



USC University of Southern California

Choreography for the Screen, Dance 175: Section 22371

Units: 2

Term—Day—Time: Fall 2020 – Thursday – 5:30-7:20 p.m.

Location: Online

Instructor: Achinta S. McDaniel, She/Her

Virtual Office Hours: M/W By Appointment

Contact Info: achintam@usc.edu

Catalog Description

Creative choreography of theatrical dance for the screen. Emphasis on rhythmic analysis, versatility, composition, notation techniques, and stylizing.

Full Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to the protocols behind creating choreography for the screen. The course encompasses the practical aspects of the choreographic process as well as builds a historical context for notable and iconic choreographer/director figures in television, film and music video formats from the past and present.

Course Overview

With the advent of dance film, social media and the music video age, choreography has been positioned as its own viable art, one which is readily integrated into global popular culture. This course aims to investigate construction of choreographies for the screen by exploring movement methodologies and strategies for working within the parameters of creating dances for the screen. Students will receive hands-on experience (particularly relevant to popular dance and commercial media). Students will learn how to create and interpret a shot-list, communicate with production teams, make creative/collaborative editing decisions, create concept submissions for multi-scale projects, and to produce a cohesive creative products in multiple screen formats. Students will embody various dance styles to aid in creating their own work, as well as to understand relationships 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, analyzing and appreciating performance aesthetics celebrated within choreography for the screen and popular dance media.
- Analyze the parameters of “successful” choreography for the screen based on identifiable characteristics of high quality work.
- Engage in conversations surrounding theoretical, historical and aesthetic movement signatures stemming from global cultural and pop cultural influences.
- Develop skills for the observation of dance performance on the screen from a subjective perspective.
- Develop efficient research, writing and speaking skills, which incorporate the articulation of their visions into a submission, proposal and visual presentation.
- Examine the creative aspects of dance and how they interrelate with popular dance/ culture.
- Identify significant creative artists in the dance continuum 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 class.
- Collaborate with a partner/group to create choreographies for the screen.
- Make connections between their individual training and the ability to create choreographies based on experience and generational learning.

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. Students will need a computer with internet access to view and share assignments, and to share drafts of performance projects throughout the course. To view and complete assignments, from time to time students will need to use a variety of websites, social networks, and apps during the course, such as TikTok, YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and/or Vimeo. *After reading this paragraph, e-mail me at achintam@usc.edu to introduce yourself, and briefly tell me what your favorite music video is and why.*

USC technology rental program

Attending classes online and completing coursework remotely requires access to technology that not all students possess. If you need resources to successfully participate in this class, such as a laptop or internet hotspot, you may be eligible for the university’s equipment rental program. To apply, please [submit an application](#). The Student Basic Needs team will contact all applicants in early August and distribute equipment to eligible applicants prior to the start of the fall semester.

USC Technology Support Links

[Zoom information for students](#)

[Blackboard help for students](#)

[Software available to USC Campus](#)

Required Textbook: McPherson, Katrina. *Making Video Dance A Step-by-Step Guide to Creating Dance for the Screen* (2nd ed) Routledge Taylor & Francis Group. Print
Assigned/In-Class Viewings *Students can expect additional in-class and assigned video viewings to be provided by professor beyond the following list.*

Berkeley, Busby. "Lullaby of Broadway". *Goldiggers of 1935*. 1935. Warner Archive, *That's Dancing* 1985. Web 2017. https://youtu.be/flt_JropsAA

Fosse, Bob. "Liza Minnelli - Mein Herr from Cabaret." *Cabaret*. 1972. Que No. Web 2018. <https://youtu.be/DgiOedirhcQ>

De Keersmaker, Anne Teresa. "Rosas Danst Rosas" (Parts 1-3). Théâtre de la Balsamine, Brussels. May 1983. Web. 18 December 2014.

