USC Kaufman
School of Dance

DANC 312: African American Dance
Section 22513

Fall 2016
4 units
Day: M/W
Time: 2:00-3:45pm
Location: KDC 236

Instructor: E. Moncell Durden
Office: KDC 227
Office Hours: To be scheduled by email
Contact Info: durden@usc.edu

Catalog Description

Exploration of the discursive foundations, political motivations, and aesthetic strategies of dance writers and artists whose works have enabled the category of "black dance."

Full Course Description

This course will expand the student's knowledge of the human condition and human cultures as expressed and validated through African American dance as an embodied cultural practice and art form. The nucleus of this course focuses on the study of African American dance as a means to examine the intersecting histories of race, gender, sexuality, class, notions of citizenship and conceptions of humanity as a part of the African experience in America.

Course Overview

This course will survey and trace the systems and traditions of dance and embodied practices produced and circulated in Afro-diasporic communities in the United States of America. This survey will feature how genres connected to Black Dance Traditional, Jazz, vernacular, Hip Hop, etc. maintain distinctive markers yet retain a common core set of cultural priorities that seem to transverse regionally, nationally, trans-nationally communities, and generationally. We will interrogate the socio-political, socio-cultural, and historical contexts in which dance and embodied practice have shaped and influenced notions of Black-ness, African-ness, American-ness and human-ness. We will also address the significance and challenges associated to defining dance as African, African-American or Black in relationship to American ideals of freedom, equality and the fundamental opportunities associated with citizenship in the United States. Finally, this course will observe how the aesthetics, Africanist themes/retentions and politics of African American dance as a major influence and stimulus in contemporary culture.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will understand the historical development of African American dance in the United States, greater North America and the Caribbean.
2. Students will understand how social and political factors affected the development of African
3. American dance, specifically as they relate to race, gender power and other institutional forms of oppression.
4. Students will understand the impact African and African American contributions had on the development of concert dance.

5. Students will gain an appreciation of how Black vernacular dances and dance forms affected the American popular culture and the development of contemporary dance.
6. Students will attend professional dance performances and social dance events to gain an appreciation of the art form in its current state.

Required Readings and Supplementary Materials

Glass, Barbara. African American Dance: An Illustrated History. McFarland & Company, 2007. Additional short readings, film and videos may be assigned relating to topics covered in class.

Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required

Students will be required to view media outside of class for discussion and other assignments.

Required Articles (subject to change)

Hall, Stuart. Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices. London: Sage in Association With the Open U, 1997. Print.

DeFrantz, Thomas "Black Bodies Dancing Culture: Black Atlantic Transformations", in Black Cultural Traffic Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2005.

DeFrantz, Thomas. Dancing Many Drums Excavations in African American Dance. Madison, Wis. U of Wisconsin, 2002. Print.

DeFrantz, Thomas. The black beat made visible: Hip hop dance and body power of the presence of the body pp. 6481). Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press. 2004

Malone, Jacqui. Steppin on he Blues: The Visible Rhythms of African American Dance. Urbana: U of Illinois, 1996. Print.

Osumare, Halifu. ""Dancing the Black Atlantic: Katherine Dunham's Research to Performance Method"." AmeriQuests; Jul2010, Vol. 7 Issue 2, P1, 1 July 2010.

Pond, Steven F. ""Chameleon" Meets Soul Train: Herbie, James, Michael, Damita Jo, and Jazz-Funk." American Studies: 125-40. Print.

Bragin, Naomi. "Techniques of Black Male Re/dress: Corporeal Drag and Kinesthetic Politics in the Rebirth of Waacking/Punkin'." Web. 16 Jan. 2015.

Jackson, Jonathan David, "Social World of Voguing," Journal for the Anthropological Study of Human Movement 12, no. 2 2002): 27.

Hazzard, Gordon, K. "African-American Vernacular Dance: Core Culture and Meaning Operatives." Journal of Black Studies: 427A45. Print.

Hall, Stuart. What is this "black" in black popular culture? in Gina Dent ed.), Black Popular Culture, Seattle: Bay Press, 21–33.

Gottschild, Brenda Dixon. Stripping the Emperor: The Africanist Presence in American Concert Dance. Looking Out: Perspectives on Dance and Criticism in a Multicultural World. Eds. David Gere, et al. New York: Schirmer Books, 1995. 95 – 121

Osumare, Halifu. The Dance Archaeology of Rennie Harris: Hip Hop or Postmodern? In
Ballroom, Boogie, Shimmy Sham, Shake: A Social and Popular Dance Reader, ed. Julie Malnig Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 261-281.

Online Reading

http://pitchfork.com/thepitch/321-the-cultural-legacy-of-soul-train/

Assigned Films

Will view the following films, among others, if schedule allows.

