you watch dance on television, in movies, online, in live concerts and shows, at half-time? The many factors of your experiences influence your dance aesthetic.

Personal Response

You will also have a personal response to dance. Do you prefer to move fast or slow, bouncy or gliding, all over the room or just a little bit? Do you want your dance to demonstrate emotion, or do you prefer a show of virtuosity?

Kinesthetic

Consider your physical response to dance as you think about your dance aesthetic. Dance is capable of eliciting joy, sorrow, and a wide spectrum of emotions. What aspect of the dance spoke to your personal experiences?

Dance is a beautiful and meaningful stand-alone art. It can be performed without any ancillary arts. But it is also an art that partners successfully with other arts. Costume, scenery, poetry, drama, and music are often a part of the spectacle. As you watch dances this semester, be aware of the music, costumes, and staging that help to lend color and meaning to the dance.

In preserving a culture's dances, one is able to preserve its stories and other art forms as well.



Fig. 9 “Odissi” by [Iqbal Saggu](#) is marked with [CC BY 2.0](#)

Summary

People have different ideas about how to define dance. One way to understand dance is to analyze its movement elements: body, energy, space, and time.

We can also study dance in terms of its purpose. Religious dances serve to imitate animals or natural elements, to achieve healing, to commemorate an occasion, or to reach spiritual connection. Social dances can serve in courtship, to find unity in work, unity in war, or camaraderie in the community. Performance dance is created and practiced for presentation to an audience. Western performance dance forms that have developed include ballet, modern dance, tap, jazz, musical theater, and hip-hop. Protest dances can be created to effect social change.

One's dance aesthetic is shaped and influenced by numerous factors. Family, media, personal response, and kinesthetic response are all contributors to a personal aesthetic.

Check Your Understanding

1. What is your definition of dance? Explain your response. How does your definition differ from those in the textbook?
2. What factors influence your dance aesthetic?

Resources

[Safeguarding intangible cultural heritage in education](#), UNESCO

Fig. 1 Word Cloud Generated image created by the Dance Cohort CC BY

Learning Objectives

- Recall the Elements of Dance
- Distinguish between the Elements of Dance
- Analyze, identify, and describe the Elements of Dance

A dance, as a work of art, must be constructed as well as a beautiful building.... A dance must have a beginning, development, and climax – just as a building has foundations, walls, and roof.
—Ted Shawn

What Are the Elements of Dance?

The Elements of Dance are the basic building blocks of dance that help us identify and describe movement, assisting in the ability to analyze, interpret, and speak/write about dance as an artistic practice. When viewing dance, we want to put into words what we are witnessing by analyzing its most important qualities. The elements of the dance provide us with the tools to do so.

In dance, the **body** can be in constant motion and even arrive at points of stillness. However, even in stillness, the dancers are inherently aware of themselves. No matter the case, all forms of dance can be broken down into their primary elements: **BODY**, **ENERGY**, **SPACE**, and **TIME**. To easily remember the dance elements, we use the acronym: B. E. S. T., which stands for **BODY**, **ENERGY**, **SPACE**, and **TIME**. Dance can be seen as the use of the **BODY** with different kinds of **ENERGY** moving through **SPACE** and unfolding in **TIME**.

Let's take a quick look at the elements of dance before we dig in further.

Watch This

Randy Barron, Teaching Artist on the Kennedy Center's National Roster, made this video to explain the Elements of Dance:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=21#oembed-1>

Body

The **body** is the dancer's instrument of expression. When an audience looks at dance, they see the dancer's **body** and what is moving. The dance could be made up of a variety of actions and still poses. It could use the whole body or emphasize one part of the **body**. Exploring **body** shapes and movement actions increases our awareness of movement possibilities.

Body Shapes

The choreographer who is designing a dance may look at their dancers as sculpture. They choose shapes for the dancers to make with their bodies. These can be curved, straight, angular, twisted, wide, narrow, **symmetrical**, or **asymmetrical**. These shapes can be geometric designs, such as circles or diagonals. They could make literal shapes such as tree branches or bird wings. They can also make conceptual shapes (abstract) such as friendship, courage, or sadness. Sometimes a choreographer emphasizes the **negative space** or the empty area around the dancers' bodies instead of just the **positive space** the dancer occupies. Look at the positive and negative spaces in Fig. 2



Fig. 3 [Three Female Dancers](#) under a [CC0 license](#)

Body Moves/Actions

Dance movements or actions fall into two main categories:

Locomotor: (traveling moves) walk, run, jump, hop, skip, leap, gallop, crawl, roll, etc.

Nonlocomotor: (moves that stay in place) melt, stretch, bend, twist, swing, turn, shake, stomp, etc.

Below is an example of **body** movements and shapes by modern dance choreographer Paul Taylor.

Watch This

Excerpt from modern dance choreographer Paul Taylor's *Esplanade*. Observe how the dancers use **locomotor** movement as they run and form circular formations and create lines in **space**.





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Body Parts

Each part of the **body** (head, shoulders, elbows, hips, knees, feet, eyes, etc.) can move alone (isolated) or in combination. In the classical Indian dance form Bharatanatyam, dancers stomp their feet in a **percussive** rhythm. At the same time, the dancer performs mudras, codified hand gestures that are important in the storytelling aspect of Bharatanatyam, to communicate words, concepts, or feelings.

Observe in the video below how the dancer alternately emphasizes her feet and legs with her hand and arm gestures. In classical Indian dance forms, facial expressions and hand gestures play an important role in storytelling.

Watch This

Excerpt from Pushpanjali, where choreographer Savitha Sastry performs a classical Indian dance solo called Bharatanatyam. Observe how the dancer alternately emphasizes the feet and legs with hand and arm gestures.



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In the next video, dancers are participating in the GAGA technique developed by Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin. In this movement language, dancers are directed to listen to their

inner sensations to elicit physical responses and movement. Notice how the dancers are integrating the entire **body** to create fluid and successive movement.



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Check Your Understanding



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<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=21#h5p-1>

Energy

An exploration of “how” a movement is done rather than “what” it is gives us a richer sense of dance as an expressive art. A dancer can walk, reach for an imaginary object and turn, making these movements look completely different by changing the use of **energy**. For example, anger could be shown with a loud quick walk, a sharp reach, and a strong twisting turn. Happiness could be depicted by using a delicate gliding walk, a gentle reach out, and a smooth, light turn. **energy** is what brings the dancer’s intent or emotion to the audience. The element of **energy** is sometimes called **efforts** or **movement qualities**.

Dancer and movement analyst Rudolf Laban broke it down into four **efforts**, each of which is a pair of opposites:

1. **Space** (direct or indirect use of **space**) When the dancer is paying attention to the use of **space**, they can be direct, single-focused, and targeted in their use of it. Conversely, they can be indirect, multi-focused, and aware of many things in the space around them.
2. **Weight** or force (strong or light use of weight) The dancer can emphasize the effort or use of force by fighting against it, throwing their weight and strength into movements. The opposite is using a yielding, light sense of weightlessness in their movements.

3. **Time** (sudden or sustained use of time) Not to be confused with tempo, the dancer's use of time can be reflected in their movement. It can appear hurried, as though fighting against time. Conversely, the dancer can have a relaxed attitude toward time as though they have all the time in the world.
4. **Flow** (bound or free use of the flow of movement) When the dancer's flow is bound up, they can appear to be careful and cautious, only allowing small amounts of flow. The opposite is when the dancer appears to throw the movement around without inhibition, letting the movement feel carefree.

Another way we can define **energy** is by looking at the **movement qualities**. **Movement qualities** are energy released during various time-spans to portray distinct qualities. There are six dynamic **movement qualities**.

1. **Sustained** (slow, smooth, continuous)
2. **Percussive** (sharp, choppy, jagged)
3. **Swinging** (swaying, to and fro, pendulum-like)
4. **Suspended** (a moment of stillness, the high point, a balance)
5. **Collapsed** (fall, release, relax)
6. **Vibratory** (shake, wiggle, tremble)

Notice the kinds of **energy** the dancers are displaying in the examples below.

In the first video, the dancers are using **efforts** of direct, strong, sudden and bound movements. In terms of **movement qualities**, the dancers are using percussive, **vibratory**, and moments of collapse.

Watch This

Hip-hop dance crew Kaba Modern use the **efforts** of direct, strong, sudden, and bound movements. In terms of **movement qualities**, the dancers use **percussive**, **vibratory**, and moments of **collapse**.



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In the National Opera of Ukraine's prelude from Chopiniana, the dancers are using **efforts** of light and free movements. The **movement qualities** are sustained and suspended.



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Check Your Understanding



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<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=21#h5p-12>

Space

Let's look at where the dance takes place. Is the dance expansive, using lots of **space**, or is it more intimate, using primarily **personal space**? An exploration of **space** increases our awareness of the visual design aspects of movement.

1. **Personal Space:** The **space** around the dancer's body can also be called near space. A dance primarily in **personal space** can give a feeling of introspection or intimacy.
2. **Negative Space/Positive Space:** Sometimes, a choreographer emphasizes the **negative space** or the empty area around the dancers' bodies instead of just the **positive space** the dancer occupies. Look at the positive and negative space in the photograph below.
3. **General Space:** The defined space where the dancer can move can be a small room, a large stage, or even an outdoor setting.
4. **Levels:** Dancers use a variety of **levels**: high, middle, or low. High movements can reach upward and include using jumps and leaps or lifting each other. A middle level move is generally a move that takes place between the height of the dancer's shoulders and knees. Low level moves can include sitting, kneeling, sinking to the ground, rolling, or crawling.

5. **Directions:** While dances made for the camera often have the performers facing forward as they dance, they can also change **directions** by turning, going to the back, right, left, up, or down.
6. **Pathways** or Floor Patterns: Where the dancer goes through **space** is often an important design element. They can travel in a circle, figure eight, spiral, zig-zag, straight lines, and combinations of lines.
7. **Range:** Movements or shapes can be near reach, mid-ranged, or far reach. **Range** is associated with one's **kinesphere**. **Kinesphere** is the immediate area surrounding the **body** and is described as a three-dimensional volume of **space**. Imagine a bubble around the dancer's **body**, with their arms and limbs extended to their fullest extent in every possible direction without moving from a fixed spot, this is considered a personal **kinesphere**. Movement occurs in a person's **kinesphere** and includes near reach (movement that is close to the body, small or condensed), mid-reach (movement that is neither near nor far but comfortably in the middle), and far reach (large and expansive movement).
8. **Relationship:** Dancers can explore the relationship between different **body** parts, the relationship of one dancer to another dancer or a group of dancers, or the relationship to a prop or to objects in the dance **space**.



Fig. 4 [Agility ballet dancing athlete](#). From Pexels and under the Pixabay [Content License](#)

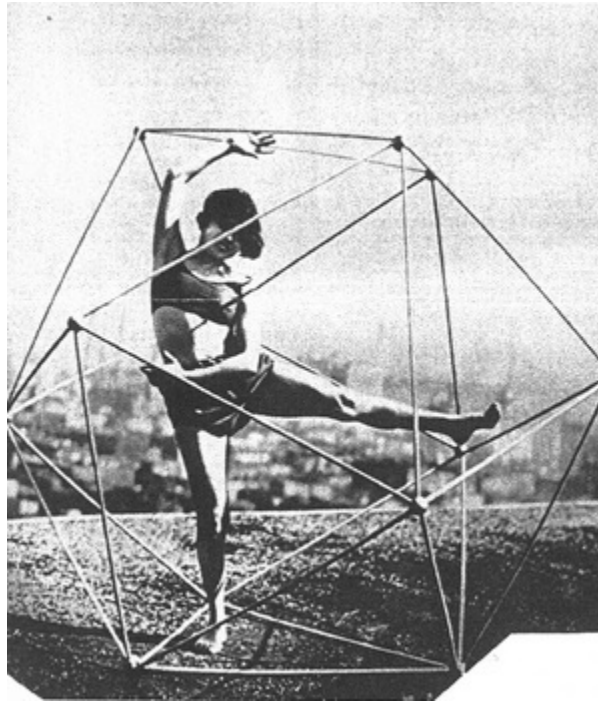


Fig. 5 Français : Épreuve gélatino-argentique
1925 24,5 x 21 cm 18 May 2017 Mathildemultiple.
[CC BY SA 4.0](#)

Watch This

Excerpt from George Balanchine's ballet Apollo. Notice the interlocking of circles of the dancers' arms and the straight lines made by the dancers' legs.



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In this next video, notice various **floor patterns** such as circular **pathways** and straight lines that are made by the group of dancers. Observe the dancers' use of gestures that go from near to far

reach, from personal **space** to filling the general space. The choreography also uses levels from low to high.



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Check Your Understanding



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<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=21#h5p-26>

Time

Dance is an art of **time**; movement develops and reveals itself in **time**. Adding a rhythmic sense to movement helps transform ordinary movement into dance and informs when the dancer moves.

1. **Pulse:** The basic **pulse** or underlying beat
2. **Speed** (tempo): Fast, moderate, slow
3. **Rhythm Pattern:** A grouping of long or short beats, accents, or silences
4. **Natural Rhythm:** Timing which comes from the rhythms of the breath, the heartbeat, or natural sources like the wind or the ocean
5. **Syncopation:** Accents the off-beat in a musical phrase

Compare the different uses of **time** in the two videos below. In the first video, the dancers have no musical accompaniment and use their breath to initiate movement and cue each other for the timing. Their movement is also slow to moderate in tempo and imitates the **natural rhythm** of the ocean.

Watch This

Excerpt from modern dance choreographer Doris Humphrey's *Water Study*. In this video, the dancers have no musical accompaniment and use their breath to initiate movement and cue each other for the timing. Their movement is also slow to moderate in tempo and imitates the natural rhythm of the ocean.



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Promo clip of *Step Afrika!*, where the dancers are creating rhythm patterns with body percussion. There is an emphasis on syncopation and varying tempos with accents.



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Summary

All dance forms share foundational concepts known as the Elements of Dance. The Elements of Dance are overarching concepts and terminology that are useful when observing, creating, analyzing, and discussing dance. Dance can be broken down into its primary elements : **Body**, **Energy**, **Space**, and **Time**. These can be easily recalled through the acronym B.E.S.T.

The **body** is the mobile instrument of the dancer and informs what is moving. The **body** category includes shapes, actions, whole-**body**, and **body**-part movements. **Energy** is how the **body** moves. When speaking about **energy**, we can refer to effort or movement qualities. **Space** is where movement occurs and includes personal and general **space**, **levels**, **directions**, **pathways** and **floor patterns**, various sizes of movements,

range of movement, and **relationships**. **Time** is when the dancers move. The **time** category includes **pulse**, **speed**, **rhythmic patterns**, **natural rhythm**, and **syncopation**.

As an observer of dance, it can be easy to allow our biases to influence how we perceive dance. By using dance vocabulary and stating what we observe, we can be more objective in our discussions of dance. Using the Elements of Dance, we can view dance through an unbiased lens to consider its structural elements and deepen our understanding and appreciation of dance as an art form.

Check Your Understanding

1. Try making shapes that depict literal and abstract concepts. Some examples of literal shapes might be a flower, a seashell, or a rainbow. Some abstract shapes might be circles, diamonds, or even concepts such as friendship, heroism, or depression.
2. Make a short (10 second) dance phrase and perform it twice with two different types of energy.
3. On paper, draw a map with a continuous pathway without lines overlapping. After mapping your pathway, try adding locomotor movements on various levels that complement your pathway design.
4. Make a sentence introducing yourself and your favorite food. For example: “Cissy Whipp likes chips and guacamole.” or “Vanessa Kanamoto likes grilled shrimp.” Now try clapping the rhythm your sentence makes. (Notice how the two examples have very different rhythms.) Create a movement pattern that matches the rhythm pattern of your sentence. Practice until you can repeat it four times in a row.

Check Your Understanding



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=21#h5p-27>

Resources

The [Elements of Dance website](#) from Perpich Center for Arts Education in partnership with University of MN Dance Program

3.

BALLET

Learning Objectives

- Explain the function of court dance and the development of ballet.
- Summarize the development of ballet from its professionalization through romantic, classical, avant-garde, neoclassical, and contemporary ballet.
- Associate major ballet milestones with the works and choreographers responsible.

Nothing resembles a dream more than a ballet, and it is this which explains the singular pleasure that one receives from these apparently frivolous representations. One enjoys, while awake, the phenomenon that nocturnal fantasy traces on the canvas of sleep; an entire world of chimeras moves before you.

—Theophile Gautier, French poet

What Is Ballet?



Fig 1 [Ballet Don Quijote](#) licensed [CC0](#)

Ballet is the epitome of classical dance in Western cultures. **Classical dance** forms are structured, and stylized techniques developed and evolved throughout centuries requiring rigorous formal training. Ballet originated with the nobility in the Renaissance courts of Europe. The dance form was closely associated with appropriate behavior and etiquette. Eventually, ballet became a professional vocation as it became a popular form of entertainment for the new middle class to enjoy. Ballet spread throughout the world as dance masters refined their craft and handed their methods down from generation to generation. Over 500 years, it has developed and changed. Dancers and choreographers worldwide have contributed new vocabulary and styles, yet ballet's essence remains the same.

Ballet Characteristics: Codified Technique

Ballet is a **codified** dance form ordered systematically and has set movements associated with specific terminology. Ballet is a rigorous art and requires extensive training to perform the technique correctly. The first ballet creators' principles have survived intact, but different regional and artistic styles have emerged over the centuries. Ballet classes follow a standard structure for progression and are comprised of two sections.

The first part of ballet class typically begins with a warm-up at the barre. The **barre** is a stationary handrail that dancers hold while working on balance, allowing them to focus on placement, alignment, and coordination. The second half of the ballet class is performed in the center without a barre. Dancers use the entire room to increase their spatial awareness and perform elevated and dynamic movements.



Fig. 2 [Cours public du ballet national de Cuba](#) by [Jean-Pierre Dalbéra](#) licensed [CC-BY-SA 2.0](#)

Alignment and Turnout

Ballet emphasizes the lengthening of the spine and the use of **turnout**, an outward rotation of the legs in the hip socket. This serves both to create an aesthetically pleasing line and increase mobility.

Foot Articulation



Fig. 3 [Modern pointe shoes](#), modeled by Daria L. The edge of the toe pad, which is inserted between the foot and toe box for cushioning, can be seen on the right foot. CC Public Domain Public Domain

Ballet demands a strong articulated foot to perform demanding movements and create an elongated line.

Pointe shoes, a ballet staple, add to the illusion of weightlessness and flight. They are constructed with a hard, flat box to enable dance on the tips of the toes; it is a technique called **en pointe** that requires years of training and dedication to develop the needed strength in the feet, ankles, calves and legs.

Elevated Movement

Traditionally, ballet favors a light quality, called *ballon*, with elevated movements. Dancers seem to overcome gravity effortlessly and achieve great height in their leaps and jumps.

Pantomime and Storytelling

Ballet can tell a story without words through a language of gestures called **pantomime**. Some movements are easily understood or have simple body language, but more abstract concepts are given specific gestures of their own to convey meaning. The facial expressions, the musical phrasing, and dynamics all play a role in

communicating the story. Pantomime developed in ballet's Romantic period and was further incorporated during the classical era.

Watch This

The Royal Ballet dancers demonstrate and decode ballet pantomime for *Swan Lake*. David Pickering addresses the audience in the basics of pantomime, and audience members mimic the movement. In the second part of the clip, principal dancers Marianele Nunez and Thiago Soares reenact act 2 as David Pickering narrates the pantomime.



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Court Dance: Italy and France

In medieval Italy, an early pantomime version featured a single performer portraying all the story characters through gestures and dance. A narrator previewed the story to come, and musicians accompanied the pantomime. Pantomimes were quite popular, but they were sometimes over-the-top in their efforts to be comedic, often resulting in lewd and graphic reenactments. Dance was a part of everyday life. Peasants danced at street fairs, and guild members danced at festivals, but it was in the royal courts that ballet had its genesis.



Fig. 4 [John Rich](#) as Harlequin with batte, c. 1720 [Public Domain](#)

European Renaissance: Ballet de Cour

Catherine de Medici



Fig. 5 Representation of a ballet before Henri III. and his court, in the gallery of the Louvre. Re-engraving from an original on copper in the *Ballet comique de la Royne* by Balthazar de Beaujoyeux (Paris: Ballard, 1582). According to T. E. Lawrenson, *The French Stage and Playhouse in the Seventeenth Century* (2nd ed., 1986), p. 184, this performance took place in the Petit Bourbon. Public Domain.

Catherine de Medici, a wealthy noblewoman of Florence, Italy, married the heir to the French throne, King

Henri II. In 1581, she went to Paris for a royal wedding accompanied by Balthazar de Beaujoyeulx, a dance teacher and choreographer. Catherine de Medici commissioned Beaujoyeulx to create ***Ballet Comique de la Reine*** in celebration of the wedding, and it became widely recognized as the first court ballet. The **ballet de cour** featured independent acts of dancing, music, and poetry unified by overarching themes from Greco-Roman mythology. The ballet included references to court characters and intrigues. After the *Ballet Comique de la Reine* production, a booklet was published with libretto telling the ballet story. It became the model for ballets produced in other European courts, making France the recognized leader in ballet.



Fig. 6 [Painted portrait of Catherine de' Medici](#) (1519-1589) Public Domain

King Louis XIV

During King Louis XIV's reign, France was a mighty nation. King Louis XIV kept nobility close at hand by moving his court and government to the Palace of Versailles, where he could maintain his power. At court, it

was necessary to excel in fencing, dance, and etiquette. Nobility vied for an elevated position in court, as one's abilities in the finer arts reflected success in politics.

King Louis XIV was a great patron of the arts and vigorously trained in ballet. He performed in several ballet productions. His most memorable role was Apollo, gaining the title the "Sun King" from *Le Ballet de la Nuit*, which translates to "The Ballet of the Night."

Louis XIV's love of dance inspired him to charter the Académie Royal de Musique et Danse, headed by his old dance teacher Pierre Beauchamps and thirteen of the finest dance masters from his court. In this way, the king assured that "la danse classique," that is to say, "ballet," would survive and develop. The **danse d'école** provided rigorous training to transition from amateur performance dancers to seasoned professionals. This also opened the door for non-nobility to pursue ballet professionally. For the first time, women were also allowed to train in ballet. Women were only allowed to participate in court social dances until this point. Male performers took on all the roles in court ballets, wearing masks to dance the roles of women.



Fig. 7 Louis XIV dans *Le Ballet de la nuit*. The ballet was choreographed in 1653. It was significant because Louis XIV made his debut at court. This court ballet lasted 12 hours, beginning at sundown and lasting until morning, and consisted of 45 dances. Louis XIV appeared in 5 of them. The most famous dance of *Ballet de la Nuit* portrays Louis XIV as Apollo the Sun King. CC Public Domain

Transitioning from the ballet de cour, dances of the Renaissance ballroom grew into the **ballet a entrée**, a series of independent episodes linked by a common theme. Early productions of the academy featured the opera-ballet, a hybrid art form of music and dance. Jean-Philippe Rameau served as both composer and choreographer for many early opera-ballets.

At this time, there was a differentiation of characters that dancers assumed. These roles were generally categorized as:

1. **danse noble:** regal presentation suitable for roles of royalty
2. **demi-character:** lively, everyday people; “the girl next door”
3. **comique:** exaggerated, caricatured characters

Some significant developments aided in the progression of ballet as an art form at the Académie Royale de Musique et Danse. Pierre Beauchamps significantly contributed to ballet by developing the five basic positions of the feet used in ballet technique. He also laid the foundation for a **notation system** to record dances. Raoul Auger Feuillet refined the notation and published it in 1700; then, in 1706, John Weaver translated it into English, making it globally accessible.

Watch This

In this split-screen, Feuillet’s dance notation is shown on the left side while dancers perform the Baroque dances on the right side.



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The Académie Royale de Musique et Danse was the place to train classical dancers. Dancers and dance masters alike traveled to the great centers of Europe, bringing French ballet to the continent. Today’s Paris Opera Ballet is the direct descendant of the Académie Royal de Musique et Danse.

Watch This

This TED-Ed animated video clip summarizes the origins of ballet:



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Dance in the Age of Enlightenment

The Age of Enlightenment was a philosophical movement that emphasized freedom of expression and the eradication of religious authority. These ideas caused criticism among philosophers who believed art forms should speak to meaningful human expression rather than ornamental art forms.

Jean-Georges Noverre (1727-1810)

Ballet master and choreographer Jean-Georges Noverre challenged ballet traditions and made ballets more expressive. In his famous writings, *Letters on Dancing and Ballet*, Noverre rejected dance traditions at the Paris Opera Ballet and helped transform ballet into a medium for storytelling. The masks that dancers traditionally wore were stripped away to show dramatic facial expressions and convey meaning within ballets. Pantomime helped tell the story of the ballet. In addition, plots became logically developed with unifying themes, integrating theatrical elements. From Noverre's concepts, **ballet d'action** emerged.

Carlo Blasis (1797-1878)

Carlo Blasis was particularly influential in shaping the vocabulary and structure of ballet techniques. He invented the “attitude” position commonly used in ballet from the inspiration of Giambologna's sculpture of Mercury. He published two major treatises on the execution of ballet, the most notable being “An Elementary

Treatise Upon the Theory and Practice of the Art of Dancing.” Blasis taught primarily at LaScala in Milan, where he was responsible for educating many Romantic-era teachers and dancers.



Fig. 10 A picture of [Bologna's Mercury on a Russian stamp](#). (not subject to copyright). A dancer performs an *attitude* (by [Fanny Schertzer](#), licensed [CC BY-SA 3.0](#))

Costume Changes

During the Renaissance, men and women wore elaborate clothing. Women wore laced-up corsets around the torso and panniers (a series of side hoops) fastened around the waist to extend the width of the skirts. Men wore breeches and heeled shoes. The upper body was bound by bulky clothing and primarily emphasized footwork. By the 18th century, there were changes in costuming. Two dancers helped revolutionize costumes.

Marie Sallé (1707-1756)

Marie Sallé was a famous dancer at the Paris Opera, celebrated for her dramatic expression. Her natural approach to pantomime storytelling influenced Noverre. She traded the elaborate clothing that was fashionable at the time to match the subject of the choreography. In her self-choreographed ballet *Pygmalion*, she wore a less restrictive costume, wearing a simple draped Grecian-style dress and soft slippers. This allowed for less restricted movement and expression.



Fig. 11 Adelaïde Simonet as the Princess in the pantomime-ballet *Ninette à la Cour*, first produced by the Paris Opera Ballet in 1778 with choreography by Maximilien Gardel, as performed in London in 1781. In the [Public Domain](#)



Fig. 12 Garnier, after Nicolas Lancret (1690-1743). [Mademoiselle Sallé](#) in the Public Domain

Marie Camargo (1710-1770)

Marie Camargo, a contemporary of Sallé, exemplified virtuosity and flamboyance in her dancing. She shortened her skirt to just above the ankles to make her impressive fancy footwork visible. She also removed the heels from her shoes, creating flat-soled slippers. This allowed her to execute jumps and leaps that were previously considered male steps.



Fig. 13 La Camargo Dancing c. 1730, Nicolas Lancret (1690-1743). Andrew W. Mellon Collection, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC. [CC Public Domain](#)

Check Your Understanding



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Romantic Ballet

From France and the royal academy, dance masters brought ballet to the other courts of Europe. These professional teachers and choreographers went to London, Vienna, Milan, and Copenhagen, where the monarchs supported ballet. During the 18th century, the French Revolution ended the French monarchy, and Europe saw political and social changes that profoundly affected ballet. By the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution resulted in middle-class people working in factories. Art shifted from glorifying the nobility to emphasizing the ordinary person.

The Romantic era of ballet reflected this pivotal time. Ballets had now become **ballet d'action**, ballets that tell a story. The Romantic era was a time of fantasy, etherealism, supernaturalism, and exoticism. Artistic themes included man vs. nature, good vs. evil, and society vs. the supernatural. The dancers appeared as humans and mythical creatures like sylphs, wilis, shades, and naiads. Women were the stars of the ballets, and men took on supporting roles. Choreography now included pointework, pantomime, and the illusion of floating. Romantic ballets most often appeared as two acts. The first act would be set in the real world, and dancers would portray humans. In contrast, the second act was set in a spiritual realm and often would include a tragic end.