Part 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkThEOYpofU>

Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UacylkU6OAM>

Part 3: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zS_kWttptS4

Fosse, Bob. *There's Gotta Be Something Better Than This*. Universal Music Group. Web. 13 December 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVh7MXmSwFo>

Goebel, Parris. *Level Up*. 2018. Warner Music Group. Web. 13 December 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dh-ULbQmmF8>

Grant, Chris. *Wrist Watch*. Upcoming. Web. December 15 2018. Independent.

Winghart, Andrew. *Cry Me a River*. Web. 13 December 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-I-SE6Q9Le0>

Winghart, Andrew. *Jarami*. Independent. Web. 13 December 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fXWtZB2MWLg>

Additional/ Supplemental Video Materials:

Firstenberg, Sam. *Breakin' 2: Electric Boogaloo*. 1984. Web. 19 December 2014. <http://www.veoh.com/watch/v14772319bGDbD2Dm>

Deren, Maya. "Meshes of the Afternoon". 1943. Web. 18 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSYOTA-ttMA>

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

- Deren, Maya. "Ritual in Transfigured Time". Performer: Hada Benedito. Web. 19 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IG5K65gkTU>
- Deren, Maya. "Meditation on Violence". Performer: Chao Li Chi. 1948. Web. 19 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bvwnkV3DFKY>
- Flatley, Michael. "Lord of the Dance". Dir. David Mallet. November 1999. Web December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WydKoVuDyw>
- Forsythe, William. "One Flat Thing, Reproduced" (Parts 1-3). Forsythe Company, Frankfurt, Germany. 2000. Web. 18 December 2014. Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cufauMezz_Q
- Part 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCbVTR-I5RQ>
- Part 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNebCPB9gqk>
- Hammer, M.C. "Too Legit to Quit". Capitol/ EMI Records. 1991. Web. December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFCv86Olk8E>
- Hammer, M.C. "You Can't Touch This". Capitol/ EMI Records. 1990. Web. December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otCpCn0l4Wo>
- Hudlin, Reginald C. *House Party. New Line Cinema* (Excerpt). 1990. Web. December 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JC_4l7bFKJk
- Knowles, Beyoncé. *Countdown*. Sony Music Entertainment. 2011. Web. 19 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2XY3AvVgDns>
- Lee, Coco. "Before I Fall in Love". 1999. Web. 19 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cBn4jhQupc&list=PLPSNOpj5j8b0aDNzjXz68pnN5JV Mhz5WL>
- Lee, Coco. "Do You Want My Love". 1997. Web. 19 December 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gl_ba8PWbUw
- Lee Coco. "Hip Hop Tonight". 2006. Web. 19 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s35V1r7MzEo>
- Robbins, Jerome. *Westside Story*. Mirisch Corporation. 1961. Web. December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Af3L9btBhuQ>
- Silberg, Joel. *Breakin'*. Metro Goldwyn Mayer. 1984. Web. 19 December 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mcn3ULXqRos>

Stone, Andrew L. *Stormy Weather*. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corporation. 1943. Web. December 2014. Excerpt 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8yGGtVKrD8 ; Excerpt 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl_MjxTUjGE

Wenders, Wim. *Pina*. Neue Road Movies. 2011. Web. 19 December 2014. <http://vimeo.com/57798400>

Wolfe, George C. "Bring in Da' Noise, Bring in Da' Funk" (Excerpt). 1996. Broadway. Web. 19 December 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dp_bM_c-BTQ

Woodruff, Bille. *Honey*. Universal Pictures. 2003. Web. 19 December 2014. <http://watch32.com/movies-online/honey-1163>

Description of Assignments and Student Assessment

▪ Readings and Viewings:

Students will have reading assignments and/ or an equivalent video viewing assignments throughout the semester that coincides with the course modules in choreography creation. We will be focusing on in-class practical movement studies related to the reading and/or video. There are two written assignments due this semester: one video concept submission assignment and one final concept submission assignment. There will be several in class assignments due throughout the semester. **Students should complete the assigned reading/ video viewing prior to the class meeting date for which it is listed, unless we are viewing together in class.**

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, 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 assignments. 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.

