

Dance in American Cultures

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Export date: 2026-09-05T17:13:38.281Z

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Unit 1 – Dance in American Cultures: An Introduction

1.1 Defining Dance in Cultural Context

Dance is a powerful form of cultural expression that reflects values, beliefs, and traditions. It serves multiple purposes, from religious ceremonies to social gatherings, and plays a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage across generations.

Key elements of dance include purposeful movement, rhythm, expressiveness, and structure. Cultural influences shape dance styles, while religious beliefs, social norms, and historical events contribute to the evolution and fusion of different dance forms.

Understanding Dance in Cultural Context

Role of dance in culture

- Dance is a form of human movement that involves purposeful, rhythmic, and expressive body motions
- Often performed to music or other accompaniment
- Can be spontaneous or choreographed
- Dance serves as a means of cultural expression and communication
- Reflects the values, beliefs, and traditions of a particular culture
- Conveys emotions, stories, and social messages
- Helps preserve and transmit cultural heritage across generations
- Dance plays a role in various cultural contexts, such as:
 - Religious and spiritual ceremonies (Hindu temple dances, Native American ceremonial dances)
 - Social gatherings and celebrations (weddings, festivals)
 - Rites of passage (coming-of-age rituals, initiation ceremonies)
 - Entertainment and performance (theater, concerts)

Key elements of dance

- Purposeful and intentional movement
- Dance movements are deliberately chosen and executed
- Differs from everyday, functional movements (walking, running)
- Rhythm and timing
- Dance often follows a specific rhythm or musical structure
- Movements are synchronized with the accompanying music or beat
- Expressiveness and artistry

- Dance conveys emotions, ideas, and narratives through body language and facial expressions
- Incorporates elements of creativity, interpretation, and personal style
- Structured and choreographed
- Dance routines are often carefully planned and rehearsed
- Follows a specific sequence of movements and patterns (ballet, tango)
- Performative nature
- Dance is typically performed for an audience or within a specific context
- Differs from spontaneous or social dancing (club dancing, impromptu dancing)

Cultural influences on dance

- Cultural values influence the purpose and meaning of dance
- Dance as a means of spiritual connection (Sufi whirling dervishes)
- Dance for social bonding (square dancing)
- Dance for storytelling (Balinese dance dramas)
- Religious beliefs may dictate the types of movements, costumes, and contexts in which dance is performed
- Sacred dances in Hindu temples
- Native American ceremonial dances (Ghost Dance, Sun Dance)
- Social norms and gender roles can shape dance styles and participation
- Separate dance forms for men and women in some cultures (Kathak in India)
- Gendered expectations in partner dances (male leads, female follows in ballroom dancing)
- Historical events and cultural interactions can lead to the evolution and fusion of dance styles
- Influence of African dance on Latin American and Caribbean dance forms (salsa, samba)
- Fusion of traditional and contemporary styles (modern ballet, hip-hop influenced by breakdancing)
- Geographic location and environmental factors can impact dance practices
- Use of specific materials or instruments based on local resources (coconut shells in Polynesian dances)
- Adaptation of dance movements to the physical environment (flat-footed Irish step dancing on hard surfaces)

Dance vs other art forms

- Dance often incorporates elements of music, such as rhythm, melody, and lyrics
- Music can dictate the tempo, mood, and structure of dance movements
- Live accompaniment or recorded music is commonly used in dance performances
- Costumes and visual elements enhance the overall expression and aesthetics of dance

- Traditional clothing (kimonos in Japanese dance)
- Masks (Indonesian topeng dance)
- Props (fans in Korean buchaechum dance)
- Dance can be inspired by or used to interpret literature, poetry, and oral traditions
- Ballet adaptations of fairy tales (Sleeping Beauty, Swan Lake)
- Dance dramas based on epic stories (Indian Ramayana and Mahabharata)
- Dance may be performed in conjunction with other performing arts
- Musical theater combines dance, acting, and singing (Broadway shows)
- Opera incorporates dance elements (ballet sequences in classical operas)
- Cultural festivals showcase dance alongside music and theater (Carnival in Brazil)
- Visual arts can capture and represent dance through static media
- Paintings and sculptures depict dance poses and movements (Edgar Degas' ballet dancers)
- Photography captures the dynamism and emotion of dance (Barbara Morgan's images of Martha Graham)

1.2 Overview of American Dance History

American dance has evolved dramatically since colonial times, blending European, African, and Native American influences. From social dances to modern and postmodern forms, it reflects the nation's diverse cultural heritage and societal changes.

Key figures like Isadora Duncan, Martha Graham, and George Balanchine revolutionized dance in America. Their innovations, along with social movements and global influences, shaped the rich tapestry of American dance styles we see today.

Historical Development of American Dance

American dance history timeline

- Colonial era (1600s-1700s)
- European social dances (minuets, quadrilles) introduced and adapted
- Native American ceremonial and social dances continue despite suppression
- 19th century
- Minstrel shows popularize African American dance forms in distorted, stereotypical manner
- Vaudeville stages feature variety acts including dance
- Modern dance pioneers (Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn) break from ballet's constraints
- Early 20th century
- African American dance styles (jazz, tap, swing) gain mainstream popularity
- Ballroom dances (foxtrot, waltz, tango) become social dance crazes

- Modern dance develops as a distinct art form (Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, Charles Weidman)
- Mid-20th century
- Ballet establishes itself in America with George Balanchine and the New York City Ballet
- Postmodern dance emerges, experimenting with chance and everyday movement (Merce Cunningham, Judson Dance Theater)
- Broadway musicals integrate dance as a central element of storytelling
- Late 20th century to present
- Hip-hop and street dance styles (breaking, locking, popping) emerge from urban communities
- Fusion of various dance genres creates new hybrid forms
- Globalization leads to increased cultural exchange and diversity in American dance

Key figures in American dance

- Isadora Duncan
- Pioneered modern dance by rejecting ballet's strict techniques and costumes
- Emphasized natural, expressive movement inspired by ancient Greek art
- Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn
- Founded influential Denishawn School and Company
- Incorporated elements of Eastern and Native American dance into their work
- Martha Graham
- Developed the Graham technique, a foundation of modern dance training
- Created psychologically and emotionally complex choreography
- George Balanchine
- Established neoclassical ballet style, emphasizing speed, precision, and musicality
- Co-founded the New York City Ballet, a leading American ballet company
- Alvin Ailey
- Founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater to celebrate African American culture and experience
- Created iconic works such as "Revelations" that blend modern, ballet, and African dance
- Merce Cunningham
- Pioneered postmodern dance, using chance procedures and abstract movement
- Collaborated with avant-garde composers and visual artists
- Judson Dance Theater collective
- Challenged traditional notions of dance, incorporating pedestrian movement and improvisation

- Included influential choreographers such as Trisha Brown, Yvonne Rainer, and Steve Paxton

Social, Cultural, and Artistic Context

Societal influences on American dance

- Industrialization and urbanization
- Migration to cities led to the development of dance halls and ballrooms
- Urban environments fostered the creation and spread of new dance styles
- Great Depression
- Federal Theatre Project provided funding for dance performances and education
- Socially conscious dance works addressed themes of poverty and inequality
- Civil Rights Movement
- African American dancers challenged racial segregation and stereotypes in the dance world
- Integration of dance companies and venues promoted diversity and equity
- Feminist movement
- Female choreographers and dancers asserted their creative agency and leadership
- Dance works explored gender roles, identity, and women's experiences
- Globalization and cultural exchange
- Increased exposure to international dance forms influenced American choreographers
- Collaborations between American and international dance artists became more common

Comparison of American dance styles

- Ballet
- Characterized by grace, precision, and technical virtuosity
- Relies on structured techniques and vocabulary (turnout, pointe work)
- Often tells stories through choreography and mime
- Modern dance
- Rejects ballet's rigidity in favor of natural, expressive movement
- Explores abstract themes and inner emotions
- Emphasizes individuality and innovation in choreography
- Jazz dance
- Rooted in African American vernacular dance and music
- Features syncopated rhythms, isolation of body parts, and improvisation
- Values personal style and expression

- Tap dance
- Focuses on percussive footwork and complex rhythmic patterns
- Draws from African and Irish dance traditions
- Often performed to jazz music or without accompaniment
- Hip-hop dance
- Originated in African American and Latino urban communities
- Includes styles such as breaking, locking, popping, and freestyle
- Emphasizes battles, cypher circles, and individual expression

1.3 Dance as a Form of Cultural Expression

Dance is a powerful way cultures express themselves. From traditional hula to modern hip-hop, dance movements, costumes, and music convey cultural meanings and stories. It's not just entertainment – dance reinforces identity, passes down knowledge, and reflects a society's values.

Dance also preserves cultural heritage. Traditional dances are living archives of history, with elders teaching younger generations. But globalization is changing things. While it spreads dance styles worldwide, it can lead to cultural appropriation. Still, international platforms help preserve threatened traditions.

Dance as a Form of Cultural Expression

Cultural expression through dance

- Dance is a powerful medium for expressing cultural identity and values
- Movements, costumes, and music convey cultural meanings and symbols (hand gestures in Indian classical dance)
- Participation in traditional dances reinforces a sense of belonging and shared heritage (hula in Hawaiian culture)
- Dance communicates cultural narratives and stories
- Choreography and gestures depict historical events, myths, and legends (Balinese Legong dance)
- Performances pass down cultural knowledge and wisdom to younger generations (West African griots)
- Dance serves as a form of nonverbal communication within a cultural context
- Specific movements and styles convey emotions, social roles, and relationships (tango in Argentina)
- Dancers engage in a dialogue with the audience and each other through their performances (flamenco in Spain)

Dance as cultural reflection

- Dance reflects a culture's worldview and belief systems
- Religious and spiritual dances embody sacred beliefs and rituals (whirling dervishes in Sufism)

- Secular dances mirror social hierarchies, gender roles, and moral codes (waltz in 19th-century Europe)
- Dance reinforces cultural norms and expectations
- Participation in certain dances may mark rites of passage or social milestones (quinceañera in Latin American cultures)
- Adherence to specific dance forms and styles reinforces cultural identity and conformity (ballet in Western classical dance)
- Dance can challenge and reshape cultural values and practices
- Innovative choreographers and performers push boundaries and question traditional norms (modern dance pioneers like Isadora Duncan)
- The evolution of dance styles reflects changing cultural attitudes and values over time (hip-hop and street dance)

Dance in cultural preservation

- Dance serves as a living archive of cultural history and memory
- Traditional dances encapsulate a culture's past experiences, triumphs, and struggles (capoeira in Afro-Brazilian culture)
- Oral histories and cultural knowledge are embedded within dance movements and narratives (Aboriginal corroboree in Australia)
- Dance education ensures the continuity of cultural heritage
- Elders and master dancers pass on techniques, stories, and meanings to younger generations (Kathak in Indian classical dance)
- Formal and informal training programs preserve and disseminate dance knowledge (Juilliard School, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater)
- Dance performances and festivals celebrate and showcase cultural heritage
- Community gatherings and cultural events feature traditional dances as a centerpiece (pow wow in Native American cultures)
- Public performances raise awareness and appreciation of a culture's dance heritage among wider audiences (Diwali celebrations, Chinese New Year parades)

Globalization's impact on dance

- Globalization facilitates the spread and fusion of dance styles across cultures
- Increased travel, migration, and communication enable dancers to learn and incorporate new techniques (Bollywood dance, K-pop choreography)
- Cultural exchanges and collaborations lead to hybrid and innovative dance forms (Afro-Cuban jazz dance, contemporary ballet)
- Globalization can lead to cultural appropriation and misrepresentation of dance traditions
- Commercialization and commodification of traditional dances may distort their original meanings and contexts (Haka in sports events)

- Misappropriation of sacred or culturally significant dances can cause offense and cultural erosion (Native American headdresses in music festivals)
- Globalization also presents opportunities for cultural preservation and revitalization
- International platforms and audiences raise awareness and appreciation of threatened dance traditions (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list)
- Cultural exchange programs and partnerships support the transmission and safeguarding of dance heritage (Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, National Dance Institute)

1.4 Methodologies for Studying Dance in America

Studying dance in American cultures requires a mix of methods. Researchers use ethnography to immerse themselves in dance communities, conduct interviews, and gain firsthand experience. Historical research digs into archives and traces how dance forms have evolved over time.

Interdisciplinary approaches bring in perspectives from sociology, psychology, and cultural studies. This allows for a deeper understanding of dance as a social practice, a form of expression, and a reflection of cultural values. These methods help uncover the complex role of dance in American society.

Methodological Approaches to Studying Dance in American Cultures

Methodological approaches for dance study

- Ethnographic and anthropological methods involve immersive fieldwork, participant observation, interviews, and cultural engagement to understand dance practices within their specific cultural contexts
- Historical research techniques encompass archival research, primary source analysis, tracing the evolution of dance forms, and contextualizing dance within broader historical and cultural frameworks
- Interdisciplinary perspectives draw from fields such as sociology, psychology, and cultural studies to examine dance as a multifaceted phenomenon shaped by social, cognitive, emotional, and cultural factors

Ethnography in cultural dance contexts

- Conducting fieldwork and participant observation
- Immersing oneself in the dance community through active participation in dance events, classes, and performances
- Observing and documenting dance practices, social interactions, and cultural norms within the community
- Building trust, rapport, and long-term relationships with community members to gain insider perspectives
- Conducting interviews and collecting oral histories
- Gathering first-hand accounts, personal narratives, and lived experiences from dancers, choreographers, and community members
- Documenting the cultural meanings, values, and significance associated with dance practices through in-depth interviews

- Analyzing interview data to identify recurring themes, patterns, and cultural insights that shed light on the role of dance within the community
- Engaging in cultural immersion and embodied experience
- Learning and participating in dance forms through direct physical engagement and practice, often over an extended period
- Gaining embodied knowledge and understanding of the cultural context, movement vocabularies, and expressive qualities of dance
- Reflecting critically on one's own embodied experiences, cultural positioning, and subjectivity as a researcher in relation to the dance community

Historical research of American dance

- Conducting archival research and primary source analysis
- Examining historical documents such as photographs, video recordings, dance notation, choreographic notes, and performance reviews
- Analyzing primary sources to reconstruct and interpret historical dance practices, aesthetics, and performance contexts
- Triangulating multiple sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the historical development and significance of dance forms
- Tracing the evolution and development of dance forms over time
- Identifying key moments of innovation, influential figures, and pivotal works that shaped the trajectory of American dance (modern dance, jazz dance, hip-hop)
- Examining the cultural, social, and political factors that influenced the emergence, popularization, and transformation of dance forms
- Analyzing the transmission, adaptation, and hybridization of dance practices across generations, regions, and communities
- Contextualizing dance within broader historical and cultural frameworks
- Situating dance practices within the larger context of American history, considering the impact of events, movements, and ideologies (civil rights, feminism, globalization)
- Examining the relationship between dance and other artistic, social, and political developments, such as music, fashion, and activism
- Analyzing the role of dance in shaping and reflecting American identity, values, and cultural narratives over time

Interdisciplinary analysis of dance

- Sociological approaches examining dance as a social practice and institution
- Analyzing the social structures, hierarchies, and power dynamics within dance communities, such as the relationships between dancers, choreographers, and audiences
- Examining the role of dance in shaping social identities, interactions, and group formations based on factors such as gender, race, class, and sexuality

- Investigating the ways in which dance reflects, reinforces, or challenges societal norms, values, and expectations surrounding the body, movement, and expression
- Psychological approaches exploring the cognitive and emotional aspects of dance
- Examining the psychological processes involved in learning, memorizing, and executing complex dance movements and choreography
- Analyzing the therapeutic and transformative potential of dance for individuals and communities, such as its ability to promote emotional well-being, resilience, and healing
- Investigating the role of dance in fostering self-expression, creativity, and personal growth, as well as its impact on body image, self-esteem, and identity development
- Cultural studies approaches analyzing dance as a site of cultural expression and contestation
- Examining the ways in which dance embodies, communicates, and transmits cultural meanings, values, and traditions (rituals, celebrations, social dances)
- Analyzing the role of dance in constructing, negotiating, and expressing cultural identities, particularly in the context of diaspora, migration, and globalization
- Investigating the ways in which dance challenges dominant cultural narratives, power structures, and stereotypes, serving as a form of resistance, subversion, and social commentary

Unit 2 – Native American Dance Traditions

2.1 Diversity of Native American Dance Forms

Native American dance traditions are deeply rooted in tribal cultures, reflecting spiritual beliefs and connections to nature. From the Navajo Yeibichai Dance to the Iroquois False Face Dance, each tribe has unique rituals that serve specific purposes within their communities.

These dances vary regionally, with Southwest tribes focusing on agricultural themes and Plains tribes emphasizing warrior traditions. Despite historical suppression, Native American tribes have preserved their dance heritage, which continues to play a vital role in cultural identity and spiritual practice today.