Theater Special Effects



Fig. 14 Stage of the Garnier Opera House, Paris, France. [operagarnier12f](#) by [scarletgreen](#) is licensed [CC BY 2.0](#)

The opera houses featured **prosceniums**, a stage with a frame or arch. The shift of performance venues had a significant effect on ballet in the following ways:

1. In ballrooms, geometric **floor patterns** were appreciated by audiences who sat above. The audience's perspective changed to a frontal view with the introduction of the proscenium stage, and the body became the composition's focus.
2. Turned-out legs were emphasized, allowing dancers to travel side-to-side while still facing the audience. This required dancers to have greater skill and technique.
3. The proscenium stage separated the audience and performers, transitioning ballet from a social function to theatrical entertainment.
4. Curtains allowed for changes in scenery.
5. The flickering of the gas lights in the theaters gave a supernatural look to the dancing on the stage.
6. Theaters also enabled rigging to carry the dancers into the air, giving the illusion of flying.

The stagecraft of the time lent itself to creating the scenes that choreographer Filippo Taglioni would use in his ballets.

La Sylphide



Fig. 15 Alfred Edward Chalon (1780–1860) (artist) Lane, Richard James (A.R.A.) (1800–1872) (lithographer) J. Dickinson (publisher). [Marie Taglioni in Zephyre et Flore](#) in the public domain

In 1824, ballet master Filippo Taglioni (1777–1871) choreographed *La Sylphide*. His daughter Marie portrayed the sylphide, an ethereal, spirit-like character. Marie Taglioni (1804–1884) wore a white romantic tutu with a bell-shaped skirt that reached below her knees, creating the effect of flight and weightlessness. Taglioni also removed the heels from her slippers and rose to the tips of her toes as she danced to give her movement a floating and ethereal quality. Taglioni is recognized as one of the first dancers to perform en pointe.

La Sylphide features a **corps de ballet**, a group of dancers working in unison to create dance patterns. Because the corps de ballet is dressed in white romantic tutus (as is the norm with sylphs, fairies, wilis, and other creatures that populate the worlds of Romantic ballet), *La Sylphide* is known as a **ballet blanc**.

Watch This

Watch this video of the Royal Scottish Ballet that describes and shows excerpts from *La Sylphide*:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-4>

Auguste Bournonville (1805-1879)

Auguste Bournonville, a French-trained dancer, served as a choreographer and director in the Royal Danish Ballet. Four years after the original *La Sylphide* production, Bournonville re-choreographed the ballet. Bournonville's dances featured speed, elevation, and beats where the legs "flutter" in the air. He also expanded the lexicon of male dancing by adding ballon for men and stylized movements for women that portrayed them as sweet and charming. Bournonville created many dances for the Danish ballet, and the company has preserved his choreography through the centuries.

Watch This

The Bournonville variation from Napoli demonstrates movements of elevation:





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Giselle

Giselle is a ballet masterwork that is still performed worldwide. It is inspired by the literary works of Heine and Hugo that referenced the supernatural wilis. *Giselle* was choreographed by Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot and composed by Adolphe Adam. It is almost a template for the traditional Romantic ballets. Act 1 is set in a village, and act 2 is in a graveyard, an otherworldly place populated by the ghosts of young girls who died before their wedding day—wilis. Giselle falls in love with a young man, Albrecht, who pretends to be a local but is really a nobleman. Distracted by his deception, she dies from grief. When Albrecht visits her grave, the wilis conspire to dance him to death. Giselle, now a wili herself, intervenes to save him.

Coppélia

Not all Romantic-era ballets were tragic and supernatural. Arthur St. Léon created the great comedic ballet *Coppélia*: “The Girl with the Enamel Eyes.” The ballet is based on a tale by E. T. A. Hoffman. It tells the story of a village boy, Franz, enamored by the girl Coppélia. Unbeknownst to him, she is an automaton. His jealous girlfriend Swanilda discovers the deception created by the doll’s creator, and when the old toymaker tries to animate his doll with magic, she takes the doll’s place and pretends to come to life. The characters’ antics were great hits with audiences, and the ballet remains popular today.

Classical Ballet: Imperial Russia

About the time King Louis XIV was sponsoring the creation of ballet in his court, Peter the Great became tsar of Russia (1682-1725). He embraced science and Western social ideas in an effort to bring “the enlightenment” to Russia. Peter built the imperial city of St. Petersburg and established his court there. His successor, Empress Anna, retained Jean-Baptiste Lande in 1738 to establish a ballet school at the military academy she had established. This school became the home of the Maryinsky Ballet. The Bolshoi Ballet was a rival school and company later established in Moscow.

Following Lande’s lengthy directorship in St. Petersburg, many of Europe’s most important ballet masters

and choreographers took a turn at the helm in creating dance in Russia, including Jules Perrot, Filippo Taglioni, and Arthur St. Léon.

Marius Petipa (1818–1910)

Marius Petipa was the most influential choreographer of this era, known as “the father of classical ballet.” A dancer from a family of French ballet dancers, he moved to St. Petersburg as a minor choreographer. He rose to great importance in Russian ballet as the director and choreographer of the Maryinsky Ballet for nearly sixty years (1847–1903). He created over sixty ballets in his career, restaging a number of the great Romantic-era ballets (much of the existing choreography of ballets like *Giselle* and *Coppélia* are the work of Marius Petipa’s restaging.) Petipa also created new original ballets, beginning with *The Pharaoh’s Daughter*, a five-act ballet complete with an underwater scene and livestock onstage.



Fig. 16 Photograph of Marius Petipa by an unidentified photographer. In the [public domain](#)

Characteristics of Classical Ballets

Marius Petipa is responsible for the defining characteristics of classical ballets. Petipa’s creations told stories using ballet, character dance, and choreographic structures that highlighted the most technical dancers of the company.

Classical Ballet Choreographic Structure

Petipa developed a standard choreographic structure. He used character dances, folk dances that depicted various cultures, to add variety to the performance. Unlike the Romantic ballets that consisted of two acts, classical ballets expanded to three or four acts. Many dances that had nothing to do with moving the plot forward were included in these ballets to make them longer. These extra dance numbers are called **divertissements** (diversions). Divertissements were often character dances. The end of the ballet usually features the **grand pas de deux**, a duet for the principal dancers. The grand pas de deux has four sections:

1. Adagio—The principal dancers perform slow movements together that are fluid and controlled.
2. Man's Variation—Males display their technical virtuosity by performing leaps, turns, and jumps.
3. Woman's Variation—Females often perform quick footwork and turns.
4. Coda—The principals dance together to display impressive movements.

Watch This

The Sleeping Beauty grand pas de deux featuring Robert Bolle and Diana Vishneva:



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Contextual Connections

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky composed three great ballets. He was already a recognized and respected composer in Russia when Petipa asked him to compose the ballet score for *The Sleeping Beauty*. Petipa gave Tchaikovsky specific instructions on the music he required for the ballet. The ballet was lavishly produced and became an enormous success.

Tchaikovsky's second ballet, *The Nutcracker*, was choreographed by Petipa's choreographic assistant, Lev Ivanov (1834-1901). Petipa's choreographic assistant, Lev Ivanov, worked alongside Petipa in the creation of many ballets. He created entire portions of Petipa ballets and ballets of his own.

The Nutcracker was not admired in Russia at the time—it was seen as frivolous and trivial. It was in America in the middle of the twentieth century that *The Nutcracker* found popularity as a vehicle for local dancers in communities around the country.

The third well-known ballet Tchaikovsky composed was *Swan Lake*. Marius Petipa choreographed the first and third acts of the ballet—those set in the environs of Prince Siegfried, town and ballroom, and the world of people. Lev Ivanov choreographed acts 2 and 4, the beautiful scenes set at the lake with the swans.



Fig. 17 [corps de ballet](#) by [Jack Devant ballet](#) licensed [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

After the revolution of 1917, the Russian populace embraced ballet. Rather than discarding it as a symbol of the tsars, the working class adopted it as their own, and ballet became a symbol of national pride.

At the end of the 19th century, Russia was at the apex of the ballet world, and this continued well into the 20th century. The Vaganova Choreographic Institute in St. Petersburg employs Russia's finest teachers to train its dancers. The life of a ballet dancer in Russia brings privileges and opportunities that make acceptance into the school highly desirable.

Check Your Understanding



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Ballet Russes: Dance and the Avant-Garde

Sergei Diaghilev (1872-1929)



Fig. 18 Russian ballet impresario and founder of the Ballets Russes Sergei Diaghilev (1872-1929). From the [Library of Congress](#) with no known restrictions on publication.

Sergei Diaghilev, a Russian art lover, organized the Ballet Russes in 1909. He identified ballet as the ideal vehicle to present the Russian arts to the West. Diaghilev's troupe included some of Russia's finest dancers and choreographers recruited from the Vaganova Institute and the Maryinsky ballet. He promoted collaborations with avant-garde composers and artists of the time. The tour to Paris extended twenty years as the Ballet Russes performed for Paris, Europe, and the Western world. The Ballet Russes introduced a new and modern form of ballet, revitalizing ballet in the West.

Michel Fokine (1880-1942)

The first choreographer of Ballet Russes was Michel Fokine. Like Jean-Georges Noverre, Fokine developed principles to reform ballet. Fokine focused on ballet's expressiveness rather than physical prowess. He believed movement should serve a purpose to the theme, and costumes should reflect the dress of the time and setting. Fokine also stripped away pantomime in his ballets, emphasizing movement and self-expression as the catalyst for storytelling. His one-act ballet *Les Sylphides* was reminiscent of the earlier ballet *La Sylphide* in its use of the

ethereal sylph. But Fokine's ballet had no plot. A single man, a poet, dances among a group of sylphides in a ballet that evokes a dreamlike mood.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Les Sylphides* (c 1928). This black-and-white clip is some of the only footage of the company that exists. Diaghilev did not want his ballet company to be filmed because he was afraid of losing income from box-office sales.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-7>

Fokine's *The Firebird* was based on tales from Russian folklore. His *Petrouchka* told the story of a trio of puppets at a Russian street fair.

Vaslav Nijinsky (1889–1950)



Fig. 19 The dancer Vaslav Nijinsky in the ballet *Le spectre de la rose* as performed at the Royal Opera House in 1911.
[Public Domain](#)

Vaslav Nijinsky was a principal dancer of the company and is remembered for his astonishing gravity-defying jumps and poignant portrayals. When Fokine left the company, Nijinsky became the principal choreographer. He choreographed the *Rite of Spring: Tales from Russia*, *Afternoon of a Faun*, and *Jeux*. Nijinsky's dances were controversial because the themes, movement aesthetics, and music were unconventional for the time. *The Rite of Spring* portrays a pagan ritual and fertility rites that left the audience in uproar on its opening night.

Watch This

Excerpt from the *Rite of Spring*.



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Léonide Massine (1895-1979)

Léonide Massine followed Nijinsky as a choreographer, where he expanded on Fokine's innovations, focusing on narrative, folk dance, and character portrayals in his ballets. *Parade* is a one-act ballet about French and American street circuses. Pablo Picasso designed the cubist sets and costumes.

Watch This

Excerpt of *Parade*. The characters are introduced in three groups as they try to entice an audience into the performance. The giant cubist figures portray business promoters.



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Bronislava Nijinska (1891-1972)

Bronislava Nijinska, the fourth Ballet Russes choreographer, was Vaslav's sister and stands out as one of the few recognized women choreographers. Her ballet *Les Noces*, set to music by Stravinsky, was noted for its architectural qualities. She created *Le Train Bleu* and several ballets known for being Riviera chic, portraying the carefree lifestyle of Europe's idle rich.



Photograph of *Le Train Bleu*, 1924, which included costumes designed by Coco Chanel. From the [Library of Congress](#) with no known restrictions on publication.

George Balanchine (1904-1983)

George Balanchine was the fifth and last choreographer of Diaghilev's Ballet Russes. He created ten ballets for the company. The *Prodigal Son* is a retelling of the bible story. *Apollo* shows the birth of the god Apollo and his tutoring in the arts by the three muses. Those two ballets remain in the repertory of the New York City Ballet.

Watch This

Excerpt from Balanchine's *Apollo* performed by Pacific Northwest Ballet:



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Watch This

This short clip features pictures and footage with commentary by Lynn Garafola, Nancy Reynolds, and Charles M. Smith:



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Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Original Ballet Russe

The dancers of Ballet Russe were left at loose ends after the death of Diaghilev. A former Russian colonel, Wassily de Basil, joined with Rene Blum and found the funding to buy Diaghilev's sets and costumes. He hired George Balanchine as the choreographer for the new company, Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Balanchine recruited girls of twelve and fourteen to become the new stars of the company. The trio—Tamara Toumanova, Irina Baronova, and Tatiana Riabouchinska—was dubbed the baby ballerinas.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Les Sylphides* featuring the baby ballerinas:





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In little more than a year, Blum had split from de Basil, and Balanchine was replaced with Léonide Massine as choreographer. Massine created ballets from 1932–1937, including *Gaite Parisienne*, and *Les Presages*, the first ballet set to a symphony.

Ultimately Massine split from de Basil. In a court battle, de Basil's company retained the rights to all of Massine's work during that time. But Massine held on to the name Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

The Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo toured Europe, and when World War II broke out, the company sailed for North America, while De Basil's company, now named The Original Ballet Russe, headed to Australia. They later also toured the US and South America. Both companies performed for countless new audiences, introducing Russian ballet to the New World. American dancers were hired to fill the ranks of the companies. Among others, five Native American ballerinas were hired to tour with the companies.

The Five Moons

Many American dancers found work with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo and Original Ballet Russe. Five exceptional Native American dancers who became ballerinas with these companies hailed from Oklahoma. Known as the Five Moons, a reference to their tribes, these women gained fame and success at the highest levels of ballet and were foundational in the development of Oklahoma dance institutions.

Maria Tallchief

- (Osage Nation, 1925–2013) went on to dance with New York City Ballet. She married George Balanchine and worked with him for many years. Balanchine's *Firebird* was a signature role for her.

Marjorie Tallchief

- (Osage Nation, 1926–2021), Maria's sister, was known for her great versatility as a dancer. She had a successful dancing career in Europe and the United States, then served as director at Dallas Civic Ballet Academy, Chicago's City Ballet, and Harid Conservatory in Boca Raton.

Moscelyne Larkin

- (Peoria/Eastern Shawnee/Russian, 1925–2012) first learned ballet from her dancer mother. She starred at Radio City Music Hall and founded Tulsa Ballet Theatre with her husband.

Yvonne Chouteau

- (Shawnee Tribe, 1929–2016) joined Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at the age of 14, where she danced many roles from the Ballet Russe repertory. She served as an artist in residence at the University of Oklahoma and founded Oklahoma City Ballet with her husband.

Rosella Hightower

- (Choctaw Nation, 1920–2008) danced with these major companies and with American Ballet Theatre, but she later found her work in France, as director of Marseilles Opera Ballet and then Ballet de Nancy. Hightower was the first American director of the Paris Opera Ballet.



Fig. 20 Two of the Five Moons sculptures at the Tulsa Historical Society. From left to right: Marjorie Tallchief, Rosella Hightower. [Photo](#) by Peter Greenberg. [CC BY-SA 3.0](#)

Both Ballet Russe companies had disbanded by 1960. Many of the retired dancers went on to found ballet schools and companies throughout the New World and Europe.

Neoclassical Ballet

Neoclassical dance utilizes traditional ballet vocabulary, but pieces are often abstract and have no narrative. Several choreographers were experimenting with the neoclassical style. Balanchine's work is regarded as neoclassical, embracing both classical and contemporary aesthetics. Balanchine wanted the attention to be on the movement itself, highlighting the relationship between music and dancing by creating movement that mirrored the music. Balanchine also employed freedom of the upper body, moving away from the verticality of the spine for a more expressive movement that drew inspiration from vernacular jazz dance styles that became prominent.

American Ballet in the 20th Century

At the invitation of Lincoln Kirstein, George Balanchine went to New York City when the Ballet Russes ended in 1929. In 1934, they established the first ballet school in the United States, the forerunner of the School of American Ballet. It expanded into a short-lived dance company. In 1948, Balanchine established a small company that ultimately grew to become the New York City Ballet (NYCB). New York City Ballet is the resident company of Lincoln Center in NYC and one of the most recognized ballet companies in the country.

George Balanchine was a prolific choreographer with a long career. Due to his contributions to the development of ballet in the United States, Balanchine is known as “the father of American ballet.” He wanted to express modern 20th-century life and ideas to capture the spirit and athleticism of American dancers. Some of his most famous ballets include *Serenade*, *Jewels*, *Stars and Stripes*, and *Concerto Barocco*.

Watch This

Excerpt of the Rubies pas de deux from the ballet *Jewels*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-12>

American Ballet Theatre (ABT)



Fig. 21 KCB Dancers George Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*. [Photo](#) by Steve Wilson [CC BY 2.0](#)

American Ballet Theatre (ABT), a New York City Ballet contemporary, is also recognized as a premier ballet company. Its mission is to preserve the classical repertoire, commission new works, and provide educational programming.

Its directors have included Lucia Chase and Oliver Smith, Mikail Baryshnikov, and Kevin McKenzie. Hundreds of renowned choreographers have created works with ABT. Antony Tudor created intimate psychological ballets, Agnes de Mille created ballets of Americana, and Jerome Robbins produced ballets across a range of styles.

Watch This

Excerpt from *Rodeo* by Agnes de Mille. The dancers mimic the bowed legs of cowboys and trot about as if they are astride horses. Aaron Copland composed the music.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-13>

Ballet grew in other cities of America as well. San Francisco Ballet was founded by Adolphe Bolm, a Ballet Russes dancer. Chicago and Utah both established ballet companies early on.

Other Notable American Ballet Artists: Mid-20th Century

Jerome Robbins (1918-1998)

Jerome Robbins was an American-born dancer and a significant choreographer in ballet, musical theater, and film. Robbins contributed modern ballets to the repertory of New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. His artistic works are influenced by ordinary people and reflect current times.

Watch This

Short documentary that highlights scenes of *Fancy Free* with commentary by Daniel Ulbricht and Ella Baff. *Fancy Free* is set in the 1940s; this ballet is about the escapades of sailors onshore. *Fancy Free* is the precursor for the musical *On the Town*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-14>

Robert Joffrey (1930-1988)

In 1953 Robert Joffrey began his company, Joffrey Ballet, as a small touring group traveling in a single van. It is primarily known for its pop-culture ballets, like *Astarte*, and historical recreations of ballets like Nijinsky's *Rite of Spring*, Fokine's *Petrouchka*, and Massine's *Parade*.

Arthur Mitchell (1934-2018)



Fig. 22 Portrait of Arthur Mitchell. From the [Library of Congress](#) in the public domain

Arthur Mitchell was the first African American principal dancer to perform with a leading national ballet company, New York City Ballet. In 1969, in response to news of Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination, Mitchell created a ballet school in his childhood neighborhood. The Dance Theatre of Harlem rose from the ballet school, a classical ballet company composed primarily of African American dancers.

Mitchell wanted to produce ballets that would raise the voices of people of color and create opportunities for them to dance professionally. He used his company as a platform for social justice. In his *Creole Giselle*, Mitchell reimaged the romantic ballet and set it in Louisiana during the 1840s. According to the Dance Theatre of Harlem's program notes, "During this time, social status among free blacks was measured by how far removed one's family was from slavery. Giselle's character is kept the same; her greatest joy is to dance. Albrecht is now Albert, and the wilis are the ghosts of young girls who adore dancing and die of a broken heart."

Watch This

This archival material from *Creole Giselle* includes pictures and dancing clips narrated by the dancers of the original ballet, Theara Ward, Augustus Van Heerden, Lorraine Graves:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-15>

Check Your Understanding



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#h5p-29>

Contemporary Ballet: Ballet in the 21st Century



Fig. 23 Dance Theatre of Harlem. [Photo by Matty Stern/U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv CC BY 2.0](#)

Contemporary ballet is a dance genre that uses classical techniques (French terminology) that choreographers manipulate and blend with other dance forms, such as modern dance.

Alonzo King LINES Ballet

Alonzo King is an American choreographer who initially studied at the ABT. King also danced with notable choreographers Alvin Ailey and Arthur Mitchell before founding his company, LINES Ballet. LINES Ballet is located in California, where King uses Western and Eastern classical dance forms to create contemporary ballets.

BalletX

BalletX was founded in 2005 by Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan and is located in Philadelphia. The mission of BalletX is to expand classical vocabulary through its experimentation to push the boundaries of ballet.

Watch This

Christine Cox and Matthew Neenan discuss the mission of BalletX. The footage shows clips of the company's performances, pictures, and interviews with the company members:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-16>

Complexions Contemporary Ballet

In 1994, Complexions was founded by Dwight Rhoden and Desmond Richardson. The mission of Complexions is to foster diverse and inclusive approaches in the making and presentation of their works to inspire change in the ballet world.

Watch This

Excerpt from *WOKE* that uses music from Logic to explore themes of humanity in response to the political climate.



— One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-17>

Other Notable Contemporary Ballet Artists

- **Nederlands Dans Theater**, founded in 1959, is a Dutch contemporary dance company.
- **William Forsythe** founded the Forsythe Company (2005–2015), integrating ballet with visual arts.
- **Jiří Kylián** blends classical ballet steps with contemporary approaches to create abstract dances.
- **Amy Hall Garner** combines ballet, modern, and theatrical dance genres.
- **Trey McIntyre** founded the Trey McIntyre Project in 2005, combining ballet and contemporary dance with visual arts.
- **Ballet Hispánico**, founded by Tina Ramirez in 1970, blends ballet with Latinx dance to create more opportunities for dancers of color, known as one of America's Cultural Treasures.
- **Justin Peck** is the resident choreographer for New York City Ballet, creating new works; he earned a Tony Award for his choreography in the revival of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Carousel*.

Inclusivity

From its origins in the elite white-only courts of France and Italy and well into the present day, Western dance forms had a history of exclusionism. In the United States, the first Black ballet dancer who broke the color barrier in 1955 to dance in a major ballet company was Raven Wilkinson. Wilkinson danced and toured with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Racial segregation was at its height during this time, forcing Wilkinson to deny her race when performing at most venues. After facing years of discrimination, Wilkinson eventually left the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. After facing rejection from several American ballet companies, Wilkinson was hired to dance with the Dutch National Ballet. Wilkinson later became a mentor to Misty Copeland.



Fig. 24 Ballerina Raven Wilkinson. [Photo by Pamela V. White](#) licensed [CC BY 2.0](#)

Misty Copeland

In 2015, Misty Copeland became the first African American female principal dancer with American Ballet Theatre. Copeland is also the first woman of color to take the lead role of Odette/Odile in *Swan Lake*. Her road to principal dancer was difficult, as many claimed she had the wrong skin color to dance professionally. Due to the racism faced throughout her life, Misty Copeland uses her platform to bring awareness to the challenges people of color face in the ballet world by advocating for diversity.

Watch This

Misty Copeland's interview on race in ballet.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-18>

Hiplet



Fig. 25 Missy Copeland dancing in the ballet Coppelia. “[From the ballet Coppelia cropped](#)” Gilda N. Squire is licensed [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

Racial barriers have caused choreographers to challenge the traditional Eurocentric forms of ballet. Hiplet, a fusion of ballet movement and hip-hop, was created by Homer Hans Bryant to provide opportunities for dancers of color to connect to ballets and express themselves in a contemporary and culturally relevant way.

Watch This

In this video, Hiplet creator Homer Hans Bryant discusses how he developed this dance style:



— One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-19>

Gender Roles



Fig. 26 “George Balanchine’s Apollo – David Ingram & Traci Gilchrest – photo by Peter Zay” by Charlotte Ballet licensed CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

Ballets historically tend to follow stereotyped gender roles that emphasize femininity and masculinity. These conventional standards are reinforced in the movements, roles, costuming, and partnering displayed in ballets. In pas de deux in classical ballets, female dancers are paired with male dancers. Female dancers are often portrayed as delicate, complacent, ethereal beings. In contrast, male dancers are presented as dominant and strong; they lift their female partners, enforcing the image of men supporting women.

Mathew Bourne

In 1995, Matthew Bourne took a contemporary approach to classical ballet in his reimagined *Swan Lake*. Bourne disrupts societal expectations by replacing the female swans with men. In the male-male pas de deux, the dancers lift and support each other, shifting the power dynamics to emphasize equality in the movement.

Watch This

“The New Adventures” excerpt of Bourne’s *Swan Lake*:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-20>

LGBTQIA+ Representation

Ballets have also reinforced heterosexual norms and narratives. Societal ideals of feminine- and masculine-stereotyped gender roles have caused inequality in the representation of the **LGBTQIA+** community. Although there are openly gay male dancers in ballet, their roles pressure them to adhere to rigid ideas of masculinity: the chivalrous prince rescues the helpless female character. Historically, the Romantic era brought the ballerina to the forefront, and ballet became perceived as a feminine art form. Dancers who identify as lesbians are excluded from the ballet narrative because movement qualities reinforce binary norms.

The representation gap for all sexual orientations has excluded people in the **LGBTQIA+** community. Many feel the pressure to conform to rigid gender stereotypes. **LGBTQIA+** artists today are using their platforms to address the lack of representation and challenge ballet traditions to include a wide spectrum of sexuality.

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo adds a twist of humor to classical ballets. The company, founded in

1974, features men performing en travesti (in the clothing of the opposite sex.) The dancers in this company challenge the gender norms of ballet by assigning men to traditionally female roles.

Watch This

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo's version of *Swan Lake*. In the pas de quatre, or dance of four, the dancers perform a parody of the Dance of the Little Swans.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-21>

Ballez

Ballez is a ballet company founded by Katy Pyle in 2011. Ballez aims to dismantle the patriarchal structure of ballet to create inclusive spaces for the representation of queer dancers. In 2021, Pyle reimaged the romantic ballet *Giselle*. In Ballez's production *Giselle of Loneliness*, Ballez highlights the experiences of queer and gender non-conforming, non-binary, and trans dancers. The dancers perform an audition solo inspired by the "mad scene" from the original *Giselle* that comments on the personal challenges and experiences affecting their relationship with ballet from an LGBTQIA+ lens.

Watch This

An interview with Katy Pyle:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#oembed-22>

Body Types

Generally, ballet centers on European aesthetics, including the ideal body shape. George Balanchine, the founder of New York City Ballet, favored a ballet dancer with a long neck, sloped shoulders, a small rib cage, a narrow waist, and long legs and feet. These ideals have resulted in the pressure to maintain a slender physique and have caused body dysmorphia in many dancers. Copeland has stated that at the age of 21, artistic staff commented on how her body “changed” and their hopes to see her body “lengthen.” According to Copeland, “That, of course, was a polite, safe way of saying, ‘You need to lose weight.’” In 2017, Misty Copeland released her health and fitness book *Ballerina Body: Dancing and Eating Your Way to a Leaner, Stronger, and More Graceful You*. Copeland shares her health-conscious approaches to developing healthier and stronger bodies in this book.

Ballet Timeline



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=184#h5p-22>

Summary

Ballet is a Western classical dance form with a rich history—beginning in the Renaissance as a royal court entertainment infused with social and political purposes, eventually developing into a codified technique. Over time, ballet transformed, experiencing costume changes in the Enlightenment that led to dancers being able to express themselves without being confined to restrictive clothing. In the Romantic era, ballet d’action emerged, emphasizing emotions over logic to help communicate the ballet’s story. There were also technical elements

such as flying machines that gave the impression of dancers floating onstage. The unique theater effects led to female dancers beginning to dance en pointe. During the classical period, Russia became the leader of ballet, with government support to establish ballet schools. Ballet shifted in pursuit of virtuosity, demanding greater technique from dancers. The Ballet Russes made a significant impact by modernizing ballets, bringing ballet to other world regions, and helping establish ballet in America, and a new ballet style was formed, neoclassical. Today, choreographers challenge the ballet traditions and embrace various dance genres to blend with ballet in contemporary dance.