▪ Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments will be submitted/viewed in class. Exceptions will be made only in truly exceptional circumstances.

▪ Quizzes

On occasion, there may be an in-class planned or "pop" quiz at the beginning of class, based on the concepts learned in previous classes. (Late and absent students will not have the opportunity to make up the quiz.)

- **Midterm, 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 prior to the drop/add week (week 3) to ensure proper attendance.** Exams may consist of movement and written explanation and articulation. Please note the dates below for the specified midterm and final exam:

MIDTERM: THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1st (5:30PM, ASSIGNMENT TURNED IN BY 4PM)

FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19th (4:30PM-6:30PM, ASSIGNMENT TURNED IN BY 3:00PM)

- **Papers and Presentations**

All papers/ choreography submissions should be formatted based on the specific parameters and industry standards discussed in class. Please reference course discussions and review all course rubrics via blackboard for proper formatting.

Grading Breakdown

There are a total of 100 points for the quarter. Students earn the 100 points by completing the Midterm (20), Final (25), Assignments (15), In-Class Work (25), and Attendance (15). The Midterm and Final exams and group projects require individual and collective participation.

Letter Grade Requirements:

- In-class work: 10 pts
- Attendance: 10 pts
- Choreography Assignments: 10 pts
- Pop quizzes: 10 pts
- Midterm: 25 pts
- First draft final exam assignment: 10 pts
- Final Exam: 25 pts

Grading Scale:	95-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+	67-69 D+	59 and below F
	90-94 A-	84-86 B	74-76 C	64-66 D	
		80-83 B-	70-73 C-	60-63 D-	

***Elective Experience Zoom Performance** with all USC Kaufman Elective Dance Classes- In-Process Video Showing: **November 9, 2020** Time TBA

Course Schedule: Weekly Breakdown

Week	Topics/ Daily Activities	Homework	Deliverable/ Due Date	In Class
Week 1 August 20th	<p>Introduction to Course/ Course Overview</p> <p align="center">----</p> <p>Dance Film vs. Screen Dance: Understanding the Aesthetic Differences</p> <p align="center">----</p> <p>Viewing and Discussing Iconic Commercial Choreographies for the Screen</p>	Watch assigned Busby Berkeley and Andrew Winghart Videos	N/A	<p>Discuss Syllabus and Course Design/ Expectations</p> <p align="center">“What is the Difference?”</p> <p>Discussion of Dance Film vs. Screen Dance</p> <p align="center">What are the markers of “successful” dance works on camera?</p> <p align="center">Viewing and discussion of View Anna Teresa De Keersmaker’s “Rosas Danst Rosas” & Michael Jackson’s “Smooth Criminal”</p>
Week 2 August 27th	Structuring Dance	Choreographers 1, 2 & 3 Create 32 8-counts of phrase work to be utilized and shown in class.	Sept 3 rd 2020	<p align="center">“Marching Methodologies” How to structure dances effectively for solo and group performance.</p> <p align="center">—————</p> <p align="center">“What makes good choreography for the screen?”</p> <p>Building language for viewing dance: Additional viewing and discussion of iconic videos assigned</p>

<p>Week 3 September 3rd</p>	<p>Creating Choreography based on Structure</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Introduction to Midterm Assignment & Possible Guest Visit from Dane Martens regarding Department Resources</p>	<p>Choreographers 4, 5 & 6 Create 32 8-counts of phrase work to be utilized in class.</p> <p>-----</p> <p>At home: Begin identifying dancers, shoot dates and a location you plan to utilize in your midterm submission and be prepared to discuss/show your progress with Professor McDaniel on at least 1-2 min of the work by September 24th.</p>	<p>Sept 10th, 2020</p>	<p>Choreographers 1, 2 & 3 In Class Work/ Presentation Day</p>
<p>Week 4 September 10th</p>	<p>Creating Choreography based on Structure</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Editing Software with Dawn Stoppiello</p>	<p>READ: McPherson: 1- 20 & 23-40</p> <p>-----</p> <p>At home: Begin creating your written choreography submission and shot list. Continue identifying dancers, shoot dates and a location you plan to utilize in your midterm submission and be prepared to discuss/ show your progress with Professor McDaniel on at least 1-2 min of the work by Sept 24th.</p>	<p>Read by: Sept 24th</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Be ready to discuss choreography submission by Sept 24th, 2020</p>	<p>Choreographers 4, 5 & 6 In Class Work/ Presentation Day</p> <p>Choreographers 4, 5 & 6 In Class Work/ Presentation Day</p>