Native American Tribes and Dance Traditions

Native American tribal dance traditions

- Navajo (Diné)
 - Yeibichai Dance performed during the winter Night Chant ceremony to restore balance and harmony
 - Basket Dance celebrates the gathering of crops and the making of baskets, expressing gratitude for the harvest
- Hopi
 - Snake Dance performed to bring rain and ensure a bountiful harvest, featuring live snakes and intricate choreography
 - Buffalo Dance honors the spirit of the buffalo and its importance to the tribe, with dancers mimicking the animal's movements
- Pueblo tribes (Zuni, Acoma, Taos)
 - Corn Dance celebrates the planting and harvesting of corn, a staple crop central to Pueblo culture and mythology
 - Deer Dance honors the spirit of the deer and the hunt, with dancers embodying the grace and agility of the animal
- Plains tribes (Lakota, Cheyenne, Arapaho)
 - Sun Dance is a sacred ceremony for spiritual renewal and healing, involving fasting, prayer, and physical endurance
 - Grass Dance originated as a warrior's dance, now performed at powwows to showcase skill and style
- Iroquois (Haudenosaunee)
 - False Face Dance performed by the False Face Society for healing purposes, using carved wooden masks to ward off evil spirits
 - Women's Shuffle Dance is a social dance performed by women at gatherings, featuring intricate footwork and rhythmic patterns

Regional variations in dance styles

- Southwest
 - Characterized by intricate footwork and rhythmic patterns, with dances often tied to agricultural cycles (planting, harvesting) and spiritual ceremonies (rain-making, healing)
 - Examples include the Hopi Snake Dance and the Pueblo Corn Dance
- Great Plains
 - Emphasis on elaborate regalia (feathered headdresses, beaded clothing) and powerful, expressive movements
 - Dances often associated with warrior traditions (Grass Dance) and tribal identity (Sun Dance)
- Northeast
 - Dances frequently accompanied by singing and drumming, with a strong focus on community participation and social interaction
 - Examples include the Iroquois False Face Dance and Women's Shuffle Dance

Historical Context and Cultural Significance

Historical context of dance forms

- Pre-colonial era
 - Dances were integral to spiritual practices, social gatherings, and cultural traditions
 - Served as a means of storytelling, passing down knowledge (oral histories), and maintaining tribal identity
- Colonial era and forced assimilation
 - Many Native American dance practices were suppressed or banned by European colonizers and the U.S. government
 - Boarding schools aimed to eradicate Native American culture, including dance traditions, through forced assimilation
- 20th century and cultural revitalization
 - Native American tribes worked to preserve and revive their dance traditions in the face of ongoing cultural oppression
 - Powwows emerged as intertribal gatherings to celebrate and showcase Native American dance and culture, fostering pride and unity

Symbolism in dance costumes

- Headdresses and feathers
 - Represent spiritual connections, achievements, and status within the tribe
 - Eagle feathers are highly revered and awarded for acts of bravery or wisdom
- Beadwork and embroidery

- Intricate designs and patterns hold cultural meaning and tell stories, with colors and motifs often representing tribal affiliations and personal identity
- Bells and jingles
- Create rhythmic accompaniment and enhance the sensory experience of the dance
- Can also serve as a means of spiritual communication and prayer, connecting dancers to the divine
- Animal symbolism
- Incorporation of animal elements (fur, horns, shells) represents the dancer's connection to the natural world and the sacred
- Specific animals (eagle, buffalo, deer) may be honored for their qualities or significance in tribal lore, with dancers embodying their spirit through movement and costume

2.2 Spiritual and Ceremonial Dances

Native American spiritual dances are vital for connecting with ancestors, deities, and nature. These dances express gratitude, offer prayers, and facilitate healing rituals. Movements and rhythms hold deep symbolic meaning, representing elements of nature and spiritual entities.

Various types of ceremonial dances exist, like the Sun Dance, Ghost Dance, and Snake Dance. Each serves unique purposes, from renewal and reunification to bringing rain. Sacred objects, such as feathers and drums, play crucial roles in these rituals, enhancing spiritual connections.

Native American Spiritual and Ceremonial Dances

Dance in Native American spirituality

- Serves as a means of communication with the spirit world facilitates connection with ancestors, deities, and nature
- Enables the expression of gratitude, prayers, and petitions through movement and rhythm
- Performed for various purposes including healing rituals to restore balance and well-being, rites of passage (puberty ceremonies, weddings), and seasonal celebrations (harvest, solstice festivals)
- Dance movements and rhythms hold symbolic meaning with specific gestures and steps representing elements of nature, animals, or spiritual entities
- Rhythmic patterns evoke a trance-like state for spiritual journeying and altered states of consciousness

Types of ceremonial dances

- Sun Dance practiced by Plains tribes (Lakota, Cheyenne, Arapaho) typically held during the summer solstice
- Participants dance around a sacred tree, offering prayers and sacrifices symbolizing the renewal of life and spiritual connection to the sun
- Ghost Dance originated among the Paiute tribe in the late 19th century and spread to other tribes as a response to colonization and forced relocation

- Dancers believed the ritual would reunite them with deceased ancestors and restore their traditional way of life
- Banned by the U.S. government, leading to the Wounded Knee Massacre in 1890
- Snake Dance performed by the Hopi tribe in the American Southwest occurring in late summer (usually August)
- Dancers carry live snakes in their mouths as they move in a serpentine pattern believed to bring rain and ensure a bountiful harvest

Sacred objects in dance rituals

- Feathers, often from eagles, represent spiritual power and connection to the sky serving as a conduit for prayers
- Drums and rattles provide rhythmic accompaniment and symbolize the heartbeat of the Earth connecting dancers to the natural world
- Masks and headdresses depict ancestral spirits, animals, or mythological figures imbuing the wearer with their qualities and energy
- Dances often take place in circular areas, representing the cyclical nature of life and the interconnectedness of all beings
- Some tribes construct temporary structures (Sun Dance lodge) specifically for the ceremony
- Natural landmarks (mountains, rivers) may hold spiritual significance and serve as dance sites

Colonization's impact on spiritual dances

- Many traditional dances were banned or suppressed by colonial authorities and missionaries seen as "pagan" or "savage" practices incompatible with Christianity
- Forced assimilation policies (Indian Boarding Schools) aimed to erase Native American culture and spirituality
- Despite challenges, many tribes have maintained or revived their dance traditions with elders and community leaders passing down knowledge to younger generations
- Some dances have been adapted to incorporate modern elements while retaining their spiritual essence
- Today, Native American spiritual dances continue to serve as a means of cultural preservation, identity, and resistance against ongoing marginalization connecting participants to their heritage and the spirit world

2.3 Social Dances and Powwows

Native American social dances are deeply rooted in tribal traditions, serving spiritual and cultural purposes. These dances celebrate important events like successful hunts and harvests. Powwows emerged as intertribal gatherings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, often honoring returning veterans.

Powwows feature various dance categories, including traditional, fancy, and jingle dress dances. Music is integral, with drum groups providing accompaniment. These gatherings serve multiple functions, from preserving traditions to fostering community bonds and educating non-Native audiences about Native American culture.

Native American Social Dances and Powwows

Origins of Native American dances

- Native American social dances deeply rooted in various tribal traditions and ceremonies serving spiritual, social, and cultural purposes within tribes
- Dances performed to celebrate successful hunts, harvests (corn, buffalo), or other important events (weddings, coming-of-age ceremonies)
- Powwows emerged as intertribal gatherings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Early powwows often held to celebrate the return of Native American veterans from wars (World War I, World War II)
- Powwows evolved over time to include a wider range of social, cultural, and ceremonial activities (dancing competitions, cultural demonstrations, arts and crafts markets)

Categories of powwow dances

- Traditional dances
 - Men's Traditional Dance: Dancers wear regalia reflecting their tribe's warrior traditions (eagle feather bustles, beaded vests, moccasins)
 - Women's Traditional Dance: Dancers wear long, fringed dresses and dance with a graceful, swaying motion (buckskin dresses, shawls, fans)
- Fancy dances
 - Men's Fancy Dance: Dancers wear colorful regalia with bustles and dance with fast, intricate footwork (spinning, leaping, backflips)
 - Women's Fancy Shawl Dance: Dancers wear colorful shawls and dance with spinning and leaping movements (elaborate beadwork, fringed shawls)
- Jingle Dress Dance
 - Women wear dresses adorned with metal cones creating a jingling sound as they dance (hundreds of metal cones, colorful ribbons)
 - Dance believed to have originated as a healing dance among the Ojibwe people (inspired by a dream, used in prayer for healing)

Music in Native American dances

- Drumming and singing integral parts of Native American social dances and powwows
- Drum groups, consisting of several singers and drummers, provide musical accompaniment for dances (large, group-played drums)
- Songs often passed down through generations and may have spiritual or cultural significance (honor songs, prayer songs, victory songs)
- Different drum groups may have distinct styles and repertoires
- Northern and Southern style singing and drumming are two main traditions found at powwows (higher pitched vs. lower pitched singing, faster vs. slower tempos)

- Singers use vocables, or non-lexical syllables, in their songs (hey-ya, way-ha, yo-ho)
- Vocables often used in place of or alongside words in Native American songs (convey emotion, set rhythm)

Functions of powwows in communities

- Powwows serve as important gatherings for Native American communities to come together and celebrate culture and heritage
- Provide opportunities for social interaction, cultural exchange, and strengthening community bonds (reuniting with friends and family, making new connections)
- Often include vendor markets where Native American artists and craftspeople can sell their work (jewelry, pottery, textiles, paintings)
- Powwows play a role in preserving and passing on Native American traditions to younger generations
- Youth can learn dances, songs, and other cultural practices by participating in powwows (dance classes, drum workshops)
- Many powwows include specific events and categories for young dancers to encourage their involvement (tiny tots, junior divisions)
- Powwows can also serve as a means of cultural education and outreach to non-Native audiences
- Some powwows open to the public, providing opportunities for cultural exchange and understanding (cultural demonstrations, educational exhibits)

2.4 Contemporary Native American Dance

Native American dance has evolved, blending traditional elements with modern techniques. Choreographers like Rosy Simas and Emily Johnson create unique fusions, incorporating Martha Graham and José Limón influences into their cultural context.

Despite challenges like limited funding and stereotypical portrayals in media, Native American dance is gaining visibility. It serves as a powerful tool for cultural preservation and social activism, with dancers reclaiming narratives and educating audiences about their diverse traditions.

Contemporary Native American Dance

Modern dance influence on Native American dance

- Modern dance techniques incorporated into contemporary Native American dance
- Martha Graham technique emphasizes contraction, release, and floorwork
- José Limón technique focuses on fall, recovery, and use of breath
- Lester Horton technique includes fortifications and flat backs
- Native American choreographers adapt modern dance techniques to their cultural context and artistic vision by blending them with traditional Native American dance elements creating a unique fusion of styles

Notable Native American choreographers and companies

- Rosy Simas (Seneca) known for works like "Skin(s)" (2011) and "We Wait In The Darkness" (2014)
- Emily Johnson (Yup'ik) created pieces such as "The Thank-you Bar" (2009) and "Shore" (2014)
- Rulan Tangen and Dancing Earth produced "Of Bodies Of Elements" (2012) and "Seeds: RE GENERATION" (2018)
- Santee Smith and Kaha:wi Dance Theatre choreographed "The Mush Hole" (2016) and "Blood Tides" (2018)

Native American dance in popular media

- Stereotypical and inaccurate portrayals prevalent in Hollywood films like "Dances with Wolves" (1990) and "Pocahontas" (1995)
- Commercialization and appropriation of Native American culture remains a concern
- Native American dancers and choreographers work to challenge and subvert these representations by reclaiming their narratives and educating audiences about the diversity and complexity of Native American dance

Challenges for Native American dancers

- Limited funding and resources can hinder the growth and development of Native American dance
- Marginalization and underrepresentation in mainstream dance institutions persists
- Balancing cultural authenticity with artistic innovation presents a unique challenge
- Despite these obstacles, Native American dance is gaining increased visibility and recognition
- Collaborations with non-Native artists and organizations provide new opportunities
- Dance serves as a powerful tool for cultural preservation and social activism in Native American communities

Unit 3 – European Dance Influences in America

3.1 Folk Dances from Various European Cultures

European folk dances brought vibrant traditions to America, shaping our dance culture. From Irish step to Spanish flamenco, these styles influenced tap, clogging, contra, and more, preserving cultural heritage while evolving into uniquely American forms.

These dances served as social gatherings, helping maintain community bonds in new settings. European dance masters who immigrated to America shared their expertise, establishing dance education and contributing to the professionalization of dance in the United States.

European Folk Dances and Their Influence on American Dance

Characteristics of European folk dances

- Irish step dance features hard shoe and soft shoe styles with a rigid upper body and intricate footwork influenced tap dance and clogging in America
- English country dance emphasizes grace, elegance, and spatial patterns in social dances performed in lines or squares contributed to the development of American contra and square dances
- Scottish Highland dance includes solo and group dances (Highland Fling, Sword Dance) characterized by strength, agility, and precision influenced American folk dances and military drill routines
- Spanish flamenco combines passionate and expressive dancing, singing, and guitar playing influenced Latin American and Caribbean dance styles that later impacted American dance
- French ballet provides a codified system of dance techniques and positions with an emphasis on grace, precision, and storytelling laid the foundation for classical ballet in America
- Italian tarantella features lively, upbeat folk dance from southern Italy with quick, light steps and tambourine playing influenced American folk dances and popular social dances

Social contexts of folk dances

- European folk dances served as social gatherings and celebrations that helped maintain cultural identity and community bonds adapted to American settings (barn dances, community events)
- European immigrants brought their folk dance traditions to America which helped preserve cultural heritage in new communities and evolved and blended with other cultural influences
- European folk dances were taught in schools and dance academies which helped popularize and spread these dance forms and led to the development of uniquely American styles and variations
- European dance masters and teachers immigrated to America and shared their expertise, helped establish dance education, and contributed to the professionalization of dance

Steps of European folk dances

- Irish step dance basic steps include point, hop, skip, leap in reel, jig, and hornpipe rhythms

- English country dance figures include do-si-do, hand turns, stars, heys in dances (Virginia Reel, Sir Roger de Coverley)
- Scottish Highland dance basic steps include skip change, pas de basque, high cuts in dances (Highland Fling, Sword Dance)
- Spanish flamenco basic steps include golpe, planta, tacón in palos (rhythms) like Seguiriyas, Soleá, Bulería
- French ballet positions of the feet and arms with basic steps like plié, tendu, relevé
- Italian tarantella basic steps include tarantella step, tambourine step in dances (Pizzica, Tammurriata)

Legacy in American dance forms

- Irish step dance influenced the development of American tap dance and clogging and contributed to the popularity of Irish-American cultural events and competitions
- English country dance evolved into American contra and square dances and helped establish social dance traditions in American communities
- Scottish Highland dance influenced American military drill routines and marching band performances and contributed to the popularity of Highland Games and Scottish cultural festivals
- Spanish flamenco influenced the development of Latin American and Caribbean dance styles and contributed to the popularity of Spanish-themed dance performances and events
- French ballet provided the foundation for classical ballet training and performances and influenced the development of American ballet companies and choreographers
- Italian tarantella influenced American folk dances and popular social dances and contributed to the popularity of Italian-American cultural events and festivals

3.2 Ballroom Dancing in America

Ballroom dancing swept America in the early 20th century, evolving from upper-class entertainment to a widespread phenomenon. From the waltz to the foxtrot, these dances brought European elegance to American ballrooms, shaping social interactions and cultural norms.

The popularity of ballroom dancing has ebbed and flowed over the decades. It reached its peak in the 1940s and 50s, declined in the 60s and 70s, but has seen a resurgence since the 80s thanks to competitive dancing and TV shows.