- Wreckin' Shop 1992, directed by Diane Martel, (24 min)
- Paris is Burning 1990, directed by Jennie Livingston, (71 min)
- Ethnic Notions 1986, directed by Marlon Riggs, (57 min)
- Over the Top Bebop: Honi Coles and Cholly Atkins 1964, directed by Nick Havinga, (27 min)
- Bamboozled 2000, directed by Spike Lee, (135 min)
- Soul Train: Hippest Trip in America 2010, directed by Amy Goldberg, J. Kevin Swain, (64 min)
- Everything Remains Raw, directed by E. Moncell Durden

Recommended Additional Resources (not required)

- Film: School Daze 1988, directed by Spike Lee, 135 min)
- Readings:

Scott, Anna B. What's it Worth to Ya? Adaption and Anachronism: Rennie Harris' PureMovement and Shakespeare. Routledge Dance Studies Reader, Second Edition, eds. Alexandra Carter and Janet O'Shea. London: Oxford, 2010), 78A89.

Elam, Harry Justin. Black Cultural Traffic Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2005. Print.

Kraut, Anthea. "Between Primitivism and Diaspora: The Dance Performances of Josephine Baker, Zora Neale Hurston, And Katherine Dunham." Theatre Journal: 433A50. Print.

Elam, Harry Justin." Spike Lee's Bamboozled" in Black Cultural Traffic Crossroads in Global Performance and Popular Culture. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan, 2005.

Readings and Viewings: Students should complete the assigned reading or viewing before the class for which it is listed. The textbook for this course, African American Dance: An Illustrated History (Barbara Glass), and complimentary requisite texts will serve as principal sources. Nonetheless, please bear in mind that, as dance is a predominately non-verbal form of human expression, watching, experiencing and embodying different dance forms through in-class activities and videos will also constitute primary and textual exposure to the material. Accordingly, visual media shown in class represent vital primary texts for the course and, like lectures and reading materials, will be the basis of questions on quizzes and exams. Students are encouraged to engage with additional media in conjunction with their readings.

Attendance: Viewing, discussion, and in-class activities factor greatly in this course, so regular attendance is required. For this course, participation includes being attentive and focused ie: NOT texting or surfing the internet); actively participating in discussions, master classes, and group activities; asking thoughtful questions; coming to class fully prepared; and exercising personal responsibility and consideration of others at all times. If you have more than four unexcused absences, your grade for this class will reflect that fact. Chronic tardiness may be recorded as an absence.

Units of Study:

1) What is African American Dance? What is Culture? How do we study dance?
2) Today's Hip Hop
3) Been around the world
5) Where'd you get that funk from
6) Soul: A Decade on Fire
7) Rock n Roll: The Early Years
8) Midterm
9) It don't mean a thing, if it ain't got that swing
10) The Big Apple
11) Storyville
12) Ragging the Beat
13) Blackface Minstrelsy
14) Master Juba
15) Ring Shout
16) Finals

Unit Reflection/Analysis Papers: two, each 3 – 5 pages

Students will write two unit reflection/analysis papers designed to develop critical thinking about the readings, music and movement, and connect them to personal experiences. Your papers will reflect comprehension of assigned readings. Use your papers to expand, deepen and/or complicate your understanding of the material covered in class. Each paper must put the selected authors into conversation with one other, and into conversation with you.

1. Define each of the terms and theoretical concepts framing the unit as you presently understand it.
2. Demonstrate understanding of key readings and critical analysis of videos, readings and performances.
3. Draw connections between videos, live performances, lectures and readings.
4. Reveal how your understanding has been impacted by ideas from this unit. Express what new ideas are percolating for you. Furthermore, reflect personally on what you found to be the most meaningful and/or challenging concept in this unit of study.

Final Research Paper: 5 – 7 pages, plus references

Reflect on the black dance continuum, and how your understanding of it has changed over this term in light of the course materials. **DUE: Friday, Dec, 9th @ 4pm.**

The major method for student evaluation will be through a "draft and re-write" process of a substantial written document. At the end of the semester each student is required to complete a research paper that analyzes and synthesizes the terms, theories, and authors related to the readings, lectures, performances and video presented in class. At the **Friday of Week 11**, students are required to submit a research paper proposal, with a bibliography that contains approximately 5 or more reputable, academic, and/or peer-reviewed sources; which means books, academic journal articles and/or book chapters used in the course. NO WIKIPEDIA. I encourage each of you to consider submitting a rough draft by **Week 15** for my review.