Check Your Understanding

1. Ballet Pantomime

Choreograph a short pantomime that tells a story through dialogue. You may either choose to ask a friend or family member to exchange dialogue or perform your dance alone. Use a combination of traditional pantomime gestures from the selected videos and add original gestures and facial expressions. Record your pantomime and share the link on the discussion board (minimum of 20 seconds). Include a script summarizing what your pantomime says.

[Video 1](#)

[Video 2](#)

[Video 3](#)

Here are some topic examples you might consider:

- Activities or sports you like to participate in and why.
- What makes you happy (taking walks, spending time with friends, etc.).
- Aspects about your day.
- A place you've traveled to and what you saw.
- Words of encouragement/affirmation.

2. Elements of Dance in Ballet

Utilizing the Elements of Dance, watch two videos from different ballet eras (Renaissance, the

Enlightenment, the Romantic period, classical, avant-garde, neoclassical, and contemporary), and write a reflection speaking to the salient qualities observed. Answer the following prompts:

- Compare and contrast the aesthetics observed using the Elements of Dance.
- How does the movement reflect the ballet era? How does the period reflect the movement?

3. Dear Catherine de' Medici

Write a letter to Catherine de' Medici that speaks to the current discourse in the ballet world. Select one of the discussion topics found in this chapter and watch the associated video (race, gender roles, LGBTQIA+ representation, or body types in ballet) to reflect on, respond to, and advocate for how the ballet world can address these issues. Please reference the class book or use the internet to conduct further research. Post your assignment on the discussion board and cite references (minimum of 150 words).

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4.

MODERN DANCE

Learning Objectives

- Explain the similarities and differences between ballet and modern dance
- Identify key techniques and prominent figures in modern dance history
- Understand the history of Western performance dance and summarize major events in the course of its development

Dance is the hidden language of the soul.

—Martha Graham

What Is Modern Dance?

In the early twentieth century, choreographers broke away from the strict traditions of ballet to develop dance as varied and rich as the American melting pot. Choreographers drew upon the styles of many cultures to create a new dance form as diverse as the citizens and expressive of the independence of the American spirit. Black dancers and choreographers explored their African and Caribbean roots and shaped their own form of expressive modern dance. Others sought new movement to depict the human condition. Inevitably, dances were shared, merged, and reimagined. No matter the case, early pioneers of modern dance explored new ways to express themselves in more natural and free form while conveying the spirit of their times.

Modern Dance Characteristics

Modern dance technique is unlike ballet's codified set of movements used worldwide. Modern dance styles are individualized and, for the most part, named after the person who developed them; for instance, José Limón created Limón Technique. Although modern dance techniques vary, movement concepts are embedded throughout techniques, sharing overarching principles. Let's take a look at the movement concepts in modern dance.

Dynamic Alignment and Flexibility

All dancers use dynamic alignment. However, in modern dance, emphasis is given to the core along with the pelvis, which is the center from which all movement originates. The core keeps the dancer grounded and stable. Modern dancers also use free or unrestrained movements of the torso that allow for flexibility in all directions.

Watch This

Graham Technique with dancers demonstrating contractions. The torso is in a concave shape created by the core contracting (abdominals); as a result, the pelvis “tucks under,” and the chest reacts by rounding forward.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-1>

Gravity

In modern dance, gravity is accepted; it acts in a partnership with the body, utilizing the dancer's weight paired with momentum.

Watch This

An example of the Limón Technique called **fall and recovery** that uses the body's weight with momentum to surrender into gravity. The dancer is demonstrating arm swings, known as release swings. In this action, the dancer begins with the body in a vertical position and the arms swing in any direction. The dancer allows the momentum from the swing to propel the body in the direction of the arm, giving in to gravity.



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The Tanz Theater Münster company dancers interact with the floor. They can quickly move between **floor work** and standing movement.



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Breath

The use of breath is a prominent component of modern dance. Dancers do not always attempt to hide their breathing. The inhalation and expiration of breath provide a natural physical rhythm that assists in executing movement.

Bare Feet, Flexed Feet, and Parallel Feet

Modern dance is often performed barefoot. Many exercises utilize the feet in a parallel position. Unlike traditional ballet, modern dance can use a flexed foot instead of a pointed foot.

Improvisation

Improvisation is the practice of unplanned movement. Many choreographers use improvisation as the basis for generating movement ideas for choreography. Through active investigation, choreographers select and further develop the movements explored from their improvisation to consider how they can be applied in their dance concept.

Watch This

The dancer improvises movements that include **floor work** and standing movement



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-4>

The Pioneers: First and Second Generations

Historical Context

Modern dance appeared in Germany and the United States in the early 20th century. In the late 19th century, the second Industrial Revolution brought significant changes. The rise of people who lived and worked in cities, mainly middle-class or white-collar workers, lived less active lifestyles, resulting in the task of public health officials to prevent the spread of diseases caused by sedentary lifestyles. Emphasis on the benefits of maintaining a regular exercise regimen, such as dance, gymnastics, and sports, was highly praised. European theorists Delsarte and Dalcroze introduced methods for understanding human movement that were presented to colleges as “aesthetic dance.” These theorists made an impression on emerging modern dancers as they provided new ways to uncover the expressive qualities of the body by responding to internal sensations with greater freedom in movement possibilities.

Loie Fuller (1862–1928)



Fig.1 [Loie Fuller Dancing](#) – photograph by Samuel Joshua Beckett (MET, 2005.100.952) CC Public Domain

Loie Fuller was a former actress and skirt dancer, a popular dance form in Europe and America, mainly found in burlesque and vaudeville. Fuller is known for her dramatic manipulation of fabrics and lighting designs, creating visual effects such as butterfly wings and fire images. She made these effects by shining light onto her voluminous silk costumes. Loie also experimented with electrical lighting, colored gels, and projections.

Watch This

Fuller debuted as a dancer in *Serpentine Dance*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-5>

Isadora Duncan (1877–1927)

Isadora Duncan rejected her early training in ballet technique, feeling the movement and costumes were restrictive and lacked personal expression. Instead, she explored more natural movements, such as walking, running, skipping, and jumping. Instead of ballet attire, she emulated the Greeks when she wore tunics, danced barefoot, and performed dances about nature. It gave her movement a sense of freedom and abandonment.

Historically, modern dance has been tied to cultural forces that reflect society. Duncan's dances expressed the human condition, especially women's rights. She traveled throughout America and eventually settled in Europe, where she founded her school. Duncan trained dancers and called them "Isadorables."

Watch This

Duncan perform outdoors.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-6>

“Denishawn”

Ruth St. Denis (1879–1968)

Ruth St. Denis became fascinated with cultures worldwide when she saw an advertisement for Egyptian Deities cigarettes. The image of the goddess on the cigarettes inspired her dances honoring goddesses and deities based on her impressions of Indian, Egyptian, Spanish, and Javanese dance forms that weren’t culturally accurate. Instead, they were a reflection of her aesthetics.

Watch This

Denis’s East Indian Nautch Dance inspired by the dance practiced by the nautch girls of India.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-7>



Fig.2. [Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn](#) in an out-of-doors photo, in costume, for *National Geographic Magazine*, April 1916, reprinted May 1951.. 1915. Notes: National Endowment for the Arts Millennium Project. CC Public Domain

Ruth St. Denis married Ted Shawn; this also began a creative partnership. Together they founded the Denishawn school, creating a diverse curriculum that included ballet, Asian dances, and dance history. They encouraged dancers to connect their dancing bodies to their minds and spirits. Through their school emerged the first generation of modern dancers.

Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn parted ways. St. Denis turned her attention to religion and continued teaching South Asian dance forms. Ted Shawn went on to found Jacob's Pillow in Massachusetts, the nation's oldest dance festival.

Ted Shawn (1891–1972)

Ted Shawn formed an all-male dance company called Ted Shawn and His Men Dancers, hoping to make modern dance a respected profession for male dancers.

Watch This

Kinetic Molpai is a dance work in 12 parts; it features Ted's all-male company who form a chorus. A solitary man, the leader, joins them sporadically. Fun fact: Shawn recruited athletes from Springfield College that had no experience in dance and trained them.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-37>

First Generation: Discovering Personal Voices

Dancers from the Denishawn school began to branch out as they grew restless with the company's artistic vision, which focused on exotic themes that proved to be more so entertainment on the vaudeville circuit. Instead, the first-generation dancers wanted to express their creative voices and push the art form's boundaries, resulting in various codified modern techniques.

Martha Graham (1894–1991)



Fig.3. [Dancer Martha Graham](#), on page 54 of the April 1922 Shadowland.
CC Public Domain

Martha Graham studied dance at Denishawn but left to form her own company and develop her own technique. She believed that dance should show the struggle and pain that comes with life. She developed “**contract and release**,” a technique that shows movement initiating from the center of the body meant to embody conflict. This technique involves percussively tightening the body’s core muscles (centered on the lower abdominals and pelvis), followed by a release of tension (the spine lengthens to return to an elongated neutral posture). This technique utilizes breath to support the movement; the dancer begins with an inhale,

then an exhale, allowing the body to contract, lastly followed by an inhale to release and return the body in vertical/neutral alignment.

Graham's repertoire included dances based on Americana, such as *Frontier* and *Appalachian Spring*; she also created dances based on Greek myths as in *Night Journey*, and emotional dances.

Watch This

Lamentation is a signature solo performed by Graham. Graham embodies grief as she contorts her body within the stretchy fabric.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-8>

Humphrey-Weidman: Doris Humphrey (1895–1958) and Charles Weidman (1901–1975)



Fig. 4 [Doris Humphrey, from a 1921 publication](#). In the public domain.

Doris Humphrey & Charles Weidman were former Denishawn students and had a creative partnership and together founded the Humphrey-Weidman company. In collaboration with Weidman, Humphrey created a movement technique based on the body's reaction to gravity and weight called "**fall and recovery**." Humphrey believed the body constantly moves in between the "arc between two deaths," in a successive pattern responding to gravity.

Watch This

Weidman discuss the concept behind “**fall and recovery.**”



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-38>

Lester Horton (1906–1953)



Fig.5 Lester Horton from “A tribute to Lester Horton.” Via YouTube used under fair use

Lester Horton became interested in dance when he saw Native Americans doing indigenous dances. He is most renowned for his technique, called the Horton Technique. This technique embeds strength-building and flexibility principles through fortification exercises (set exercises designed to increase technical skills underpinned with anatomy principles).

Horton also had a company that is credited with founding the first racially integrated dance company in America. His choreography drew inspiration from Native American and African dance forms.

Watch This

Students perform the Horton Technique, working on a flat back series that aim to strengthen and stretch the legs, core, and back.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-9>

(Osborne) Hemsley Winfield (1907–1934)



Fig. 6 (Osborne) Hemsley Winfield from “The Unknown Pioneer of Modern Dance.” Photo by Martinus Andersen (c. 1933). Collection Todd Andersen. Used under fair use

(Osborne) Hemsley Winfield was an African American modern dancer who sought ways to create equitable opportunities for Black dancers. Winfield was inspired by the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement that brought African American artists to the forefront as changemakers. In 1931, he co-founded the Bronze Ballet Plastique with the help of Edna Guy, later to be renamed The New Negro Art Theatre Dance Group, which was the first African American modern dance company in the United States. Winfield also established a dance school to provide dance instruction. After Winfield passed away, the New Negro Art Theatre Dance Group dissolved due to a lack of financial support.

Edna Guy (1907–1983)



Fig.7. [Edna Guy from “Black Past” by Nelson Neal](#). Fair Use

In 1924, Edna Guy was the first African American to study with Denishawn. However, due to the prevalent racial segregation, she was only able to perform for in-house recitals. She later co-founded the New Negro Art Theatre Dance Group alongside Hemsley Winfield. In 1937, Guy and Allison Burroughs staged Negro Dance Evening, highlighting African diaspora dances.

Second Generation: Expanding the Horizons of Modern Dance

The second-generation modern dancers either continued following their predecessors’ work or went in a different direction by creating new dance techniques, styles, and unorthodox choreographic approaches.

José Limón (1908–1972)



Fig. 8 José Limón from “José Limón Bio” YouTube. Used under fair use José Limón, originally from Mexico, danced with Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman. Eventually, Limón would form his own company and ask his mentor, Humphrey, to be the artistic director. Limón expanded on Humphrey’s “fall and recover” technique and emphasized fluid, sequential movement, and the use of breath as the origin and facilitator for movement as a way to approach organic movement. Limón’s legacy is still alive today. His company continues to perform, dancing the repertory of Limón along with new works from artists.

Watch This

There Is a Time, based on the historic poem from the Bible, “Ecclesiastes.” This dance contains universal themes describing the human experience.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-10>

Katherine Dunham (1909–2006)



Fig.9 Photograph shows Katherine Dunham, dancer, full-length portrait, facing right, wearing dance costume. Alfredo Valente (1899–1973, photographer). [Library of Congress](#) with no known rights restrictions

Katherine Dunham was a dancer and trained anthropologist who studied the dances of Haiti and other Caribbean islands. She performed and choreographed for Broadway musicals, movies, and concerts with the company. Dunham developed her technique that drew on principles of the African dance movement, called the Dunham Technique. Dunham sought to create dances that represented her African American heritage. Her work extended outside of modern dance, where she choreographed for Hollywood films. She founded a school of dance in New York City in the mid-1940s.

Watch This

Katherine Dunham's *Carnival of Rhythm*, 1941.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-11>

Students participate in Dunham Technique. Dunham Technique utilizes classical lines, free movement of the torso that utilizes isolations and undulations, paired with a dynamic range of tempos and rhythmical styles.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-12>

L'Ag'Ya. This was Dunham's signature piece, a story-based folk ballet set in Martinique that combines many dance styles.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-13>

Pearl Primus (1919–1994)

Pearl Primus was a trained anthropologist. She secured funding to study dance abroad in Africa and the Caribbean. Primus became a strong voice of African American dance by addressing racism in the United States. One of her most noted works is “Strange Fruit,” based on the poem by Lewis Allan about the lynching of

Black people. In 1979, she and her husband established the Pearl Primus Dance Language Institute, which centered classes in various African dance styles. Primus also founded her company, “Earth Theatre,” which toured nationally.



Fig.10 [Pearl Primus, Rock Daniel](#). From the Barbara Morgan Archives [CC-BY 3.0](#)

Watch This

Pearl Primus performing solo tabanka teach



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-14>

Talley Beatty (1918–1995)

Talley Beatty is a Louisiana native born in Shreveport. He was initially a dancer and student of Katherine Dunham and appeared in Broadway shows and films. In 1952, he established his company, which toured in

the United States and Europe with a program called “Tropicana,” featuring African and Latin American dance styles. Beatty’s choreography centered on themes of African American life. Renowned dance companies, like the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Dance Theatre of Harlem, have restaged his works.



Fig.11 Talley Beatty from “80 Faces Talley Beatty” YouTube. Used under Fair use

Watch This

In this video, former ADF scholarship student and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater member Hope Boykin and choreographer and dancer Duane Cyrus speak about their pivotal experiences working with Mr. Beatty on his classic piece *Road of the Phoebe Snow* (1959).



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-15>

Donald McKayle (1930–2018)

Donald McKayle was one of the pioneering African American modern dancers to focus on socially conscious works speaking to the experience of Black people in the United States. During the span of his career, McKayle choreographed several masterworks, including “Rainbow Round My Shoulder,” exposing the harsh working conditions of imprisoned Black men set to chain-gang songs. For his tireless contributions, he holds honorable mentions as “one of America’s irreplaceable dance treasures” from the Dance Heritage Coalition.



Fig. 12 [Portrait of Donald McKayle](#) in 1963. New York Public Library. CC-BY-SA 4.0

Watch This

This dance is a staging from the Labanotation score.





One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-16>

Alvin Ailey (1931–1989)

Alvin Ailey is another important second generation dance artist. He studied with Lester Horton, Katherine Dunham, and Martha Graham. His independent career began after the death of his mentor, Lester Horton. In 1958, he formed the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, based in New York. Ailey became an influential voice that brought awareness to the inequalities faced by African Americans. Ailey was dedicated to highlighting and preserving the African American experience by drawing inspiration from his heritage, including spirituals, blues, and jazz.



Fig.13 [Portrait of Alvin Ailey](#) in 1955. By Carl Van Vechten, photographer. In the public domain

Watch This

“Sinner Man,” an excerpt from Revelations. Ailey used Lester Horton’s technique in many of his dances.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-17>

Ailey sought out other African American choreographers to set dances for his company. In the video below, you will see Wayne McGregor’s Chroma, Ronald K. Brown’s Grace, and Robert Battle’s Takademe. It also has Alvin Ailey’s masterpiece Revelations.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-39>

Ailey choreographed myriad works. His work Revelations is an American classic. He received many honors in his career for his work in the arts and in civil rights, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Watch This

By turns muscular and lyrical, “The River” is a sweeping full-company work that suggests tumbling rapids and meandering streams on a journey to the sea.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-18>

Erick Hawkins (1909–1994)

Erick Hawkins initially studied at the School of American Ballet, eventually meeting Martha Graham. Hawkins was the first man invited to perform with Graham’s company. Hawkins created a dance technique that integrated kinesiology principles coupled with what would be later known as somatic studies that connect the body, mind, and soul. He was interested in the body’s natural movements and was inspired by Zen principles, Native Americans, and the beliefs of Isadora Duncan.



Fig.14. Erick Hawkins and unknown dancer from “Erick Hawkins Here and Now with Watchers Like Darling Clip” YouTube. Used under fair use

Watch This

“Plains Daybreak,” inspired by Native American dances and stories.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-40>

Paul Taylor (1930–2018)

Paul Taylor danced with Graham’s company for several years. In 1959, he formed the Paul Taylor Dance Company. His choreographic works in modern dance ranged from abstract to satire themes. Eventually, Paul Taylor found his niche in classical modern training with remnants of ballet or a lyrical dance style underpinning the movement. His piece Esplanade has choreography couched in **pedestrian movements** (plain, everyday movements like walking, skipping, running). You may remember seeing a sample of this in Chapter 2, “Elements of Dance.”



Fig.15 [Paul Taylor](#) taken by Carl Van Vechten, photographer Jan. 12, 1962
Public Domain

Watch This

Taylor's *Airs*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-19>

Merce Cunningham (1919–2009)

Merce Cunningham initially danced with Martha Graham; however, he left to follow his own artistic vision. He formed a creative collaboration with his life partner, John Cage. They experimented with avant-garde ideas that emphasized that dance could be independent of music and narrative or could be a separate entity.

Cunningham developed “chance dance,” in which fragments of choreography were randomly shuffled to create new and spontaneous dances determined by chance acts of rolling dice or flipping a coin. Cunningham also used computer software to aid in generating movement.



Fig.16 [Merce Cunningham April 16, 1919- July 26, 2009](#). By [Floor](#) licensed CC-BY-SA 2.0

Watch This

The contributions Cunningham made in modern dance.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-20>

Merce Cunningham’s work process.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-21>

Alwin Nikolais (1910–1993)

Alwin Nikolais explored the geometries of form and dance. He created painted glass slides to light his dances like in this video of “Crucible.” He created his own costumes and props and most of the music for his dances, thereby controlling the whole stage environment.



Fig.16 Alwin Nikolais from “ALWIN NIKOLAIS HONOREE – (COMPLETE) 10th KENNEDY CENTER HONORS, 1987” YouTube. Used under Fair Use

Watch This

Excerpt from “Crucible.”



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-22>

Third Generation: The Postmodern Movement

The postmodern movement emerged during the early 1960s and reflected the revolutionary mood of the times. Postmodern choreographers began to question the reasons for dance-making—who could dance (can untrained people be performers?), what could be used as music (can silence be music?)—and experimented with where dance could occur. Performances began featuring ordinary movements with non-dancers and were done in non-traditional settings such as art galleries, churches, outdoor settings, and even on the sides of buildings. Another feature that emerged in the postmodern period was the rise of dance collectives with no one named choreographer. Judson Dance Theater and Grand Union are great examples of this trend.

Robert Dunn (1928–1996)

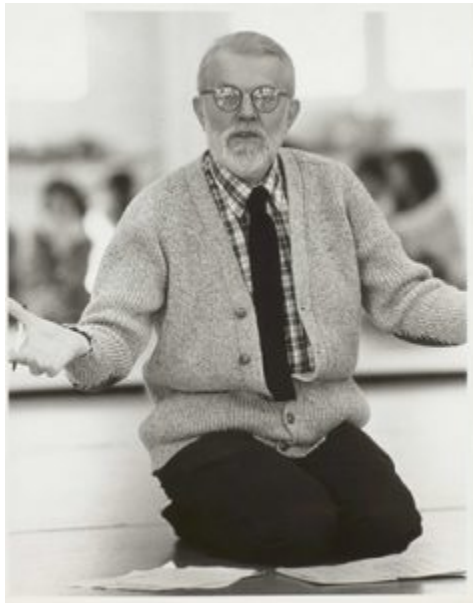


Fig. 17 Library of Congress. RED kneeling on the floor, wearing his signature sweater and tie. Public Domain

Robert Dunn was a musician who played piano for Merce Cunningham's classes. Dunn was drawn to the radical principles of John Cage and attended his classes on composition. Eventually, he would use the concepts learned from Cage and apply them to dance in choreography workshops attended by Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton, and Tricia Brown, among others. Dunn encouraged them to be risk-takers by encouraging ongoing experimentation.

Judson Dance Theater

Dunn's dance composition classes found residency at Judson Memorial Church and adopted the name of Judson Dance Theater for their dance collective. The Judson Dance Theater dancers met weekly and were given assignments, performed their choreographic works, and critiqued each other. The artists mainly used improvisation as the source for generating movement. The Judson Dance Theater eventually disbanded, and the Grand Union emerged, created by several of the Judson Dance Theater dancers and new members.

Grand Union

The Grand Union was a collaborative effort with all dancers contributing to the artistic process of the group. They experimented with multimedia performance art and improvisation. Their creative research encouraged artists to expand their definitions of dance to include **pedestrian movement** (ex: walking and running) and task-oriented movement (ex: dancers must maintain physical contact throughout the entire dance). These allowed for the participation of both trained and untrained dancers to perform. In addition, the artists sought out alternative spaces for dancing, such as warehouses and lofts. Choreographers made statements with their works rather than storytelling.



Fig.18 Photo of the Grand Union. A still image from “Skirball TV: The Alchemy of Grand Union, with Wendy Perron & Douglas Dunn” YouTube. Used under fair use

Yvonne Rainer (1934-)

Yvonne Rainer studied with Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham. Robert Dunn’s choreography workshop influenced her work as a choreographer. She was interested in the use of repetition, games, tasks, and partnering, which would become common choreographic practices employed in dance-making.



Fig.19 From [What Is dance? “Spontaneity” 6](#) By [Daniel Assayag](#) licensed CC-BY-SA 4.0

Watch This

Rainer's Trio A, a solo dance featuring **pedestrian movement**.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-23>

Steve Paxton (1939-)

Steve Paxton studied and performed with Limón and Cunningham. He was inspired by the improvisation techniques explored during the Judson Dance Theater and Grand Union collaborations. Paxton developed “**contact improvisation**,” which has principles based on weight-sharing, touch, and movement awareness paired with pedestrian movement.

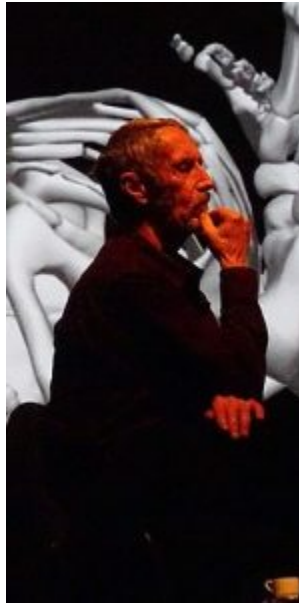


Fig.20 Steve Paxton in the Grand Auditorium of Culturgest (Lisboa, Portugal) talking about dance at the opening of his retrospective exhibition. [Photo](#) by Nos Papillons licensed CC-BY-SA 4.0

Watch This

An example of **contact improvisation**. The dancers maintain a point of contact and trade-off weight sharing.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-24>

Trisha Brown (1936–2017)

Trisha Brown studied with several notable teachers, including Merce Cunningham. In the early 1970s, she founded the Trisha Brown Company, engaging in “site-specific” works. These are performance spaces outside the conventional theater, such as dances on rooftops. She also explored avant-garde and postmodernist ideas to experiment with pure movement and repetitive gestures in dance.

Watch This

Brown’s “Man Walking Down the Side of a Building.”



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-25>

Fourth Generation: Contemporary Modern Dance

During the mid-1970s, there was a shift back to more technical-based movements with a return to the proscenium stage. We are using the term **contemporary modern** to refer to this current genre.

Remember that the term *modern* refers to those early choreographers who broke away from Old World ballet and developed an original abstract modern point of view. After a while, these early modern choreographers codified their technique styles. At this time, *modern* refers to any of the choreographers who studied with or were influenced by the first- or second-generation modern dancers and are now codifying their own technique. *Postmodern* dance broke away from modern technique and used **pedestrian movement** (everyday gestures or actions such as walking, sitting, opening a door).

Contemporary dance is an expansive term meaning current, what’s happening now. It is a broader, more individualistic, expressive style of dance.

Contextual Connections

Dance Magazine's Victoria Looseleaf helps to define the difference between contemporary and modern dance: [Modern vs. Contemporary](#):

"Perhaps modern and contemporary genres have taken on new meanings because the global village has created a melting pot of moves, a stew of blurred forms that not only break down conventions and challenge definitions, but, in the process, create something wholly new, but as yet unnamed."

In this article, Looseleaf went on to speak with several dance professionals about their thoughts on the topic:

- Mia Michaels, Choreographer for *So You Think You Can Dance* and various pop stars and dance companies, Los Angeles:
 - "I'm a little responsible for *So You Think You Can Dance* co-opting the term 'contemporary.' When we first started the show, Nigel [Lythgoe] was calling it lyrical. I said, 'It's not lyrical, it's contemporary.' We've created a monster. Contemporary is an easy way out—it's when you don't know what to call it, you call it contemporary. I feel like dance is fusing all the forms and that the uniqueness of each genre is starting to be muddled. It feels regurgitated and I want it to change desperately. I'm wanting to see where these new legends and voices—like Fosse, Robbins, Graham—are going to pop up."
- Jennifer Archibald, Founder/Director, Arch Dance, New York City:
 - "Contemporary is a collection of methods that have been developed from modern and postmodern dance. It's also a cycle of shedding techniques we've learned in favor of personal expression of movement. Where modern dance moved against the grain of ballet, contemporary moves against the grain of classical modern techniques. "Contemporary is not a technique; it's a genre associated with a philosophy and exploration of different natural energies and emotions. There's a physicality that's appealing today, but there's a spirituality of the contemporary movement that has been lost with the new generation in this free-for-all of different methods."

Twyla Tharp

Twyla Tharp trained with the American Ballet Theatre, modern dance artists Martha Graham and Merce Cunningham, and Luigi and Matt Mattox jazz dance educators. Tharp began choreographing dances that blend dance genres, such as modern dance, jazz, tap, and ballet. Tharp has choreographed “more than one hundred sixty works: one hundred twenty-nine dances, twelve television specials, six Hollywood movies, four full-length ballets, four Broadway shows and two figure skating routines. She received one Tony Award, two Emmy Awards, nineteen honorary doctorates, the Vietnam Veterans of America President’s Award, the 2004 National Medal of the Arts, the 2008 Jerome Robbins Prize, and a 2008 Kennedy Center Honor.” (*Bio | twyla tharp*. [n.d.]. Retrieved April 27, 2022, from [Twyla Tharp Dance Foundation](#))



Fig. 22 The image of American dancer/ choreography Twyla Tharp, 2004. Photo: [National Medal of Arts Recipient](#). Licensed in the [public domain](#).

Watch This

Tharp's Deuce Coup, dancing to music by the Beach Boys, is considered the first crossover between ballet and modern dance.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-26>

Twyla Tharp's Famous "Eight Jelly Roll" dance from Twyla Moves, American Masters, PBS.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-41>

Garth Fagan

Garth Fagan developed the Fagan Technique, blending modern dance, Afro-Caribbean dance, and ballet. He received his training from Limón, Ailey, and Graham. Fagan has created works for notable companies like Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and New York City Ballet.