Week 5 September 17th		Utilize the day off to organize your shoot. ----- READ: McPherson 1-20 & 23-40	Be ready to discuss choreography submission by Sept 24 th , 2020 ----- Read by: Sept 24 th , 2020	
Week 6 September 24th	How to Create a Written Choreography Submission & Shot List ----- In Class Progress Check-In Date for Midterm Assignment & Discussion of McPherson 1-20 & 23-40	READ: McPherson 43-60 & 64-82 ----- Continue creating a written choreography submission based on your choreographed piece. Along with your written submission you will submit a 1-2 min visual submission of your choreography on video.	Written and Visual Choreography Submission Midterm Due: October 8th	Discussion of creating a choreographic production for the screen. In class practice at various shooting concepts and utilizing terminology.
Week 7 October 1st	Discussion of McPherson 43-60	IN CLASS WORK DAY	N/A	Discussion of McPherson 43-60
Week 8 October 8th	MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT DUE 4:00pm & Reflection on Your Process	N/A	MIDTERM ASSIGNMENT DUE 4:00pm	Viewing Midterm Choreography Submission Assignments In Class ----- Discussing your process and revelations.
Week 9 October 15th	Discussion of the final project	At home: Begin imagining your final project.	N/A	Learning from pros in the industry.

	TBD: Guest Lecture on Choreography for the Screen			
Week 10 October 22nd	How to create a digital treatment.	At home: Begin creating your digital choreography submission. Along with your digital submission you will submit a 3-4min visual submission of your choreography. Be prepared to discuss/show your plans for your final video submission on April 6 th or 13 th .	Final Digital and Visual Choreography Submission Due: November 19th (Be prepared to discuss and show progress by October 29th and November 5th.)	Discussion on submitting your vision as a choreographer for hire.
Week 11 October 29th	Tiny Dances in Tiny Spaces: TikTok	At home: Continue working on your digital treatment.	Final Digital and Visual Choreography Submission Due: November 19th (Be prepared to discuss and show progress by October 29th and November 5th.)	Select Choreographers present 1 min of Tiny Dances in Tiny Spaces TikTok Assignment
Week 12 November 5th	Tiny Dances in Tiny Spaces	At home: Continue working on your digital treatment.	Final Digital and Visual Choreography Submission Due: November 19th (Be prepared to discuss and show progress by October	Select Choreographers present 1 min of Tiny Dance in Tiny Spaces TikTok Assignment

			29th and November 5th.)	
Week 13 November 12th	Last Class Meeting: In Class Progress Check-In Date for Midterm Assignment	Progress check in for final exam assignment with Professor McDaniel & In Class Workday Continue creating a digital choreography submission based on your choreographed piece. Along with your digital submission you will submit a 3-4min visual submission of your choreography on video.	Final Digital and Visual Choreography Submission Due: November 19, 2020	Discussions on progress, troubleshooting and assignment check in.
Week 14 November 19th Final Exam 4:30-6:30pm (Final Project due by 3:30pm)	FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM	IN CLASS VIEWING OF ALL FINAL EXAM VIDEO SUBMISSION ASSIGNMENTS

Additional Polices:

Equity and Respect Policy:

Your professor is committed to equity for all students, and 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 and brave learning environment being 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. Please advise the professor of your gender pronoun, and the way in which you require being addressed. All students should use one another’s identified pronouns at all times.