History and Evolution of Ballroom Dancing in America

Evolution of ballroom dancing popularity

- Early 20th century: Introduced ballroom dances from Europe
- Waltz, Foxtrot, and Tango gained popularity among upper class society (Vanderbilts, Astors)
- 1920s-1930s: Witnessed rise of dance halls and ballrooms
- Increased accessibility for middle and working classes to participate
- Emergence of new dances like Charleston and Lindy Hop (Savoy Ballroom)
- 1940s-1950s: Considered Golden Age of ballroom dancing

- Influenced by Hollywood films (Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers) and big band music (Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman)
- Jitterbug and Swing became popular dance styles
- 1960s-1970s: Experienced decline in popularity
- Rise of rock and roll (Elvis Presley, The Beatles) and counterculture movements shifted musical tastes
- Ballroom dancing seen as old-fashioned by younger generations
- 1980s-present: Resurgence of interest in ballroom dancing
- Competitive ballroom dancing gained recognition as a legitimate sport
- Television shows (Dancing with the Stars) and movies (Strictly Ballroom) featuring ballroom dancing increased mainstream exposure

Ballroom Dance Styles and Their European Origins

Origins of ballroom dance styles

- Waltz
- Originated in Austria and Germany in the 18th century
- Characterized by 3/4 time signature and flowing, turning movements
- Foxtrot
- Developed in early 20th century United States
- Influenced by European Waltz and American ragtime music
- Smooth, progressive dance with long, gliding steps
- Tango
- Originated in Argentina and Uruguay in late 19th century
- Characterized by passionate, dramatic movements and close embrace
- Cha-Cha
- Derived from Cuban dance "Guaracha" in the 1950s
- Features lively, syncopated rhythm and compact, flirtatious movements
- Quickstep
- Evolved from Foxtrot in 1920s England
- Fast-paced, energetic dance with rapid, skipping steps and turns

Social and Cultural Impact of Ballroom Dancing

Ballroom dancing in social interactions

- Social etiquette and courtship rituals
- Provided structured environment for social interaction between men and women

- Strict codes of conduct governed dance floor behavior (no inappropriate touching) and partner selection (ladies' choice)
- Gender roles and expectations reinforced
- Traditional lead and follow roles - men lead, women follow
- Women expected to be graceful and responsive, men strong and decisive
- Class and racial divisions apparent
- Initially associated with upper-class white society (debutante balls)
- Segregated dance halls and events limited participation of minority groups
- Challenges to traditional norms emerged
- Same-sex ballroom dancing and role reversal challenged heteronormative expectations
- Integration of dance halls and events promoted racial and cultural mixing (Savoy Ballroom)

Influence on American dance forms

- Jazz dance incorporated ballroom elements
- Foxtrot and Charleston incorporated elements of African American dance
- Swing dance developed from fusion of ballroom and African American styles (Lindy Hop)
- Modern dance pioneers inspired by ballroom
- Early modern dancers drew from expressiveness and partnering of ballroom
- Choreographers Isadora Duncan and Ruth St. Denis incorporated ballroom influences
- Broadway and Hollywood musicals featured ballroom
- Ballroom dance sequences featured prominently on stage and film
- Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers popularized ballroom through on-screen performances
- Social dance trends continue ballroom influences
- Ballroom elements influence popular social dances like salsa, hustle, country-western

3.3 Impact of European Classical Dance Forms

European classical dance forms, especially ballet and modern dance, have deeply influenced American dance. These styles brought grace, precision, and emotional expression to the US, shaping the development of American ballet companies and training methods.

Key figures like George Balanchine and Isadora Duncan adapted European techniques for American audiences. Their work led to unique American styles, blending classical foundations with new ideas, and influenced Broadway, Hollywood, and beyond.

European Classical Dance Forms and Their Influence on American Dance

European influences on American dance

- Ballet
 - Originated in Italian Renaissance courts of the 15th century (Florence, Venice)
 - Codified in France during the 17th century under Louis XIV's reign
 - Characterized by grace, precision, and ethereal quality
 - Emphasizes turnout of the legs, pointe work, and virtuosic technique
- Modern dance
 - Developed in early 20th century rebelling against ballet's rigidity
 - Pioneered by Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis, and Ted Shawn
 - Emphasized natural, fluid movements and emotional expression
 - Incorporated elements from folk and ethnic dances (Spanish, African, Asian)

Principles of classical dance forms

- Ballet principles adapted in America
- Cecchetti method introduced by Enrico Cecchetti focused on anatomical principles and virtuosity
- Balanchine technique developed by George Balanchine emphasized speed, musicality, and athleticism
- Vaganova method introduced by Russian dancers emphasized strength, flexibility, and expressive port de bras
- Modern dance principles adapted in America
- Graham technique developed by Martha Graham based on contraction and release, spiral movements, and emotional intensity
- Horton technique created by Lester Horton emphasized flexibility, strength, and coordination through flat backs, lateral stretches, and fortifications
- Humphrey-Weidman technique developed by Doris Humphrey and Charles Weidman focused on fall and recovery, breath rhythm, and dynamism

Key European figures in American dance

- Ballet influences
 - George Balanchine (Russian-born) co-founded New York City Ballet, created neoclassical style emphasizing musicality and abstract movement
 - Antony Tudor (English) introduced psychological realism in ballet, choreographed works for American Ballet Theatre

- Léonide Massine (Russian) collaborated with Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, created character-driven ballets
- Modern dance influences
- Isadora Duncan (American, trained in Europe) pioneered free, natural movements and rejected restrictive clothing
- Ruth St. Denis (American, influenced by European and Asian cultures) co-founded Denishawn School, explored spiritual themes
- Mary Wigman (German) taught at Bennington Summer School of Dance, influencing American modern dancers with her expressive, percussive style

Legacy of European dance traditions

- Establishment of professional ballet companies
- New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet
- Regional companies across the United States (Boston Ballet, Houston Ballet)
- Proliferation of ballet training schools
- School of American Ballet, Joffrey Ballet School, numerous regional schools
- Incorporation of European training methods and syllabi (Vaganova, Cecchetti)
- Development of American modern dance companies
- Martha Graham Dance Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Paul Taylor Dance Company
- Integration of ballet technique in modern dance training
- Influence on Broadway and Hollywood
- Choreographers with classical backgrounds creating works for musical theater and film (Agnes de Mille, Jerome Robbins)
- Crossover of ballet and modern dancers into commercial dance genres (Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire)

Unit 4 – African American Dance Legacy

4.1 African Dance Roots and Influences

African dance traditions are a vibrant tapestry of movement, rhythm, and culture. From polyrhythmic structures to grounded stances, these dances embody spiritual significance, mark life events, and foster community bonds.

African dance has deeply influenced American dance forms. Jazz, tap, hip-hop, and modern dance all draw from African traditions, incorporating elements like improvisation, rhythmic complexity, and isolated body movements.

African Dance Traditions

Key elements of African dance

- Polyrhythmic structure incorporates multiple rhythms played simultaneously, allowing dancers to interpret and respond to different rhythmic patterns
- Call-and-response facilitates interaction between drummers, singers, and dancers, with dancers responding to musical cues and changes in rhythm
- Grounded and low center of gravity achieved through bent knees and forward-tilted pelvis promotes a strong connection to the earth
- Isolated body movements emphasize different body parts moving independently, with a focus on isolations of the chest, pelvis, and head
- Improvisation within structure gives dancers the freedom to express individuality while staying within the framework of the dance

African influence on American dance

- Jazz dance incorporates polyrhythmic elements, syncopation, isolated body movements, and a grounded stance derived from African dance traditions
- Tap dance draws from African dance's rhythmic complexity and percussive footwork, as well as the call-and-response dynamic between dancers and musicians
- Hip-hop dance adopts grounded movements, isolations, improvisation, and individual expression rooted in African dance
- Modern dance incorporates African-inspired movements, rhythms, and explores grounded and fluid qualities influenced by African dance traditions

Cultural significance of African dance

- Spiritual significance: Dances are often performed in religious ceremonies to communicate with ancestors and deities
- Rites of passage: Dances mark important life events (birth, coming of age, marriage) and facilitate the transmission of cultural values and traditions
- Social bonding: Participation in dance promotes unity, cohesion, and a sense of belonging within communities

- Storytelling and oral history: Dances serve as a means to convey stories, legends, and historical events, preserving and transmitting cultural heritage

Regional African Dance Styles

Regional styles in African dance

- West African dances (Guinean, Senegalese, Ghanaian) emphasize polyrhythms, percussion, and energetic, explosive movements, often associated with specific ethnic groups
- Central African dances (Congolese) feature fluid and undulating movements, with an emphasis on the lower body and pelvis, often performed in circular formations
- East African dances (Maasai, Rwandan) incorporate vertical jumping, leaping movements, vocalization, and chanting, often performed in lines or rows
- Southern African dances (Zulu, Ndebele) showcase high-energy, stomping, and kicking movements, incorporating props (shields, sticks) and often performed in gender-specific groups

4.2 Plantation Dances and Ring Shouts

Plantation dances emerged during slavery, preserving African heritage and fostering community among enslaved people. These dances served as a form of resistance, communication, and spiritual expression, maintaining cultural identity in the face of oppression.

Characterized by rhythmic movements, circular formations, and improvisation, plantation dances laid the foundation for African American dance forms. Their influence is evident in styles like the cakewalk, tap dance, and breakdancing, shaping the rhythmic structures and themes of black dance traditions.

Historical Context and Cultural Significance

Origins of plantation dances

- Emerged during the transatlantic slave trade and enslavement of Africans in the Americas
- Enslaved Africans brought cultural traditions, including dance and music, to the New World (drumming, call-and-response singing)
- Served as a means of preserving African heritage and identity in the face of oppression
- Performed in the limited free time enslaved Africans had, often on Sundays or during holidays (Christmas, Easter)
- Took place in secret, away from the watchful eyes of slave owners, in wooded areas or slave quarters
- Used as a form of communication, resistance, and community building among enslaved Africans
- Provided a space for social interaction, cultural expression, and sharing of information (coded messages, news of rebellions)

Cultural importance for enslaved Africans

- Maintained a connection to African roots and cultural identity
- Helped preserve African traditions, beliefs, and values in the face of forced assimilation and cultural suppression (ancestral veneration, polytheistic beliefs)

- Fostered a sense of community and solidarity among enslaved Africans
- Provided an opportunity for collective expression, shared experience, and emotional support in the face of adversity
- Incorporated elements of African spirituality and religious practices
- Served as a means of spiritual expression, healing, and transcendence in the face of dehumanizing conditions of slavery (ring shouts, possession trances)
- Functioned as a form of resistance and subversion against the oppressive system of slavery
- Provided a space for enslaved Africans to assert their humanity, agency, and cultural identity in defiance of oppressors (mocking slave owners through satirical dances like the cakewalk)

Movement Patterns and Influence

Movement patterns in plantation dances

- Characterized by a strong emphasis on rhythmic movement and percussive elements
- Dancers created complex polyrhythms through foot-stomping, hand-clapping, and body percussion (patting juba)
- Rhythms were often syncopated, with accents placed on the offbeats, creating a sense of tension and release
- Featured circular or semicircular formations, with participants moving in a counterclockwise direction
- Circular formation symbolized unity, continuity, and the cyclical nature of life
- Movements were often improvisational and individualized
- Dancers would take turns entering the center of the circle to showcase their unique styles and interpretations (solo breakouts)
- Movements included shuffling, sliding, and gliding steps, as well as more vigorous and ecstatic expressions (leaps, spins, shimmies)
- Call-and-response patterns were common in both the music and the movement
- A leader would initiate a movement or vocal phrase, and other participants would respond in unison, creating a dynamic and interactive performance

Influence on African American dance

- Laid the foundation for the development of various African American dance forms
- Influenced the emergence of styles such as:
 1. Cakewalk
 2. Charleston
 3. Tap dance
 4. Breakdancing

- Improvisational nature and emphasis on individual expression continued in later African American dance traditions
- Solo performances in tap dance
- Battles and freestyle elements in hip-hop dance
- Use of polyrhythms, syncopation, and call-and-response patterns shaped musical and rhythmic structures of African American dance forms
- Evident in jazz music that accompanied dances like the Lindy Hop and swing dances of the early 20th century
- Sense of community, resistance, and cultural identity fostered by plantation dances remained a central theme
- From the Harlem Renaissance to the civil rights movement and beyond, dance continued to serve as a means of asserting black identity, solidarity, and social commentary (Alvin Ailey's Revelations)

4.3 The Harlem Renaissance and Dance

The Harlem Renaissance sparked a cultural revolution in dance. African American artists like Josephine Baker and Bill Robinson broke barriers, introducing innovative styles that challenged norms. Their performances celebrated Black identity, blending traditional elements with new forms like the Lindy Hop and Charleston.

Dance became a powerful tool for expression and resistance during this era. It allowed African Americans to assert cultural pride, build community, and influence mainstream culture. The Harlem Renaissance's impact on dance paved the way for greater representation and appreciation of Black artists in American entertainment.

The Harlem Renaissance and Its Impact on Dance

Key figures of Harlem Renaissance

- Josephine Baker
 - African American dancer, singer, and actress who became an international sensation in Paris during the 1920s
 - Known for her exotic and provocative dance performances that challenged societal norms and stereotypes
- Bill "Bojangles" Robinson
 - African American tap dancer and actor who pioneered a new style of tap dancing
 - Incorporated jazz rhythms and a more upright posture into his performances (Fred Astaire)
 - Became one of the highest-paid African American entertainers of his time, breaking barriers in the entertainment industry
- Florence Mills
 - African American singer, dancer, and actress who starred in various Broadway shows during the Harlem Renaissance

- Known for her captivating stage presence and expressive performances that showcased her versatility as an entertainer (Blackbirds)
- The Nicholas Brothers (Fayard and Harold)
- African American dance duo known for their acrobatic and energetic performances
- Incorporated elements of jazz, tap, and ballet in their routines, creating a unique and dynamic style (Stormy Weather)
- Appeared in numerous films and stage productions throughout their career, inspiring future generations of dancers

Impact on African American culture

- Increased visibility and appreciation of African American artists
- The Harlem Renaissance provided a platform for African American dancers to showcase their talents to a wider audience
- Helped challenge stereotypes and racial barriers in the entertainment industry, paving the way for greater representation (Cotton Club)
- Celebration of African American cultural heritage
- Dance became a means of expressing pride in African American identity and roots, connecting with cultural traditions
- Incorporated elements of African dance traditions and rhythms, preserving and promoting cultural heritage (ring shout)
- Influence on mainstream American culture
- The popularity of African American dance styles during the Harlem Renaissance helped shape American popular culture
- Paved the way for greater acceptance and integration of African American artists in the mainstream entertainment industry (Broadway, Hollywood)

Emergence of new dance styles

- Lindy Hop
- Originated in the African American community of Harlem in the late 1920s, named after Charles Lindbergh's flight across the Atlantic
- Fusion of jazz, tap, and swing dance elements, characterized by its fast-paced, improvisational, and acrobatic movements
- Became a symbol of the vibrant social dance scene during the Harlem Renaissance, spreading to dance halls across the country (Savoy Ballroom)
- Charleston
- Popular dance style that emerged in the 1920s, named after the city of Charleston, South Carolina
- Characterized by its fast-paced, syncopated steps and leg movements, often performed to jazz music

- Became a sensation during the Harlem Renaissance, representing the exuberance and freedom of expression associated with the era (Fats Waller)

Dance as expression of identity

- Asserting cultural pride
- Dance provided a means for African Americans to celebrate their cultural heritage and assert their identity in the face of oppression
- Incorporated elements of African dance traditions, such as polyrhythmic movements and improvisation (Juba dance)
- Resistance and resilience
- Dance became a form of resistance against racial oppression and discrimination, allowing African Americans to express their emotions and struggles
- Demonstrated the resilience and strength of the African American community in the face of adversity (protest dances)
- Building community and social bonds
- Dance served as a unifying force within the African American community, bringing people together and fostering a sense of belonging
- Social dance events and performances created a supportive network for African American artists and activists during the Harlem Renaissance (rent parties)

4.4 Contemporary African American Dance Forms

Contemporary African American dance forms like hip-hop, stepping, and krumping are powerful expressions of culture and identity. These styles emerged from urban communities, reflecting the struggles and triumphs of African Americans through movement.

These dances have had a massive global impact, influencing popular culture and inspiring dancers worldwide. They serve as platforms for cultural pride, social activism, and community building, allowing African Americans to share their stories and celebrate their heritage through movement.

Contemporary African American Dance Forms

Contemporary African American dance forms

- Hip-hop dance
- Originated in the 1970s in the Bronx, New York City
- Influenced by African dance, jazz, tap, and funk styles
- Includes breaking (breakdancing), locking, popping, and freestyle
- Stepping
- Originated in the early 20th century among African American fraternities and sororities
- Involves synchronized percussive movements, clapping, and chanting
- Performed in lines or formations, often in a call-and-response format

- Krumping
- Developed in the early 2000s in South Central Los Angeles
- Characterized by exaggerated, expressive, and highly energetic movements
- Evolved from clowning, a dance style associated with birthday party clowns in the 1990s

Cultural contexts of dance styles

- Hip-hop dance
- Emerged as a response to the socioeconomic conditions in the Bronx during the 1970s
- Served as a means of self-expression and community building for African American and Latino youth
- Reflected the influence of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement
- Stepping
- Developed as a means of unity and pride within African American fraternities and sororities
- Used to showcase the strength and discipline of the African American community
- Served as a way to preserve and celebrate African American cultural heritage
- Krumping
- Emerged as a form of self-expression and emotional release for African American youth in South Central Los Angeles
- Provided an alternative to gang violence and a means of coping with social and economic challenges
- Reflected the influence of African American spiritual and religious practices (church, gospel music)

Global impact of African American dance

- Hip-hop dance
- Has become a global phenomenon, with dancers and enthusiasts worldwide
- Influenced popular culture, including music (rap, R&B), fashion (baggy clothing, sneakers), and media (music videos, movies)
- Incorporated into various dance competitions (World Hip Hop Dance Championship, Juste Debout)
- Stepping
- Has gained popularity beyond African American fraternities and sororities
- Featured in films (Stomp the Yard), television shows (A Different World), and live performances
- Adapted and incorporated into other dance styles (cheerleading, drill teams) and cultural contexts
- Krumping
- Gained international recognition through documentaries (Rize)
- Influenced the development of similar dance styles in other countries (Jumpstyle in Europe, Raggaeton in Latin America)
- Showcased in dance competitions and events worldwide (Krump Kings, Krump Sessions)

Dance as African American expression

- Contemporary African American dance forms serve as a means of:
- Asserting cultural pride and identity
- Challenging stereotypes and negative representations (gangsta rap, thugs)
- Promoting social and political activism (Black Lives Matter, police brutality)
- Building community and fostering a sense of belonging
- Dance provides a platform for African Americans to:
- Share their stories, struggles, and triumphs
- Celebrate their cultural heritage and traditions (African roots, oral history)
- Express creativity, resilience, and resistance in the face of adversity (racism, poverty)
- Connect with others and create a sense of solidarity (dance crews, battles)

Unit 5 – Social Dance in American History

5.1 Evolution of Partner Dances

American partner dances blend European, African, and Latin American traditions, creating a diverse and vibrant dance culture. From the graceful waltz to the energetic swing, these dances reflect America's melting pot of cultures and social changes.