Fig.23 [Garth Fagan](#), by [A Few Good Men](#) licensed [CC BY 2.0](#)

Watch This

Fagan's "From Before," performed by the Alvin Ailey Dance Company.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-27>

Contextual Connections

Disney's *The Lion King*

Fagan is perhaps best known for his legendary work on Disney's Broadway musical *The Lion King* (1997), in which he brought the animals to life by combining clever costume pieces with dance evocative of the animals in the story. In this video, you will get a glimpse of the man and his choreography.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-28>

Pilobolus

Pilobolus is a dance collective created in the late 1970s by Dartmouth college student-athletes Robby Barnett, Martha Clarke, Lee Harris, Moses Pendleton, Michael Tracey, and Jonathan Wolken, with the guidance of their teacher Alison Chase. Pilobolus branched from a choreography class experimenting with gymnastics and improvisation to create images by sculpting bodies.



Fig. 24 [Pilobolus Dance Theater](#). By [Anselm Hook](#) licensed [CC-BY 2.0](#)

Watch This

Pilobolus perform Shadowland.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-29>

Mark Morris

In the early years of his career, Mark Morris performed with the companies of Lar Lubovitch, Hannah Kahn, Laura Dean, Eliot Feld, and the Koleda Balkan Dance Ensemble. The Mark Morris Dance Group was formed in 1980, when he was just 24. Since then Morris has created over 150 works for the company. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov.



Fig. 25 Mark Morris, American modern dancer, choreographer and director. Photo by [Charles Haynes](#) CC BY-SA 2.0

Watch This

Reporter Jeffrey Brown talks to the famed choreographer on his production of “L’Allegro” on PBS’ Great Performances.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-30>

Bill T. Jones

Bill T. Jones is known for blending controversial subjects into his modern dance choreography. Bill T. Jones and his life partner, Arnie Zane, founded the Bill. T. Jones / Arnie Zane Company in the early 1980s. Their creative works explored LGBTQIA+ themes of identity and racial tensions. Following the death of Zane, who

succumbed to AIDS, Jones continued their work with the company. Bill T. Jones uses his platform as socio-political activism using dance, autobiographical elements with narrative, and theatrical components.



Fig.26 Choreographer Bill T. Jones at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois. 2009. [Photo](#) by Russell Jenkins. In the [public domain](#)

Watch This

An excerpt from *D-Man in the Waters* performed by the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. *D-Man in the Waters* is a political response to the AIDS epidemic honoring those who have succumbed to the disease.



— One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-31>

His piece What Problem?, in which Bill T. Jones explores current events and questions of racism, equality, brutality, and change.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-32>

Jawole Willa Jo Zollar

In the early 1980s, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar founded Urban Bush Women. Her training began with the Dunham Technique and studying various African diaspora dance forms. Urban Bush Women started as an all-women group and predominantly centered their work from women's perspectives; however, the company has included male dancers. The mission of Urban Bush Women is to raise the voices of people of color to advocate for social change addressing issues of race and gender inequalities. Jawole Willa Jo Zollar blends personal testimonies from the company members to create narratives (text) combined with African and contemporary dance forms.



From “Urban Bush Women with Jawole Willa Jo Zollar Black America.” [YouTube](#). 2017. Used under Fair Use.

Watch This

“Hair and Other Stories,” exploring body image, gender identity, and race through conversations about hair care.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-33>

Lorenzo “Rennie” Harris

Lorenzo “Rennie” Harris brings hip-hop to the concert stage, often telling stories of the human condition. In 1992, Harris founded his company, Puremovement, located in Philadelphia, in an effort to preserve hip-

hop culture. Harris has choreographed contemporary dance works for modern companies, like the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. His works will be further discussed in Chapter 7.



Fig. 25 Renie Harris. Photo by Lugenbee. 2011 [CC BY-SA 3.0](#)

Watch This

The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre perform an excerpt from Harris' Exodus.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-34>

Robert Battle

Robert Battle is the current Artistic Director of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. He was a choreographer for the Ailey company. A graduate of Juilliard, he joined the Parsons Dance Company and founded his own company, Battleworks Dance. Battle has received numerous prestigious awards, such as being honored in 2005 by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts as one of the “Masters of African-American Choreography.”



Fig.26 A still of Robert Battle from “Black History Month: Robert Battle and The History of Dance” [YouTube](#). 2021. Used under Fair Use

Watch This

Takademe choreographed in 1999.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-42>

Sean Dorsey

Sean Dorsey is a transgender and queer choreographer. Dorsey founded the Sean Dorsey Dance Company based in San Francisco, centering his work on LGBTQIA+ themes. In 2002, Dorsey established Fresh Meat Production, a non-profit organization that advocates for equity in gender-nonconforming communities through commissions of new dances and community engagement programs.

Watch This

An excerpt of Boys in Trouble, a social commentary on the rigid ideas of gender and masculinity.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-35>

AXIS Dance

In the late 1980s, AXIS Dance was co-founded by Thais Mazur, Bonnie Lewkowicz, and Judith Smith. AXIS dance is one of the first dance companies to create inclusive spaces for dancers of all physical abilities. Through collaborative efforts, the company developed dance known as physically integrated dance, which aims to broaden the idea of dance and who a dancer is through movement that respects a “wide spectrum of physical attributes and disabilities” (Axis dance company. [2022]. In [Wikipedia](#)).



Fig.27 Demo performance by AXIS. At Ganei Aviv Community Center, Lod. 2016. [Photo by U.S. Embassy Jerusalem CC-BY 2.0](#)

Watch This

AXIS Dance's rehearsal process, featuring commentary by Artistic Director Marc Brew.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-43>

Camille A. Brown

Camille A. Brown blends African dance, social dances with vernacular jazz dance forms. In 2006, she founded Camille A. Brown & Dancers with choreographic works speaking to issues of race, culture, and identity. Brown's creative works have been commissioned for renowned companies such as the Alvin Ailey Dance Theater.



Fig.28 Camille A Brown. [Photo](#) by Darralynn Hutson. 2016. [CC BY-SA 4.0](#)

Watch This

New Second Line, inspired by the events of Hurricane Katrina in 2005. A celebration of the culture of New Orleans and the perseverance of Black people in the midst of devastation.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-44>

Victor Quijada



Fig.29 Victor Quijada photographed in Montreal, Quebec, Canada at the Pauline-Julien theatre. [Photo](#) by [Bull-Doser](#) in the [public domain](#).

Victor Quijada is a Mexican-American contemporary choreographer from Los Angeles, CA. He began as a B-Boy and further expanded his dance background as a student at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts, where he was introduced to modern dance and ballet. In 2002, Victor Quijada founded RUBBERBAND blending hip-hop ideology with various dance forms and theatrical elements.

Watch This

Victor Quijada's RUBBERBAND, blending hip-hop ideology with various dance forms and theatrical elements.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#oembed-36>

Louisiana Connection



Fig.30 A still of Dianne Maroney-Grigsby from “The Choreographer’s Last Dance-April 23, 2022” [YouTube](#). 2021. Used under Fair Use

Dianne Maroney-Grigsby performed with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater for several years. She also served as the company’s assistant artistic director and taught full-time at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center. Maroney-Grigsby later took the position of Artistic Director of Grambling State University’s Orchesis Dance Company. During her career, she has taught at Louisiana Dance Foundation’s Summer Dance Festivals, where she has choreographed for their resident dance company, Louisiana Dance Theatre (LDT). Some of her most noted works include “I Won’t Let Go of My Faith” and “World Hunger.”

Contextual Connections: Other Notable Contemporary Modern Artists

- Dallas Black Theatre, based in Texas, was founded in 1976 by Ann Williams, dedicated to

producing contemporary modern dance works that use a blend of modern, ballet, and jazz dance styles.

- Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, based in Utah, was founded in 1968 with the intent to raise more opportunities for people of color, with dances speaking to the African American experience.
- Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, located in Colorado, is considered a cultural ambassador for their work speaking to social injustices rooted in the African diaspora.
- Doug Varone and Dancers was founded in 1986 and is based in New York, with choreographic works that are musically driven.
- Stephen Petronio Company was founded in 1984 and is located in New York. The company aims to preserve the postmodern dance lineage.
- Ohad Naharin is the artistic director of the Israeli Batsheva Dance Company and creator of Gaga, a movement language responding to one's internal sensations.
- Shen Wei is a Chinese-American choreographer and founder of Shen Wei Dance Arts, a company using Western and Asian aesthetics, including dance, multimedia, and art.
- Akram Khan is an English choreographer that blends contemporary dance with Kathak, a traditional Indian dance.
- Crystal Pite founded Kidd Pivot in 2002, intertwining contemporary dance and storytelling with theatrical elements.
- Kyle Abraham founded his company in 2006, called A.I.M. (formally known as Abraham.In.Motion), blending ballet with other dance forms, like modern dance and hip-hop, to speak to the human condition.
- Mia Michaels is primarily known for her choreography featured on *So You Think You Can Dance*. In 1997, Michaels founded the company RAW (Reality at Work), choreographing contemporary and jazz dance styles.

Modern Dance Timeline



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#h5p-8>

Summary

Modern dance emerged as a contrast or rejection of the rigid constraints of ballet. From individual free expressions to contemporary modern dance, just like its beginnings, modern dance is forever changing. Today, combining unifying elements of other genres of dance (African, ballet, jazz, hip-hop), modern dance is interested in the communication of emotional experiences through basic and uninhibited movement. Currently, through all of its variations, it has become whatever the choreographer would like it to be according to the artist's background, teachings, technique, style, and imagination. Because it is so personal and individualistic, this art form will remain popular and viable for years to come.

Check Your Understanding

Directions: Using the Elements of Dance, select a ballet video from Chapter 2 and a modern dance video from Chapter 3. Compare and contrast its important qualities to reflect the aesthetic values placed on ballet and modern dance (minimum 150 words).

Directions: Select two videos from Chapter 4. Answer the following prompts (minimum 150 words):

- Using the Elements of Dance, compare and contrast both videos' important qualities to reflect the aesthetic values placed by the modern dance choreographers.
- Reflect on how the dance reflects the time it was choreographed and how the time influenced the dance.

Modern Dance Quiz 1:



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#h5p-32>

Modern Dance Quiz 2:



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=344#h5p-33>

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5.

TAP, JAZZ, MUSICAL THEATER, AND TELEVISION AND FILM



Fig. 1 [Otterbein University](#) Theatre & Dance [Class of 2021 Musical Theatre Majors](#) CC BY-SA 2.0

Learning Objectives

1. Identify key techniques and prominent figures in tap, jazz and musical theater dance genres.
2. Understand the history of tap, jazz and musical theater dance and summarize major events in the course of its development.
3. Demonstrate a culturally informed dance aesthetic.

Sometimes dancing and music can describe a true image of the customs of a country better than words in a newspaper.

—Gene Kelly

The development of jazz and tap dance forms resulted from West African dance forms that were eventually blended with other cultures, beginning with the transatlantic slave trade in the mid–late 16th century. While slaves were transported to what we now know as the United States, the ship’s captains wanted to keep their cargo healthy. The enslaved people were brought on top of the ship to actively perform what was called “dancing the slaves.” They stayed shackled; however, they came up with creative ways to exercise and mimicked the **percussive** sounds derived from drums that were an integral part of their culture. The Africans used their bodies to maintain some of these sounds and rhythms, such as **hambone**. From African, Spanish, Irish, and other cultural dance roots, tap and jazz dance forms were unstructured, and over time, became structured forms of dance that have blended and evolved over the years. The American inventions of tap and jazz were built from African drumming rhythms mixed with other forms of dance cultures and rhythms. It is important to note that **jazz dance**, **tap dance**, and jazz music are some of the forms of dance and music created in the United States by our enslaved African ancestors.

As the country changed, adding immigrants from Europe, the Middle East, the Caribbean, South America and Africa, social dances absorbed all these flavors and produced exciting new forms. Minstrel shows of the early 1800s were replaced by vaudeville shows after the Civil War. Post–World War I, ragtime music was disappearing into jazz. Shows began incorporating jazz and swing music, which called for a new style of

dancing. These shows, in turn, were replaced or supplemented by Broadway and Hollywood musicals and eventually movies and television. In this chapter, we will look at how the dance forms continue to evolve in television, film, and music videos.

Tap

Tap Dance Characteristics

- Dancers wear shoes that can be either flat-soled or heeled, usually with metal “taps” attached, which strike the floor to make **percussive** sounds. Each part of the shoe makes a particular beat and sound.
- Dance steps use quick **polyrhythmic** and **syncopated** sounds.
- Dancers often use improvisation to create their own rhythms.
- Some sub-styles include **hoofing**, **soft shoe**, **flash act**, **Broadway tap**, and **rhythm tap**.

When enslaved people were forbidden to play percussion instruments by plantation owners fearing an uprising, they found other ways to communicate and keep their culture alive, mainly by slapping their thighs, clapping hands, jawboning, stomping, or tapping rhythms with their feet. The Juba dance or **hambone**, originally known as Pattin’ Juba, is an African American style of dance that involves stomping as well as slapping and patting the arms, legs, chest, and cheeks. “Pattin’ Juba” would be used to keep time for other dances during a walkaround, using tin cans under the feet as well as beating on bowls with spoons. Eventually these dances merged with the clogging and jigs brought by Irish indentured servants to form American tap. Early tap dancers wore hard-soled or wooden shoes. If they wore a soft-soled shoe, they attached pennies, nails, or pieces of metal to the toes and heels to enhance the sound. Some young dancers in America today still attach bottle caps or tin cans to their shoes to create an inexpensive tap shoe.

Watch This

This is a video of kids in homemade tap shoes dancing in the New Orleans French Quarter.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-1>

In the early 1830s, **minstrel shows** became popular and toured the land. Performances included songs, dance, variety acts, and jokes that came at the expense of African Americans, as white men in blackface appropriated Black culture by inappropriately mimicking and mischaracterizing African Americans. For instance, the **cakewalk** was a popular dance tradition for slaves on plantations in the 19th century that was adopted by white performers and presented in **minstrel shows**. The **cakewalk** was performed as a competitive dance performed on plantations. In essence, the **cakewalk** was an exaggerated parody created by the slaves to imitate the upper-class mannerisms of their white plantation owners—the main movement and steps derived from European dances, such as the minuet.

Watch This

The Cakewalk



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-2>



Fig. 2 [Portrait of Boz's Juba](#), from an 1848 London playbill.
CC-Public Domain

William Henry Lane, also known as Master Juba, was born a free African American in 1825. He grew up learning to dance from “Uncle” Jim Lowe, an African American jig-and-reel dancer. At a young age, Lane became well-known for his talent. Master Juba is considered the first to perform as an American tap dancer. His style combines Irish reel steps, clogging with African rhythms. Eventually, white performers were replaced by African American performers. Master Juba was featured in minstrel shows as the best dancer in America.

Watch This

The history of Master Juba.



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In the 1870s, vaudeville began to replace **minstrel shows**, and for the next sixty years, vaudeville ruled the day. Touring groups crisscrossed the land bringing shows to the masses with wholesome entertainment that ladies and children could attend. These were variety shows. Acts ranged from dance to acrobats, jugglers to child performers, and comedy acts to kick lines of chorus ladies. **Tap dance** found an audience in **vaudeville**, and its performance flourished.

Tap Dancers

Bill “Bojangles” Robinson (1878–1949)



Fig. 3 [The Bill “Bojangles” Robinson](#) statue is a historic landmark in Richmond, Virginia. It’s a great representation of Mr. Robinson, who was a famous tap dancer. The statue is located in historic Jackson Ward. Bojangles’s monument is a great tourist attraction. By [Brooklyn4083](#) [CC-BY-SA 4.0](#)

Bill “Bojangles” Robinson (1878–1949) began his dancing career in vaudeville. He gained fame and popularity in the movies in which he acted, sang, and danced. He appeared in a number of movies with the young actress Shirley Temple and was the first to break the color barrier which had prevented mixed races from performing

together. He also appeared with Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, and Katherine Dunham in *Stormy Weather*. He became the most popular and highest-paid African American performer of his time. In spite of this, he died penniless and alone. After his death, his birthday, May 25, became National Tap Dance Day in his honor.

Watch This

Bill Robinson performing his famous “Stair Dance” with Shirley Temple in *The Little Colonel*, 1935



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-4>

John W. Bubbles (1902–1986)



Fig. 4 [Portrait of John W. Bubbles](#), as the original Sporting Life in George Gershwin's 1935 opera *Porgy and Bess*. Van Vechten, Carl, 1880–1964, photographer. CC-Public Domain

John W. Bubbles is considered the “father of **rhythm tap**.” Bubbles used heel drops to accent the offbeat parts of the music. He was also known for his impressive improvisational skills. Bubbles also performed with Ford Lee “Buck” Washington in vaudeville shows, and they received acclaim for their talents.

Watch This

John W. Bubbles performing.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-5>

Charles “Honi” Coles (1911–1992)



Fig. 5 A screenshot from YouTube “Charles ‘Honi’ Coles wins 1983 Tony Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical.” Fair use

American tap dancer and actor Charles “Honi” Coles and his longtime partner, Charles “Cholly” Atkins popularized **tap dance** enormously. They toured with Duke Ellington’s, Cab Calloway’s, and Count Basie’s big bands while making short films for TV. Honi Coles earned a Tony Award in 1983 for his Broadway dancing and a National Medal for his dancing contribution. He taught dance and dance history at universities including Cornell, George Washington, Yale, and Duke in the 1980s.

Watch This

Charles “Honi” Coles



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-6>

The Nicholas Brothers

Fayard Nicholas (1914–2006) and Harold Nicholas (1921–2001), the Nicholas brothers, were at a very young age introduced to dance while watching the vaudeville acts for which their parents played in the orchestra. They learned to be dancers, singers, and actors. Because they were so versatile, their careers extended to vaudeville, movies, nightclubs, concerts, Broadway, records, radio, and television. They performed a very acrobatic style of tap that has been called “**flash**” tapping, which included backflips and jump splits. Unlike many Black performers of this period, they refused to wear service uniforms and almost always appeared in the formal wear of white tie and tails.



Fig. 6 The Nicholas brothers – Fayard, left, and Harold – in 1943’s *Stormy Weather*. Getty Images CC-Public Domain

Fred Astaire (1899–1987)



Fig. 7 [Fred Astaire in *Royal Wedding*](#). CC-Public Domain

Fred Astaire (1899–1987) was famous for combining tap with ballroom dance, creating an elegant, easygoing style of rhythmic tap. He had many different partners, including Ginger Rogers, his most renowned partner. Astaire was known for surprising tricks such as dancing up a wall or ceiling, dancing with a coat rack or a mop, and dancing to firecrackers. He revolutionized how dance scenes were filmed, insisting that his dances be filmed with a single take and wide camera angle, instead of using cutaways and close-ups and multiple takes. This became the norm for recording tap dancing in movies and television for decades. He will be discussed further in the musical theater section.

Watch This

Fred Astaire in “Say It With Firecrackers” from *Holiday Inn* (1942)



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-7>

Gene Kelly (1912–1996)



Fig. 8 [Head Shot of Gene Kelly](#)
CC-Public Domain

Gene Kelly is known for his athleticism, acrobatic abilities, charm, and insistence on perfection. He also combined tap, ballroom, and ballet in his dancing. One of the most famous tap dance sequences known today is in the movie *Singin' in the Rain*. Gene Kelly also directed several films where he experimented with lighting, camera techniques, and special effects to achieve proper integration of dance with film and was one of the first to use split screens, double images, and live-action with animation.

Watch This

Gene Kelly Singing in the Rain, 1952



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-8>

Contextual Connections: Other Notable Tap Dancers and Performances

Ruby Keeler (1910–1993)

American actress, dancer, and singer Ethel Ruby Keeler was known for her partnership with Dick Powell in several successful musicals at Warner Bros., particularly *42nd Street*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-9>

Eleanor Powell (1919–1982)

Eleanor Powell initially performed in nightclubs as one of the few female tap dance soloists of the

time. By the 1930s, Powell became a well-known tap dancer in Hollywood musicals as one of the top tap dancing stars. She became known for quick and complex footwork and acrobatic abilities.



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Ginger Rogers (1911–1995)

American actress, dancer, and singer Ginger Rogers was famous in early Hollywood. She was a favorite partner of Fred Astaire in the RKO musicals. For her starring role in *Kitty Foyle* (1940), Rogers won an Academy Award for Best Actress.



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Gregory Hines (1946–2003)

Hines was one of the most celebrated tap dancers of all time, famous for being an improviser of tap steps, sounds, and rhythms. His improvisation was compared to that of a drummer, doing a solo and coming up with exciting beats. Hines appeared on Broadway and starred in more than forty films. In addition to numerous accolades, Gregory Hines won a Daytime Emmy Award, a Drama Desk Award, and a Tony Award.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-12>

Savion Glover (1973–)

Savion Glover is an exciting tapper who studied with Gregory Hines and found great success as a dancer. He

choreographed and performed in *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk*, a 1996 Broadway show that is a history of the black experience told in rap. He won a Tony Award for that choreography. Glover stated that his style is funk tap. When asked to describe what funk is, he says it is the bass line. “Funk is anything that gets one’s head on beat. It is riding with the rhythm. It is a pulse that keeps one rolling with the beat.” Gregory Hines stated that “Savion is possibly the best tap dancer that ever lived.” Savion Glover is a contemporary hooper; he states that tap dance is a dance style, while hoofing is a lifestyle.

Watch This

Savion Glover in *Bring in 'Da Noise*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-13>

Chloe Arnold (1980–)

Director, producer, Emmy-nominated choreographer, and actress Chloe Arnold is recognized globally for her tap dancing. Her company won the 1st Crew Battle on Fox’s program *So You Think You Can Dance*. Together with her sister Maud Arnold, Chloe co-directs and produces DC Tap Festival, a critically acclaimed and worldwide recognized festival. The US House of Representatives has acknowledged them as art ambassadors and preservers. As a solo tap dancer, Chloe has delivered performances in more than 21 countries and 35 states.

Maud Arnold (1986–)

Maud, the sister of Chloe Arnold, is a tap sensation. She has quickly established herself as a desired performer, teacher, and judge in various geographical locations, including the US, Brazil, Russia, Tokyo, and Barcelona. Maud has collaborated with Beyoncé and was featured in the national commercial of Toyota Corolla in 2014. Maud and her sister Chloe founded the Syncopated Ladies to raise female status in a male-dominated tap

world. After releasing their first video in 2012, the Syncopated Ladies have become iconic for tap dancing to pop music and hip-hop.

Watch This

Chloe and Maud Arnold



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-38>

Watch This

Maud Arnold



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Watch This

Syncopated Ladies



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Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards (1976–)



Fig. 12 Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards at Stockholm Tap Festival 2013. Image provided by the artist. CC-SA

Dormeshia Sumbry-Edwards (1976–) began dancing at the age of 3 and earned recognition as a tap dance prodigy by 12, appearing in Broadway productions, performing with legendary tap dancers Gregory Hines, Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown, and Savion Glover. Dormeshia is referred to as the “queen” by the *New York Times* and “the mistress of her generation.”

Watch This

Dormeshia performing at the Stockholm Dance Tap Festival:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-16>

Ayodele Casel (1975–)

Ayodele Casel combines tap dancing with inspiration from salsa music. She was the only woman in Savion Glover's company, Not Your Ordinary Tappers. Casel choreographs for Broadway shows, such as the 2022 revival of *Funny Girl*. She co-directs Operation Tap, an online educational platform. In 2021, she was featured on the US Postal Service Forever Stamp.

Watch This

An excerpt from Chasing Magic.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-17>

Michelle Dorrance (1979-)

Michelle Dorrance founded Dorrance Dance in 2011. Dorrance received wide attention for keeping the traditions of tap dance while expanding the art form's boundaries. In 2015, Dorrance received the MacArthur Fellowship for her creative contributions to tap dance and for educating people about tap dance history.

Watch This

An excerpt from the Blues Project by Dorrance Dance.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-18>

Jazz

Jazz Dance Characteristics

- **Jazz dance** often contains elements of social dance, but in a performance manner.
- Dancers use **isolations**, accentuating one specific part of the body, such as the head, rib cage, or hip.
- Dancers keep a low center of gravity and often bend their knees for more freedom of movement.
- **Percussive** or **syncopated** movements are used to accent off-beats or surprising aspects of the music.
- Sensuality in **jazz dance** is emphasized more than in traditional styles.

During the vaudeville era, New Orleans' Congo Square became a pivotal location where various cultures came together and shared their customs and traditions through music, song, and dance. The exchange of cultural elements brought about jazz music combining blues and ragtime. It incorporates **polyrhythms**, polycentrism, **syncopation**, and improvisation that dance mirrored as it developed alongside jazz music. During the 1940s, when bebop music was introduced, **jazz dance** branched out to use other music genres.

As Hollywood became the new ground for entertainment, **jazz dance** forms and music continued to evolve in jazz clubs. The Harlem Renaissance (1921–1933) was the cultural movement highlighting African

American artists, authors, and philosophers in New York. Jazz clubs, such as the Cotton Club and Apollo Ballroom, promoted African-American jazz musicians and dancers that attracted a broad audience, gaining widespread attention to jazz.

As we saw in the modern dance section, Katherine Dunham is known as the “matriarch of Black dance.” Dunham integrated the syncopated rhythms of Haiti, Cuba, Brazil, and the Caribbean into American dance. She is credited with the technique of body **isolationism** and incorporating it into her dance style. Katherine Dunham’s influence and dance technique had a huge impact on the world of jazz dance. Today almost all jazz dancers use her technique in their dance.

Jazz Dancers

Josephine Baker (1906–1975)



Fig. 15 [Photo of Josephine Baker](#) attributed to [Allison Marchant](#). [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#)

American-born Josephine Baker was a dancer, singer, and actress who centered her career in Europe, mainly in

France. *Siren of the Tropics* (1927), directed by Mario Nalpas and Henri Étievant, gave her the distinction of breaking the color barrier and being the first African American woman to star in a major motion picture.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-19>

Jack Cole (1911–1974)



Fig. 16 Title: [Portrait of Jack Cole](#)
Abstract: 1 photographic print : gelatin silver. Library of Congress. CC-Public Domain

Jack Cole has been called the “father of American **jazz dance**.” He made his professional dance debut with

Denishawn in August 1930. Cole was influenced by the pioneering modernists Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman, with whom he performed briefly. His career spanned three significant arenas: nightclub, Broadway stage, and Hollywood film. He was a pioneer for multiculturalism in the musical comedy dance arena. Cole's style of dancing is innovative, acrobatic, and angular. He is known for using small groups of dancers rather than a large company. Jack Cole is remembered as the prime innovator of the theatrical jazz dance heritage.

Watch This

Jack Cole's choreography



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-20>

Bob Fosse (1927–1987)



Fig. 17 Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library. “Gwen Verdon [center left], Bob Fosse [center right] and unidentified others in rehearsal for the stage production *New Girl in Town*” [The New York Public Library Digital Collections.1957](#). License unknown

Robert Louis Fosse followed in the footsteps of Jack Cole in his work on Broadway. Fosse was an American actor, choreographer, dancer, director and screenwriter.

He was a prolific director and choreographer, creating musical works on stage and screen, including the stage musicals *Damn Yankees* (1955) and *Chicago* (1975). His films include *Cabaret* (1972) and *All That Jazz* (1979). Fosse’s distinctive style of choreography was known for “jazz hands” and slouched turned-in positions. In 1973 he won Oscar, Emmy, and Tony awards all in the same year. Fosse won a record eight Tonys and was nominated for several Academy Awards. He won Best Director for *Cabaret* and the Palme D’Or in 1980 for *All That Jazz*. He also won an Academy Award for direction for *Pippin*.

