DANC 482, Section 22570R:
Choreography for Television
Spring 2015
4 units
Day: Monday
Time: 5:00pm-7:50pm
Location: Mudd Hall 101

Instructor: Saleemah E. Knight
Office: STO 3rd Floor
Office Hours: To be scheduled by email
Contact Info: saleemah@usc.edu
Syllabus Design: Saleemah E. Knight

Catalog Description
Creative choreography of theatrical dance for television. Emphasis on rhythmic analysis, versatility, composition, notation techniques and stylizing. Duplicates credit in former THTR 482.

Full Course Description
This course serves as an introduction to the protocols behind creating choreography for television and film. The course encompasses the business and practical aspects of the choreographic process as well as builds a historical and cultural context for notable films and iconic choreographer/director figures in television and film.

Course Overview
Choreography for television was once the only medium by which dance was viable to mainstream audiences. With the advent of dance film, Internet and the music video age choreography has found its place amongst art, literature and is readily integrated into pop culture worldwide. This course aims to take a look at historical figures in choreography for the screen by comparing and contrasting where art dance and commercial dance mediums diverge. Students will receive hands-on experience with the practices of creating dance for the camera in either realm (dance film or popular dance media). Students will learn the how to create and interpret a shot-list, edit video, create casting breakdowns, hold mock auditions and produce a final product. Students will also embody various dance styles to aid in creating their own work as well as understand the cultural relationship and socio-political ideas relevant to iconic choreographies in the dance media continuum.
Learning Objectives

In this course students will:

• Develop critical thinking, analytic and cognitive skills by utilizing various approaches to viewing, critiquing and appreciating performance aesthetics celebrated within dance film and popular dance media.

• Understand the parameters of choreography for television based on identifiable characteristics.

• Engage in conversations surrounding theoretical, historical and aesthetic movement signatures stemming from Westernized and global cultural influences.

• Question the overall ability for socio-political ideas influence choreography for TV and film and/or infuse meaning into movement.

• Develop skills in reading comprehension, including active interpretation and analytical skills that foster critical and creative thinking.

• Develop skills for the observation of dance performance on film from a subjective perspective that involves the use of cognitive context building, framed by cultural awareness by way of learned histories and methods.

• Develop efficient research, writing and speaking skills, which incorporate observation and reading comprehension into a term paper and oral presentation.

• Examine the creative aspects of dance and how they simultaneously interrelate with art dance and popular dance.

• Identify significant creative artists in the dance continuum with an understanding of their cultural heritage and place them in a historical context, as well as speak to their contributions to the field.

• Embody the physical practice of dance (relevant to course material) in the studio and/or classroom.

• Become active participants in the local fine arts dance scene by attending at least one professional-level live dance performance during the semester.

• Collaborate with a group to create their own mock auditions, casting calls and dance films.
. Make connections between their own personal experiences and the larger history of the discipline.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/ Software Required**
Students will be required to view media both inside and outside of class for discussion and to fulfill assignment requirements.

**Readings:**


**Assigned Youtube Viewings:**


Part 1: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkThE0YpofU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkThE0YpofU)
Part 2: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UacylkU60AM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UacylkU60AM)
Part 3: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS_kWttpt54](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS_kWttpt54)


Deren, Maya. “Study in Choreography for the Camera”. Performer: Talley Beaty. 1945. Web. 18 December 2014. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnUEr_gNzwk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnUEr_gNzwk)


Part 1: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cufauMezz_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cufauMezz_Q)
Part 2: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCbVTR-l5RQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCbVTR-l5RQ)
Part 3: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNebCPB9gqk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNebCPB9gqk)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFCv86Olk8E


Additional Video Materials:


Description of Assignments and Student Assessment

• **Readings and Viewings:**
  Students will have 1-3 reading assignments per week (totaling 100+ pages), and/or an equivalent video viewing assignment each week. We will also be focusing on in-class practical movement studies related to the week’s reading. There are four papers due this semester: one directed research paper, one short response paper, one term paper/oral presentation and one Dance Reflection paper. **Students should complete the assigned reading or viewing prior to the class meeting date for which it is listed.**

  The readings for this course contain many primary sources written by those present and/or highly researched in the related topic or creation of a major dance work. However as dance is a predominantly non-verbal form of human expression, viewing, experiencing and embodying different dance forms through in-class participation and video viewing will also be a supplementary and/or primary source for exposure to the material. The purpose of visual media shown in class will provide vital information required to succeed on pop quizzes, written papers and exams. Students are encouraged to engage with additional material and re-view watched performances at home to aid in movement recall and better comprehension of specified readings and assignments.

• **Attendance:**
  Guided discussion surrounding viewing and in-class activities attribute greatly to a student’s success in this course; regular attendance is required. For this course, proper participation requires attention and focus. Cell phones and Internet searches for the purposes of social interaction during class time can limit a student’s progress and learning within the course. Actively participating in discussions, master classes, guest classes, and group activities; asking thoughtful questions; coming to class fully prepared; and exercising personal responsibility and consideration of others at all times is apart of successful attendance and participation in this course. If you have more than four unexcused absences, your grade will reflect these instances. Excessive tardiness may also be recorded as an absence.