Communication Policy

E-mails from official usc.edu addresses are to be used by students when corresponding with professor. *First ask yourself: Did I consult my syllabus?*

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory because the majority of the course material is covered in class. All students are expected to actively engage and participate (see In-Class Work Policy below) in each class, *including auditing students*. There will be one excused absence allowed (no doctor's notes are necessary). Tardiness of 15 minutes or more will constitute an absence. Further, three tardy attendances of less than 15 minutes will also constitute an absence. For group assignments, be sure to notify your fellow classmates of your absence (48) forty-eight hours prior to the class session. For time zone issues with class meetings and exams, contact professor for accommodation.

In-Class Work Policy

Be present: This is choreography class, and a bulk of our work will be done in class as a group, through embodied practice, and in partners/small groups for assignments and midterm/final projects. Students will contribute to the learning environment by dancing of course, completing in-class assignments, viewings, readings, giving peer feedback, and engaging in group discussions and oral, practical, and video presentations. Other work may include worksheets and responses to polls. Students are graded on thoughtful participation and completion of work. Make up assignments for in-class work are available for students with serious extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

Netiquette Technology Policy

Mobile phones/electronic devices MUST be placed on "Do Not Disturb" mode: Even in the Zoom space, unless devices are required for private, official DSP accommodations, do not use mobile devices during class time; If you check your phone, text message, make or take phone calls during class time, expect your grade to be affected negatively. Repeatedly turning off your camera to check text messages is not an ideal way to be present in class. Be mindful and present! Repeat offenders will be asked to leave class for that day and marked "absent."

Proper Attire for Dance Class

Comfortable clothing which does not hide your movement and body posture is required for technique based classes. No accessories or noisy jewelry which interfere with lectures and practice please.

Zoom Guidelines

Mute microphones at unless prompted by instructor. Unless instructed otherwise, students will dance in each synchronous Zoom class meeting. With this in mind, appropriate space and surroundings will be necessary (i.e. lying down on your sofa and eating is not an appropriate way to show up for Zoom Kathak class. Be prepared to dance in your space your space wisely and safely. Zoom recordings of class will be provided from time to time. You are expected to keep your camera on during synchronous zoom sessions. Contact professor well in advance of class if you need an accommodation or cannot keep camera on during class.

Synchronous session recording notice

Synchronous Zoom sessions will be recorded and provided to all students asynchronously.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. Class Recordings are not to be posted on any commercial website or social media platform, and are not to be shared in any way apart from for use of learning the coursework. Students' assignments and midterm/final projects will be recorded and shared, and each choreographer student's work may be shared on social networks only with the express permission granted by students performing in their works, and by the professor of record. Students are not to record other students' presentations or movement demonstrations, unless permission is granted by students and professor. Students are not to record other students' presentations or movement demonstrations, unless permission is granted by students and professor.

SCampus Section 11.12(B)

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

COVID-19 Resources

Consult the latest COVID-19 testing and health protocol requirements for on campus courses. Continuously updated requirements can be found on the [USC COVID-19 resource center website](#).

Academic Conduct and Support Systems:

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 Part B, Section 11, "Behavior Violating University Standards" <https://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b/>. 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>.

Support Systems:

Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

<https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/>

Syllabus for Danc 175: Section 22371

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255

Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. <http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. <https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/>

Sexual Assault Resource Center

For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: <http://sarc.usc.edu/>

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086

Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. <https://equity.usc.edu/>

Bias Assessment Response and Support

Incidents of bias, hate crimes and micro aggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/>

The Office of Disability Services and Programs

Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. <http://dsp.usc.edu>

Student Support and Advocacy – (213) 821-4710

Assists students and families in resolving complex issues adversely affecting their success as a student EX: personal, financial, and academic. <https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa/>

Diversity at USC

Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. <https://diversity.usc.edu/e12>

USC Emergency Information

Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, <http://emergency.usc.edu>

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime.

Provides overall safety to USC community. <http://dps.usc.edu>