Watch This

Bob Fosse and wife Gwen Verdon in *Who’s Got the Pain*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-21>

Gwen Verdon (1925–2000)

American actress and dancer Gwyneth Evelyn “Gwen” Verdon was an accomplished performer on Broadway and Hollywood. Not only did she win four Tony Awards for her musical comedy performances, but she also served as an uncredited choreographer’s assistant and specialty dance coach for theater and film.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-22>

Carmen de Lavallade (1931-)



Fig. 20 Dancer [Carmen de Lavallade](#). Photograph by Carl Van Vechten, 3 March 1955. From the [Carl Van Vechten Collection](#) at the Library of Congress. Public Domain

Carmen de Lavallade, a native of New Orleans, worked with Lester Horton and Alvin Ailey to create her signature style of jazz dance. She was a member of the Lester Horton Dance Theater in 1949, where she danced as a lead dancer until her departure for New York City with Alvin Ailey in 1954 and made her Broadway debut with Alvin Ailey in the musical *House of Flowers*. She staged musicals, plays, and operas and eventually became a professor and member of the Yale Repertory Theater. In December 2017, she received the Kennedy Center Honors Award.

Watch This

Carmen de Lavallade's *Dear Quincy* (1968):



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-23>

Joe Tremaine (1938–)



Fig. 21 Still of Joe Tremaine from YouTube “Joe Tremaine Lifetime Achievement Award KARTv Dance Awards.” Fair use

Joe Tremaine, a native of New Orleans, studied with many of the great dancers of the 1960s. Having appeared in many films and Broadway shows, Tremaine was later cast by June Taylor as one of the eight male dancers on the Jackie Gleason Show. He later became known as the dance teacher of the stars, working with such names as Diana Ross, Goldie Hawn, Barry Manilow, and Cameron Diaz.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-24>

Ann Reinking (1949–2020)



Fig. 22 [Ann Reinking](#), photographed in 1981 by Jack Mitchell. [CC-BY-SA 4.0](#)

American dancer, actress, choreographer, and singer Ann Reinking was Bob Fosse's lead dancer and wife in the 1970s. She worked extensively in musical theater. Reinking starred in Broadway productions such as *Coco*, *Over Here!*, *Goodtime Charley*, *Chicago*, *Dancin'*, and *Sweet Charity*.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-25>

Debbie Allen (1950-)



Fig. 22 [Allen](#) at the Thelonious Monk Awards October 26, 1997 Kennedy center Wash. D.C. From [DEBBIE ALLEN](#) AnimatedCC-BY-SA 2.0

Deborah Kaye Allen is a popular American actress, dancer, choreographer, director, and producer. She has won five Tony Awards and a Golden Globe Award, and has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Her choreography in the television series *Fame* (1982–1987), where she portrayed dance teacher Lydia Grant,

made her famous. Allen has directed more than 50 television and film productions. One of Allen's notable productions is the *Hot Chocolate Nutcracker*, a huge success for over 12 years.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-26>

Codified Jazz Dance Technique

During the Integration of concept musicals, technically trained dancers became favored to convey the storyline. To meet the demands required in the choreography, jazz dancers began forming techniques. These techniques became the basis of studio training for dancers.

Eugene Louis Faccuito “Luigi” (1925–2015)



Fig. 23 Still image of Eugene Louis Faccuito “Luigi” from YouTube “Roslyn Kind interviews Eugene Louis Faccuito ‘Luigi’ dance world icon” Fair use

As an adult, Eugene Louis Faccuito, nicknamed “Luigi,” was paralyzed on the right side of the body following a car accident. Doctors were convinced he’d never walk again; however, Luigi was unwilling to accept this and created a warm-up of set exercises that helped him recover from paralysis. The warm-up included classical ballet principles combined with parallel body positions and isolations to encourage the body muscles to activate and build strength appropriately. In 1956, Luigi founded the First World Jazz Centre, where students trained in his techniques.

Watch This

Luigi dance technique



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Matt Mattox (1921–2013)



Fig. 23 Still image of Matt Mattox from YouTube “The Jazz Dance of Matt Mattox”
Fair use

Matt Mattox developed a technique called freestyle. Freestyle is a technique that builds upon levels from beginner to advanced, combining ballet with polyrhythmic body isolations and the complex footwork often used in tap dance.

Watch This

Matt Mattox dance technique



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Gus Giordano (1930–2008)



Fig. 23 An image of Gus Giordano from YouTube
“The Gus Giordano Jazz Legacy Foundation #2”
Fair use

Gus Giordano used modern dance components in his technique, such as contractions, hinges, and parallel leg positions to develop muscular strength. The Giordano Dance Center in the Chicago area was established in 1953 to elevate the appreciation of the dance form and provide dancers training in Jazz. Later, he founded the Gus Giordano Jazz Dance Chicago to bring jazz dance to the concert stage. In 1990, Giordano established the Jazz Dance World Congress as an annual event that brought together master teachers, choreographers, and professional jazz dance companies worldwide for classes and performances.

Watch This

Gus Giordano in *Steam Heat*



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Lynn Simonson (1943-)



Fig. 24 Lynn Simonson from YouTube
“Lynn Simonson-Jazz Dance Class #1 Jazz
Art 1998” Fair use

Lynn Simonson created the famed Simonson Jazz Technique. Taught in 16 countries, Simonson Jazz Technique trains dancers regardless of their style. This method is the official one taught at Manhattan’s

DanceSpace. Simonson's jazz technique uses anatomical awareness to help dancers move efficiently and easily to reduce injuries.

Watch This

Lynn Simonson teaching a dance class



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-30>

Jazz Dance Today

Today, jazz dance includes a wide range of styles that branched from communal experiences of authentic jazz / social dances to gain global attention. Jazz dance mirrors societal trends, resulting in various jazz dance styles, including theatrical, lyrical, and commercial dance.

Pat Taylor



Fig. 24 A screen capture from YouTube “A #GTMD20 Pump-Up From Pat Taylor of JazzAntiqua Dance and Music Ensemble” Fair Use

In 1993, Pat Taylor founded JazzAntiqua Dance & Music Ensemble, celebrating African American jazz history and traditions. The company is dedicated to educating, preserving, and creating an appreciation of jazz by collaborating with artists in performances, classes, and community events.

Watch This

JazzAntiqua Dance & Music Ensemble, Brian Swartz & the Gnu Sextet Choreography with Pat Taylor as Artistic Director



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-31>

Melanie George



Fig. 24 Still of Melanie George from YouTube “SummerStage Anywhere Culture Talk: Jawole Willa Jo Zollar in Conversation With Melanie George.” Fair Use

In 2012 Melanie George founded the Jazz Is...Dance Project, showcasing a form she calls Neo-Jazz, characterized by early jazz dance styles and aesthetics combined with contemporary jazz techniques. George centers her movements on West African elements, based on eight key elements noted on her [website](#): groundedness and weight sensing; rhythm and syncopation; isolations; weight shift from the pelvis to facilitate complex footwork; musicality and a deep relationship to jazz music and its related forms, blues and funk; improvisation; a Black American vernacular base for movement vocabulary and composition; and acknowledgement of community, while honoring the individual.

Musical Theater

Musical Theater Characteristics

- The choreography furthers the storyline of a musical production and helps in character development.
- The movements are often exaggerated to reach the audience in large theaters.
- Many styles of dance can be utilized depending on the music and lyrics.
- The dancing often showcases athleticism or unusual stunts.

Musical theater dance grew out of vaudeville shows when directors began stringing songs, dances, and skits

into a loose storyline. It took off in the 1940s with Jack Cole's fusion of jazz, ballet, and various global dance forms combined in the musical *Something for the Boys*. It has gone through many changes in popularity and styles but remains popular today whether performed live on stage, on film, or on television. **Musical theater** dance embodies the collaboration between choreographers and writers as it combines choreography and written text, and sung lyrics. It is less of a single dance style and more of a purpose for which dance is used in a musical production.

Here are a few of the important **musical theater** works:

Shuffle Along, 1921, music composed by Eubie Blake, lyrics by Noble Sissle. *Shuffle Along* was written, staged, and performed in 1921 entirely by African Americans. *Shuffle Along* was the first show to make African American dance an integral part of American **musical theater**. The African American musicals of this era, especially *Shuffle Along*, are of great importance to the history of American **musical theater**.

Watch This

Shuffle Along historical overview:



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Contextual Connections

Oklahoma!, 1943, was the first musical written by the duo of Rodgers and Hammerstein. Dance sequences are incorporated into the plot of the show. In this dream scene, the heroine dreams

about her romantic choices and their possible outcomes. Watch *Oklahoma!*: Rogers and Hammerstein, choreographer: Agnes DeMille.

West Side Story, 1957, is a concept musical choreographed by Jerome Robbins that is a modernized adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, highlighting the tension of rival street gangs. It was translated to film in 1961 and again in 2021. Watch the trailer for the 2021 version directed by Steven Spielberg.

Mary Poppins, 1964, is a movie musical choreographed by Louisiana native Marc Breau and his wife Dee Dee Woods. The musical is about a magical nanny who arrives to care for the children of a busy banker and his suffragette wife. The original movie stars Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke. This video shows the energetic chimney sweep dance "Step in Time."

The 1966 musical **Cabaret**, with music by John Kander, lyrics by Fred Ebb, and book by Joe Masteroff, is set in 1929–1930 Berlin during the Jazz Age as the Nazis are coming into authority. The musical unfolds in the decadent nightlife scene at the seedy Kit Kat Klub and revolves around American writer Clifford Bradshaw's relations with English cabaret performer Sally Bowles. This video from the movie version, 1972, shows the title song and dance.

A Chorus Line, 1975, looks at a Broadway dance audition. The dancers share revelations about the life of a gypsy, a Broadway dancer. It was unusual in that it showed the behind-the-scenes view of auditioning and developing a Broadway show. In 1985, it was adapted to film. Watch *A Chorus Line*: "One" (Finale) from the movie with choreography by Michael Bennett.

Chicago, 1975, is a satire on the concept of the "celebrity criminal," set in the 1920s Jazz Age. It features the stories of women who murdered husbands and lovers and the slick lawyer who manipulates the media and the court to win their freedom. Watch "All That Jazz" from *Chicago*, Choreography by Bob Fosse.

Cats opened in London in 1981 and opened on Broadway in 1982. It is a musical composed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, based on the 1939 poetry collection *Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats* by T. S. Eliot. It tells the story of a tribe of cats called the Jellicles and the night they make the "Jellicle choice" by deciding which cat will ascend to the Heaviside layer and come back to a new life. The choreography is by Gillian Lynne and brilliantly imitates the movement and attitude of cats.

The Lion King, 1997, unlike most musicals, began as a Disney Studios animated film in 1994. Directed by sculptor and puppeteer Julie Taymor, the musical features actors in animal costumes as well as giant, hollow puppets worn and operated by the actors and dancers. Directed by sculptor and puppeteer Julie Taymor, the musical features actors in animal costumes as well as giant, hollow puppets worn and operated by the actors and dancers. The music is by Elton John, along with

additional music and lyrics by Lebo M, Mark Mancina, Jay Rifkin, Julie Taymor, and Hans Zimmer. Watch this promotional video from Disney on Broadway.

[Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk](#), 1996, was created by tap legend Savion Glover with a mission—to break down the stereotypes of what tap dance could be. It won a Tony Award. Watch this video, which shows the “Taxi Dance” that grew out of Glover’s experience of being ignored by cabs when he was trying to get to rehearsal.

[The Producers](#), 2001, is a musical with music and lyrics by Mel Brooks, based on a book by Brooks and Thomas Meehan, with choreography by Susan Stroman. It is adapted from Brooks’s 1967 film of the same name. The story concerns a failing theatrical producer and his accountant, who scheme to produce the most notorious flop in history, thereby cheating their backers out of millions of dollars. Unfortunately, the show is a hit. Mel Brooks draws on ridiculous accents, caricatures of Nazis, and many show business in-jokes. Watch this trailer for the Broadway show.

[Hairspray](#), 2002, is an American musical that follows teenage Tracy Turnblad’s journey as she tries to dance on the Corny Collins Show, choreographed originally by Jerry Mitchell. The show’s energy comes from the 1960s-style dance music and “downtown” rhythm and blues. It is based on John Waters’s 1988 film of the same name. The video features a rousing song and dance to “You Can’t Stop the Beat.”

[Hamilton](#), 2015, choreographed by Andy Blankenbuehler, is a groundbreaking rap musical that tells the story of Alexander Hamilton. Written by and starring Lin-Manuel Miranda, the show was sold out on Broadway far into the future before pandemic closings forced an end to the show. Fortunately, a performance was filmed in 2016 and is now available to watch on Disney Plus. Watch the official clip compilation for Hamilton, a musical movie starring Lin-Manuel Miranda and Phillipa Soo.

Assessment:

Test your knowledge on tap, jazz, and musical theater.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#h5p-35>

Film and Television

“Film and television have greatly expanded the dance audience and led to the new art form of dance films, while video and computer technology are aiding in dance creation, preservation, education and marketing.” —[The Canadian Encyclopedia](#), Feb. 2, 2011.

Watch This

Southern University Dancing Dolls.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-33>

Many popular Broadway or off-Broadway musicals made the transition into the movies and eventually into television. MGM (Metro Goldwyn Mayer) produced hundreds of movie musicals throughout the 1930s, '40s, and '50s. Performers like Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly were under contract to the film studio. Movies like *Singin' in the Rain* and *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* had high production values and were tremendous box office hits.

Here are a few musicals that were made for film:

Stormy Weather, 1943, features the choreography of Katherine Dunham. It was filmed with an all-Black cast and tells the story of an ambitious song-and-dance man played by Bill Robinson and his on-and-off relationship with a beautiful singer played by Lena Horne. In this excerpt, Ms. Dunham and her dancers embody the storm, a metaphor for a stormy relationship:

Watch this



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-34>

Royal Wedding, 1951, includes a clever innovation created by Fred Astaire, in which the set rotates to create the illusion of dancing up the walls and on the ceiling:

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-35>

Singin' in the Rain, 1952, starring Gene Kelly, Debbie Reynolds, and Donald O'Connor, was hugely popular. It was a film about film history and the mishaps of the transition to sound for both actors and technicians. This excerpt features Gene Kelly in the title song:

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-36>

White Nights, 1985, stars ballet dancer Mikhail Baryshnikov and tapper Gregory Hines and was choreographed by Twyla Tharp. In this movie, the Russian ballet dancer who wants to defect to America meets an American tap dancer who defected to Russia to avoid serving in the Vietnam War. Together, they plot ways to defect back to the United States while competing with their dance forms.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#oembed-37>

Assessment:

Chapter Review.



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

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Summary

Tap dance evolved out of a need when African percussion instruments were taken away from slaves; slaves then turned to their bodies as percussive instruments to express themselves and retain their cultural identities. Jazz dance evolved out of an extension of African movements of isolation, syncopation, and polyrhythmic to interpret the sounds of jazz music as an accompaniment. Tap and jazz dance are currently performance styles that were birthed in the United States in the early 19th century and mid-20th century, respectively. Africans and African descendants were at the heart of the unique dance forms that were created in the US. They met at the crossroads of Irish, Spanish, and French dance and music forms. Musical theater evolved out of vaudeville shows, which involved singing, dancing, music, and scripts with storylines. Musical theater is not a dance style, but a vehicle for which dance is used with songs to enhance the storyline in the written text. Television and film have given dance more worldwide attention. With today's computer technology outlets, dance remains viable and essential.

Check Your Understanding

1. Try dancing along with the lesson [in this video](#):. Make up your own rhythm pattern using the basic moves you learned. Which Elements of Dance did you use?
2. Select two videos from this chapter, one from the early days and one from modern times. Compare and contrast them using dance vocabulary.
3. Chapter 5 Quiz:





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<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=502#h5p-38>

6.

RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL DANCE

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate a culturally informed dance aesthetic.
- Recognize the elements of dance and apply that knowledge to analyze, create, and perform dance.
- Describe religious and social dances and illustrate how the dances fit into their world culture.

The one thing that can solve most of our problems is dancing.

—James Brown

What Is Religious Dance?

The earliest dances were likely tied to religion, using movement as part of rituals. Belief systems embraced dance as a way to connect to higher powers that influenced everyday life. Other religions eschewed dance or banned it for several different reasons. “Religious” can refer to a range of ecclesiasticism. Primitive imitative dances and dances to the elements like the sun and rain appealed to nature and the spirits whose benevolence made existence possible. Some dances are **indigenous**, but others have traveled, morphed, and adapted from earlier roots. By studying religious dance, you gain insight into the worship of different cultures.

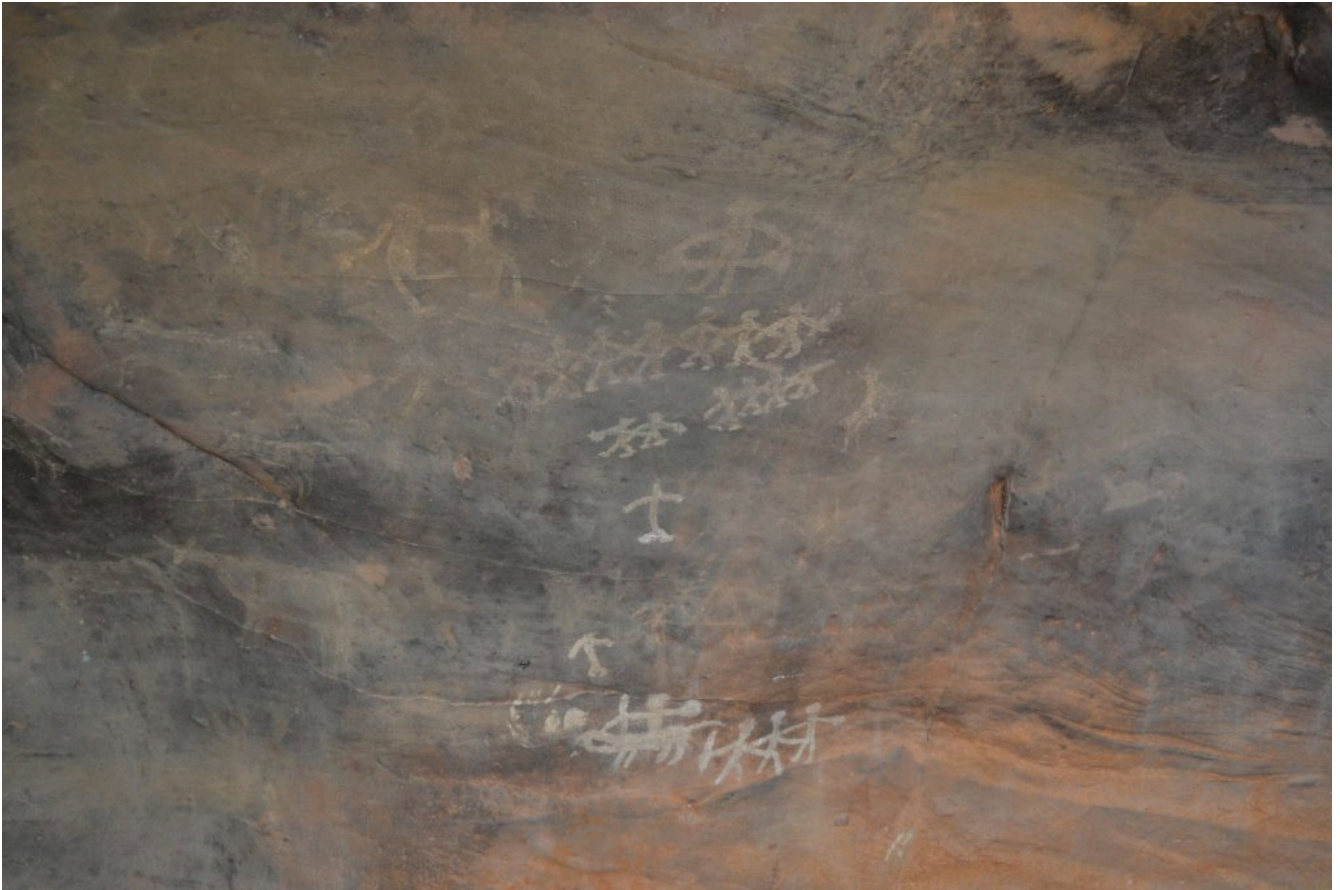


Fig. 1 Mesolithic dancers at Bhimbetka. Source: [Dancing painting at Bhimbetka](#) by to [Nandanupadhyay](#), Wikimedia Commons. [CC BY-SA 3.0](#)

Processionals and Round Dances

Ancient Greek dance was used to solidify the community and was divinely inspired. Everyone participated in religious ceremonies as cultivated amateurs and well-rounded citizens. A big part of the program was processions and circle dances. The realities of the cosmos ruled the symbolism of the dances and references to the sun, moon, and constellations figured into the movement. In Greek mythology, the nine Muses are goddesses of the arts, born of Zeus and Mnemosyne, the goddess of memory. Of them, **Terpsichore** is the Muse of dance, often represented holding a lyre.

Dance in ancient Greece can be divided into two types: **Dionysian** dance and **Apollonian** dance. The god Apollo was the patron of dance, music, philosophy, and healing. He was associated with light. **Apollonian** art is known for serene majesty and formal balance.

Dionysus, on the other hand, was the god of fertility, wine, and dance. His divine power induced cheerful merriment and wildness. **Dionysian** art is known for unrestrained emotion and ecstasy.

The dithyramb was a chorus that was incorporated into ritual festivals with choric song and dance, accompanied by flute. They were an effort to control the wild dances of Dionysus. They evolved over time to become “tragedies,” what we consider the origin of Western theater. Thespis was a dithyramb leader from the 6th century BC who is credited as being the first actor in the Western world and to this day actors are known as **thespians**.



Fig. 2 In ancient Egypt, dancers impersonated a deity such as the goddess Hathor, taking on the deity's attributes and interpreting the divine world for those watching. Asset number [226711001](#) © The Trustees of the British Museum. Shared under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International \(CC BY-NC-SA 4.0\)](#) licence.

Types of Religious Dance

Religious dances can be categorized by their purpose as

1. Dances of Imitation
2. Medicine dances
3. Commemorative dances
4. Dances for spiritual connection

Dances of Imitation

Particularly in primitive and **indigenous** cultures, dances of imitation are performed. The dances can serve all kinds of purposes, often in search of fortunate outcomes like good weather and good hunting.

Watch This

Native American: Sioux Buffalo Dance. In this video filmed by Thomas Edison in 1894, men from a Sioux tribe imitate a buffalo in tribute to its courage. They bend forward from the waist, performing knee-raising steps as they move in a circle.



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Native American: Eagle Dance

The Eagle Dance is performed to connect with a higher power for healing, rain, strength in war and general divine intervention. It is often performed by two dancers with drummers surrounding them. The dancer dons feathered wings that he spreads and flaps in imitation of the great eagle. He does a low skip, lifting his knees high, moving in a serpentine pattern. Then he pauses, perches low, and folds his wings over his quivering leg.

Watch This



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Sierra Leone: Ostrich Dance

A Jacob's Pillow program note for this Ostrich Dance delineates its cultural importance: "Warriors imitate the powerful graceful movement of the king of birds. Living close to nature, they observe the movements of the ostrich, the largest and most powerful of the birds on the continent of Africa. This dance, from Sierra Leone, was introduced in the United States by Asadata Dafora."

Watch This



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Asadata Dafora was a privileged and well-educated Creole man from Sierra Leone. He was determined to educate the rest of the world about African culture. He traveled Western Africa learning its dance, music and

stories, then shared these arts with the rest of the world. In the 1930s he brought African performance arts to the American theatrical stage.

Australian Aboriginal Dance

Australian Aboriginal dance commonly incorporates imitations of certain animals or birds to assist in storytelling and to bring dreamtime to the people. Dreamtime refers to the ancestral beings associated with life force and creative power whom were believed to be able to communicate important messages or life lessons through one's dreams.

These traditional and ceremonial dances could be used as an initiation process or to celebrate a new stage of life. Dances played an important role in the spirituality of **Indigenous** Australian tribes and each group had different customs when it came to performing and orchestrating these dances.

Watch This

The Aboriginal Crane Dance



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Mexico: Yaqui Deer Dance



Fig. 3 [Yaqui Traditional dance mask](#) in the Tumacácori Museum. 20 September 2019. Attributed [Marine 69–71](#). CC-SA 4.0

The Yaqui people are of Sonora, Mexico and Arizona. This hunters' dance imitates the movements of prey and reenacts the hunt. Deer dancing is related to three of the nine “worlds” that Yoemem (the Yaqui people) recognize. This dance, like the religion, centers on balancing the worlds and repairing harm done to them by humans. Catholicism was introduced to the Yaqui by Jesuit missionaries, and today most practice a syncretic religion that is a merger of the two.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-5>

Medicine Dances

San Tribe of Africa (Bushmen Dance) Trance Dance

The trance dance, which is still practiced by San communities in the Kalahari region, is an **indigenous** ritual by which a state of altered consciousness is achieved through rhythmic dancing and hyperventilation. It is used for healing sickness in individuals and healing negative aspects of the community as a whole.

Watch This

Trance Dance



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-6>

Amazon Indigenous People: Bullet Ant Coming of Age Ritual

Young men test their endurance by wearing a glove full of stinging bullet ants. Men of the village join the young man in dance to help survive the pain.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-7>

Mongolia: Shaman Dance

In Mongolia, Shamans serve as intermediaries between the human world and the spirit world. Both men and women may be Shaman. The religion is animistic (attributes a spirit to all things), and rituals address medicine, religion, a reverence for nature, and ancestor worship. On the summer solstice Shamans perform a fire ritual at night. The Shaman drums carry the ancestral spirits of the Shaman.

Watch This

Mongolia: Shaman Dance, a performance at Ulan Bator's Choijin Lama Temple Museum.



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Commemorative Dances

Dances are created to remember a special day, a special event, a meaningful moment. Some commemorative dances are very old. Maypole dances have early pagan roots. They are a celebration of the rebirth of spring. Other commemorative dances are more recent and more personal to our times.

China: Dragon Dance

In China, the dragon is a symbol of imperial power and good luck. It follows that the longer the dragon, the better the luck. In particular the dragon dance is performed at festive occasions, especially the Chinese New Year. Dragons are often about 100 feet long, although they also can be shorter or even twice as long. The dragon is traditionally constructed with fabric laid over hoops that are lifted over the performers' heads on long poles. Performers must coordinate their movements to achieve the sinuous dance of the dragon. Nine is a standard number of dragon dancers but there can be fewer or more. Some dragons even specialize with fancy patterns and acrobatic feats.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-9>

United States: Table of Silence; Choreographer Jacquelyn Buglisi

Ten years after the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were struck by a terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, this commemorative dance was created. Performed each year in the heart of New York City at Lincoln Center, dancers from all over the city join together to remember those who lost their lives on that day and the first responders who died in the days after.

Dancers from many different religions participate in this dance. It is for all to reflect and remember, regardless of personal creed. Dancers from all over New York City audition to participate in this dance.

Rehearsals are held in a number of spots throughout the city beginning months in advance, then the groups come together to dance on the day and time of the anniversary of the attack.

This dance is reminiscent of the style of ancient Greek dance. It features a procession into the Lincoln Center plaza. Dancers keep time with their strides, proceeding in a circle as they perform meaningful gestures in unison. They position themselves in concentric circles and continue to dance together in unity. This is a dance that brings the community together to remember a tragic time in American history.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-10>

Watch This

American Apache: Girl's Rite of Passage

“Apache girls take part in ancient tests of strength, endurance and character that will make them women and prepare them for the trials of womanhood.”



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Dances for Spiritual Connection

Christian Dance

The holy book of Christendom (and Judaism) is the Bible. References to dance can be found peppered throughout, especially in the Old Testament, and dance was a part of early Christian ritual. However, the church came to equate dance with the desires of the flesh and loosening of mores, and dance was banned from church ritual. Some religious groups, Calvinists and Quakers, completely banned dance from their lives. Christianity is the only major world religion that has forbidden dance to such an extent.

During the 1960s the Catholic pope called the Second Vatican Council. At that time the liturgy, the rituals of the church that parishioners participate in, was updated to reflect the times. Dance found its way back into the church. Several other groups restored dance to their services. Some Protestant churches participated in ecstatic worship in which worshipers would talk in tongues and shake or roll in the ecstasy of the holy spirit.