• **Quizzes:**
  On occasion, there may be an in-class pop quiz at the beginning of class, based on the readings assigned for that day. (Late and absent students will not have the opportunity to make up the quiz.) The quizzes will be returned and can aid as a study guide for the course exams.

• **Mid-Term, Final Exam and Presentations:**
Students are required to be in class on the day of exams and presentations. It is a student’s responsibility to note the dates of all exams to insure proper attendance. Exams will consist of short answer and essay questions. Please note the dates below for the specified mid-term and final exam:

**MIDTERM: MONDAY, MARCH (WEEK 9)**
**FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, MAY 11\textsuperscript{TH}, 2015  (4:30-6:30PM Mudd Hall 101)**

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**Papers and Presentations**
*A link for MLA formatting can be found here: [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/).

- **Busby Berkeley vs. Maya Deren Short Response Paper and Presentation (due Monday, February 9\textsuperscript{th}, Week 5):**

  Please write a thoughtful 2-3 paged response to the Berkeley and Deren works by clearly identifying the difference between dance film/ choreography for the camera and popular dance film. Be clear to identify which choreographer/ director’s work (Berkeley or Deren) more directly lends itself to dance filmmaking and which one is situated in commercial culture. The paper should give historical and background information on both artists as well as identify any other significant contributions he or she has made to their field. The paper must be double-spaced, should be written in MLA format and must include at least two credible sources for each creative artist as well as an MLA formatted bibliography. *

- **“The Dancing Body and Cultural Cross-Over” Term Paper (due Monday, March 2\textsuperscript{nd}, Week 8):**

  Looking at the hallmarks of dance for popular TV, including music videos and movie musicals we can now see how culture plays deeply into the way in which choreography is interpreted and framed within the camera. Referencing the Coco Lee music videos and the *Bride and Prejudice* movie, please identify how the style by which these music videos/ films are captured, work to reinforce the theme. For example, since Coco Lee aims to re-define the Chinese body in terms of sexuality, how does the way in which the music videos are filmed, work to enhance that message? You may want to consider Coco Lee’s style of dress, camera angles, etc. Similarly for *Bride and Prejudice*, what particular themes do the choreography and wardrobe reinforce within the confines of Bollywood and Indian culture? Do we see either piece of media giving reference to the culture
and heritage of the recording artist/ cast, while still aiming for mainstream appeal? Yes or No? Please explain.

Please write a 5-7 paged paper that clearly identifies moments within either film or music video that are relevant to the theme of this paper. The paper must be double-spaced, should be written in MLA format and must include at least three credible sources for either music video or film as well as an MLA formatted bibliography. * You are welcome to use the Borelli course readings part of your credible sources.

• **Casting Dancers for Film, Television or Music Video Assignment- Collaborative Group Project: (full assignment due Monday, April 27th, Week 16):**

Working as a choreographer in the field requires you to have a handle on the practical side of dance as well as the business aspect. For this assignment, you must use your business savvy as a creative artist to develop a concept, cast dancers, and write a treatment for your own music video, film, dance film or commercial. There are several parts to this assignment, which reference the information that we have covered in class.

1: Please develop a visual concept/ treatment for an artist of your choice. The treatment should be no more than one page in length. Once the treatment has been approved by the director, (the instructor for the course), you will move on to step two. You will want to have this approved no later than March 9th, in order to give yourself ample time to complete the assignment.

2. Once your treatment is approved, you will need to cast dancers for your assignment. You can choose to do this through live audition, video audition or via picture submission. You will need to create an audition breakdown for your project (approved by the instructor no later than April 6th) that potentially requires dancers to be available for the rehearsal dates, shoot dates and the final presentation of your work.

3. Create a choreography submission that you will either film or present live for the director. The submission must be no more than 2 minutes for a music video, 30 seconds for a commercial and 5 minutes for a film. If working on a music video, you must include one verse and one “hook”. For all mediums, be creative in terms of setting, choreography, wardrobe and overall theme. Be sure to make sure that your theme matches your original treatment for the artist. For those choosing to create a music video or commercial submission, this must also be accompanied by a 5-page write up, outlining the creative process and any inspirations for your work. If you choose to create a 5-minute dance film, or a 5-minute film incorporating elements of dance, you are not required to do
additional writing. For any type of video or film medium, you will need to upload the finished product to Youtube as an “unlisted” link.

Note: For films incorporating elements of dance, you will need a total of at least 2.5 minutes of dance total within your 5-minute film. You can choose to split this up however you desire.