Unit one: History Due electronically by 9 pm, Wed, Sept 21st)
Unit two: Heritage Due electronically by 9pm, Wed, Nov 2nd)
Final Research Paper Proposal Due electronically by 9pm, Friday, Nov 4th)
Final Research Paper Due electronically by 4 pm, Friday, Dec 9th)

Mid-Term Exam: Oct 12, 2016
Final Evaluation Exam: Dec 9, 2016 2:00pm-4:00pm

Grading Breakdown

There are a total of 100 points for the quarter. Students earn the 100 points by completing the Reflection/Analysis papers (two, at 20 points each), Mid-term 20pts, Final 30pts, and Attendance & Participation pts. Any more than three absences will result in a grade-tier deduction, ie. an A becomes an A-, a B+ becomes a B, etc. Weekly classes require individual and collective participation.

Letter Grade Requirements:	TOTAL POSSIBLE	=100 POINTS
	Attendance/Participation	= 15 points
	Analysis/Reflection Paper #1	=15 points
	MidTerm Exam	= 25 points
	Analysis/Reflection Paper #2	= 15 points
	Final Research Paper	= 30 points
	Hip Hop Dance Review	= 10 points *Extra Credit*

Grading Scale:	100 A+	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+
	94-99 A	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D
	90-93 A-	80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-
				59 and below F

	Daily Topics	Reading & Homework	Deliverable Due Dates	Other Notable
Week 1	Introduction to African American Dance	**Reading**: Representation_Hall1997 BLACK_BEAT_HIPHOP_DANCE_PAPER Hall-Identity-Modernity-1 Vogue The Social_Jackson26-42.pdf **Films**: Paris is Burnin,		
Week 2	Today's Hip Hop	**Reading:** **Kuehn_Rize** Krumpin in N Hollywood-Frazier Sommer - 2012 - Underground House Dancing **Films**: Rize, CYBATD		
Week 3	Cultural Roots in New Soil	**Reading**: Hip-Hop Dance Formations and the Jazz Continuum BLACK_BEAT_HIPHOP_DANCE_PAPER **Films**: Everything Remains Raw, House Party, Breakin, Beat Street.		
Week 4 1980s	Been around the world	**Reading**: Global_Breakdancing_and_the_Intercultural_Body REFORMING_THE_CIRCLE **Films**: Bouncing Cats, Planet Bboy, Far East Coast		
Week 5 1970s	Where you get your funk from? Rocking, The hustle, Waacking, Locking, Popping/Boogaloo,	FIRST UNIT PAPER DUE **Reading**: Chameleon" Meets Soul Train: Bragin, Naomi. "Techniques of Black Male Re/dress: Love_peace_and_soul	Wed, Sept, 12th	

	B-boying (Breaking)	**Film**: Soul Train: The hippest trip in America, Wattstax: 1972 Watts Summer Music Festival		
Week 6 1960s	Soul: A decade on fire: Social politics, Civil Rights, Fallen Icons, Dance move-meant	**Reading**: What's that Sound **Films**: T.A.M.I. (Clips) 1968 Olympics the black power salute Twist: Ron Mann Motown Soul, Ed Sullivan Show,		
Week 7: 1950s	Rock n Roll: Jitterbug, Camel walk, Twist, Social Decorum	**Reading**: ROCK_N_ROLL_ERA **Films**: Rock n Roll: the Early Years And other footage		
Week 8:	MIDTERM	Refer to Blackboard for Rubric	OCT 12th	
Week 9: 1940s	It Don't mean a thing, if it aint got that swing: Lindy-Hop, Race Music, Club culture and hep cats	**Reading**: Malone, Jacqui. *Steppin on the Blues* JAZZ_AND_AMERICAN_CULTURE **Films**: Mura Dehn: the Spirt Moves And other footage		
Week 10: 1930s	Big Apple African-Americans Inspire a National Craze	**Reading**: Text book reading **Film**: The Big Apple: 1937		
Week 11: 1914	Storyville: The naked dance	SECOND UNIT PAPER DUE **Reading**: Text book reading, Before Storyville **Film**: The Swing Thing: Documentary	Wed, Nov 2nd	
Week 12: 1800	Ragging the beat	Reading: Text book reading, History of Ragtime Films: Farewell to Storyville (Clip) Ken Burns Jazz		
Week 13	Blackface Minstrelsy	Reading: Text book reading Film: Blacks in Vaudeville Ethnic Notions		
Week 14	Master Juba: Buck n wing, Rhythm bones, Jug band,	Reading: Text book reading Films: Hoffers and Flash acts		

Week 15	Ring Shout: Plantation dances and songs Sacred & Secular Stono Rebellion 1739	Reading: Text book reading Films: The Ring-shout & the Birth of African-American Religion		
Week 16	FINAL EXAMS			

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

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 Standards https://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://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety. This is important for the safety of the 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 http://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.

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.

FINAL NOTE: It is often necessary for the instructor to place his/her hands on a student in order to better facilitate the learning process and to illustrate proper alignment. If a student should have an aversion to this practice please notify the professor prior to the start of classes.