Partner dances have played a crucial role in American social life, fostering community, romance, and self-expression. They've challenged gender norms, influenced popular culture, and continue to evolve, reflecting the dynamic nature of American society.

Historical Development and Cultural Significance of American Partner Dances

Historical roots of American partner dances

- European dance traditions significantly influenced American partner dances
- Waltz, a smooth and graceful dance in 3/4 time, originated in Europe and gained popularity in America
- Polka, a lively dance in 2/4 time, came from Central Europe and became a sensation in the US
- Schottische, a partnered folk dance in 2/4 time, derived from Germany and Scotland and found its way to American ballrooms
- African dance traditions contributed to the development of American partner dances
- Ring shout, a spiritual dance performed in a circle, influenced the formation of African American vernacular dances
- Cakewalk, a dance that mocked the mannerisms of white slave owners, became popular in minstrel shows and vaudeville
- Latin American dance traditions enriched the diversity of American partner dances
- Rumba, a sensual dance with Afro-Cuban roots, gained popularity in the US during the 1930s
- Salsa, a vibrant dance that combines elements of Cuban and Puerto Rican styles, emerged in New York City in the 1960s
- Cha-cha, a flirtatious dance derived from the Mambo, became a ballroom staple in the 1950s
- Native American dance traditions, such as round dances performed in a circular formation, influenced the development of certain American folk dances
- Fusion and evolution of dance styles in America led to the creation of new partner dances
- Jitterbug, an umbrella term for various swing dances, emerged in the 1920s and 1930s
- Lindy Hop, a dynamic and improvisational swing dance, originated in Harlem in the late 1920s
- East Coast Swing, a simplified version of Lindy Hop, became popular in the 1940s and 1950s
- West Coast Swing, a smooth and linear dance, evolved from Lindy Hop in the 1950s and 1960s

Social factors in dance development

- Immigration and cultural diversity played a significant role in shaping American partner dances
- Various ethnic groups (Irish, Italian, Jewish, African American) brought their dance traditions and influenced the development of new styles
- Urbanization and the rise of dance halls provided opportunities for social interaction and dancing
- Dance halls became popular venues for people to socialize, learn new dances, and find potential partners
- Technological advancements facilitated the spread of dance trends
- Radio broadcasts and television shows exposed Americans to new dance styles and popularized them nationwide
- Social norms and gender roles influenced the evolution of acceptable dance positions and movements
- Close-embrace dances (Tango) were initially considered scandalous but gradually gained acceptance
- Lead and follow roles in partner dances often reflected traditional gender expectations but have become more fluid over time
- Economic factors affected the accessibility of dance lessons and venues across social classes
- Dance studios and ballrooms catered to different socioeconomic groups, from working-class dance halls to upscale society clubs

Characteristics of partner dance styles

- Waltz
- 3/4 time signature creates a flowing and elegant feel
- Characterized by rise and fall motion and smooth, gliding steps
- Foxtrot
- 4/4 time signature allows for a mix of slow and quick steps
- Smooth and progressive movements with a strong partnership connection
- Tango
- 2/4 or 4/4 time signature emphasizes staccato and syncopated rhythms
- Passionate and dramatic movements with sharp head turns and pauses
- Swing dances (Lindy Hop, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing)
- 4/4 time signature provides a foundation for energetic and improvisational movements
- Characterized by bounce, swing-out patterns, and open-position turns
- Latin dances (Rumba, Salsa, Cha-cha)
- Various time signatures (4/4, 2/3, 4/4) create distinct rhythmic patterns
- Rhythmic and expressive movements with hip actions and complex footwork

Social and Cultural Impact of Partner Dances

Role of dances in social interactions

- Social bonding and community building
- Partner dances serve as a means of bringing people together and fostering a sense of belonging
- Group dances (line dances, circle dances) promote unity and shared experience
- Courtship and romance
- Partner dances provide opportunities for flirtation and physical intimacy
- Close proximity and nonverbal communication facilitate romantic connections
- Expression of individual and cultural identity
- Dance styles allow individuals to express their personality and creativity
- Participation in culturally specific dances (salsa, tango) reinforces cultural pride and heritage
- Challenges to traditional gender roles
- Lead and follow roles in partner dances have become more fluid and interchangeable
- Same-sex dance partnerships challenge heteronormative expectations
- Influence on popular culture
- Partner dances have been widely represented in music (jazz, big band, Latin genres), films (musicals, dance movies), and television (dance competition shows)
- Dance trends have shaped fashion, language, and social interactions beyond the dance floor

5.2 Dance Halls and Social Gatherings

Dance halls were the beating heart of American social life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. These vibrant spaces brought people together, crossing class and ethnic lines, to enjoy music, socialize, and discover new dance crazes like the Charleston and Lindy Hop.

Beyond just fun, dance halls reflected shifting cultural norms. They represented a move towards public entertainment and changing attitudes about social interaction, especially between men and women. Dance halls also played a crucial role in popularizing new music genres and dance styles.

The Role of Dance Halls in American Social and Cultural History

Social significance of dance halls

- Served as important social gathering spaces in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Provided venues for socializing, dancing, and enjoying music (live performances)
- Facilitated interaction between different social classes and ethnic groups (working-class, upper-class, various ethnicities)
- Played a significant role in developing and popularizing various dance styles
- Showcased live performances of ragtime, jazz, swing, and other popular music genres

- Gave rise to new dance crazes that emerged and spread (Charleston, Lindy Hop)
- Reflected the changing cultural landscape in America
- Represented a shift towards more public and commercialized forms of entertainment (dance competitions, exhibitions)
- Mirrored changing attitudes towards social interaction, particularly between men and women (courtship, romantic interaction)

Etiquette in dance halls

- Followed specific codes of conduct and etiquette expected of patrons
- Required proper attire (formal wear for men, dresses for women)
- Discouraged or prohibited certain behaviors (excessive drinking, inappropriate dancing)
- Varied social norms and expectations depending on the type of dance hall and patrons' social class
- Observed more relaxed social norms in working-class dance halls compared to upscale ballrooms
- Practiced racial segregation in many dance halls with separate venues for different racial groups (African American, white)
- Offered opportunities for courtship and romantic interaction
- Allowed for close physical contact between partners in dances (waltz, foxtrot)
- Followed highly codified etiquette around asking for dances and interacting with potential partners

The Impact and Legacy of Dance Halls in American Culture

Dance halls and popular dances

- Served as the primary venue for spreading new dance styles and music genres
- Introduced and taught popular dances in dance halls before spreading to the wider public
- Provided space for professional dancers and instructors to showcase and teach new steps and techniques (exhibitions, competitions)
- Contributed to the commercialization of social dancing
- Held dance competitions, exhibitions, and other events to attract patrons
- Established dancing as a legitimate form of entertainment and profession through the success of certain dance halls and performers
- Extended influence beyond the physical venues
- Depicted dance hall culture in popular media (films, music, literature)
- Left a lasting impact on American popular culture through the popularized dances and music

Community building through dance halls

- Provided a space for people to come together and form social bonds
- Developed a sense of community and belonging among regular patrons within their local dance hall

- Served as a meeting place for people from different backgrounds and social circles (class, race, gender)
- Played a particularly important role for marginalized communities
- Offered African American dance halls as a space for black musicians and dancers to perform and express themselves
- Provided acceptance and community for LGBTQ+ individuals within the dance hall scene
- Helped break down social barriers through the shared experience of dancing and enjoying music together
- Provided opportunities for people to interact and connect across lines of class, race, and gender
- Fostered a sense of unity and shared identity among patrons through the communal nature of social dancing

5.3 Popular Dances of the 20th Century

American social dances in the 20th century were more than just moves on a dance floor. They reflected the spirit of their times, from the rebellious Charleston of the 1920s to the disco-inspired Hustle of the 1970s.

These dances shaped American culture, challenging social norms and bringing people together. They influenced fashion, music, and even helped break down racial barriers. Their legacy lives on today, inspiring new generations of dancers and cultural movements.

Popular 20th-Century American Social Dances

Characteristics of American social dances

- Charleston
 - Originated in the 1920s, strongly associated with the Jazz Age and the spirit of the Roaring Twenties
 - Fast-paced, energetic dance featuring kicks, swings, twists, and a swinging rhythm that encouraged improvisation
- Lindy Hop
 - Developed in the late 1920s and 1930s in the African American community of Harlem, New York City
 - Fusion of various dance styles including the Charleston, tap, and jazz dancing
 - Involves a dynamic mix of 8-count and 6-count steps, with a strong emphasis on partner connection and creative improvisation
- Jitterbug
 - Umbrella term encompassing various swing dances that were immensely popular in the 1940s, particularly during World War II
 - Characterized by fast, bouncy movements, intricate footwork, and playful partner interaction
 - Includes variations such as the East Coast Swing, Jive, and Boogie Woogie
- Twist

- Popularized in the early 1960s, becoming a dance craze that coincided with the rise of rock and roll music
- Simple dance involving a twisting motion of the hips and knees, performed individually or with a partner without physical contact
- Hustle
- Emerged in the 1970s, heavily influenced by Latin and Ballroom dances and closely tied to the disco music era
- Partner dance characterized by fast, flowing movements, spins, and turns, with a strong emphasis on rhythm and stylistic flair

Historical context of dance emergence

- The Charleston and the Jazz Age
- Emerged during the Roaring Twenties, a period of economic prosperity, social liberation, and cultural experimentation
- Reflected the era's spirit of rebellion against traditional norms and the embrace of new forms of music and dance
- Lindy Hop and the Harlem Renaissance
- Developed in the African American community of Harlem during the 1920s and 1930s, a time of significant artistic and cultural flourishing
- Part of the broader Harlem Renaissance movement, which celebrated African American culture and creativity
- Reflected the social and political struggles of African Americans during the Jim Crow era and served as a form of cultural resistance and expression
- Jitterbug and World War II
- Became widely popular during the 1940s, coinciding with the events of World War II
- Served as a means of escape, enjoyment, and social bonding for Americans during the challenges and uncertainties of wartime
- Spread globally as American soldiers introduced the dance to other countries, contributing to its international popularity
- Twist and the rise of rock and roll
- Popularized in the early 1960s, alongside the growing influence of rock and roll music on youth culture
- Reflected the younger generation's embrace of new music and dance styles that challenged traditional norms of partner dancing and social interaction
- Hustle and the disco era
- Emerged in the 1970s, during the height of the disco music craze that swept across the United States
- Reflected the era's emphasis on style, glamour, and the vibrant nightclub culture associated with disco music

- Influenced by the growing popularity and mainstream acceptance of Latin music and dance styles in American culture

Influences on dance popularity

- Music
 - Jazz music's syncopated rhythms and improvisational nature heavily influenced the development and style of the Charleston and Lindy Hop
 - Rock and roll's driving beat, energy, and rebellious spirit played a significant role in shaping the Twist and its popularity among youth
 - Disco music's distinctive four-on-the-floor rhythm and lush orchestration directly inspired the creation and popularization of the Hustle
- Fashion
 - The Charleston's popularity led to the rise of flapper fashion, characterized by shorter hemlines, looser-fitting clothing, and a bold, modern aesthetic
 - Zoot suits, with their high-waisted trousers and long jackets, became closely associated with the Lindy Hop and the broader swing dance culture
 - The Twist's simplicity and informal nature allowed for more casual, everyday clothing to be worn on the dance floor, reflecting changing social norms
 - The Hustle's glamorous image was reflected in the era's flashy, form-fitting disco attire, which emphasized style and self-expression
- Media
 - Movies, such as "The Jazz Singer" (1927) and "Swing Kids" (1993), played a significant role in showcasing and popularizing social dances to wide audiences
 - Television shows, including "American Bandstand" and "Soul Train," exposed viewers to new dances, music, and fashion trends
 - Instructional books and videos, like Arthur Murray's dance lessons, made social dances more accessible and easier to learn for the general public
 - Music videos and live performances by popular artists further promoted and spread dance trends, contributing to their mainstream success

Legacy of social dances

- Influence on subsequent dance styles
 - The Charleston and Lindy Hop laid the foundation for the development of other swing dances, such as West Coast Swing and Rock 'n' Roll
 - The Twist's simplicity and emphasis on individual expression paved the way for the rise of freestyle dancing in the following decades
 - The Hustle's unique blend of Latin and Ballroom elements influenced the evolution of partner dances like Salsa, Cha-Cha, and Merengue
 - Contribution to the desegregation of dance venues

- The popularity of African American dances like the Lindy Hop challenged racial segregation and discrimination in dance halls and ballrooms
- Integrated dance contests and performances helped break down racial barriers, promoting cultural exchange and understanding
- Role in shaping American popular culture
- Social dances have been an integral and influential part of American music, fashion, and entertainment throughout the 20th century
- Dance crazes have often reflected and shaped broader cultural trends, such as the rise of youth culture, changing gender roles, and the sexual revolution
- The enduring popularity of social dances has contributed to the preservation, celebration, and evolution of American cultural heritage
- Continued relevance and revival
- Many iconic 20th-century social dances, such as the Lindy Hop and the Charleston, have experienced significant revivals in recent decades
- The timeless appeal and energy of these dances continue to inspire new generations of dancers, enthusiasts, and artists
- The legacy of 20th-century social dances lives on through dance education, performances, social events, and their lasting impact on American culture

Unit 6 – The Rise of Ballet in America

6.1 Early American Ballet Companies

Early American ballet faced unique challenges as it sought to establish itself in a new cultural landscape. Key figures like Anna Pavlova and George Balanchine played crucial roles in shaping the art form, while overcoming obstacles such as limited resources and a lack of trained dancers.

Cultural influences, including European immigration and the rise of modern dance, helped shape American ballet's distinct style. The art form adapted to reflect American themes and incorporated elements from jazz and popular entertainment, creating a unique blend of classical technique and contemporary expression.

Key Figures and Challenges in Early American Ballet

Key figures in early American ballet

- Anna Pavlova
 - Russian ballerina toured the United States in 1910 and 1924 inspiring the creation of early American ballet companies
- Adolph Bolm
 - Russian dancer and choreographer founded the Adolph Bolm Ballet in 1917, one of the first American ballet companies
- Catherine Littlefield
 - American dancer and choreographer founded the Philadelphia Ballet Company in 1935
- Lincoln Kirstein
 - American writer, impresario, and arts patron co-founded the School of American Ballet in 1934 with George Balanchine
- George Balanchine
 - Russian-born choreographer and ballet master established the School of American Ballet and New York City Ballet, shaping the direction of American ballet

Challenges for American ballet companies

- Lack of trained dancers
 - Addressed by establishing ballet schools (School of American Ballet) and importing experienced dancers from Europe
- Limited financial resources
 - Secured funding from wealthy patrons and sponsors and collaborated with other art forms (opera, musical theater)
- Competition with popular entertainment
 - Created ballets with American themes and influences to attract audiences and incorporated elements of modern dance and jazz to appeal to a wider audience

- Absence of a strong ballet tradition
- Developed a distinctly American style of ballet emphasizing athleticism, speed, and innovation in choreography

Cultural and Societal Influences on American Ballet

Cultural influences on American ballet

- Immigration of European artists
- Brought classical ballet training and traditions to the United States contributing to the establishment of professional ballet companies and schools
- Rise of modern dance
- Influenced American ballet to incorporate more expressive and individualistic elements challenging traditional ballet aesthetics and techniques
- Emergence of American music and themes
- Ballets incorporated American folk dances, jazz music, and contemporary subjects reflecting the cultural diversity and dynamism of American society
- Economic and social changes
- Great Depression led to increased government support for the arts through programs (Federal Dance Project)
- World War II brought a sense of nationalism and pride in American culture
- Popularity of Hollywood films
- Exposed audiences to dance and ballet through movie musicals creating a demand for spectacular and entertaining ballet productions

6.2 Influential American Ballet Choreographers

American ballet choreographers revolutionized dance in the 20th century. George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, and Agnes de Mille pushed boundaries, blending styles and infusing American themes into their work. Their innovations shaped ballet's evolution in the U.S. and beyond.