The Charismatic Movement of the 1970s ushered the Christian church into contemporary times, and dance found new purchase in the form of liturgical dance, or praise dance. Worshipers combine dance and music to express the spirit of God.

Watch This

My Worship Is For Real | Anointed Praise Dance Ministry



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The early Christian church developed the notion of the afterlife, which led to purity on earth. To achieve that purity, a life of celibacy was ascribed. Dance, especially dance between sexes, was eschewed. The Catholic church under Pope Gregory went further to banish dance. Even as citizens were dancing at festivals, guild meetings, and court balls, the church of Rome denied dance.

In 1604 England also banned dance in the church. The “Shaking Quakers” incorporated ecstatic dance into

religious services. The sect moved to the United States as groups of “Shakers,” a religion restricting interaction between men and women. The parishioners would dance, sing, and shake out the sins of the flesh in their worship. In 1930, the first generation modern choreographer Doris Humphrey choreographed “The Shakers,” depicting scenes of the Shaker worship experience. This clip shows a portion of the dance.

Watch This

The Shakers



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-13>

Cultural Connections

Article: [Gene Kim and faith based dance series on Instagram](#).

Pursuit of Vitality



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Dancer Personifies Gospel Music.



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Damascus—Islam: Sufi “Whirling” Dervishes

The Mevlevi sect of Sufi Islam has practiced a dance for over seven hundred years based on the writings of the poet Rumi. The dervishes spin faster and faster, chanting Allah, with the right palm lifted to heaven to receive God’s blessing and the left hand pointing to the ground in a terrestrial connection, the Dervish existing between two worlds. The dancers seek to suppress their ego to find oneness with God. The ceremony is called a sema. It is especially practiced in Turkey.

Watch This



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-16>

India: Bharatanatyam



Fig. 4 Chola dynasty statue depicting Shiva dancing as [Nataraja](#) (Los Angeles County Museum of Art) [CC-Public Domain](#)

Shiva is one of the principal gods of Hinduism. He is recognized as the god of dance and creator of the world.

Bharata Natyam is a very old religious dance performed in India by women. Early religious stories are told through hand gestures, facial expressions, and rhythmic foot drumming. Young girls called devadasis were committed to God and trained to perform the Bharata Natyam in church, but they were exploited and ultimately used as little more than prostitutes. Under the British colonial Raj rule, the Bharata Natyam was banished. Some influential Indians helped to preserve the dance.

Watch This





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Japan: Bugaku

Bugaku is a Japanese classical dance rooted in ancient Shinto ceremonies tied to the rituals of the Imperial Court. Men perform it exclusively, telling stories, legends, or battles to educate people about religious beliefs. The purpose of Bugaku is to appease the gods, purify evil spirits, and pray for favorable outcomes such as a good harvest.

The movement used in Bugaku is sacred and symbolic. One unique feature of Bugaku is the stylized walking, known as “the art of walking.” Performers are trained to keep the feet connected to the earth through slow, precise, and deliberate movement, known as Okisa. Okisa is the energy that generates and flows from within the performer’s body for spiritual connection.

Watch This



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Cambodia: Robam Boran

Cambodia’s Robam Boran, also known as Khmer classical dance, is one of Southeast Asia’s oldest court dance

traditions. Initially, the king's lakhon lueng, sacred female dancers, ritualistically performed dances to pray to ancestral spirits for favorable outcomes, such as rainfall.

Training in Robam Boran begins at an early age. Children's bodies are manipulated by their teachers to make them flexible. Performers' fingers and toes curl back, and the elbows are hyperextended. Dancers also are expected to hold their balance for an extended period. Robam Boran uses stylized movements and gestures to convey a story. The gestures are called kbach and are symbolic of nature, representing, for example, a flower, leaf, fruit, or tendril.

Watch This

The Magic of Khmer Classical Dance



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Hawaii: Hula

The Hawaiian People practiced a polytheistic religion with four primary gods and numerous undergods and spirits. There was a kinship between the gods and the ruling class, and indeed, all people were on a more equal footing with their gods than in traditional Western religions. There was no written language for Hawaii, so it was through the practice of the hula dance that the lore of the people was preserved and passed down to following generations.

Watch This

Hula Is More Than a Dance—It's the “Heartbeat” of the Hawaiian People.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-20>

Ghana, West Africa: Voodoo Dance and Music Celebration

Voodoo primarily originated in Western Africa and was then transported West with the African diaspora to take root at points in South America, the Caribbean Islands, and North America (New Orleans in particular). Different versions of the practice emerged at these diverse locations, and syncretic versions (the blending of different belief systems) of the original practices developed to incorporate ideas from the Catholic church. Voodoo recognizes divine spirits that govern the Earth, its natural forces, and its people. These spirits are the center of religious practice. Voodoo practices ancestor worship and holds that the spirits of the dead are living among us.

Watch This



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What Is Social Dance?

All over the world, people dance. Different social dances have different purposes and different values. Sometimes they blend and merge with others to become new dances. But no matter what, we find a connection to others in social dance.

The term folk dance refers to the secular, recreational, and celebratory dance expression of a past or present culture. The term was coined in the 19th century by European scholars studying the culture and art forms of different world regions. These academics viewed the simple, untrained “folk” carrying on their ancestors’ ancient traditions and often wrote condescending descriptions of these activities. The term folk dance was accepted until the mid-20th century, when it was replaced with the more respectful term traditional dance. It can refer to dances of the people that often have a nationalistic purpose. Although they were original dances done by and for the people in their own communities, they are sometimes adapted for performances and performed by trained dancers. It should be noted that not all traditional dancers dropped the designation folk dance; some use the term as a source of pride.

Indigenous, Ethnic, or World Dance

These terms, often used interchangeably, describe many cultural or traditional dances. Reference is often made to their ethnic, rather than their tribal, origins. A world dance is simply a dance characteristic of a particular cultural group.

For our purposes, social dances are dances that have a social function and are intended for participation rather than performance. These are dances found in social gatherings and, in their original form, not found on a stage. They celebrate special occasions and reveal something about the dancers’ culture.

Social dances can be categorized by their purpose as:

1. Courtship Dances
2. Work Dances
3. War Dances

4. Communal Dances

Courtship Dances

In cultures where marriages are arranged, men and women do not engage in courtship dances. In other cultures, dance may serve as a simple flirtation or involve a more complex ritual.

Niger: Guerewohl Festival, Wodaabe

In Western Africa, the Wodaabe cattle herders gather in the fall for the Guerewohl. During the week-long festival, young men seek to attract women. They apply make-up that will help to make the white of their eyes and teeth pop, wear festive dresses, and line up, linking arms and swaying up and down onto their toes. They chant, call, and use rolling eyes and chattering teeth to attract women.

Watch This



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Spain: Flamenco

The **Flamenco** has its roots in Andalusia (southern Spain) and is thought to be an outgrowth of the mingling of the southern Spaniards and the Romani people who settled there. The rhythms and structure of the music developed alongside the dance. It is a relatively recent dance, with no record of it prior to the late 18th century. The flirtation between the couple speaks to courtship and passion. The dance is popular around the world and especially in Japan!

Watch This

Video courtesy of Ballet Nacional de España



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Austria: Waltz

In old Europe, Austrian villagers practiced a waltz dance from the German word walzen (to turn). Dancers spin around each other as they circle the room. The dance made its way into European ballrooms, where the closed stance between the man and woman indicated a loosening of the strict rules of behavior between the sexes. The waltz's popularity spread throughout Europe with the invading armies of Napoleon and then crossed the Atlantic to find popularity in America. It has remained a mainstay of social dance around the world for over two centuries.

Watch This



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Work Dances

Some dances are centered around the work that groups perform. Movements imitative of work routines engender unity and **synchronization**.

Japan: Ainu Fishermen's Dance.

This is a performance of a dance imitating moves used in fishing. Dances that mimicked work routines were used in past times to help build unity and continuity among the crew. The Ainu are indigenous people who today live mostly in Hokkaidō in northern Japan. Traditional Ainu dance is performed at ceremonies and banquets, as part of newly organized cultural festivals, and privately in daily life; in its various forms, it is closely connected to the lifestyle and religion of the Ainu.

Watch This



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Taiwan: Orchid Island Boat Launching Ceremony

On an island not far from Taiwan in the Philippine Sea, Tao, the indigenous people of Lan Yu build long oared boats to catch the flying fish that inhabit the surrounding coral reefs. The fish are a major staple of Orchid Islanders. Groups of divers work together to wave fish into large nets suspended from the boat. For the Tao, a boat equates to the ocean itself and the bounty that comes from it. The high prow and stern of the iconic wooden canoes make them a recognizable cultural symbol for the island.

In the boat launching ceremony, men of the village surround the boat and shake their hands to ward off evil. Then the group tosses the boat into the air several times—the higher the toss, the more good fortune.

Watch This



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War Dances

Another purpose of social dance is the war dance, a ceremonial dance performed before a battle or to celebrate victory.

New Zealand: Māori Haka

The Haka is a traditional Māori dance. It was often used as a war dance to establish unity in the group and to intimidate opposition with foot stomping, loud chanting, and fierce facial expressions. It can be performed to chants that tell traditional Māori legends. There are other chants to use for celebrations like weddings and birthdays. The Haka is danced not only in New Zealand but also in other Pacific nations. The New Zealand soccer team, the All Blacks, perform the Haka before every game.

Watch This

Here is a traditional rendering of the dance.



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Contextual Connections

Former LSU football player Breiden Fehoko, a Hawaii native, was known to perform the HAKA before LSU games.



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Brazil: Capoeira

Capoeira is a martial arts fighting style in Brazil combining dance, acrobatics, percussion, and songs. It began during the 16th century when enslaved Africans were taken to Brazil. Its original purpose was to disguise fighting as dancing. Hidden in the musical and rhythmic elements, kicks were masked as dance movements, which saved it from being identified as the practice of martial arts. Today, Capoeira is practiced for competition and entertainment. Two dancers battle inside a circle formed by the other players. They try to catch their opponent off guard with acrobatics and spinning kicks.

Watch This



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Great Britain: Morris Dance

It is believed that Morris Dance has primitive, pre-Christian fertility rite origins. Some aspects—such as stamping the earth, waving handkerchiefs to ward off the winter, and jangling bells to awaken the spring—remain, but during the Crusades martial aspects were introduced. Staves and swords, weapons of combat at the time, were added to the dances. The movements took on the look of a drill to prepare for battle. They sometimes painted their faces for disguise and added dangling strips of fabric to represent making oneself fierce for battle. Another reason for hiding one's identity is that it was usually done in mid-winter when resources were scarce and the townspeople would give them money or buy them drinks for their performance. This vigorous dance was practiced as a means of keeping physically fit. Although in the early versions of Morris it was performed solely by men, in the video below, you will see a group of both men and women performing.

Watch This

Watch the Beltane Morris Dance



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Watch This

Lucnica Recruitment Dance: Slovak National Folklore Ballet

In this video, a theatrical troupe performs a dance that demonstrates the prowess and skills of a soldier.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-31>

Communal Dances

Communal dances are found in cultures that value cooperation over competition. Some require dancers to have conformity within the group. Others feature long connected lines or circles to create a sense of togetherness and community.

England: Country Dance

English country dances were widely performed around Britain, as multiple generations joined together in

dance. These dances were transported to North America and transformed into dances like the **square dance** and Virginia Reel.

Watch This



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Romania and Israel: Hora

A **Hora** is a circular chain dance. Another version is danced by Jews worldwide. It signifies happiness, and it is danced at celebrations. Often, at weddings, or at bat and bar mitzvahs (coming of age rituals), the bride and groom or honoree are lifted into the air on their chairs as the group dances.

Watch This



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Native American:



Fig. 5 2008 New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival: Native American Pow Wow – [Carolina Tuscarora Stomp and Smoke Dancers](#).
Attributed to [Wally Gobetz](#). CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

Many Native American tribes gather yearly for **pow wows**. A **pow wow** is a great social event that features

music, dance, food, crafts, and a sharing of culture. It is a chance to celebrate the tribe's heritage. Visitors are usually welcome to attend the **pow wow** to appreciate the events.

China: Park Dancing

Older women in China congregate in parks, gymnasiums, and other public places to dance. They call themselves the “Dancing Grannies.” In the 1970s, the government encouraged the population to dance to stay physically and socially active. Due to its popularity, complaints of loud music and noise have caused the government to regulate this social activity.

Watch This



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International Folk Dance

Many ethnic and national groups have established professional folk dance companies. These companies tour the world bringing the traditional dances of their culture to other countries. This is also a way to preserve the dances of a people and develop new techniques.

Russia: Moiseyev Dance Company

Igor Moiseyev founded his company over a hundred years ago, and it is still in existence today. In Russia, folk dancing troupes developed alongside the great ballet companies. These dancers are highly trained to present high-quality performances to the world.

Watch This



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México: Ballet Folklórico de México

Ballet Folklórico de México founded in 1952 by Amalia Hernandez, centers Mexican folklore from pre-Columbian civilizations to contemporary times. The company has made an entire performance available on YouTube. This performance features many types of dances from different regions of México.

Watch This



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Ireland: Riverdance

This show from 1995 established Riverdance as a top touring group. The upright posture, immobile arms, and fancy footwork are hallmarks of Irish dance.

Riverdance was first introduced in 1994 as part of the Eurovision Song Contest in Dublin, Ireland. It became a crowd favorite, and shortly after, a touring group was established. The dancers perform in unison using upright posture, immobile arms, and fancy footwork.

Watch This



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Classical Chinese Dance

Classical Chinese dance has a 5,000 year history. Its origins go back to dances in ancient imperial palaces and folk traditions that were passed down through the generations. It is expressive, with meaning driving the movement in the telling of a dance story. Dances in the Tang Dynasty fell into the two categories of martial and civil, with the civil dance being soft and graceful, while the martial dance was vigorous and bold.

Watch This

Watch this video of a dance reminiscent of the Tang Dynasty period. This dance is based on the

2017 fantasy film, *Legend of the Demon Cat*. Watch closely for the cat to make a brief appearance at the end!



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-38>

Shen Yun Dance Company of China

Shen Yun, translating to “the beauty of divine beings dancing,” travels extensively in the United States. They are credited with reviving the ancient Chinese classical dances with new life by adding modern production values. There is usually an acrobatic component with flips and spins. Some of the moves appear to have a martial arts component, but used in an expressive, dynamic way rather than an offensive or defensive manner. Watch this promotional video from Shen Yun Dance Company.

Watch This



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Social Dance: The American Melting Pot

From points around the world, immigrants brought their dances to America. The dances then become modified and merged, resulting in new American dances.

Dances of Colonial America

These dances have origins in the country dances of England, Scotland, and Ireland. There, couples danced in formations that were circular, geometric, or in long lines, with men on one side facing women on the other. Country dances have repeatable figures and a caller to alert dancers to each upcoming maneuver. They are frequently performed across generations.

Virginia Reel

The Virginia Reel is an upbeat and lively long dance. Couples move down their lines alternately circling partners. In a progressive reel, the lead couple changes as the dance proceeds. The Virginia Reel was danced in ballrooms of American society.

Watch This



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Square Dance

The **square dance** sets four couples facing each other to form a square. A variety of simple moves engage the dancers with their partners and other couples, moving about the square. **Square dances** also have a caller to tell dancers when to change to a new maneuver.

Watch This



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Dances of Cajun and Creole Louisiana

Cajuns are descendants of the Acadian people who arrived in South Louisiana after being exiled from Nova Scotia in the mid-18th century. These Acadians were originally from the Celtic region of northern France and brought traditional French songs and dances with them. These early dances were mostly rondes and branles and included figure dances and contra dances, similar to square dances. Today's Cajuns have popular social dances called the Cajun Two-Step and the Cajun Waltz. The music is traditionally sung in Cajun French.

Watch This

Here is a video of the Cajun waltz at the Breaux Bridge Crawfish Festival:



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Cajuns dance the two-step and the waltz in an unusual tradition. It is the Courir de Mardi Gras, the “runners of the Mardi Gras.” It is a tradition that occurs in the prairies of rural South Louisiana. Costumed and masked participants, either on horseback or riding on trailers, go from house to house singing, dancing, and begging for money or ingredients for a community gumbo. The highlight is when someone donates a chicken, which is thrown into the crowd of courirs, and the chase begins.

Watch This

Watch this trailer for “Dance for a Chicken” by Pat Mire.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-43>

Zydeco Dance

Zydeco music and dance is a tradition of the Black Creole culture in South Louisiana. The word **zydeco** has expanded to be a noun, an adjective, or a verb. It refers to the style of social dance, the style of music, and a term for a social event. One could say, “Let’s go **zydeco** to the zydeco music at the **zydeco**.” The origin of the word **zydeco** is believed to come from haricots, green beans. There is a famous song by legendary **zydeco** musician Clifton Chenier called Les Haricots Sont Pas Salés. This translates to “the beans aren’t salty,” a phrase meaning that times are tough. When the words les haricots are slurred together it sounds like **zydeco**. It is an energetic partner dance with each couple adding their own flair to the dance.

Watch This

Watch this Creole couple performing their own **zydeco** variations.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-44>

Latin American Dance

Brazil: Samba

Samba is an Afro-Brazilian dance. The city of Rio de Janeiro celebrates Carnival (a Brazilian version of Mardi Gras), a festival prior to the beginning of Lent. People parade in the streets dancing various styles of **samba**. The oldest form of **samba**, the **Samba** de Roha, is still taught and practiced in the Bahia province of Brazil.

Watch This

Samba has also found a home in the professional ballroom dance circuit. Here dancers perform a flirtatious choreographed competition piece.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-45>

Argentina: Tango

Toward the end of the 19th century, moves from the dance halls of Buenos Aires merged with the milonga, a fast, sensual Argentinian dance, to create the **tango**. Originally the dance was considered too risqué for society, but the **tango** has since found great popularity around the world.

Watch This



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African American Dance

The Black Code

The Code Noir, better known as the Black Code, was enforced under the governance of King Louis XIV. The Black Code was extremely complicated and was introduced based on other codes in the French Caribbean Colonies. The French were much more lenient in their laws toward African slaves than the British and Dutch. Severe punishments of slaves were prohibited. Being separated from their families was not allowed, and they

were able to marry. On the other hand, interracial marriage was not granted, and masters could not free slaves as they pleased. Freeing slaves was under the guise of the superior council's approval and was not generously given. An exceptional reason for freedom was required by council. On Sundays, the Catholic king ordered no work to be done.

In 1764, Spanish Governor Alejandro O'Reilly replaced French law and the code noir with Spanish law. These laws gave more rights to African slaves than French laws. Slaves were allowed to not only purchase their freedom but do so over even if their masters did not want to free them. Slaves also had the right to be freed from their masters if they were being treated inhumanely through a petition from the courts. The code remained in effect until the United States completed the Louisiana Purchase in 1804.

Congo Square

Congo Square started as a French market but later came to be a gathering spot for upwards of 500 souls. Folks, enslaved and freed, came from four different regions:

- Enslaved Africans direct from the foreign slave trade
- Enslaved Africans from other parts of the US
- New Orleans-born enslaved people
- Enslaved Africans from Haiti, Cuba, and the Caribbean (a large infusion of the Haiti population came to New Orleans following its 1791–1804 revolution)

Although gatherings were discouraged, in South Louisiana, slaves were allowed to congregate in out-of-the-way spots on Sundays. In 1819, the mayor of New Orleans restricted gatherings to a single parcel of land on “the back side” of New Orleans, situated along Bayou St. John (north of Rampart Street in Treme). It was known as La Place Congo (Congo Square).

In 1893, city leaders changed the official name of Congo Square to honor the Civil War Confederate general Beauregard in an effort to discourage African Americans from congregating there. But the name never really “took.” In 2011, the city voted to return to the name Congo Square.

Dance in Congo Square

The dances of Congo Square reflected the many origins and influences of the enslaved people and freed men who congregated in the square on Sundays. Dances featured include:

Bamboula

According to Merriam-Webster, the bamboula is a primitive drum used by inhabitants of western Africa and

the West Indies, especially in voodoo ceremonies and incantations; the dance is performed to the beating of the bamboula (drum). So the bamboula dance is associated with a drum. This dance form came with the slaves from western Africa when they first came to the Caribbean, and variations of this dance appear throughout the Caribbean and eventually the US. The dance originally was done as a revolt against slavery: forward motion with skirts moving the evil spirits out, backward motion with the skirts bringing the good spirits in. These revolts were said to be led by women who danced along with the drum.

Watch This

Macislyn Bamboula Dance Company. History of Bamboula:



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Bamboula variation:



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Calenda Dance

Caribbeans performed the calenda in lines of men and women. As the dance proceeded, it became more suggestive. Slave owners tried to banish the dance.

The calinda is a voodoo dance brought to Louisiana by San Domingo and Antilles slaves. It is a martial art, as well as folk music and dance forms from the Caribbean. Commonly seen practiced in Trinidad and Tobago, it includes stick fighting and is seen at Carnival. Songs are known to have derived from calinda chants. The calinda was better known as a dance rather than a stick fight due to its violent nature. “The well-known Cajun

song ‘Allons dancer Colinda’ is about a Cajun boy asking a girl named Colinda to do a risqué dance with him; probably derived from the Calinda dance which was reported to have been performed in New Orleans by Afro-Caribbean slaves brought to Louisiana.”

Watch This



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The Second Line

The tradition of second-lining includes western African influences that slaves sought to preserve in the 1700s and 1800s and elements of American military funerals. Jazz music is a significant element; the event overall demonstrates a mixture of order, spontaneity, and unification, making it a memorable celebration of life and death.

A second-line parade is a celebration of life. The “first line” includes the brass band and members of the club, organization, or family being honored. The second line refers to the rest of the attendees, fellow revelers or mourners, and onlookers who join in as it moves along the streets. Participants in these rituals twirl a parasol or wave a handkerchief while strutting in formal attire or according to the event’s theme. This is a practice still found in New Orleans today. The second line is performed every Sunday, especially at funeral processions.

American Social Dance in the Twentieth Century

Popular New York dance clubs like the Cotton Club and the Apollo Ballroom were an important part of the “**Harlem Renaissance**” that ran roughly from the 1910s to the 1930s. The **Harlem Renaissance** was a golden age for African American artists, writers, musicians, stage performers and dancers. It gave these artists pride in and control over how the Black experience was represented in American culture and set the stage for the civil

rights movement. Popular dances associated with this time period are tap and jazz dance, which were discussed in chapter 6, and the **Charleston**, just to name a few.

Charleston: Danced by Josephine Baker

Josephine Baker was an American-born entertainer and dancer. She moved to France in the 1920s and became a naturalized citizen there. She appeared with Folie Bergere in Paris and was the first Black woman to star in a major motion picture, the silent film *Siren of the Tropics*. Baker enjoyed a long and successful career in France, where her costume of a skirt of bananas and a necklace became an iconic image of the Jazz Age of the 1920s. Baker also worked with the French resistance in WWII. She refused to dance in front of segregated audiences.

Watch This



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Baker spoke at the civil rights March on Washington at the side of Martin Luther King Jr. She said, “I have walked into the palaces of kings and queens and into the houses of presidents. And much more. But I could not walk into a hotel in America and get a cup of coffee, and that made me mad. And when I get mad, you know that I open my big mouth. And then look out, ’cause when Josephine opens her mouth, they hear it all over the world.”

Castle Walk

Vernon and Irene Castle helped to make ballroom dancing popular in the early twentieth century. They sometimes appeared in movies dancing their signature step the “**Castle Walk**.”

Watch This

This film is from 1915.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-50>

Foxtrot

“An overview of the **Foxtrot** in the Jazz Age (1920s-1930s) showing its infinite adaptability. All footage is from the era. While dance teachers of the time liked to make distinctions, music publishers, bandleaders and dancers lumped almost any dance in 4/4 or even 2/4 time under the title ‘Fox Trot’ unless it was obviously a **Tango**.”

Watch This



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Lindy Hop

The **Lindy Hop** is an African American dance that originates from Harlem, New York City. It was danced first in the famous Savoy Ballroom by African American dancers in 1928 and was danced throughout the 1930s and 1940s. The **Lindy Hop** uses improvisation with acrobatic movements.

Watch This

Whitey's Lindy Hoppers from the 1941 film Helzapoppin:



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Twist

Chubby Checker introduced the dance with his song “Do the Twist” in 1960. It became a dance craze popularized with the introduction of rock and roll music.

Watch This

Dance Demonstration of the Twist (1961)



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-53>

Swing

Swing dances developed during the Big Band Era of the 1940s. It grew out of the Lindy Hop. It is one of few dances that emphasize improvisation. East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing, and similar dances are as popular today as ever.

Watch This

Victoria Henk and Ben McHenry in Champions Jack and Jill



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=692#oembed-54>

Cultural Connections

A Visual History of Social Dance in 25 Moves: Camille A Brown is a noted modern choreographer of today. In this TED talk she offers a quick overview of social dance today and the roots from which it grows.



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Summary

Religious dance is the use of dance in spiritual ceremonies and rituals, present in most religions throughout history and prehistory. Its connection with the human body and fertility has caused it to be forbidden by some religions. The social institution of dance provides an arena for people to communicate with one another through the use of non-verbal and culturally acceptable movements and gestures. Social dances have a social function and are participation oriented rather than performance oriented.

7.

HIP-HOP



Fig. 1 [Banksy Hip-Hop Rat, London](#). March 11, 2008 Attributed to [Tim Fuller](#) CC-BY 2.0

Learning Objectives

- Demonstrate a culturally informed dance aesthetic.
- Examine the origins of hip-hop
- Analyze the hip-hop cultural elements with pop culture

- Identify influential hip-hop artists

Hip-Hop is the culture of oppressed Black and Latino people that has, I guess, kind of flipped the political end of music and art on its head. Hip-Hop is the opposite of politics. Politics separates people. Hip-Hop brings people together.

—Emilio “Buddha Stretch” Austin

What Is Hip-Hop?

Hip-hop is an umbrella term that includes several dance styles that are highly energetic and athletic. Hip-hop dance forms began as social dances that expanded to respond to socioeconomic conditions faced by marginalized African American and Latinx youth in inner cities. These dance styles hold the meaning and values of the community, resulting in a cultural movement that gained widespread attention through media that has led to its global popularity today.



Fig. 2 [DontHitMamasDanceParty_MichaelPremo_web-1404](#) by [Michael Premo](#) is licensed [CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](#)

Watch This

The History of Hip-Hop in the Bronx.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-1>

Hip-Hop Characteristics

Africanist Aesthetics

Hip-hop dance forms are situated in Africanist aesthetics that communicate the culture's traditions, values, and heritage. Dance scholar E. Moncell Durden identifies the cultural characteristics as “individuality, creativity, improvisation, originality, spirituality, stylization, dance posture (bending forward from the waist with the knees bent and the spine slightly curved), vocalization, pantomime, percussion, competition, polyrhythm, and polycentrism.”

Cultural Connections

For more information see the [New World Encyclopedia entry for African dance](#):



Fig. 3 Members of a Rwandan dance troupe perform at the Mountain Gorillas Nest lodge. [Rwanda Ruhengeri_DSC14227](#) by [youngrobv](#) licensed [CC-BY-NC 2.0](#)

The Components of Hip-Hop Dance

Hip-hop is a cultural expression characterized primarily by five foundational components: **graffiti**, **deejaying**, **emceeing**, **breaking**, and **knowledge**.

Graffiti is “the visual language of the hip-hop community” (Durden). Graffiti gained attention in the late 1960s when political activists illegally “tagged” or marked public places in defiance of government policies. Later, crews used graffiti to claim territories.

Deejays (DJs), or disc jockeys, emerged as “the sounds and memories of the community” (Durden). DJs initially hosted dance parties as part of social events. Through their experimentation with turntables and records, DJs found innovative ways to manipulate, isolate, extend, and loop the musical rhythms for dance.

Emcees (MCs) are also known as the Masters of Ceremonies. It was the emcees’ responsibility to pump up the crowd during parties. They became the community’s voice, using improvised spoken words and rhymes to tell the social conditions and experiences of the community, often shedding light on social injustices. This is known as rap today. Rapping has roots in West Africa, where griots, or storytellers, were responsible for preserving their people’s “genealogies, historical narratives, and oral traditions” (Britannica).