• “Dance Reflection” Paper (due the day of the final exam):

Students are required to observe one dance concert during the semester. A 2-page, double spaced, written paper is due on the day of the final, in which students are required to write their observation of the entire show, including any technical elements that they recognize from class being translated to the performance stage in reference to specific pieces. Students are also encouraged to engage all of their senses while observing the work (i.e. what was the mood of the piece?, how many dancers were in the piece?, were any sounds incorporated into the movement?, did it appear to travel in any particular way?, costuming?, multimedia?). Any conflicts should be brought to the instructor’s attention at least one month prior to the date of the concert. Dance reflection papers should be written in proper MLA format. *

Grading Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance, Participation, Quizzes</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Busby Berkeley vs. Maya Deren” Short Response</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Dancing Body and Cultural Crossover” Paper</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casting Dancers for Film/TV/ MV</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dance Reflection Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A+ = 100 points
A = 96-99 points
A- = 91-95 points
B+ = 88-90 points
B = 85-87 points
B- = 81-84 points
C+ = 78-80 points
C = 75-77 points
C- = 71-74 points
D+ = 67-70 points
D- = 61-63 points
F = 60 or below

Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics/ Daily Activities</th>
<th>Reading / Homework (pages TBD)</th>
<th>Deliverable/ Due Date</th>
<th>In Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to Course/ Course Overview</td>
<td>No reading assigned</td>
<td>Jan. 12, 2015</td>
<td>VIEW: Forsythe, <em>One Flat Thing, Reproduced</em> and <em>Dirty Dancing</em> (a portion of)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Dance Film vs. Popular Dance: Understanding the Aesthetic Differences</td>
<td>READ: Rosenberg, <em>Screendance</em> (1-14) and Borelli, <em>Dance and the Popular Screen</em> (445-453)</td>
<td>Jan. 19, 2015</td>
<td>No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>View</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Making Connections between Dance Film and Music Video formats</td>
<td>READ: Brannigan (39-61) and Vernallis (3-26 and 27-53) VIEW: Aerosmith’s “Crazy” Music Video (Located in Syllabus video bibliography)</td>
<td>Feb. 9, 2015</td>
<td>DUE: Deren and Berkeley Paper DISCUSS: Brannigan and Vernallis CREATE: A Treatment (Learn How To)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Socio-cultural relevance in Global Popular Dance Films/ Music Videos and the Art of Framing Dance</td>
<td>READ: McPherson (1-20) and (23-40) Borelli (268-88) and (378-92) VIEW: Bride and Prejudice and Coco Lee Music Videos (located in syllabus bibliography)</td>
<td>Feb. 16, 2015</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hip Hop Spectacle in Choreography for Reality Television / Developing Choreography for Video</td>
<td>READ: Borelli (304-18) and McPherson (43-60)</td>
<td>Feb. 23, 2015</td>
<td>DISCUSS: McPherson and Borelli Readings (tentative)CREATE: Short Choreographies for in-class Practice (tentative) VIEW: Breakin’ (tentative) GUEST LECTURE: D. Sabela Grimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading/Video/Assignment</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>(Continued) Hip Hop, Social Dance and Socio-cultural Context in Mainstream Media</td>
<td>No reading assigned VIEW: “Breakin 2”</td>
<td>Mar. 9, 2015</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAM/ Treatment Due for Film Assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td>Mar. 16-20, 2015</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Setting and Context for Filming</td>
<td>READ: Borelli, (351-63) and Vernallis (73-98) CREATE: Casting Audition Breakdown (at home, bring into class)</td>
<td>Mar. 30, 2015</td>
<td>DISCUSS: Borelli reading VIEW: Jerome Robbin’s “Westside Story” choreography EMBODY: Latin social dances and mock audition</td>
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Assignment Submission Policy
All assignments will be submitted in class. Exceptions will be made only in truly exceptional circumstances.

Additional Polices:

- **Class Conduct:**
  Please bring a paper notebook and writing instrument to class; laptops, notebooks, tablets and other technology will only be permitted at certain times. Phones will not be allowed and should not be visible during class. Texting or Internet engagement during class time will result in lowering of your class grade. Your attention during class time is greatly appreciated, and also required.
Please Note:
This class takes place at a university committed to equity for all students, where diversity and inclusion are considered critical to the academic environment. In this classroom, free speech is respected, and civil discourse is expected, with a safe learning environment the priority. We will endeavor to use language that is respectful—sometimes being inquisitive and creative, because language changes all the time—particularly when it comes to differences in age, ethnicity, gender identity or expression, race or socioeconomic status. If you have a preferred gender pronoun that is not being used, please advise the professor.

Statement for Students with Disabilities

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Website and contact information for DSP: http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html, (213) 740-0776 (Phone), (213) 740-6948 (TDD only), (213) 740-8216 (FAX) ability@usc.edu.

Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis
In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct
Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Section 11, Behavior Violating University Standardshttps://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sanctions/. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct/.

Discrimination, sexual assault and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the Office of Equity and Diversity http://equity.usc.edu/ or to the Department of Public Safety.
http://capsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety/online-forms/contact-us. This is important for the safety whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. The Center for Women and Men http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/ provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage sarc@usc.edu describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose primary language is not English should check with the American Language Institute http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. The Office of Disability Services and Programs http://sait.usc.edu/academicsupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, USC Emergency Information http://emergency.usc.edu/ will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.