These pioneers left lasting impacts on dance. Balanchine's neoclassical style, Robbins' theatrical approach, and de Mille's narrative-driven choreography expanded ballet's expressive range. Their influence continues to inspire choreographers and captivate audiences today.

Influential American Ballet Choreographers

Pioneering American ballet choreographers

- George Balanchine
- Co-founded the New York City Ballet established it as one of the world's premier ballet companies
- Developed neoclassical ballet style
- Emphasized speed, clarity, and musicality showcasing the technical prowess of dancers

- Stripped away elaborate costumes and sets focusing on the purity of movement (minimalism)
- Choreographed numerous iconic works that remain in the repertoire of ballet companies worldwide ("Serenade", "Apollo")
- Jerome Robbins
- Choreographed for both ballet and Broadway showcasing his versatility as a choreographer
- Incorporated elements of jazz, modern dance, and theater into ballet expanding the boundaries of the art form
- Created works that explored American themes and culture, reflecting the experiences and aspirations of the nation ("Fancy Free", "West Side Story")
- Agnes de Mille
- Pioneered the integration of ballet with character development and storytelling, adding depth and meaning to dance
- Choreographed the dream ballet in the musical "Oklahoma!"
- Revolutionized the role of dance in musical theater elevating it from mere entertainment to an essential narrative element
- Created works that celebrated American history and folklore, drawing inspiration from the country's rich cultural heritage ("Rodeo")

Choreographic styles and innovations

- George Balanchine's neoclassical style
- Focused on abstract, plotless ballets emphasizing the beauty and purity of movement
- Emphasized the beauty of pure dance and movement, stripping away extraneous elements
- Collaborated closely with composers, such as Igor Stravinsky, to create works where music and dance were seamlessly integrated
- Jerome Robbins' theatrical approach
- Blended ballet with elements of jazz, modern dance, and theater, creating a more eclectic and accessible style
- Created ballets with relatable characters and narratives, engaging audiences on an emotional level
- Explored American themes and social issues, using dance as a means of commentary and critique
- Agnes de Mille's narrative-driven choreography
- Integrated ballet with character development and storytelling, creating works with complex plots and fully realized characters
- Drew inspiration from American history, folklore, and culture, celebrating the nation's diverse heritage
- Collaborated with composers and librettists to create cohesive works where dance, music, and narrative were equally important

Impact on American ballet evolution

- George Balanchine
 - Established the New York City Ballet as a world-renowned company, putting American ballet on the global map
 - Trained generations of dancers in his neoclassical style, creating a distinct American ballet aesthetic
 - Influenced choreographers worldwide to embrace abstraction and musicality, pushing the boundaries of classical ballet
- Jerome Robbins
 - Broadened the scope of ballet by incorporating diverse dance styles and theatrical elements, making it more accessible to mainstream audiences
 - Helped popularize ballet among mainstream audiences through his Broadway works, such as "West Side Story"
 - Inspired choreographers to explore contemporary themes and social issues, using ballet as a vehicle for social commentary
- Agnes de Mille
 - Demonstrated the potential for ballet to convey complex narratives and characters, expanding the expressive range of the art form
 - Elevated the status of dance in musical theater, proving that it could be an integral part of storytelling
 - Encouraged choreographers to draw inspiration from their cultural heritage and history, fostering a distinctly American voice in ballet

6.3 New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre

Ballet in America flourished with the rise of two major companies: New York City Ballet and American Ballet Theatre. These institutions shaped the landscape of American dance, each with its unique vision and repertoire.

NYCB, founded by Balanchine, championed neoclassical style and abstract works. ABT, on the other hand, embraced a diverse repertoire, from classical to contemporary. Both companies played crucial roles in establishing America as a ballet powerhouse.

History and Development of Leading American Ballet Companies

Development of major American ballet companies

- New York City Ballet (NYCB) founded in 1948 by choreographer George Balanchine and arts patron Lincoln Kirstein, growing out of the earlier company, Ballet Society, established in 1946
- Balanchine served as NYCB's artistic director and primary choreographer until his death in 1983, emphasizing neoclassical ballet technique and abstract, plotless ballets
- NYCB performed at the New York State Theater (now David H. Koch Theater) at Lincoln Center since 1964

- American Ballet Theatre (ABT) founded in 1939 by Lucia Chase and Richard Pleasant, initially named Ballet Theatre, adopting its current name in 1957
- ABT recognized as one of the world's leading classical ballet companies, known for its diverse repertoire including classical ballets (Swan Lake), neoclassical works, and contemporary pieces
- ABT performed at various venues in New York City, including the Metropolitan Opera House, before establishing its permanent home at the David H. Koch Theater in 2006

Key Figures and Their Roles

Influential figures in ballet institutions

- Lincoln Kirstein co-founded the New York City Ballet with George Balanchine, playing a crucial role in establishing and sustaining the company as its general director, overseeing administrative and financial aspects
- Kirstein collaborated with Balanchine in creating a distinctly American style of ballet, supporting the development of American dancers and choreographers
- Lucia Chase co-founded and served as principal dancer of Ballet Theatre (later American Ballet Theatre), shaping ABT's eclectic repertoire as co-director from 1945 to 1980
- Chase worked to maintain ABT's financial stability and artistic integrity, fostering the careers of numerous prominent dancers and choreographers

Repertoire, Artistic Vision, and Cultural Significance

Repertoire and impact of NYCB vs ABT

- NYCB's repertoire heavily influenced by Balanchine's neoclassical style and abstract ballets, with iconic pieces such as "Serenade," "Symphony in C," and "Jewels" emphasizing musicality, speed, and precision in dance technique
- NYCB collaborated with notable composers (Igor Stravinsky), creating a synergy between music and dance and helping establish New York City as a major center for ballet and modern dance
- ABT's diverse repertoire encompasses classical ballets (Giselle, Don Quixote), neoclassical works, and contemporary pieces, performing full-length classical ballets and commissioning new works from both established and emerging choreographers
- ABT nurtures the development of American dancers, provides opportunities for international guest artists, and is recognized as a cultural ambassador for American ballet, touring extensively both nationally and internationally

6.4 Regional Ballet Movement

Regional ballet companies blossomed across the US after World War II, bringing ballet to communities beyond major cities. These companies expanded access to professional performances and training, collaborating with local schools and organizations to provide educational initiatives and outreach programs.

Regional companies faced challenges like limited funding and competition with other entertainment options. They balanced traditional repertoire with contemporary works, fostered local talent, and used innovative approaches to engage audiences and secure support, contributing to their communities' cultural vitality and identity.

Development and Impact of Regional Ballet Companies

Regional ballet companies in mid-20th century USA

- Increased interest in ballet and dance education post-World War II spurred growth of regional companies
- Decentralization of ballet from major metropolitan areas (New York City, San Francisco) expanded access to the art form
- Local communities desired access to professional ballet performances and training in their own regions

Contributions of regional ballet companies

- Collaborated with local schools and community organizations to provide educational initiatives and outreach programs
- Offered ballet classes and workshops for students of various ages and skill levels to promote dance education
- Provided scholarships and financial assistance to support aspiring dancers and increase accessibility
- Presented accessible and diverse repertoire (classical ballets, contemporary works) to attract new audiences
- Engaged with local communities through events, talks, and open rehearsals to build connections and interest
- Partnered with other arts organizations (symphony orchestras, theaters) to cross-promote and expand reach
- Brought high-quality ballet performances to regions without prior access, enriching cultural vitality
- Contributed to the cultural identity and pride of local communities by showcasing talent and artistry
- Inspired and nurtured local talent, fostering appreciation for the art form and creating opportunities for dancers

Challenges for regional ballet companies

- Relied on a mix of ticket sales, grants, and private donations to fund operations and productions
- Navigated limited financial resources compared to larger, established companies in major cities
- Developed innovative fundraising approaches and cultivated donor relationships to secure support
- Competed with other entertainment options and changing audience preferences in an evolving cultural landscape
- Balanced traditional repertoire with new, contemporary works to maintain relevance and attract diverse audiences
- Utilized digital platforms and social media to connect with audiences, build loyalty, and expand reach
- Encouraged the creation of original works and fostered emerging choreographers to promote artistic innovation

- Collaborated with guest artists and other dance genres (modern, jazz) to push creative boundaries and inspire new ideas
- Adapted to evolving trends and styles in the broader dance world while maintaining classical roots and technique

Unit 7 – Jazz Dance: From Roots to Modern Moves

7.1 Roots of Jazz Dance in African American Culture

Jazz dance emerged from African traditions brought to America through slavery. It blended African rhythms, movements, and improvisation with new influences, creating a unique form of expression. This fusion reflected the resilience and creativity of African Americans in the face of oppression.

As jazz dance evolved, it became a powerful means of cultural preservation and resistance. It flourished in African American communities, spreading through dance halls, competitions, and migration. Jazz dance embodied the spirit of innovation and self-expression, challenging racial barriers and shaping American culture.

African Roots and Influences on Jazz Dance

African roots of jazz dance

- African dance traditions brought to America through the transatlantic slave trade
- Enslaved Africans from various regions and cultures, each with distinct dance traditions (West African, Central African, etc.)
- African dance traditions preserved and adapted in the New World despite oppression and cultural suppression
- African dance elements influenced the development of early African American dance forms
- Ring shouts, field hollers, and work songs incorporated African rhythms and movements (call-and-response, polyrhythms)
- African-derived social dances gained popularity (Juba, Cakewalk)
- African American vernacular dances evolved and contributed to the emergence of jazz dance
- Dances rooted in African dance traditions (Charleston, Black Bottom, Lindy Hop)
- Dances performed in African American communities and later spread to mainstream culture

Key elements from African dance

- Polyrhythmic movements
- Multiple body parts moving to different rhythms simultaneously
- Reflects complex rhythmic structures found in African music (drumming, percussion)
- Improvisation and individual expression
- Dancers encouraged to add unique style and flair
- Contrasts with more structured and uniform European dance traditions (ballet, ballroom)
- Call-and-response patterns

- Interaction between dancers and musicians or among dancers
- Derived from African musical and dance practices (responsorial singing, drum communication)
- Grounded and low-centered movements
- Bent knees, crouched postures, emphasis on footwork
- Reflects connection to the earth, a significant element in African dance (agricultural dances, fertility rituals)
- Syncopation and off-beat phrasing
- Movements emphasizing weak beats or between beats
- Aligns with syncopated rhythms prevalent in African-influenced music (ragtime, blues, jazz)

Social and Cultural Context of Jazz Dance

Social context of jazz dance emergence

- Jazz dance developed in late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Period marked by racial segregation, discrimination, limited opportunities for African Americans
- Dance served as means of expression, resistance, community building
- African American dance halls and clubs provided spaces for jazz dance to flourish
- Venues like Savoy Ballroom in Harlem became hubs for jazz dance and music
- Allowed African Americans to celebrate culture and showcase talents
- Jazz dance styles spread through traveling performers and dance competitions
- Dancers and musicians toured the country, exposing wider audiences to jazz dance
- Dance contests helped popularize and innovate jazz dance styles (Harvest Moon Ball)
- Influence of African American migration on dissemination of jazz dance
- Great Migration of African Americans from South to Northern cities in early 20th century
- Brought jazz dance to new urban centers, facilitating cultural exchange and evolution (Chicago, New York)

Role of dance in African American culture

- Dance as means of preserving and transmitting African cultural heritage
- African dance traditions adapted and maintained in face of oppression and cultural suppression
- Served as link to ancestral roots and way to assert cultural identity
- Dance as form of communication and storytelling
- Movements and gestures used to convey emotions, experiences, social commentary
- Reflected joys, struggles, aspirations of African American communities
- Dance as source of empowerment and resistance

- Provided outlet for creative expression and self-affirmation in face of racial oppression
- Challenged stereotypes and asserted humanity and artistry of African Americans
- Dance as unifying force within African American communities
- Brought people together for social interaction, celebration, shared cultural experiences
- Fostered sense of solidarity and collective identity
- Dance as catalyst for cultural innovation and cross-fertilization
- Jazz dance influenced and was influenced by other African American art forms (music, literature)
- Contributed to broader development of African American cultural expression and its impact on American culture

7.2 Jazz Dance in Vaudeville and Broadway

Jazz dance exploded onto the entertainment scene through vaudeville and Broadway shows in the early 20th century. These platforms gave jazz dancers a chance to wow diverse audiences with their energetic moves, helping the style gain widespread popularity.

Key figures like Josephine Baker and Bob Fosse pushed jazz dance forward, blending different styles and creating unique choreography. Their work in theater productions elevated jazz dance to an art form, influencing social dance trends and paving the way for formal training programs.

Jazz Dance in Vaudeville and Broadway

Popularization through vaudeville and Broadway

- Vaudeville shows provided a platform for jazz dance to gain exposure and popularity as part of variety entertainment that included dancers, singers, comedians, and acrobats in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Broadway productions incorporated jazz dance into musical theater choreography, often as a central feature in shows like "Shuffle Along" (1921) which introduced African American performers to mainstream audiences and "Runnin' Wild" (1923) featuring the Charleston dance craze

Influential dancers and choreographers

- Josephine Baker, an African American dancer, singer, and actress, gained fame in vaudeville and Broadway shows with her energetic and sensual dance style before becoming an international star in Paris
- Jack Cole, considered the "Father of Theatrical Jazz Dance," blended modern dance, ballet, and ethnic dance styles (Afro-Caribbean, East Indian) to create a unique jazz dance vocabulary and choreographed for Broadway shows and Hollywood films
- Bob Fosse, an influential Broadway choreographer and director, developed a distinctive style characterized by turned-in knees, jazz hands, and hip isolations showcased in acclaimed shows like "Sweet Charity" (1966) and "Chicago" (1975)

Impact on mainstream acceptance

- Vaudeville and Broadway shows attracted diverse audiences from various socioeconomic backgrounds, helping jazz dance gain mainstream acceptance and popularity

- Jazz dance elements from vaudeville and Broadway performances were incorporated into social dance trends (Charleston, Black Bottom) and further spread through Hollywood films
- The inclusion of jazz dance in professional theater productions elevated its status as a legitimate art form, paving the way for the development of jazz dance technique and training programs

Stylistic characteristics in performances

- Jazz dance choreography emphasized syncopation and rhythmic complexity, showcasing dancers' ability to interpret and embody jazz music
- Incorporated African American vernacular dance styles (Charleston, Black Bottom, Lindy Hop) and featured exaggerated, stylized movements emphasizing showmanship, athleticism, and individual expression
- Choreographers like Jack Cole and Bob Fosse integrated elements of modern dance, ballet, and ethnic dance (Afro-Caribbean, East Indian) into their jazz choreography, expanding the boundaries of the genre through a fusion of styles

7.3 Evolution of Jazz Dance Styles

Jazz dance has evolved from African American vernacular roots to diverse styles. It blends African rhythms, ballet technique, and modern expressiveness. The genre reflects social changes and musical trends, from swing era to contemporary fusion.

Key figures like Jack Cole and Bob Fosse shaped theatrical jazz. Others, including Gus Giordano and Luigi, developed influential techniques. Jazz dance continues to evolve, incorporating elements from various dance forms and cultural influences.