Breaking is considered the original street dance associated with the hip-hop subculture. Breaking is improvisational and emphasizes the dancer’s style and athleticism while responding to the musical accompaniment, typically funk music.

Knowledge is the culmination of the Afro-diasporic cultural components to recover power from oppressive systems through spiritual and political awareness. This refers to having gratitude for your heritage that will give you insight into your future and self-understanding.



Fig. 4 Queens, [rear of five pointz](#). [Vinnebar CC BY-SA 3.0](#)



Fig. 5 A performer at “Don’ t Hit Mamas dance party.” Presented in partnership with Harlem Stage. Source: [DontHitMamasDanceParty_MichaelPremo_web-2353](https://www.dont-hit-mamas.com/) by Michael Premo licensed CC-BY-NC-ND 2.0

During the 1950s, residents living in the East Coast borough of the Bronx, New York City, struggled to survive in dire socio-economic conditions caused by poor city management. The community was plagued by the decay caused by the destruction of homes with the Cross Bronx Expressway construction. Families lost their homes and left the city to move into the suburbs. As people left, local businesses closed, and job opportunities became scarce, causing high unemployment rates. Government-subsidized houses known as the projects were built to provide affordable housing to low-income families. These became overrun by gangs and a rampant drug scene.

By the 1970s, poverty among residents had significantly increased. In the 1977 World Series between the New York Yankees and Los Angeles Dodgers, Howard Cosell

announced, “the Bronx is burning” (Wikipedia). “For a couple of years, fires had routinely erupted in the South Bronx” as people burned down buildings hoping to collect insurance money (Wikipedia). From 1973 to 1966, the Bronx “lost 600,000 jobs, more than 5,000 families were displaced, and some 30,000 fires were set in the area” (Durden).

Hip-hop emerged from this socioeconomic turmoil in the early 1970s. Marginalized inner-city African American and Latinx youth found an outlet to release frustrations through a lifestyle informed by shared living experiences that brought the community together.



Fig. 6 Urban decay. [Falsas Promesas Broken Promises](#), John Fekner, Charlotte Street Stencils, South Bronx, NY 1980. By [Incantation CC-BY-SA 3.0](#)

Louisiana Connection



Fig. 7 Terrance Morgan performing. Copyright Paul Kieu Photography. Used with permission.

[Terrance Michael Morgan](#): Born and raised in Louisiana, he is on a mission to improve the lives of today's youth by promoting positive youth development through the act of art, dance, speaking and more. Morgan began as a self-taught dancer doing mostly freestyle (improvisation), where he was introduced to the hip-hop dance style of B-Boying. This led to him becoming an original member of a local dance group Kabuki Kru. He began traveling throughout the US to participate in underground B-Boy Battles and continued learning about a variety of dance styles. He currently travels as a motivational and educational speaker/artist who performs in schools, libraries, festivals, and more weekly to spread his message of positivity. He has been affiliated with the Acadiana Center for the Arts since 2004 and is also currently a touring artist for Young Audiences of Louisiana.



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Clive Campbell



Fig. 8 DJ Kool Herc spins records in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx at an event addressing “The West Indian Roots of Hip-Hop,” Source: [Herc on the Wheels of Steel](#) by [Bigtimepeace](#) in the [public domain](#).

One of the earliest known DJs is Jamaican immigrant Clive Campbell, known as DJ Kool Herc. Kool Herc is considered a pioneer of hip-hop for developing a style of music that would lay the foundation for hip-hop music, giving him credit as the “father of hip-hop.”

DJ Kool Herc hosted parties where he invented the “merry-go-round” technique. Unlike other DJs, Kool Herc didn’t play songs continuously; instead, using two turntables, he isolated the instrumental breaks in the music and extended them by replaying them continually on a loop. This musical innovation made the songs danceable and encouraged people to dance at house parties. Kool Herc would promote the interaction

of dancers, whom he called “breakers,” “b-boys,” and “b-girls.” The term breaking meant “going off” on the dance floor, which he incorporated in the name of breakers. Breakers began practicing and honing their skills to battle or compete against one another for bragging rights of “best dancer.”

Universal Zulu Nation

Originally called the “Organization,” the Universal Zulu Nation was formed in the 1970s by reformed gang members, discouraging youth from the lifestyle. Lance Taylor, also known as Afrika Bambaataa, is one of hip-hop culture’s most influential pioneers, who helped establish this organization. He used music to illustrate hip-hop’s youth culture and its global potential. Universal Zulu Nation was founded on ideas of “peace, love, unity, and having fun” to promote change in the community. The Universal Zulu Nation is credited with establishing the five foundational components of hip-hop. Today, the organization has branches in several world regions including, Japan, France, and South Africa.

Watch This

Original hip-hop pioneers discuss the house parties hosted by Kool Herc.



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House parties became extremely popular and outgrew their spaces. They moved to the streets, where they were called block parties. DJs plugged their sound systems into the street lamps, creating a greater interaction among the neighborhood youth. Breakdancers began practicing their skills on the streets, and dance crews emerged. **Dance crews** became a second family to the youth, where older members acted as mentors helping newer members with their dancing. The dance crews practiced for hours, perfecting their skills and styles and developing new moves, and inadvertently stayed out of trouble because they did not have the time to engage in other activities. Disputes were settled in dance battles rather than resorting to violence. These block parties laid the foundations of hip-hop as a movement, and hip-hop dance forms were established.

Hip-Hop Dance Types

The hip-hop movement began on the East Coast of New York City; however, it was not isolated to this location. Other street dances emerged on the West Coast in California.

East Coast



Fig. 9 B-boy Pumba (Urban Force) dancing in the cypher of Rock Steady crew 30th Anniversary – Concrete Battle (The Bronx – July 2007). [Photo by to NexusMoves](#). [CC-BY-SA 3.0](#)

Breaking, also called breakdance by the media, is the original street dance associated with hip-hop. This dance form is generally performed solo and is highly improvisational, emphasizing the dancer's style and flair. Breaking consists of four primary components: toprocking, downrocking, power moves, and freezes.

Toprock refers to the movement that is performed from a standing position. Toprock highlights quick, percussive footwork paired with a relaxed upper body. Breakers generally begin with **toprock** to enter the **cypher**, a circular formation of people, where individual breakers take turns dancing.

Downrock, or weight-bearing movement performed on the floor, is where the dancers support their bodies with their hands and feet.

Watch This

The 6-Step, a basic foot-skill sequence used in breaking.



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Power moves are physically demanding acrobatic moves borrowed from gymnastics and martial arts requiring strength and endurance, such as spins, floats, slides, and windmills.

Watch This

Floorwork and power moves were popularized by the Latinx community.



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Freeze, or a held position, consists of the breaker halting the body from movement to achieve a challenging body pose, such as a headstand.



Fig. 10 An individual executing a freeze. [Photo by to nate bolt. CC-BY-SA 2.0](#)

West Coast

Locking

Don “Campbellock” Campbell created a funk dance style called locking. **Locking** consists of briefly freezing movement into a held position before continuing. **Locking** is highly performative, using comedic mime-like actions with large and exaggerated gestures. Dancers interact with the audience by giving high fives and performing acrobatic moves like knee splits.

In the early 1970s, Campbell founded a group of dancers called the “The Campbellock Dancers,” later shortening the name to the “Lockers.” The Lockers received wide attention as they performed on several television shows, including *The Tonight Show*, *The Carol Burnett Show*, and *Soul Train*. **Locking** as a dance style has been featured in films, music videos, and hip-hop competitions.

Watch This

Don Campbell explain the creation of Locking.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-4>

Boogaloo and Popping

Sam “**Boogaloo Sam**” Solomon created two dance styles, called **boogaloo** and popping. **Boogaloo** is an improvisational street dance that uses a fluid upper body movement to give the illusion of the body not having bones. **Popping** is a funk dance style involving contracting and releasing the muscles to cause a jerking effect.

These actions produce a robotic-like quality. Movements associated with **popping** include waving, ticking, strobing, scarecrow, and tutting.

Solomon formed the dance crew the Electric Boogaloos and made television appearances on *Soul Train* that further popularized the dance style.

Watch This

Electric Boogaloos perform on *Soul Train*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-5>

Other Hip-Hop Dance Styles

Waacking

Waacking was created by the LGBTQIA+ community in the 1970s disco era. **Waacking** uses striking arm movements, poses, and footwork, with “emphasis on expressiveness” (Wikipedia). The moves are inspired by classic Hollywood film actors/actresses, 1960s comic book heroes, and 1970s martial art films. **Waacking** has undergone several name changes throughout its development and was originally called “Posing.” The first posers included Arthur Goff, Tinker Toy, Andrew Frank, and Lamont Peterson.

Waacking gained attention from the television show *Soul Train* featuring a battle between Tinker of the Outrageous Waackers and Shabba-Doo from the Lockers. **Waacking** lost attention during the 1980s and 1990s and was revived in 2003. Brian “Footwork” Green began teaching Waacking as a formal dance style, and in 2011, Kumari Surjai choreographed a **Waacking** routine on *So You Think You Can Dance*.

Watch This

Kumari Suraj discusses the history of Waacking.



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Uprock

Uprock is known by several other names, such as Rocking or Brooklyn Rock. Uprock is considered a precursor to breaking. It is an urban street dance with opposing dancers or crews facing off in a line formation to challenge each other. The objective is to “undermine” their rival using movements that imitate fighting, such as **burns**, gestures used to ridicule opponents, typically mimicking weaponry, like the bow and arrow or shotgun, and **jerks**, sudden body movements. In the early 1970s, Uprock was associated with gang culture as a way to settle disputes and gain recognition and bragging rights.

Stepping

Stepping, also spelled steppin’ and also called blocking, is a complex synchronized dancelike performance that blends African folk traditions with popular culture. Stepping involves clapping, body slapping, vocalizations, and dramatic movements. The movements in this style of dance are discussed in chapter 5 and are related to **hambone**. This form of dance became extremely popular in the 1980s with African American fraternities and sororities and has been fused with hip-hop and other forms of dance.

Watch This

Stepping examples featuring Omega, Alpha, Zeta, Delta, Sigma, Kappa, Phi Beta Sigma – Tribute for Eddie Robinson NAACP Awards:



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-7>

Clowning

Thomas Johnson, “Tommy the Clown,” created clowning, a dance style of energetic and humorous movements wearing a clown costume. Following the 1992 Los Angeles race riots, when excessive force was used in the arrest of Rodney King, Johnson wanted to do something positive for the youth in the community. He attended birthday parties and encouraged the kids to take an interest in dance. Johnson founded his dance crew called the Hip-Hop Clowns, performing at parties. His motto is “No gangs, No drugs, Do well in school (grades, attendance, and behavior) and be a role model by living a positive lifestyle at all times” ([Source](#)).

Watch This

See how Tommy the Clown and his squad of Clowns use this form of dance to express themselves and invite in others to join in.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-8>

Krumping

Clowning is the predecessor of Krumping, created in the early 2000s by Ceasare “Tight Eyez” Wills and Jo’Artis

“Big Mijo” Ratti, former members of Tommy the Clown’s dance crew. Krumping uses aggressive improvised movements such as “stomps, jabs, chest pops, jumps, and arm swings” that mimic fighting (Wikipedia). However, the dance form does not condone physical violence. Dancers challenge each other to battles as an alternative to gang culture

Watch This

Choreography from the Urban Dance Camp featuring Krumping.



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Check Your Understanding



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#h5p-31>

Mainstream Media and Globalization

From the 1980s into the early 1990s, hip-hop gained attention through mainstream media primarily due to the rise of popularity of rap music. Two biopic films introduced hip-hop culture to the world. *Style Wars* and *Wild Style* featured Bronx’s breakers, rappers, deejays, and graffiti artists. The Hollywood film *Flashdance* also featured a brief scene of the Rock Steady Crew dancing on the streets.

Rock Steady Crew

The Rock Steady Crew was founded in 1977 by Joe Torres and Jimmy D. The crew is credited with creating original breaking moves and helped popularize breaking. They became well-known in 1981 when they battled the Dynamic Rockers at the Lincoln Center Outdoors Program, garnering media coverage from *National Geographic* and *20/20*.

Watch This

The Rock Steady Crew.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-10>

These films were the onset of what would become a global phenomenon. Companies began capitalizing on the culture for monetary gains, selling instructional manuals and video tutorials on breaking. Breaking soon declined in popularity as many felt the media was trying to “sell the culture they had created back to them” (Durden). Around this time, music artists shifted the direction of hip-hop by using **party dances** or social dance movements to associate with specific songs in their music videos, like the Cabbage Patch and Running Man. As a result, hip-hop dance styles began appearing in commercials, television shows, documentaries, and movies that drew national recognition.

Watch This

Breakers discuss the influence the media had on breaking.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-11>

Hip-hop dance styles continue to be popularized through film and television shows. Competition-based television shows like *America's Best Dance Crew* and *So You Think You Can Dance* feature dancers competing for the title of “best” dancer or crew.

Watch This

The Jabbawockeez perform on *America's Best Dance Crew*.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#oembed-12>

Cultural Connections: Influential Hip-Hop Artists

Lorenzo “Rennie” Harris

In 1992, Rennie Harris founded the professional hip-hop dance company Rennie Harris Puremovement, bringing street dance to the concert stage. To preserve the history and cultural influences of the dance form, he founded the Rennie Harris Awe-Inspiring Works (RHAW), an organization dedicated to providing educational opportunities, master classes, and mentorship to youth in 2007.

Steffan “Mr. Wiggles” Clement

Steffan “Mr. Wiggles” Clemente is a member of the Rock Steady Crew and the Electric Boogaloos. He has appeared in several music videos, dancing for Missy Elliot, Usher, and Madonna. Today, Mr. Wiggles holds outreach programs to teach youth about hip-hop culture.

Fatima Robinson

Fatima Robinson was described in the *New York Times* as “one of the most sought-after hip-hop and popular music choreographers in the world” and was once named by *Entertainment Weekly* as one of the 100 most creative people in the world of entertainment. She has choreographed for Michael Jackson’s “Remember the Time,” the NAACP Image Awards, the VH1 Hip-Hop Honors, the 2006 movie *Dreamgirls*, Pepsi, Gap, Verizon, the 2005 *The Wiz Live!*, and the 2022 Super Bowl half-time show, just to name a few.

Emilio “Buddha Stretch” Austin

Emilio “Buddha Stretch” Austin created a hip-hop dance style called **freestyle**. He combines old-school with new-school moves that were popularized in hip-hop music videos. Buddha Stretch has choreographed and performed in several music videos in the 1990s, including those of Michael Jackson and Will Smith.

Check Your Understanding



An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=750#h5p-34>

Summary

Hip-hop is an umbrella term encompassing several sub-genres. Breaking is considered the original form of hip-hop dance. The hip-hop cultural movement of the 1970s was spawned from African-American and Latinx youth in marginalized, inner-city neighborhoods. During the 1980s, the media helped increase hip-hop's popularity, gaining it widespread attention. In the 1990s, hip-hop culture, including dance, music, art, fashion, speech, and behavior, and became a component of rap music. Hip-hop dance forms are now taught in dance studios and schools and have absorbed other dance influences like jazz dance, which incorporates codified dance techniques. It is essential to recognize that these hip-hop dance styles may not be in their most authentic form that respects the cultural values and traditions from which they emerge. For the people who created hip-hop, it was a lifestyle.

Check Your Understanding

Directions: Please answer the following questions and cite any sources you use in your response.

1. Breaking began as a male-dominated dance form, causing B-Girls to advocate for equality. Research a B-Girl and speak to her influences in hip-hop as a dancer. Here are a few suggestions: Asia One, Momz-N-Da-Hood, B-Girl Firefly (Andrea Parker), Lady Jules (Julie Ulrich), and Shana Busmente.
2. Select a hip-hop dance from today (from YouTube, Google, TikTok etc.) and reflect on whether it holds the cultural aspects hip-hop is rooted in. Explain.

3. Hip-hop is grounded in self-expression. Create a 30-second video representing your hip-hop aesthetic, informed by your individuality, and upload. Please credit any artists that you use for inspiration.

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8.

CURRENT TRENDS

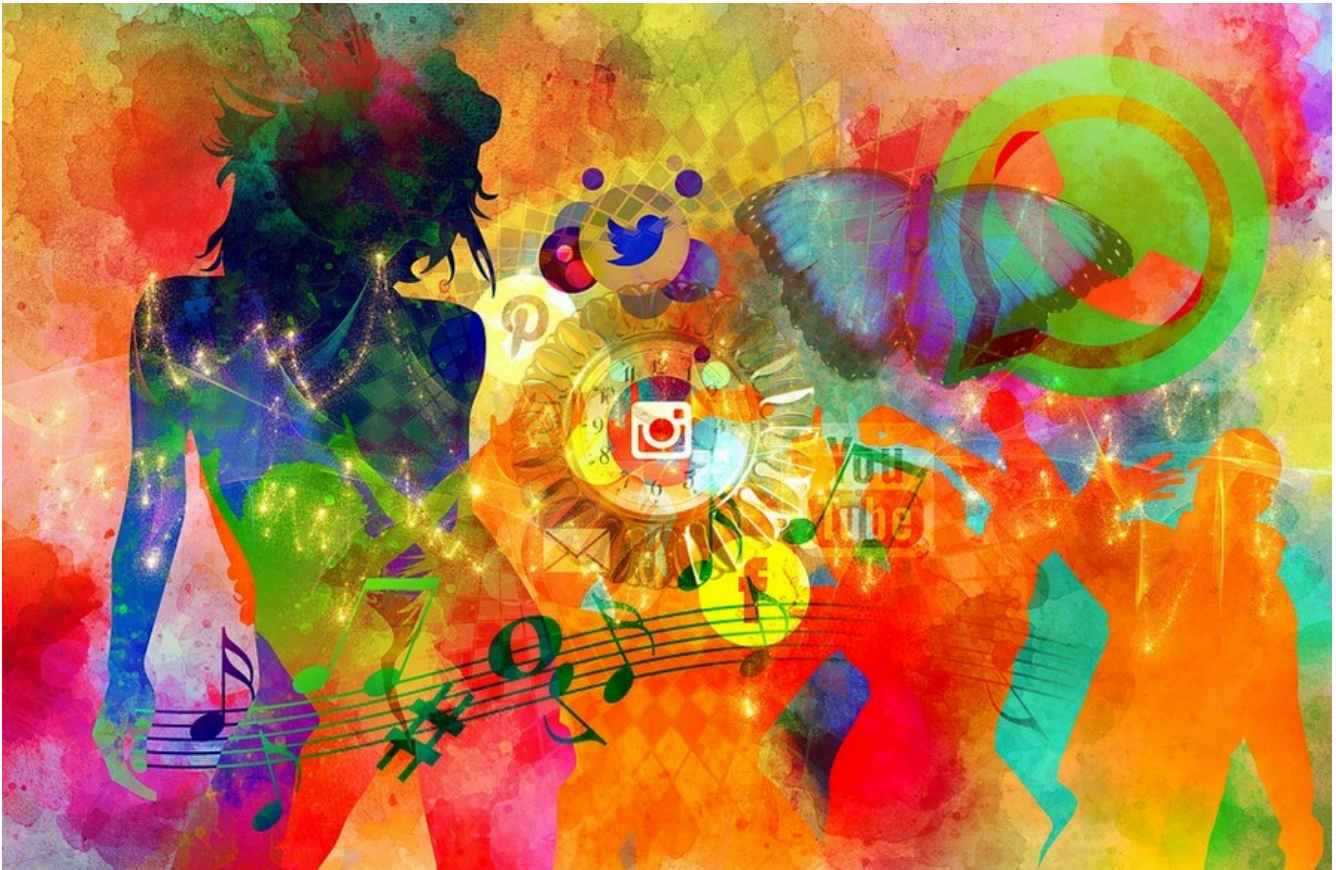


Fig. 1 [Social Media Abstract](#) by [geralt](#) is under a [Pixabay Content License](#)

Learning Objectives

- Discuss current trends in dance

- Analyze cultural elements in current dance trends
- Identify influential multimedia artists

Dancemakers have naturally gravitated toward technological innovations that enable a deeper understanding of the human body in motion. Through the use of portable computers, wearable technologies, and software apps dancers may create, design, participate and move in new modes of performance. Opportunities between dancers and choreographers inherently explore new methods out of a desire to expand their imagination, talent, and intellect.

—Carl D. Sanders, Jr.

Dance and Technology

Many changes have come about in the dance world since the COVID pandemic. Dancers have learned to work remotely, taking classes online and even staging Zoom performances. Social media platforms were already popular, but there was a surge in dance videos during the pandemic as well.

Social Media

What exactly is social media? Social media can be defined as the creation or sharing of content—such as photos, videos, or written information—through the use of websites or similar platforms that users post and share this content to for social networking, business, or just to be seen. This platform has increased visibility for everything, but dance in particular. Because of the use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Snapchat, and TikTok, dance has received so much more press and viewership. If you want to get noticed or seen as a dancer by others, if you have a dance studio and want others to see what you have to offer, or if you just want to showcase your work for classes that you teach, social media, with the use of the platforms mentioned above is a great way to do it. The majority of people use at least one or more of these social media platforms to gather information on the latest dance craze (TikTok), to watch a dance class or participate in one (YouTube), or just simply to be entertained without having to attend a dance concert or performance in person. Social media has clearly changed the way in which we have structured our lives, but more importantly, it has created a generation of quicker accessibility to advertise, promote, and create dance on a much larger scale than ever before.

Dance Hybrids

One way that dance teachers, studios, choreographers, and dance companies are surviving the changing times is by making the crossover to a hybrid model. They might teach in person or on the internet. Instead of a studio, they use a phone or tablet in their living room. They might create asynchronous material and sell the same class on-demand over and over. Or a dance company might offer a workshop or performance for online viewing for a small fee. This is called omnichannel, or integrated marketing, “a marketing approach that provides your customers with integrated shopping experiences, such as by providing a seamless experience between desktop, mobile, and brick-and-mortar.” In order to survive, dance entrepreneurs have to be flexible and create hybrid forms to deliver their dance content to the public.

Louisiana Connection



Fig. 2 Helanius J. Wilkins. Photography by Christopher Michael Carruth © 2019 Used with Permission

[Helanius J. Wilkins](#), a native of Lafayette, Louisiana, is an award-winning choreographer, performance artist, innovator, and educator. Rooted in the interconnections of American contemporary performance, cultural history, and identities of Black men, Wilkins’s creative research investigates the raced dancing body and the ways that ritual can access forms of knowledge. Intrigued by ideas about indeterminacy, he approaches performance-making and pedagogy as a means of re-framing perspectives, creative practices, linking the arts and social justice, and blurring

the lines between performer and audience. As a choreographer for stage and as a filmmaker, he draws inspiration from his upbringing in Lafayette, LA, one shaped by resilience, and his identity as a Black American to create original works that allow for moments of recognition and transformation. In his intermedia collaborations he works with artists from a wide range of disciplines, including film, video, and design.

Grounded in a belief that embodied practices give us ways of knowing ourselves and our communities, dance, for Wilkins, becomes a vehicle for understanding complex issues around race, culture, and inclusivity. He embraces the fullness of his identity, including his Creole heritage and being a Lafayette, LA, native, as rich resources for defining an “American identity” shaped by hybridity, resilience and coexistence.

Remote Work

At the start of the pandemic in 2020, dance classes went online. Students used Zoom or other virtual mediums to continue their training. Teachers equipped themselves with microphones and learned how to present class online. Students found a space at home where they could dance. Thus, a new way to learn dance has opened up, making it possible to study all forms of dance with teachers around the world. A lot of dance class videos can be found on YouTube, Vimeo and Twitch. In addition, dance teachers, companies, and organizations offer live fee-based virtual classes for anyone to take.

Technology

The use of technology in the 21st century has been difficult to remove dance from. It is so prevalent that almost all forms of auditions for scholarships, dance companies, dance lines, and even dance studios will require an uploaded video of your dance presentation. It has been made possible through technology for the dancer to develop their artistry with various technological outlets to express themselves on a larger and definitely a much more creative scale. The effects are limitless. Lighting, costuming, and special effects, along with great editing techniques, can make a dance performance or show very impressive and truly grab hold of a viewing audience.

Screendance

Screendance combines dance and filmmaking to create a cinematic experience. Screendance focuses on the “dancing body as the primary subject of creative expression” (ACDA). The movements created are explicitly devised with the camera in mind, and the camera captures the performance and directs the viewers’ eyes. Through various editing techniques, the dance is further manipulated to bring an element of storytelling.

Close-ups of the dancers can provide a sense of intimacy, while speeding the time of a frame can give a sense of urgency. Today, several dance film festivals occur worldwide, offering a platform for artists to share their works.

Watch This

The San Francisco Dance Film Festival trailer.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=752#oembed-1>

The TikTok Era

TikTok has become a viral social media platform in the 21st century, providing a way for people to create and share dances. The app launched in 2016 but became popular during the quarantine period of the COVID-19 pandemic. People began participating in dance-challenge videos, learning short routines set to popular songs, and reposting. The dances used on the app have become dance crazes featuring hip-hop-inspired movements, like the Dougie and the Dice Roll and Throw. TikTok dances are based on the premise that “everyone can do it,” with movements being repetitive, “recognizable and easily reproducible” (Burke). This has allowed people to come together to learn the dances, providing a social aspect. It has also offered a space to connect with people worldwide by enabling users to follow each other, share and download content, and make comments. Popular TikTok users who have gone viral may have financial opportunities, with companies endorsing them to promote their products. Although TikTok has become an accessible way for people to engage with dance, issues concerning choreography and intellectual copyrights have become increasingly important in protecting artists’ work.

Contextual Connections

Review this article, [What Makes a TikTok Dance Go Viral?](#), and consider what dances resonate with you on TikTok.

Additional Trends

The Trend of Dance as Competition

Prior to the twentieth century, most dance was a social activity or was performance based. Dance as a competitive sport is fairly new. Competition dance today is a lucrative business for traveling dance competition companies. It is a widespread sport in which competitive teams from different dance studios or schools perform in styles such as tap, jazz, ballet, modern, lyrical, contemporary, hip-hop, acro, and musical theater before a common group of judges. Dance competition events bring dancers together to showcase their talents, receive feedback from judges, and compete to earn recognition, typically through awards. The number of national competitions has ballooned into the hundreds since the 1980s. For individual competitors, the costs can easily top \$1,000 per month.

In 2005, a dance competition reality show called *So You Think You Can Dance* premiered and spurred a number of dance-themed competition reality shows such as *Dance Moms*, *Dancing with the Stars*, and *World of Dance*. Shows like this were highly influential in both the dance industry and with aspiring dancers as well.

Dance as competition has changed the way many young dancers see dance. Dance as an art form or for personal expression is not as valued in the competition world, which stresses dazzling technical feats, group precision, high energy, and over-the-top facial expressions to catch the eye of the judges. It is not until these dancers enter a college dance program or begin to audition for professional concert dance companies that they begin to understand the complexities of dance aesthetics. Fortunately, there seems to be a trend merging the two seemingly opposite camps. Dancers who understand the commercial world as well as the concert world and who are trained in a wide variety of styles are increasingly sought after by film directors, music artists, TV productions, and Broadway shows, as well as by professional dance companies.

Dance Health and Wellness

Dance is beneficial to our health and fitness. The exercise it provides leads to a strong and toned body, the endorphins it releases contribute to an improved mental outlook, and the socialization of shared dancing offers us support and community. Public dance classes are available in traditional genres. In addition, new hybrid dance classes aimed specifically at fitness have developed. **Zumba** uses salsa steps and rhythms in a dance class of non-stop movement. Jazzercise is a dance franchise that uses jazz dance in its fitness program. Other dance fitness trends emerge continually.

Around the globe there are organizations aimed at developing community dance programs. People Dancing, a UK group, supports dance programs for all across the country, including therapeutic dance, like dance for People with Parkinson's. Similar programs exist worldwide, including in the US.

