

CHA Excellence in Research Grant Final Report

“Dance Dance Evolution”

Caroline Butcher

April 29th, 2023

Summary:

“Dance Dance Evolution” was an event fulfilling the practicum requirements of the Hip-hop Studies Graduate Certificate offered through the Department of Theatre & Dance. This event traced the embodied lineage of Hip-hop to one of its ancestral forms, the Lindy Hop, through movement instruction, freestyle movement research, and informational presentations. The primary goal of the event was to center Hip-hop culture and its contextual emergence from Black social and cultural spaces while creating a communal and educational space amongst participants. Important figures of each form were represented throughout the event through a rolling slide presentation, highlighting each form’s contextual and cultural history. CU Students and community members (not affiliated specifically with CU) were brought together in a collaborative learning space that promoted relationality and embodied contextualization.

The event took place in the stage space of the Charlotte York Irey Theatre which was lit in a way that simulated a social space, referring to the Lindy Hop’s emergence in the Savoy Ballroom and Hip-hop’s emergence at house parties and social gatherings. Specific movement and musical choices were curated with the help of the collaborators in a way that emphasized the connections between each form. The first portion of the event highlighted local Lindy Hop instructors Allison Frey and Kenny Nelson with the live musical accompaniment by students and alum from CU’s College of Music. Participants were introduced to variations on the Charleston (a foundational step of the Lindy Hop) while organized in a circle. Partnerships were not gendered and shifted regularly. Between segments of instruction participants were given time to integrate and practice the movement they had just learned, listening and responding to the music provided by the band. The second portion was led by CU MFA alums Taylor Madgett as the dance instructor and Kristen Holleyman as the DJ. Participants were offered moments of both instruction and practice, continuing to interact with the music provided by Holleyman. A freestyle emphasis was introduced in this section, emphasizing an individual approach to the movement while staying within the form’s specific framework.

The last portion of the event was an open dance floor in which participants were encouraged to dance improvisationally, applying what had just been practiced to a context of relationality and interaction. Holleyman skillfully blended music of both genres, aurally signifying what had been first practiced in the body. The social dance space curated at the end of the event allowed participants to move freely and socially whether as an individual or in physical partnerships with other participants. Ultimately this event was a culmination of both theoretical and movement research that centered context, relationships, and embodied expression.

Budget:

Teaching Artists: \$1,050.00

Stipend of \$350 each

Lindy Hop

- Allison Frey of

[Boulder Swing](#)

- Kenny Nelson of

[Swingin' Denver](#)

Hip-hop

- [Taylor Madgett](#)

Student Jazz Ensemble: \$500.00

Stipend of \$100 each

- Will Mcleod

- Sophia Stout

- Amruta Divekar

- Alex Loran

- Eddie Ness

DJ: \$350.00

Stipend of \$350.00

- Kristen Holleyman

Production: \$50.00

Stipend of \$50.00

- Anna Pillot

Miscellaneous: \$50.00

- Promotional and informational material

Total: \$2,000.00

Funding Sources:

Graduate Research in Dance Fund – \$1,000

CHA Micro Grant – \$400.00

Program Support Funds - \$600.00

*The Program Support funds will be split amongst Kristen Holleyman and Taylor Madgett (\$300.00 each); the remainder of their payments will be supplemented by funds awarded by the GRID.