Historical Development and Evolution of Jazz Dance Styles

Evolution of jazz dance styles

- African American vernacular dance
- Draws upon African dance traditions and rhythms (polyrhythms, call-and-response patterns)
- Emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in African American communities
- Jazz dance in the 1920s and 1930s
- Influenced by the rise of jazz music (swing, big band)
- Features syncopated rhythms and improvisational movements
- Theatrical jazz dance
- Developed in the 1940s and 1950s for Broadway shows and Hollywood musicals
- Incorporates elements of ballet and modern dance
- Jazz dance in the 1960s and 1970s
- Reflects the civil rights movement and social changes of the era
- Integrates techniques from modern dance and ballet (fluidity, expressiveness)
- Street jazz and funk styles

- Emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, influenced by hip-hop culture and music videos
- Emphasizes isolations, sharp movements, and individual expression

Differentiation of major styles

- Classic jazz dance
- Originated in the 1940s and 1950s, characterized by precise, clean movements and lines
- Focuses on musicality and storytelling through dance
- Modern jazz dance
- Developed in the 1960s and 1970s, blending elements of modern dance and ballet
- Features fluid, expressive movements and explores abstract concepts
- Contemporary jazz dance
- Emerged in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, combining various dance styles (jazz, ballet, modern)
- Emphasizes individuality, versatility, and innovation in movement

Influences and Key Figures in Jazz Dance

Influences on jazz dance

- African dance traditions
- Polyrhythmic movements and grounded stance
- Call-and-response patterns and improvisation
- Ballet technique
- Turned-out positions and elongated lines
- Grace, precision, and control in movement
- Modern dance
- Expressive, fluid movements and abstract concepts
- Focuses on the body's natural movement and breath
- Hip-hop culture
- Street dance styles and isolations
- Emphasizes individuality and self-expression

Key figures in jazz dance

- Jack Cole
- "Father of Theatrical Jazz Dance", blended modern dance, ballet, and ethnic dance styles
- Influential in shaping jazz dance for stage and screen

- Bob Fosse
- Developed a distinctive style (turned-in knees, jazz hands, hat tricks)
- Choreographed iconic Broadway shows and films ("Chicago", "Cabaret")
- Gus Giordano
- Created the Giordano Technique (clean lines, precise movements, musicality)
- Founded Giordano Dance Chicago company and school
- Luigi
- Developed the Luigi Technique (opposition, body alignment) during his recovery from a car accident
- Emphasized the feeling of opposition and proper body alignment
- Matt Mattox
- Created the Mattox Technique, combining ballet, modern, and jazz dance
- Known for precision, speed, and dynamic range of movement in his choreography

7.4 Contemporary Jazz Dance

Contemporary jazz dance blends various styles, creating a unique fusion of classical jazz, modern, ballet, and hip-hop. It emphasizes musicality, dynamic movements, and individual expression, making it versatile and adaptable to different music genres and performance contexts.

This evolution has led to its prominence in popular culture, featuring in music videos, films, and stage productions. Notable figures like Mandy Moore, Twitch, and Mia Michaels have shaped the style, showcasing its ability to tell stories and convey emotions through movement.

Characteristics and Evolution of Contemporary Jazz Dance

Characteristics of contemporary jazz dance

- Fusion of various dance styles creates a unique blend
- Incorporates elements from classical jazz, modern, ballet, and hip-hop
- Emphasizes musicality and syncopation
- Dancers interpret and express the nuances of the music through movement
- Features dynamic and expressive movements
- Utilizes isolations, contractions, and extensions to convey energy and emotion
- Versatile and adaptable to different music genres and styles
- Encourages individual interpretation and style within the choreography framework

Fusion in contemporary jazz contexts

- Incorporates modern dance techniques
- Utilizes floor work, contractions, and release techniques for fluidity and organic movement

- Integrates ballet techniques
- Emphasizes precision, control, and elongated lines through pirouettes, leaps, and ballet-inspired movements
- Influenced by hip-hop and street dance styles
- Includes isolations, body rolls, and urban dance elements for a contemporary and edgy feel
- Fuses with world dance styles
- Incorporates African, Latin, and Asian dance elements to enrich cultural diversity and expand movement vocabulary

Contemporary Jazz Dance in Popular Culture and Notable Figures

Contemporary jazz in popular culture

- Featured in music videos as a means of visual storytelling and expression
- Enhances the artistic vision and message of the music (Beyoncé, Janet Jackson, Paula Abdul)
- Incorporated in films, particularly musical and dance-themed movies
- Demonstrates the versatility and adaptability of the style to various narratives ("Chicago," "La La Land," "Step Up" series)
- Utilized in stage productions, including Broadway shows and dance theater performances
- Combines contemporary jazz with theatrical elements to create engaging and entertaining productions ("West Side Story," "Fosse," "Cats")

Notable figures in contemporary jazz

- Mandy Moore: Versatile dancer and choreographer known for her work in films, television, and stage productions
- Twitch: Dancer and choreographer recognized for his unique style and contributions to "So You Think You Can Dance" and "The Ellen DeGeneres Show"
- Mia Michaels: Acclaimed choreographer known for her innovative and emotionally charged contemporary jazz pieces
- Tyce Diorio: Choreographer and dancer who has worked extensively in television, film, and stage productions, including "So You Think You Can Dance"
- Giordano Dance Chicago: Renowned contemporary jazz dance company known for its athletic and dynamic performances
- Hubbard Street Dance Chicago: Acclaimed company that combines contemporary jazz with modern and ballet techniques in its repertoire

Unit 8 – Tap Dance: America's Rhythmic Art Form

8.1 Origins and Early Development of Tap Dance

Tap dance emerged from a fusion of African and Irish dance traditions in 19th century America. This unique blend combined African rhythms and improvisation with Irish footwork, creating a new art form that reflected the cultural exchange between marginalized communities.

Early tap styles developed through minstrel shows, vaudeville, and Broadway. Despite racial segregation, tap became a means of cultural expression and resistance for African American performers, gaining recognition during the Harlem Renaissance and spreading through the Great Migration.

Historical Roots and Cultural Context of Tap Dance

Roots of tap dance

- African dance traditions
- Incorporates rhythmic footwork and percussive movements into the dance
- Utilizes improvisation and call-and-response patterns between dancers and musicians
- Draws influences from various African cultures, such as the Juba dance (featuring complex rhythms and body percussion)
- Irish dance traditions
- Features jigs and reels with intricate footwork patterns (e.g., toe taps and heel clicks)
- Emphasizes lower body movements while maintaining an upright posture
- Influenced by Irish indentured servants and immigrants who brought their dance traditions to America

Cultural exchange in tap

- Cultural exchange in urban centers during the 19th century
- African Americans and Irish Americans lived and worked in close proximity, often in urban neighborhoods
- Shared experiences of oppression and marginalization fostered a sense of community and cultural exchange
- Fusion of African and Irish dance elements
- African rhythmic sensibilities and improvisation blended with Irish precision and footwork patterns
- Created a unique amalgamation of styles that laid the foundation for tap dance
- Development of new dance forms
- "Jig dancing" emerged, combining African rhythms with Irish jig steps (e.g., shuffles and flaps)

- "Buck and wing" style developed, featuring fast footwork and acrobatic movements (e.g., leaps and turns)

Early Tap Dance Styles and Development

Elements of early tap

- Minstrel shows and vaudeville era (mid-19th to early 20th century)
- Featured exaggerated and stereotypical portrayal of African American dance by white performers in blackface
- Popularized "cakewalk" style, a high-stepping dance with exaggerated movements (inspired by enslaved Africans mocking their masters)
- Introduced "soft-shoe" style, a more subtle and graceful form of tap performed in soft-soled shoes
- Rhythm tap
- Prioritizes musicality and syncopation, creating complex rhythms with the feet
- Performed closer to the floor with more grounded movements, emphasizing the percussive nature of the dance
- Pioneered by influential dancers like Bill "Bojangles" Robinson (known for his smooth style and stair dance) and John Bubbles (credited with introducing syncopated rhythms to tap)
- Broadway tap
- Incorporates tap dance into musical theater productions, often as a featured element in choreographed numbers
- Characterized by a more upright posture and showy movements, designed to be seen from a distance on stage
- Influenced by jazz music and dance styles, such as the Charleston and the Lindy Hop

Context of tap development

- Racial segregation and discrimination
- African American performers faced limited opportunities due to segregation and racial prejudice
- Tap dance served as a means of resistance and cultural expression, allowing dancers to assert their identity and creativity
- Harlem Renaissance (1920s-1930s)
- Period of artistic and cultural flourishing in the African American community, centered in Harlem, New York
- Tap dance gained recognition as a legitimate art form, with dancers like Bill "Bojangles" Robinson and the Nicholas Brothers achieving widespread acclaim
- Great Migration
- Mass movement of African Americans from the rural South to urban centers in the North, seeking better economic opportunities and social conditions

- Spread tap dance to new audiences and venues, such as nightclubs and theaters in cities like Chicago and New York
- Influence of jazz music
- Tap dancers frequently collaborated with jazz musicians, creating a symbiotic relationship between the two art forms
- Rhythmic interplay between dancers and musicians drove innovation in tap dance, with dancers incorporating jazz rhythms and improvisation into their performances

8.2 Tap Dance Legends and Their Contributions

Tap dance legends like Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson, Fred Astaire, and the Nicholas Brothers revolutionized the art form with their unique styles and innovations. They pushed boundaries, breaking racial barriers and elevating tap to new heights in film and stage performances.

These influential tappers left lasting legacies, inspiring future generations of dancers. However, African American performers faced significant challenges, including racial segregation, stereotypical roles, and lack of credit for their contributions to the development of tap dance.

Influential Tap Dancers and Their Legacies

Influential tap dance legends

- Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson (1878-1949)
 - One of the most famous African American tap dancers of the early 20th century renowned for his light-footed, graceful style and signature "stair dance" routine
 - Helped break racial barriers by becoming one of the first African American performers to gain mainstream success and recognition
- Fred Astaire (1899-1987)
 - Iconic dancer, singer, and actor who revolutionized tap dance in film by blending it with ballroom dance to create a sophisticated and elegant style
 - Partnered with Ginger Rogers in many classic Hollywood musicals, elevating tap dance and making it an integral part of movie musicals (Top Hat, Swing Time)
- The Nicholas Brothers, Fayard (1914-2006) and Harold (1921-2000)
 - Dynamic duo known for their highly athletic, acrobatic tap routines incorporating leaps, flips, and splits
 - Performed in numerous films (Stormy Weather), stage shows, and television appearances, pushing the boundaries of tap with their high-energy showmanship

Styles and innovations of tappers

- Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson
 - Popularized a smooth, upright tap style emphasizing clean, precise footwork and rhythmic syncopation
 - Introduced the "stair dance," an iconic routine involving tapping up and down a staircase with incredible grace and precision

- Fred Astaire
- Blended tap with ballroom dance, creating a sophisticated and elegant style that showcased his impeccable timing and musicality
- Incorporated tap into cinematic storytelling, using innovative camera angles and editing techniques to showcase intricate footwork and choreography
- The Nicholas Brothers
- Developed a highly athletic, acrobatic tap style incorporating gravity-defying leaps, flips, and splits into their fast-paced routines
- Famous for their signature "no-hands" splits, where they leaped into a split without using their hands to support themselves

Impact on dance and culture

- Bill 'Bojangles' Robinson
- Helped break racial barriers by becoming one of the first African American performers to gain mainstream success and acceptance
- Influenced generations of tap dancers with his iconic style, signature moves, and charismatic stage presence
- Fred Astaire
- Elevated tap dance to new heights in Hollywood, making it an essential and celebrated element of movie musicals
- Inspired countless dancers, choreographers, and filmmakers with his innovative approach to integrating tap dance into cinematic storytelling
- The Nicholas Brothers
- Pushed the boundaries of tap dance with their high-energy, acrobatic performances that combined virtuosic footwork with athletic showmanship
- Paved the way for future generations of tap dancers to incorporate greater levels of physicality, creativity, and excitement into their routines

Challenges for African American tappers

- Racial segregation and discrimination
- Limited opportunities for African American performers to showcase their talents in mainstream entertainment venues
- Forced to perform in segregated clubs and theaters, often facing unequal pay, poor working conditions, and discriminatory treatment
- Stereotypical roles and typecasting
- Often relegated to playing subservient or comedic roles that reinforced negative stereotypes about African Americans
- Had to navigate the demands and expectations of white audiences and producers while trying to maintain their artistic integrity and cultural identity

- Appropriation and lack of credit
- White performers often copied, adapted, and popularized the innovative styles and moves of African American tap dancers without providing proper acknowledgment or compensation
- African American dancers rarely received the same level of fame, recognition, or financial success as their white counterparts, despite their significant contributions to the art form

8.3 Tap Dance in Film and on Stage

Tap dance took center stage in Hollywood musicals from the 1930s to 1950s. Stars like Fred Astaire, Gene Kelly, and the Nicholas Brothers wowed audiences with their fancy footwork, making tap a mainstream sensation and inspiring future generations of dancers.

On Broadway, tap became a crucial element in shows like "Anything Goes" and "42nd Street." It advanced plots, developed characters, and created spectacular numbers. Tap's presence in film and on stage increased its exposure, influenced its development, and helped preserve its legacy.

Tap Dance in Hollywood Musicals and on Broadway Stages

Tap dance in Hollywood musicals

- Tap dance prominently featured in Hollywood musicals from the 1930s to the 1950s
- Showcased the talents of performers and added excitement to musical numbers (elaborate routines, intricate footwork)
- Incorporated into storylines and character development (dance battles, romantic duets)
- Influential tap dancers in Hollywood musicals
 - Fred Astaire
 - Elegant and sophisticated style emphasized precision and musicality
 - Partnered with Ginger Rogers in numerous films ("Top Hat", "Swing Time")
 - Gene Kelly
 - Athletic and energetic approach to tap incorporated ballet and modern dance elements
 - Starred in films like "Singin' in the Rain" and "An American in Paris"
 - The Nicholas Brothers
 - Known for their acrobatic and fast-paced routines featuring leaps and splits
 - Featured in films like "Stormy Weather" and "The Pirate"
- Impact on American cinema
- Popularized tap dance and made it accessible to a wider audience (mainstream exposure)
- Influenced the style and aesthetics of musical films (lavish production numbers, innovative choreography)
- Inspired future generations of dancers and filmmakers (Gregory Hines, Savion Glover)

Representation of tap dancers

- Stereotypical roles for tap dancers in early Hollywood films
- Often portrayed as entertainers or supporting characters (nightclub performers, sidekicks)
- Limited opportunities for character development and dramatic roles (typecast as dancers)
- Racial stereotypes and discrimination faced by African American tap dancers
- Typecast in roles as servants, entertainers, or comic relief (maids, butlers, minstrel show performers)
- Segregated from white performers and audiences (separate dance numbers, "race films")
- Faced barriers in accessing equal opportunities and recognition (lower pay, lack of leading roles)
- Challenges in breaking stereotypes and expanding representation
- Efforts by tap dancers to showcase their versatility and acting skills (dramatic performances, non-dancing roles)
- Advocacy for more diverse and complex roles in films (speaking out against typecasting)
- Gradual shift towards more inclusive and respectful representation in later decades (increased diversity in casting)

Tap dance in Broadway shows

- Tap dance as an integral part of Broadway musicals
- Advanced the plot, developed characters, and created spectacular production numbers (dream ballets, dance breaks)
- Showcased the skills of performers and added to the overall entertainment value (show-stopping routines)
- Notable Broadway shows featuring tap dance
- "Anything Goes"
- Starred Ethel Merman and featured choreography by Robert Alton
- Included the iconic tap number "Anything Goes" performed by the ensemble
- "42nd Street"
- Adapted from the 1933 film and showcased elaborate tap routines
- Featured the show-stopping number "We're In The Money" with intricate tap choreography
- "Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk"
- Explored the history of African American experience through tap dance and music
- Showcased the innovative tap style of Savion Glover and addressed social issues
- Tap dancers who made significant contributions to Broadway
- Bill "Bojangles" Robinson
- Starred in "The Hot Mikado" and "All in Fun"

- Known for his solo tap routines and his influence on the art form (stair dance, elegant style)
- Gregory Hines
- Appeared in "Eubie!" and "Sophisticated Ladies"
- Helped revitalize tap dance on Broadway in the 1980s and 1990s (new works, mentoring young dancers)

Film's impact on tap dance

- Increased exposure and accessibility through film and stage productions
- Brought tap dance to a wider audience and sparked public interest (movie screenings, national tours)
- Inspired people to learn and appreciate the art form (dance studios, amateur performances)
- Influence on the development of tap dance techniques and styles
- Film and stage performances showcased innovative choreography and new approaches to tap (jazz-influenced rhythms, incorporation of other dance styles)
- Encouraged experimentation and creativity among tap dancers (development of individual styles)
- Contributed to the evolution of tap dance as an art form (fusion with contemporary dance, hip-hop influences)
- Preservation and transmission of tap dance knowledge
- Films and stage productions serve as historical records of tap dance (documentation of legendary performers and choreography)
- Provide opportunities for future generations to study and learn from master tap dancers (instructional videos, archived footage)
- Help maintain the legacy and cultural significance of tap dance (appreciation for the art form's history and pioneers)

8.4 Revival and Innovation in Modern Tap Dance

Tap dance experienced a revival in the late 20th century, fueled by Broadway shows, movies, and festivals. This resurgence sparked renewed appreciation for tap's history and cultural significance, rooted in African American and Irish American traditions.

Innovators like Savion Glover, Michelle Dorrance, and Jason Samuels Smith pushed tap's boundaries, blending traditional styles with hip-hop and contemporary influences. Their work, along with cross-genre collaborations and festivals, has kept tap vibrant and evolving in the 21st century.