Dance and Movement Therapy

There are a variety of ways that dance and movement therapy can be used to enhance the quality of life among people. The American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA) describes these techniques as “psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive, and physical integration to improve a person’s overall well-being” (ADTA). Dance therapists work in a wide variety of settings, from hospitals, clinics, rehabilitation centers, and drug treatment facilities to schools, nursing homes, community centers, and prisons. They can also work as freelancers or by founding private practices.

Contextual Connections

An [article in Headway](#), a journal for brain injury, quoted research fellow Dr. Gemma-Collard Stokes, who said, “What we have in dance is a uniquely rich sensorial experience that combines physical, cognitive and socially stimulating activities...Stimulating our sensory systems through dance can assist in the process of rebuilding the pathways between cognition and our motor skills.”

Are you interested in using dance in this way? Explore [Everything You Need to Know About Becoming A Dance Therapist](#).

Watch This

Dance/Movement Therapy Video:



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Dance for Parkinson's Disease

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder that affects a person's ability to move, causing freezing, unintended, or uncontrollable movement of the muscles. Several programs offer specialized classes to aid people with Parkinson's, helping to improve aspects such as balance, flexibility, coordination, and forming a mind-body connection.

Dance for Parkinson's classes empower participants to explore movement and music in ways that are stimulating, refreshing and creative. The classes are designed for people with PD and their companions, offering a fun and creative outlet to them in the form of dance.

The Dance for PD® program was developed and implemented by the Mark Morris Dance Group of Brooklyn, NY. Dance for PD is internationally active and acknowledged as an effective way to manage symptoms of Parkinson's through movement, music, imagery, and socialization. Extensive information on the program and its effectiveness, along with scientific research to support the work, can be found on the Dance for PD website. People suffering from other complaints like neuropathy, dementia, and traumatic brain injury also find benefit in attending these dance classes.

Watch This

Meet members of Brooklyn's flagship Dance for PD® class and learn why the program has become such an important part of their lives—and why you belong here too.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://louis.pressbooks.pub/danceappreciation/?p=752#oembed-3>

People Dancing is “the UK development organization and membership body for community and participatory dance.” They promote dance as a fun and healthy activity for all people by engaging “the general public in creating and performing dance with friends and families.”

National and Global Dance Initiatives

Through various initiatives, national and global dance events have allowed people to connect to the broader dance community. These events include celebrating dance as an art form, honoring dance artists, fundraising, and spreading awareness on important issues.

- International Dance Day was established in 1982 by The Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI). This event occurs annually on April 29, the birth date of Jean-Georges Noverre, in honor of his early contributions to ballet. International Dance Day aims to promote dance worldwide to heighten awareness of its value in society.
- In the United States, National Dance Day celebrates all dance forms and is held on the third Saturday in September. It was established in 2010 by Nigel Lythgoe and Adam Shankman of the dance competition show *So You Think You Can Dance* with support from American congresswoman Eleanor Holmes. Every year, the Dizzy Feet Foundation creates a dance tutorial and uploads it online, encouraging people to learn the movement to support dance's artistic expression and health benefits.
- Global Water Dances emerged from a 2008 Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies (LIMS) conference, addressing the theme “Dance and the Environment.” In 2011, Global Water Dances held its

first event with 57 locations over 24 hours. Participants join a Movement Choir, “events that use community dance to create social cohesion through non-verbal communication,” dancing near a body of water to address local water issues for environmental and social change (Global Water Dances).

- The National Water Dance is held annually, using dance as a platform for social change, advocating for awareness of water-related environmental issues in participants’ respective geographic areas, like cleanliness, accessibility, and sustainability. Through the medium of dance and site-specific performance, participants begin their dance with the same opening and beginning movements, to acknowledge that “shared movements link all of us together, which is the spirit and power of a movement choir,” from the National Water Dance Project (NWDP). Performances are held virtually, and all are invited to participate.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The concepts of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion emerged in response to the 1960s civil rights movement as people of color protested for fair treatment as citizens. Social changes began in education and workplaces to increase awareness and respect for racial differences. In a society encompassing people of varying backgrounds, consideration of diversity to include representation of people came underway to embrace individual differences. This led to the implementation of equity, equal opportunities and resources for all persons, and inclusion to ensure people feel valued. In recent years, issues surrounding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) have surfaced in the dance field. Historically, dance has drawn from Eurocentric values and traditions that have caused barriers in the profession in areas like hiring and casting. Discriminatory factors of ethnicity, race, gender, age, body weight, sexuality, or disability have left dancers marginalized in the dance profession. Today, dance artists and educators strive to increase awareness of these issues to improve all realms of DEI.

Summary

There is no doubt that the world of dance has been changing rapidly and will continue to adapt in response to new circumstances in our social, political, economic situations as well as with advancements in technology. Dance and technology have partnered to create new ways of choreographing, performing, teaching, and dancing. Dancers around the world are more connected than ever before, and this sharing means that the dance community is more diverse and inclusive than ever. Whether it’s through Zoom, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Twitch, Vimeo, TikTok, Pinterest, Reddit, Tumblr, or a new app that’s yet to be invented, dancers will continue to share their passion for the art form and to explore new ideas inspired by what they see.

National and global dance events have also allowed people to connect to the broader dance community. The world is learning that dance is not just fun, but beneficial to our health and fitness. The exercise it provides

leads to a strong and toned body, the endorphins it releases contribute to an improved mental outlook, and the socialization of shared dancing offers us support and community.

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9.

SUMMARY

Summary for Chapter 1: What Is Dance?

People have different ideas about how to define dance. One way to understand dance is to analyze its movement elements: body, energy, space, and time. We can also study dance in terms of its purpose. Religious dances serve to imitate animals or natural elements, to achieve healing, to commemorate an occasion, or to achieve spiritual connection. Social dances can serve in courtship or to find unity in work, unity in war, or camaraderie in the community. Performance dance is created and practiced for presentation to an audience. Western performance dance forms that have developed include ballet, modern dance, tap, jazz, musical theater, and hip-hop. Protest dance can be created to effect social change. One's dance aesthetic is shaped and influenced by numerous factors. Family, media, personal response, and kinesthetic response are all contributors to a personal aesthetic.

Summary for Chapter 2: Elements of Dance

All dance forms share foundational concepts known as the Elements of Dance. The Elements of Dance are overarching concepts and terminology that are useful when observing, creating, analyzing, and discussing dance. Dance can be broken down into its primary elements : Body, Energy, Space, and Time. It can be easily recalled through the acronym B.E.S.T.

The body is the mobile instrument of the dancer and helps inform us *what* is moving. The body category includes shapes, actions, whole body, and body part movements. Energy is *how* the body moves. When speaking about energy, we can refer to effort or movement qualities. Space is *where* movement occurs and includes personal and general space, levels, directions, pathways and floor patterns, various sizes of movements, range of movement, and relationships. Time is *when* the dancers move. The time category includes pulse, speed, rhythmic patterns, natural rhythm, and syncopation.

As an observer of dance, it can be easy to allow our biases to influence how we perceive dance. By using dance vocabulary and stating what we observe, we can be more objective in our discussions of dance. Using the Elements of Dance, we can view dance through an unbiased lens to consider its structural elements to deepen our understanding and appreciation of dance as an art form.

Summary for Chapter 3: Ballet

Ballet is a Western classical dance form with a rich history—beginning in the Renaissance as a royal court entertainment infused with social and political purposes, eventually developing into a codified technique. Over time, ballet transformed, experiencing costume changes in the Enlightenment that led to dancers being able to express themselves without being confined to restrictive clothing. In the Romantic era, ballet d'action emerged, emphasizing emotions over logic to help communicate the ballet's story. There were also technical elements such as flying machines that gave the impression of dancers floating onstage. The unique theater effects led to female dancers beginning to dance en pointe. During the classical period, Russia became the leader of ballet, with government support to establish ballet schools. Ballet shifted in pursuit of virtuosity, demanding greater technique from dancers. The Ballet Russes made a significant impact by modernizing ballets, bringing ballet to other world regions, and helping establish ballet in America, and a new ballet style was formed, neoclassical. Today, choreographers challenge the ballet traditions and embrace various dance genres to blend with ballet, creating contemporary dance.

Summary for Chapter 4: Modern Dance

Modern dance emerged as a contrast or rejection of the rigid constraints of ballet. From individual free expression to contemporary modern dance, modern dance is forever changing. Today, combining unifying elements of other genres of dance (African dance, ballet, jazz, hip-hop), modern dance is interested in the communication of emotional experiences through basic and uninhibited movement. Currently, through all of its variations, it has become whatever the choreographer would like it to be according to the artist's background, teachings, technique, style, and imagination. Because it is so personal and individualistic, this art form will remain popular and viable for years to come.

Summary for Chapter 5: Tap, Jazz, Musical Theater, and Television and Film

From their early rhythmic roots in Africa to the transformations imposed by slavery, jazz and tap dance grew into some of the first uniquely American performance styles. As the country changed, adding immigrants from Europe, the Middle East, the Caribbean, South America, and Ireland, social dances absorbed all these flavors and produced exciting new blended forms in early tap and jazz. These performing art dance forms evolved through early minstrel shows to vaudeville to nightclub entertainment to Broadway and Hollywood musicals. The musical theater dance style was designed to further the storyline of a musical production and help in character development, with exaggeration to reach the audience in large theaters. Eventually movies

and television gave these dance forms more worldwide attention. With today's computer technology outlets, tap, jazz, and musical theater dance remain viable, evolving, and essential.

Summary for Chapter 6: Religious and Social Dance

Religious dance is the use of dance in spiritual ceremonies and rituals, present in most religions throughout history and prehistory. Its connection with the human body and fertility has caused it to be forbidden by some religions. The social institution of dance provides an arena for people to communicate with each other through the use of non-verbal and culturally acceptable movements and gestures. Social dances have a social function and are participation oriented rather than performance oriented .

Summary for Chapter 7: Hip-Hop

Hip-hop is an energetic dance form that includes several sub-genres. Breaking, locking, and popping are the authentic forms of hip-hop dance created by marginalized African American and Latinx youth during the 1970s in response to socio-economic conditions. Hip-hop gained media attention in the 1980s, appearing on television, in music videos, and in movies. By the 1990s, hip-hop culture was popularized alongside rap music. Today, hip-hop dance forms continue evolving and blending with other styles that may use codified techniques. Through its progression, it is important to remember that hip-hop's root lies in a cultural expression and lifestyle informed by shared lived experiences.

Summary for Chapter 8: Current Trends

Dance has gained popularity through the lucrative business of dance competitions. Studios enter their students/dancers into categories divided by age, dance style, and group size to compete with other dance studios. Dancers are judged for their technical merits. The top-scoring dancers can receive prizes. In this respect, dance as competition can be viewed as a competitive sport. It is important to differentiate this type of dance from non-competitive or concert dance that seeks to promote dance as an art form

for personal expression rather than technical excellence.

Dance is used in various settings to promote health. Emphasis is given to improving people's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional well-being. Today, fitness classes use dance-inspired movement to exercise while creating a fun and social environment for participants. Dance is also used in therapy and therapeutic settings to enhance people's quality of life.

National and global dance events have connected people to the greater dance community. These initiatives seek ways to celebrate dance as an art form, honoring dance artists, fundraising, and spreading awareness on important issues.

Living in a multicultural world, embracing and celebrating the individual differences that make us unique is essential. Historically, dance has been rooted in Eurocentric values and traditions that have caused barriers in the profession. Dance educators, scholars, and artists are using their platforms to support Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the dance field.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY TERMS

Adagio: slow and sustained movements that focus on strength, balance, and control.

Apollonian: an artistic style of balance, light, serenity. This is an eponym for the Greek god of light, dance, and knowledge, Apollo.

Asymmetrical body design: the use of different shapes from one side of the body to the other, creating an unbalanced look.

Ballet a entrée: a description of a series of independent episodes linked by a common theme.

Ballet blanc: also known as “white ballet”; refers to the corps de ballet wearing white tutus or dresses, typically representing supernatural characters.

Ballet Comique de la Reine: the first recognized ballet.

Ballet d'action: or dramatic ballets rely purely on movement without the aid of speech or songs to convey the story.

Ballet de cour: (court ballet) featured independent acts of dancing, music, and poetry unified by overarching themes. Court ballets adhered to principles of hierarchy that mirrored status in the royal courts.

Ballet Master: description of a person who instructs ballet classes for a ballet company and assists in the rehearsals for performances.

Barre: a stationary handrail that supports dancers while working on balance, allowing them to focus on placement and alignment and coordination to prepare for center combinations.

Body: the dancer’s instrument of expression and is the first element of dance. The body is the mobile instrument of the dancer and helps inform us what is moving.

Boogaloo: uses a fluid upper body movement to give the illusion of the body not having bones

Breaking: a style of street dancing that incorporates coordination, acrobatic and intricate body movements, style, and aesthetics.

Broadway tap: a style combining both traditional tap dancing with musical theater–style dancing. There is an emphasis on using the upper body and arms, not just the feet. Gene Kelly and Fred Astaire exemplified this style.

Burns: while in a line, dancers will use hand gestures mimicking weaponry

Cajun Two-Step: a partner dance done to Cajun music consisting of two steps to one side, then two steps to the other.

Cakewalk: a pre-Civil War dance originally performed by slaves as a competitive dance. It was an exaggerated parody created by the slaves to imitate the upper-class mannerisms of their white plantation owners. Since the prize for this competition was an elaborately decorated cake, it is the source for the phrase “takes the cake.”

Castle Walk: Developed by Vernon and Irene Castle, the Castle Walk is a smooth walking step of direct advance and retreat with the couple in a close position.

Character dances: folk dances that depict various cultures to show national identity.

Charleston: Popular in the 1920s, its origins are believed to be from dances in Trinidad, Nigeria, and Ghana. It came to be synonymous with the Roaring Twenties.

Cipher: circle formation of people, where individual breakers take turns dancing.

Classical ballet: a ballet style established in the 19th century that uses formalized ballet vocabulary.

Classical Dance: forms are structured and stylized techniques developed and evolved throughout centuries requiring rigorous formal training.

Clowning: energetic and humorous dance moves adapted from various urban dance forms

Codified Technique: describes dance forms that are ordered systematically.

Collapsed movement: a release of energy from the body.

Comique: exaggerated, caricatured characters.

Competition: solo or groups of dancers battle or perform against other soloist or group performers

Contact improvisation: developed by Steve Paxton, is based on weight-sharing, touch, and movement awareness often paired with pedestrian movement.

Contemporary ballet: a dance genre that uses classical techniques (French terminology) that choreographers manipulate and blend with other dance forms.

Contemporary dance: an expansive term meaning current, what's happening now. It is a broader, more individualistic, expressive style of dance.

Contract and Release: a technique developed by Martha Graham to show movement that initiates by tightening the body's core muscles followed by a release of tension.

Corps de ballet: to the lowest-ranking members of a ballet company. These ensemble dancers perform movements in unison and act as a backdrop that helps feature the principal dancers and soloists.

Creativity: the use of the imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work

Dance crew: describes a group of street dancers who develop and hone their skills to battle other crews.

Dance notation: uses symbolic representation to document choreographed dances.

Danse d'école: a French term, referring to dance schools founded on the principles led by Beauchamps.

Danse Noble: characters in ballets who display a regal presentation suitable for roles of royalty.

Deejays: people that play music at parties; better known as DJs.

Demi-character: the portrayal of lively, everyday people like "the girl next door."

Dionysian: an artistic style of passion, emotion, and abandon. This is an eponym for the Greek god of wine, Dionysus.

Directions: the description of the facing of a performer as they dance or pose. This includes forward, backward, right, left, up, or down, or they can also change directions by turning.

Divertissements or diversions: short dances incorporated in ballets that aren't directly related to the story.

Downrock: weight-bearing movement performed on the floor, where the dancers support their bodies with their hands and feet.

Efforts: a term coined by dancer and movement analyst Rudolf Laban to describe the movement qualities or energy of movement.

Emcees: people that pump up the crowd at parties.

En pointe: describes the action of dancers rising to the tips of the toes.

Energy: the element of energy is an exploration of how a movement is done rather than what it is and gives us a richer sense of dance as an expressive art. When speaking about energy, we can refer to effort or movement qualities.

Fall and Recovery: the process of surrendering to gravity and returning to equilibrium, a technique originated by Doris Humphrey.

Five Moons: reference to the five Native American dancers who were foundational in the development of Oklahoma's dance institutions.

Flamenco: a courtship dance that mingled the southern Spaniards and the Romani people who settled there. It is a vigorous, rhythmic dance with percussive beats clapped or stamped.

Flash tap: sometimes called swing tap or classical tap, flash tap consists of a combination of jazz dance and acrobatics. The Nicholas Brothers' dancing was a great example of this style.

Floor work: movements performed on the floor. It is often used in modern dance technique.

Foxtrot: Popular in the early 1900s, the foxtrot was a smooth, simple ballroom dance done in 2/4 or 4/4 time signature.

Freestyle: based on improvisation rather than the choreography seen in other dance varieties

Freeze: a held position consists of the breaker halting the body from movement to achieve a challenging body pose

Funk tap: a younger, contemporary tap form that combines both hip-hop and funk. Savion Glover created this new form of tap.

General Space: the defined space in which the dancer can move.

Graffiti: writing or drawings scribbled, scratched, or sprayed illicitly on a wall or other surface in a public place.

Grand Allegro: vigorous movement, such as large jumps, hops, and leaps.

Grand pas de deux: a duet for the principal dancers. The grand pas de deux has four sections: adagio, man's variation, woman's variation, and coda.

Gypsy: a Broadway dancer who is a member of the chorus or ensemble, and who frequently travels from one show to the next.

Hambone: originally known as Pattin' Juba, an African American style of dance that involves stomping as well as various types of body percussion.

Harlem Renaissance: an intellectual and cultural revival of African American music, dance, art, fashion,

literature, theater, politics, and scholarship centered in Harlem, Manhattan, New York City, spanning the 1920s and 1930s.

Hip-hop dance posture: bending forward from the waist with the knees bent and the spine slightly curved

Hip-hop: an umbrella term that includes several dance styles that are highly energetic and acrobatic

Hiplet: a fusion of ballet movement and hip-hop.

Hoofing: Hoofing means dancing into the floor with emphasis placed on stomps and stamps in addition to rhythmic percussion of the sounds, music, and syncopations. Gregory Hines made this style of tap popular.

Hora: a round dance that is danced at celebrations by Jews worldwide.

Improvisation: the process of spontaneously creating movement

Indigenous: first peoples; the earliest known inhabitants of a region.

Individuality: the quality or character of a person that stands out from others of the same kind

Isolations: Often done as a warmup in a jazz class, isolations involve moving only one part of the body while holding the rest of the body still.

Jazz dance: a performance dance style that arose in the United States in the mid-20th century. Jazz dance had its roots in African dance and can refer to social dance forms of jazz as well as Broadway or dramatic jazz.

Jerks: sudden body movements.

Kinesphere: the immediate area surrounding the body and is described as a three-dimensional volume of space.

Krumping: rapid, exaggerated movements of the arms and legs; these movements are done aggressively.

Latinx hip-hop influences: acrobatic moves like head spins and hand glides.

Levels: the various heights where movement can occur in space.

LGBTQIA+: an abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and/or Queer, Intersex, and Asexual.

Lindy Hop: a type of swing dance that originated in the African American New York dance scene in 1928 and was inspired by aviator Charles Lindbergh, who “hopped” the Atlantic Ocean in 1927.

Locking: briefly freezing movement into a held position before continuing.

Locomotor movements: movements that travel in space.

Minstrel show: a show that included songs, dance, variety acts, and jokes that came at the expense of African Americans, as white men in blackface appropriated Black culture by inappropriately mimicking and mischaracterizing African Americans. It developed in the US in the early and mid-19th century and was widely performed until the mid-20th century but is now regarded as highly offensive.

Modern dance: a style of dance that broke away from Old World ballet and developed an original abstract modern point of view.

Movement qualities: energy released during various timespans to portray distinct qualities.

Musical theater: less of a single dance style and more of the purpose for which dance is used in a musical production. The dancing is designed to further the storyline of a musical production and help character development. The movements are often exaggerated to reach the audience in large theaters.

Natural rhythms: timing that comes from the rhythms of the breath, the heartbeat, or natural sources like the wind or the ocean.

Negative space: the empty area around the dancers' bodies.

Neoclassical ballets: traditional ballet vocabulary, but pieces are often abstract and have no narrative.

Nonlocomotor movements: those performed in place.

Originality: power of independent thought or constructive imagination

Pantomime: any of various dramatic or dancing performances in which a story is told by the expressive body or facial movements of the performers.

Party dances: social dance movements incorporated with hip-hop dance moves.

Pathways: sometimes called floor patterns and describe where the dancer goes through space, i.e., curved, straight, circular, diagonal, etc.

Pedestrian movement: the use of basic movement (everyday gestures or actions such as walking, sitting, opening a door).

Percussion: movements that are performed in a sudden, abrupt, or sharp way. They have a strong quality, as the dancer produces staccato-like moves with their body.

Percussive movements: the use of sharp, sudden, or abrupt movements that give a strong quality as the dancer produces staccato-like moves with their body.

Personal space: the space around the dancer's body.

Petit Allegro: small, brisk jumps that emphasize speed and precision.

Polycentrism: the idea that movement can initiate from any part of the body.

Polyrhythm: two or more rhythms within a tempo. Polyrhythmic patterns are featured in African dance, music, and drumming.

Popping: contracting and releasing the muscles to cause a jerking effect. These actions produce a robotic-like quality.

Positive space: the area of space the dancers' bodies occupy.

Postmodern dance: a form of dance that broke away from modern technique and used pedestrian movement and unconventional performing spaces with both skilled and unskilled dancers.

Pow wow: a yearly gathering of Native American tribes in a great social event that features music, dance, food, crafts, and a sharing of culture.

Power moves: physically demanding acrobatic moves requiring strength and endurance.

Principal dancers: the highest rank in companies. They have leading roles and are the primary focus of ballets.

Proscenium: a stage with a frame or arch.

Pulse: the basic pulse or underlying beat of movement and/or music.

Range of motion: how much or how little personal space is used when dancing or posing.

Relationship: the proximity of the dancer to others or to objects in the dance space (in front of, behind, over, under, connected, apart).

Rhythm tap: the shoes themselves are instruments; sounds are made by striking the heel, toe, or whole foot. It is often performed with no musical accompaniment. John W. Bubbles was known for this tap style.

Rhythmic patterns: the musical grouping of long or short beats, accents, or silences.

Romantic ballets: a ballet style from the early 19th century that emphasized self-expression and emotions.

Samba: a courtship dance from Brazil; it became popular in western Europe and the United States in the early 1940s. It is danced to music in 4/4 time signature with syncopated rhythm.

Soft shoe: a form of tap dancing that does not require special shoes. Rhythms can be made by tapping of the feet or sliding the feet, sometimes using scattered sand on the stage to enhance the sound. Clayton “Peg Leg” Bates made this style popular, although minstrel George H. Primrose began doing this style in his shows.

Soloists: ranked in the middle and have minor roles to perform solos.

Space: where movement occurs and includes personal and general space, levels, directions, pathways and floor patterns, various sizes of movements, range of movement, and relationships.

Speed: also known as tempo; the pace of the music or movement.

Spirituality: the fastest, most direct route to the truth; the get down and personal kind, the what’s-happening-in-me-right-now kind of truth.

Square dance: an American courtship dance with four couples in a square.

Stepping: a complex synchronized dancelike performance that blends African folk traditions with popular culture. It involves clapping, body slapping, vocalizations, and dramatic movements.

Stylization: the qualities with which a dance genre is performed.

Suspended movements: movements that occur at the peak of a movement, defying gravity before succumbing to it.

Sustained movements: movements that occur continuously, creating a smooth and even motion.

Swing Dance: a number of energetic, fast-paced social dances that developed with the swing style of jazz music in the 1920s–1950s.

Swinging movements: movements that have a pendular or circular quality.

Symmetrical: body designs that use the same shape on both sides of the body, creating balance.

Synchronization: the coordination of events to operate a system in unison.

Syncopation: the accenting of a note that would usually not be accented. It is often described as being off beat. The time signature of a piece of music has a regular pattern of strong and weak beats. A syncopated rhythm goes against this pattern by putting the accent on weak beats.

Tango: a courtship dance from Argentina, its movement is stealthy, almost cat-like and has an unmistakable staccato feel and major dramatic attitude.

Tap dance: a dance form that is performed wearing shoes fitted with metal taps, characterized by rhythmical tapping of the toes and heels.

Terpsichore: The Greek muse of dance.

Thespian: a actor. This is an eponym for the ancient Greek credited as the first actor.

Time: description of when the dancers move and how the movement uses time. The time category includes pulse, speed, rhythmic patterns, natural rhythm, and syncopation.

Toprock: movement that is performed from a standing position; quick, percussive footwork paired with a relaxed upper body.

Turnout: an outward rotation of the legs in the hip socket.

Twist: a popular dance craze from the 1960s that involves swiveling one's hips. It is believed to have its roots in African dance.

Uprock: a precursor to breaking; an urban street dance with opposing dancers or crews facing off in a line formation.

Vaudeville: a vaudeville show was a type of entertainment popular chiefly in the US in the early 20th century, featuring a mixture of specialty acts such as burlesque comedy and song and dance.

Vibratory movements: the use of rapid and repeated bursts of energy.

Vocalization: syllables in a series produced with prosodically coherent contours, as required by the logic of the dance moves

Waacking: the use of striking arm movements, poses, and footwork; the emphasis is the expression.

Waltz: a courtship dance that was developed in the courts of Europe. The waltz is performed in a 3/4 time signature by a couple who turns rhythmically around the dance floor in an elegant motion.

Zydeco: an energetic partner dance done to zydeco music. It has elements of swing dance, with each couple adding their own flair to the dance.

APPENDIX B: CHECKLIST FOR ACCESSIBILITY

This title has been reviewed to meet these accessibility practices:

Organizing Content

- Content is organized under headings and subheadings.
- Headings and subheadings are used sequentially (e.g., Heading 1, Heading 2).

Images

- Images that convey information include alternative text (alt text) descriptions of the image's content or function.
- Graphs, charts, and maps also include contextual or supporting details in the text surrounding the image.
- Images do not rely on color to convey information.
- Images that are purely decorative do not have alt text descriptions. (Descriptive text is unnecessary if the image doesn't convey contextual content information).

Links

- The link text describes the destination of the link and does not use generic text such as "click here" or "read more."
- If a link will open or download a file (like a PDF or Excel file), a textual reference is included in the link information (e.g., [PDF]).
- Links do not open in new windows or tabs.
- If a link must open in a new window or tab, a textual reference is included in the link information (e.g., [NewTab]).
- For citations and references, the title of the resource is hyperlinked, and the full URL is not hyperlinked.

Tables

- Tables are used to structure information and not for layout.
- Tables include row and column headers.
- Row and column headers have the correct scope assigned.
- Tables include a caption.
- Tables avoid merged or split cells.
- Tables have adequate cell padding.

Multimedia

- All audio content includes a transcript. The transcript includes all speech content and relevant descriptions of non-speech audio and speaker names/headings where necessary.
- Videos have captions of all speech content and relevant non-speech content that has been edited by a human for accuracy..
- All videos with contextual visuals (graphs, charts, etc.) are described audibly in the video.

Formulas

- Equations written in plain text use proper symbols (i.e., $-$, \times , \div).¹
- For complex equations, one of the following is true:
 - They were written using LaTeX and are rendered with MathJax (Pressbooks).
 - They were written using Microsoft Word's equation editor.
 - They are presented as images with alternative text descriptions.
- Written equations are properly interpreted by text-to-speech tools.²

Font Size

- Font size is 12 point or higher for body text in Word and PDF documents.
- Font size is 9 point for footnotes or endnotes in Word and PDF documents.

1. For example, a hyphen (-) may look like a minus sign ($-$), but it will not be read out correctly by text-to-speech tools.

2. Written equations should prioritize semantic markup over visual markup so text-to-speech tools will read out an equation in a way that makes sense to auditory learners. This applies to both equations written in LaTeX and equations written in Microsoft Word's equation editor.

- Font size can be enlarged by 200 percent in webbook or ebook formats without needing to scroll side to side.

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