Revival of Tap Dance in the Late 20th and Early 21st Centuries

Tap dance resurgence

- Factors contributing to the revival of tap dance
- Broadway shows featuring tap dance reignited public interest in the art form ("Black and Blue" in 1989, "Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk" in 1996)

- Increased visibility of tap dance in movies exposed wider audiences to the dance style ("TAP" in 1989, "Bojangles" in 2001)
- Growing number of tap dance festivals and workshops provided opportunities for dancers to learn, collaborate, and showcase their skills (New York City Tap Festival, Chicago Human Rhythm Project)
- Renewed appreciation for the art form's history and cultural significance
- Efforts to preserve and celebrate the legacy of early tap dance pioneers through documentaries, books, and tributes
- Increased recognition of tap dance as a uniquely American art form with roots in African American and Irish American traditions

Innovators in contemporary tap

- Savion Glover
 - Known for his innovative and powerful style that blends traditional tap with hip-hop and contemporary influences
 - Created and starred in the groundbreaking Broadway show "Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk" in 1996
- Michelle Dorrance
 - Founder of Dorrance Dance company, known for pushing the boundaries of tap dance through cross-genre collaborations and innovative choreography
 - Recipient of the prestigious MacArthur "Genius" Grant in 2015 for her contributions to the art form
- Jason Samuels Smith
 - Recognized for his unique blend of tap, hip-hop, and jazz influences that have inspired a new generation of dancers
 - Founder of A.C.G.I. (Anybody Can Get It) tap dance crew and festival, which promotes inclusivity and diversity in tap dance

Innovation in Modern Tap Dance

Evolution of modern tap styles

- Integration of various musical genres
- Hip-hop and rap influences have been incorporated into modern tap, as seen in the work of Savion Glover and Jason Samuels Smith
- Jazz and contemporary music collaborations have expanded the musical landscape of tap dance, exemplified by Michelle Dorrance's work with composer Gregory Richardson
- Expansion of tap dance techniques and styles
- Incorporation of sliding, gliding, and more grounded movements has added new dimensions to traditional tap vocabulary
- Experimentation with unconventional tap surfaces and settings, such as sand, water, and staircases, has pushed the boundaries of where and how tap dance can be performed

- Cross-genre collaborations and fusion
- Combining tap dance with other dance forms, like modern dance, ballet, and street dance, has created innovative and exciting new works
- Collaborations with musicians, visual artists, and technology have led to immersive, multimedia performances that showcase the versatility of tap dance

Preservation through tap events

- Tap dance festivals and workshops
- Provide opportunities for dancers to learn from masters and peers, fostering the exchange of ideas and techniques (New York City Tap Festival, Chicago Human Rhythm Project, L.A. Tap Fest)
- Showcase the diversity and evolution of tap dance by featuring both traditional and contemporary styles
- Competitions and showcases
- Platforms for emerging and established tap dancers to gain recognition and exposure ("Tap City", "So You Think You Can Dance")
- Encourage innovation and creativity within the art form by rewarding unique and groundbreaking performances
- Preservation and education
- Festivals, workshops, and competitions help preserve the history and legacy of tap dance by passing down knowledge and skills to younger generations
- Contribute to the ongoing evolution and vitality of the art form by nurturing new talent and ideas

Unit 9 – Modern Dance Pioneers

9.1 Isadora Duncan and the Free Dance Movement

Isadora Duncan shook up the dance world in the early 1900s. She ditched ballet's stiff moves for natural, flowy ones, dancing barefoot in loose tunics. Her style was all about expressing emotions and being yourself.

Duncan's ideas changed dance forever. She encouraged dancers to move freely, inspired by nature and ancient Greek art. This paved the way for modern dance, influencing future artists to break rules and find their own unique styles.

Isadora Duncan and the Free Dance Movement

Isadora Duncan's modern dance revolution

- Isadora Duncan (1877-1927) pioneered modern dance by breaking away from rigid classical ballet conventions and developing a new style emphasizing natural, fluid movements
- Rejected strict ballet technique and artificial movements by abandoning corsets, tutus, and pointe shoes in favor of dancing barefoot, wearing loose-fitting tunics inspired by ancient Greek attire
- Emphasized expressing emotions and individual creativity through dance, believing it should be a natural extension of human movement and encouraging dancers to find their own unique style and interpretation

Elements of Duncan's dance philosophy

- Promoted natural movement based on organic motions, utilizing breath, gravity, and momentum to create fluid, expressive motion instead of constrained ballet movements
- Encouraged dancers to express emotions and individuality through movement as a means of personal expression and communication, emphasizing connecting with one's inner self and conveying authentic feelings
- Drew inspiration from ancient Greek art, particularly sculptures and vase paintings, admiring the natural, flowing lines and poses depicted and incorporating elements of Greek aesthetic into her dance style and costuming

Impact of Free Dance Movement

- Revolutionized dance by challenging established classical ballet conventions and paving the way for modern dance as a distinct art form
- Emphasized individual expression and creativity in dance, encouraging dancers to break free from rigid techniques and explore unique styles, inspiring future generations to push dance boundaries
- Influenced development of various modern dance techniques and styles, laying the foundation for other modern dance pioneers (Ruth St. Denis, Ted Shawn) and contributing to the growth and diversification of modern dance throughout the 20th century

Context of Duncan's artistic vision

- Emerged during early 20th century social and cultural change, with women's suffrage movement and gender equality push influencing her ideas about female empowerment and self-expression, along with prevalent interest in ancient Greek culture and aesthetics in arts and intellectual circles
- Career coincided with rise of modernism in the arts, her unconventional approach aligning with modernist spirit of breaking tradition and exploring new forms of expression
- Performances met with both praise for innovative style and expressive approach, and controversy, challenging prevailing norms of dance and female propriety

9.2 Martha Graham and the Graham Technique

Martha Graham revolutionized dance with her innovative techniques and expressive choreography. She developed a unique movement vocabulary based on contraction, release, spirals, and floor work, breaking away from classical ballet's rigidity.

Graham's work explored deep psychological themes, drawing from Greek mythology, American history, and personal experiences. Her influence continues through her dance company and technique, inspiring generations of dancers to push the boundaries of physical and emotional expression.

Martha Graham's Contributions to Modern Dance

Core principles of Graham Technique

- Contraction and release
 - Contraction involves rounding the spine, pulling the navel towards the spine, reflecting the exhalation of breath
 - Release involves lengthening the spine, opening the chest and back, reflecting the inhalation of breath
- Represents the cycle of life, the ebb and flow of energy and emotion
- Spirals
 - Twisting and rotating movements of the torso create dynamic tension and energy in the body
 - Allows for fluid transitions between movements, enhancing the expressive potential of the dancer
 - Spirals can be initiated from various parts of the body (pelvis, ribcage, shoulders) and can move in different directions
- Floor work
 - Utilizes the floor as a supportive surface for movement, emphasizing the connection between the body and the earth
 - Includes falls, rolls, and recoveries, which challenge the dancer's strength, flexibility, and spatial awareness
 - Floor work adds a grounded, primal quality to the movement and expands the range of choreographic possibilities

Martha Graham's modern dance contributions

- Pioneered a new movement vocabulary that broke away from the rigidity and formality of classical ballet
- Developed a unique technique based on the principles of contraction and release, spirals, and floor work
- Explored psychological and emotional themes, using dance as a means of expressing the inner landscape of the human psyche
- Collaborated with composers (Aaron Copland), visual artists (Isamu Noguchi), and designers to create multi-disciplinary performances
- Established the Martha Graham Dance Company in 1926, providing a platform for the development and performance of modern dance works
- Trained generations of dancers and choreographers in the Graham Technique, ensuring the continuity and evolution of her artistic vision

Psychological themes in Graham's choreography

- Greek mythology and tragedy
- Drew inspiration from ancient Greek stories and archetypes to explore universal themes of love, loss, betrayal, and redemption
- Examples: "Cave of the Heart" (1946) based on the story of Medea, "Night Journey" (1947) based on the story of Oedipus and Jocasta
- American history and identity
- Examined the American experience through the lens of dance, addressing social and political issues
- Examples: "Appalachian Spring" (1944) celebrating the American pioneer spirit, "Chronicle" (1936) commenting on the rise of fascism
- Personal struggles and triumphs
- Drew from her own life experiences and emotions to explore themes of individuality, femininity, and the search for meaning
- Examples: "Lamentation" (1930) expressing grief and sorrow, "Errand into the Maze" (1947) depicting a journey of self-discovery and confrontation with fear

Graham's influence on modern dance

- Established the Graham Technique as a foundation for modern dance training, influencing countless dancers and choreographers
- Expanded the boundaries of modern dance by pushing the limits of physical and emotional expression through movement
- Legacy continues through the Martha Graham Dance Company, which performs her works, commissions new pieces, and preserves the Graham Technique
- Serves as a model for other modern dance companies around the world, inspiring future generations to explore new possibilities in dance

9.3 Doris Humphrey and José Limón

Doris Humphrey revolutionized dance with her theory of fall and recovery. She emphasized natural movement cycles, breath rhythm, and weight manipulation, creating a dynamic and expressive dance style that broke from traditional ballet forms.

Humphrey's collaboration with José Limón further developed these principles, blending her theories with his powerful dancing. Their partnership shaped modern dance, influencing generations of dancers and choreographers with their innovative approaches to movement and storytelling.

Doris Humphrey's Dance Theory

Key principles of Humphrey's theory

- Fall and recovery
- Natural cycle of falling and recovering forms the basis of all movement
- Dancers initiate movement by surrendering to gravity and then recover from the fall
- Creates a sense of tension and release in the dance (suspension and resolution)
- Breath rhythm
- Incorporates the natural rhythm of breathing into choreography
- Movements often originate from the torso, reflecting the expansion and contraction of the lungs
- Helps create a sense of organic flow in the dance (ebb and flow)
- Use of weight
- Emphasizes the use of the body's weight to create dynamic and expressive movements
- Dancers surrender to gravity and use their weight to generate momentum (falling, swinging, suspending)
- Conscious manipulation of weight allows for a wide range of movement qualities (light, strong, sustained, sudden)

Humphrey-Limón collaboration

- Began working together in the 1930s with Humphrey as choreographer and Limón as leading male dancer
- Developed a close artistic partnership, with Humphrey creating works showcasing Limón's powerful and expressive dancing
- Limón helped refine and expand Humphrey's dance theories, particularly the use of weight and the male dancer's role
- Established the Humphrey-Limón Company, which became a leading force in American modern dance (1940s-1950s)

Choreographic approaches of Humphrey vs Limón

- Humphrey's approach

- Emphasized fall and recovery, breath rhythm, and weight
- Explored social and political themes (impact of war, struggle for human dignity)
- Developed movement motifs that became hallmarks of her style (arc, spoke)
- Limón's approach
- Built upon Humphrey's principles but incorporated elements of his Mexican heritage and male perspective
- Explored themes of masculinity, heroism, and the human condition
- Developed a distinctive vocabulary emphasizing weight, gravity, and the pelvis as the center of movement
- Expanded the range of movement possibilities in modern dance by introducing new concepts (fall and recovery, breath rhythm, conscious manipulation of weight)

Significance of Humphrey-Limón legacy

- Played a crucial role in the development of American modern dance
- Helped establish modern dance as a distinct art form, separate from ballet and other styles
- Served as a training ground for influential dancers and choreographers (Merce Cunningham, Alvin Ailey)
- Dance theories and techniques continue to be taught and practiced worldwide
- Emphasis on the expressive potential of the human body and exploration of socially relevant themes set the stage for future generations of modern dance artists

9.4 Lester Horton and West Coast Modern Dance

Lester Horton's technique blends diverse cultural influences with anatomical principles. It's a unique approach that fuses Native American, Afro-Caribbean, and Asian dance styles, emphasizing body isolation, opposition, and resistance.

Horton's impact on West Coast dance was huge. He started one of the first racially integrated dance companies in the US, developed a distinctive modern style, and influenced countless dancers and choreographers, shaping American dance for generations.

Lester Horton Technique

Elements of Lester Horton Technique

- Fuses diverse cultural influences including Native American dance, Afro-Caribbean dance (rumba, samba), Balinese dance, and Japanese theater (kabuki, noh)
- Emphasizes anatomical principles such as isolation of body parts, opposition and resistance, flat backs, lateral stretches, and fortifications (strengthening exercises like flat back)
- Uses a codified technique with specific vocabulary and unique terminology for movements and positions (hinges, coccyx balance, lateral T)
- Focuses on emotional expressiveness and dramatic intensity to convey powerful themes and narratives

Horton's impact on West Coast dance

- Established the Lester Horton Dance Theater in Los Angeles (1932), one of the first racially integrated dance companies in the United States
- Developed a distinctive modern dance style incorporating diverse cultural influences and anatomical principles
- Collaborated with other artists and choreographers like Bella Lewitzky and Alvin Ailey to create innovative works
- Influenced the broader American dance scene as Horton technique became a foundation for many modern dance styles and inspired future generations of dancers and choreographers

Horton's legacy in dance education

- Established a comprehensive dance training system emphasizing the importance of anatomical principles and technical proficiency
- Created a codified technique with a specific vocabulary providing a structured approach to modern dance training
- Trained numerous influential dancers and choreographers including: 1. Alvin Ailey, who later founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater 2. Bella Lewitzky, who established her own dance company and technique
- Horton's legacy continues through the teaching of his technique in dance institutions worldwide, shaping generations of dancers

Horton Dance Theater and diversity

- Established one of the first racially integrated dance companies in the United States (1932), providing opportunities for dancers of diverse backgrounds
- Created works that addressed social and political issues like "The Beloved" (1948) exploring themes of racial inequality and social injustice
- Promoted cultural diversity through the incorporation of various dance styles and influences, encouraging the fusion of different cultural elements in modern dance
- Challenged societal norms and stereotypes through innovative choreography and diverse casting, pushing boundaries in the dance world

Unit 10 – Postmodern Dance: Origins and Evolution

10.1 Merce Cunningham and Chance Choreography

Merce Cunningham revolutionized dance by using chance procedures and avant-garde collaborations. He tossed coins, rolled dice, and consulted the I Ching to make choreographic choices, creating unique, unrepeatable works. His partnerships with John Cage, Robert Rauschenberg, and Jasper Johns pushed artistic boundaries.

Cunningham's legacy challenged traditional dance composition by rejecting narrative and emotional expression. He decentralized stage space, embraced technology, and developed a distinctive technique. His approach emphasized spine-initiated movements, isolation of body parts, and complex rhythmic structures, demanding high technical proficiency from dancers.

Merce Cunningham's Choreographic Approach

Chance procedures in choreography

- Employed various methods such as coin tosses, dice rolls, and consulting the I Ching to make choreographic decisions determining elements like movement sequence, timing, spacing, and dancer placement
- Embraced the unpredictability and randomness inherent in the creative process by allowing chance to dictate key aspects of the choreography
- Created works that were unique and unrepeatable, as the specific combination of elements would vary from performance to performance

Impact of avant-garde collaborations

- John Cage, Cunningham's long-term collaborative partner and life partner, pioneered indeterminate music composition which influenced Cunningham's adoption of chance procedures in choreography
- Robert Rauschenberg, a visual artist, designed sets and costumes for Cunningham's works using unconventional materials and found objects to create visually striking and innovative stage environments
- Jasper Johns, another visual artist, designed sets and costumes for Cunningham's works incorporating elements of his iconic pop art style and contributing to the multidisciplinary nature of Cunningham's performances

Cunningham's Legacy in Dance

Challenging traditional dance composition

- Rejected narrative and emotional expression in favor of focusing on pure movement appreciated for its inherent qualities rather than storytelling or conveying specific emotions
- Decentralized the stage space by eliminating the traditional hierarchy of stage positions, allowing dancers to face any direction and perform in any part of the stage, encouraging audience members to

have their own unique viewing experience

- Embraced technology by incorporating film, video, and computer-generated imagery into performances, collaborating with artists and technologists to create innovative stage designs, and pioneering the use of motion capture technology in dance

Characteristics of Cunningham technique

- Emphasized movements initiated from the spine and radiating outward, keeping the torso erect and stable while limbs moved independently
- Focused on moving specific body parts in isolation to create complex, layered, and polyphonic movement sequences
- Incorporated chance-determined sequences of movements resulting in unexpected and non-linear combinations of steps
- Demanded a high level of technical proficiency from dancers, emphasizing clean lines, precise angles, and clear spatial intentions
- Explored a wide range of rhythmic possibilities using irregular and complex rhythmic structures, often having dancers perform movement phrases in counterpoint to the music

10.2 Judson Dance Theater and Experimental Dance

The Judson Dance Theater shook up the 1960s NYC art scene, challenging traditional dance norms. Young artists and choreographers, inspired by avant-garde pioneers, broke free from modern dance constraints, embracing unconventional spaces and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Judson dancers rejected virtuosity, embracing everyday movements and untrained performers. They explored improvisation, chance, and multimedia elements, addressing social issues through dance. This revolutionary approach paved the way for postmodern dance and influenced generations of experimental artists.

Historical Context and Artistic Goals

Context of Judson Dance Theater

- Emerged in early 1960s New York City amidst avant-garde art scene challenged traditional notions of dance and performance
- Formed by young artists and choreographers influenced by experimental approaches of Merce Cunningham and John Cage sought to break free from constraints of modern dance
- Held performances at Judson Memorial Church in Greenwich Village utilized unconventional spaces encouraged audience participation and interaction
- Embraced interdisciplinary collaboration incorporated elements of visual art, music, and theater blurred boundaries between art forms
- Emphasized process over product focused on exploration and experimentation rather than polished performances valued creation of new movement vocabularies and techniques

Experimental Approaches and Influence

Experimental approaches in Judson Dance

- Rejected virtuosity and technical proficiency embraced pedestrian movements and everyday gestures incorporated untrained performers and non-dancers
- Explored improvisation and chance procedures used scores and task-based structures to generate movement allowed for spontaneity and unpredictability in performances
- Challenged relationship between dance and music worked with avant-garde composers and musicians experimented with silence, ambient sound, and unconventional music
- Incorporated multimedia elements utilized film, video, and projection in performances integrated visual art, sculpture, and installation into dance works
- Engaged with social and political issues addressed topics such as gender, sexuality, and civil rights used dance as means of activism and social commentary

Influence on postmodern performance

- Paved way for emergence of postmodern dance rejected formalism and expressionism of modern dance emphasized conceptual and minimalist approaches to movement
- Expanded definition of dance and performance challenged traditional notions of virtuosity and technique embraced wide range of movement styles and influences
- Influenced development of site-specific and immersive performance utilized unconventional spaces and environments encouraged audience participation and interaction
- Inspired future generations of experimental artists and choreographers laid groundwork for development of performance art influenced work of contemporary dance artists and collectives

Key Choreographers and Works

Key choreographers of Judson Dance

- Yvonne Rainer
 - "Trio A" (1966) featured minimalist and repetitive movements rejected virtuosity and expressionism
 - "Continuous Project-Altered Daily" (1970) incorporated everyday objects and actions into performance explored relationship between dance and labor
- Trisha Brown
 - "Man Walking Down the Side of a Building" (1970) site-specific work utilizing harnesses and ropes challenged perception of gravity and spatial orientation
 - "Accumulation" (1971) explored accumulation and layering of simple movements emphasized process of building and deconstructing phrases
- Lucinda Childs
 - "Dance" (1979) collaboration with composer Philip Glass and visual artist Sol LeWitt utilized repetitive and geometric movement patterns explored relationship between dance, music, and visual art

- "Radial Courses" (1976) incorporated circular and spiral movement patterns investigated use of space and directional changes

10.3 Contact Improvisation and Steve Paxton

Contact improvisation revolutionized dance in the 1970s. Developed by Steve Paxton, it explores physical dialogue through touch and shared weight. This form challenges traditional power dynamics, emphasizing spontaneity and equal agency among dancers.

Contact improv has deeply influenced contemporary dance. It expanded partnering possibilities, contributed to somatic practices, and shaped post-modern dance. The form continues to thrive globally, used for both performance and personal growth.

Contact Improvisation and Steve Paxton

Core principles of contact improvisation

- Explores physical dialogue between two or more moving bodies through touch, sharing weight, and maintaining physical connection
- Developed by Steve Paxton in the early 1970s
- Listening through the skin and responding to physical impulses from partner
- Surrendering to gravity and momentum allows for fluid, organic movement
- Maintaining constant state of awareness and readiness to adapt to partner's movements
- Letting go of preconceived ideas about movement and dance encourages spontaneity
- Embracing unpredictability leads to discovery of new movement possibilities

Physical skills for contact improvisation

- Giving and receiving weight safely and efficiently with a partner
- Maintaining balance while sharing weight and moving together
- Falling and recovering safely using techniques like rolling and yielding
- Moving fluidly in response to partner's movements and impulses
- Heightened awareness of touch and pressure guides physical communication
- Sensitivity to subtle shifts in partner's weight and momentum allows for seamless transitions
- Sensing and responding to energy and intention of partner creates dynamic dialogue
- Developing spatial awareness in relation to oneself and others navigates shared space

Democratic nature of contact improvisation

- Challenges traditional power dynamics in dance by having no designated leader or follower
- Roles are fluid and interchangeable, with all participants having equal agency
- Contrasts with hierarchical structures in ballet and modern dance, where choreographer is authority figure and dancers execute predetermined movements

- Encourages egalitarian and collaborative approach to dance-making through co-creation in real-time
- Fosters sense of community and shared responsibility among participants

Impact on contemporary dance

- Influenced emergence of post-modern dance in 1970s and 80s by challenging conventional notions of technique and composition
- Emphasized process over product and exploration of movement for its own sake
- Contributed to growth of somatic practices in dance training and performance, integrating mind, body, and spirit
- Expanded vocabulary and possibilities of partnering and lifts in contemporary dance through new ways of sharing weight and creating dynamic interactions
- Influenced development of dance theater and physical theater practices
- Continues to be practiced and taught internationally as distinct dance form and tool for movement research and personal growth

10.4 Postmodern Choreographers and Their Legacies

Postmodern choreographers like Pina Bausch, Twyla Tharp, and Mark Morris revolutionized dance in the late 20th century. They blended different styles, incorporated everyday movements, and pushed artistic boundaries, creating works that were both accessible and thought-provoking.

These innovators left a lasting impact on contemporary dance. They blurred lines between art forms, emphasized individual expression, and used dance as a medium for social commentary. Their legacies continue to inspire new generations of dancers and choreographers worldwide.

Postmodern Choreographers

Key postmodern choreographers and works

- Pina Bausch
 - German choreographer and dancer who founded Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch
 - Pioneered the Tanztheater (dance theater) style blending dance, theater, and everyday movements
 - Significant works include "Rite of Spring" (1975) exploring themes of sacrifice and ritual, "Café Müller" (1978) delving into loneliness and human connection, and "Kontakthof" (1978) examining relationships across generations
- Twyla Tharp
 - American dancer, choreographer, and author who established the Twyla Tharp Dance Company
 - Known for her fusion of classical ballet and modern dance techniques, incorporating popular music (Bob Dylan, Frank Sinatra) and cultural references
 - Notable works include "Deuce Coupe" (1973) set to Beach Boys music, "Push Comes to Shove" (1976) showcasing technical virtuosity, and "In the Upper Room" (1986) featuring athletic and dynamic movement
- Mark Morris

- American choreographer, dancer, and opera director who founded the Mark Morris Dance Group
- Recognized for his musical sensitivity, often collaborating with live musicians (Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax)
- Significant works include "L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato" (1988) set to Handel's oratorio, "The Hard Nut" (1991) a witty retelling of "The Nutcracker," and "Dido and Aeneas" (1989) exploring gender roles in the opera

Approaches in postmodern choreography

- Pina Bausch
 - Developed Tanztheater (dance theater) combining elements of dance, theater, and everyday movements
 - Explored complex human emotions (desire, fear, loneliness), relationships, and social issues through abstract and surreal choreography
 - Incorporated spoken word, singing, and unconventional props (dirt, water, flowers) to create immersive environments
- Twyla Tharp
 - Blended classical ballet and modern dance techniques, emphasizing athleticism and technical virtuosity
 - Incorporated popular music (Beach Boys, David Byrne) and cultural references to create accessible and engaging works
 - Collaborated with artists from diverse disciplines (Miloš Forman, Philip Glass) to push the boundaries of dance
- Mark Morris
 - Known for his musical sensitivity and frequent collaborations with live musicians (Yo-Yo Ma, Emanuel Ax)
 - Infused his choreography with humor, wit, and playfulness, often subverting traditional gender roles and expectations
 - Drew inspiration from a wide range of musical sources (baroque, classical, folk) to create dynamic and expressive works

Impact and Legacy

Influence on contemporary dance

- Blurred boundaries between dance and other art forms, encouraging interdisciplinary collaborations (theater, music, visual arts)
- Emphasized individual expression and diversity, rejecting strict codified techniques in favor of a wide range of movement vocabularies
- Increased focus on conceptual and thematic content, using dance as a medium for social and political commentary and exploring personal narratives and experiences

Legacies of postmodern choreographers

- Expanded the definition and possibilities of dance, challenging traditional notions of choreography and performance
- Inspired future generations of choreographers and dancers, paving the way for new artistic voices and perspectives
- Established influential dance companies (Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch, Twyla Tharp Dance Company, Mark Morris Dance Group) and institutions, providing platforms for the creation and presentation of new works and fostering international exchange and collaboration in the dance community

Unit 11 – Hip-Hop Culture & Street Dance

11.1 Origins of Hip-Hop Dance

Hip-hop dance burst onto the scene in 1970s Bronx, NYC. Born from the streets, it blended African American and Latino influences, creating a fresh style at block parties and neighborhood gatherings.

Early hip-hop dance drew inspiration from funk, jazz, and Latin styles. Breakdancing, popping, and locking emerged as key elements, with dancers innovating moves to match the DJ's breakbeats and the MC's rhymes.

Origins of Hip-Hop Dance

Roots of hip-hop dance

- Hip-hop dance emerged in the Bronx, New York City, during the 1970s
- Influenced by the socio-economic conditions and cultural diversity of the area (poverty, urban renewal, immigration)
- African American and Latino youth played a crucial role in the development of hip-hop dance
- Adapted and blended various dance styles to create a new form of expression (breaking, popping, locking)
- Block parties and neighborhood gatherings served as platforms for the growth of hip-hop dance
- DJs provided the music (breakbeats) while dancers showcased their skills and innovations (freestyle, battles)

Influences on early hip-hop

- Funk music and dance heavily influenced early hip-hop dance
- James Brown's energetic performances and signature moves inspired many dancers (moonwalk, robot)
- Jazz dance contributed to the foundation of hip-hop dance
- Improvisation and individual expression, key elements of jazz dance, were embraced by hip-hop dancers
- Breakdancing, a major component of early hip-hop dance, drew from jazz dance techniques (acrobatics, freezes)
- Latin dance styles, particularly from Puerto Rican and Cuban communities, shaped hip-hop dance
- Salsa and mambo influenced the footwork and partner dance aspects of hip-hop (Hustle, Lindy Hop)

Development of Hip-Hop Culture

Hip-hop music and dance relationship

- Hip-hop music and dance evolved together, each influencing the other
- DJs played a vital role in providing the musical backdrop for dancers (breakbeats, samples)

- Dancers responded to and interpreted the music, creating new moves and styles (toprock, downrock, power moves)
- The relationship between MCs and dancers shaped the performative aspect of hip-hop culture
- MCs would often call out and interact with dancers during performances (call and response)
- The interplay between music and dance helped establish hip-hop as a distinct cultural movement
- The four elements of hip-hop culture: DJing, MCing, breakdancing, and graffiti art

Role of dance battles

- Dance battles and competitions were essential to the growth and development of hip-hop dance
- Provided a platform for dancers to showcase their skills and gain recognition (reputation, status)
- Encouraged innovation and creativity as dancers sought to outperform their rivals (originality, style)
- Battles often took place in informal settings, such as street corners or park jams
- Dancers would form circles and take turns displaying their moves (cypher, battle rounds)
- Crowds would gather to watch and judge the performances (audience participation)
- Formal competitions, such as the New York City Rap Tour and the World Supreme Championships, emerged later
- Offered dancers a chance to compete on a larger scale and gain exposure (prize money, sponsorships)
- Helped spread hip-hop dance beyond its local origins and establish it as a global phenomenon (international competitions, media coverage)

11.2 Breaking, Popping, and Locking

Breaking, popping, and locking are the building blocks of hip-hop dance. These styles emerged in the 1960s and 70s, each with unique moves and cultural roots. They reflect the creativity and resilience of African American and Latino communities during challenging times.

These dances blend acrobatics, rhythm, and personal flair. Breaking features dynamic floor moves, popping creates robotic illusions, and locking uses exaggerated pauses. Pioneering dancers and crews helped spread these styles, shaping hip-hop culture worldwide.

Breaking, Popping, and Locking: Foundational Styles of Hip-Hop Dance

Foundational hip-hop dance styles

- Breaking (B-boying/B-girling)
- Originated in the Bronx, New York City, in the early 1970s
- Characterized by dynamic floor-based movements, acrobatic power moves, and stylized freezes
- Heavily emphasizes improvisation and competitive battling between dancers
- Popping
- Developed in Fresno, California, in the late 1960s and early 1970s

- Focused on isolated, jerky, and contracting movements that create a popping effect
- Incorporates various sub-styles such as robotting (mimicking robot movements), waving (creating illusions of waves passing through the body), and tutting (angular arm and hand movements inspired by Egyptian hieroglyphics)
- Locking
- Created by Don Campbell in Los Angeles, California, in the late 1960s
- Features precise, fast, and exaggerated movements punctuated with sudden pauses or "locks"
- Often performed to funk music with a strong emphasis on musicality, showmanship, and comedic elements

Key movements and techniques

- Breaking
- Toprock: Upright dance steps performed to the rhythm of the music before transitioning to the floor
- Downrock: Intricate floor-based footwork patterns and sequences
- Power moves: Acrobatic and physically demanding moves that showcase strength, momentum, and control (windmills, flares, head spins)
- Freezes: Stylized poses that demonstrate balance, flexibility, and body control, often used to punctuate routines
- Popping
- Popping: Quickly contracting and relaxing muscles to create a snapping or jerking effect throughout the body
- Waving: Fluid, sequential movements that create the illusion of a wave traveling through the dancer's body
- Tutting: Precise, angular arm and hand movements inspired by the geometric shapes found in Egyptian hieroglyphics
- Robotting: Isolating body parts to mimic the stiff, mechanical movements of a robot
- Locking
- Locking points: Signature moves that emphasize the abrupt "locking" or freezing of positions before continuing the dance
- Wrist rolls: Circular, fluid motions of the wrists often used as transitions between locking points
- Pointing: Extending the arms and fingers in specific directions to accent and punctuate movements
- The Lock: The foundational move where the dancer suddenly stops and holds a distinct pose before smoothly continuing the routine

Cultural context of hip-hop styles

- Breaking
- Emerged in the African American and Latino communities of the Bronx during the early days of hip-hop culture

- Influenced by a fusion of dance styles including African and Latin American dances, martial arts, and gymnastics
- Served as a powerful form of self-expression, community building, and nonviolent competition for youth in the face of socioeconomic challenges
- Popping
 - Developed within the African American community of Fresno, California, against the backdrop of the funk music scene and the Black Power movement
 - Reflected the social and political climate of the time by emphasizing individuality, creativity, and pride in one's cultural identity
 - Evolved alongside other funk-inspired dance styles and became a cornerstone of the emerging West Coast hip-hop dance scene
- Locking
 - Created by African American dancer Don Campbell in Los Angeles during the vibrant funk music and dance era of the late 1960s and early 1970s
 - Gained widespread popularity through appearances on the influential television show "Soul Train" and performances by the pioneering dance group "The Lockers"
 - Embodied the fun, playful, and energetic spirit of funk music while showcasing the unique style and personality of individual dancers

Influence of pioneering dancers

- Breaking
 - Kool Herc: Jamaican-American DJ credited with laying the musical foundation for breaking through his innovative parties and breakbeat selections
 - Rock Steady Crew: Influential b-boy crew that helped popularize breaking worldwide through performances, competitions, and media appearances
 - Dynamic Rockers: Pioneering crew known for pushing the boundaries of the dance with their innovative power moves and distinct style
- Popping
 - Boogaloo Sam: Founder of the legendary Electric Boogaloos crew and a key figure in the development and spread of popping
 - Popin' Pete: Prominent member of the Electric Boogaloos, renowned for his mastery of the style and significant contributions to its evolution
 - Skeeter Rabbit: Pioneering popper who helped refine and expand the vocabulary of the dance through his unique approach and innovations
- Locking
 - Don Campbell: Creator of locking and founder of the groundbreaking dance group The Lockers
 - Greg "Campbellock Jr." Pope: Original member of The Lockers who played a significant role in shaping the style's development and popularizing it through performances

- Jimmy "Scoo B Doo" Foster: Another key member of The Lockers, known for his distinctive style and contributions to the growth of locking as an art form

11.3 Hip-Hop Dance in Popular Culture

Hip-hop dance exploded in popularity thanks to media exposure. Music videos, movies, and TV shows brought the energy and creativity of hip-hop dance to mainstream audiences, inspiring people to learn and engage with the style.

Iconic performances like Michael Jackson's "Thriller" and the Jabbawockeez on "America's Best Dance Crew" left a lasting impact. These showcases sparked trends, influenced pop culture, and drove interest in hip-hop dance across generations and communities.

The Influence of Media on Hip-Hop Dance Popularity

Media's role in hip-hop dance popularity

- Music videos
 - Provide visual representation of hip-hop dance styles showcasing choreography and routines (Michael Jackson's "Thriller", MC Hammer's "U Can't Touch This")
 - Increase exposure and accessibility to a wider audience beyond the original hip-hop community
- Movies
 - Feature hip-hop dance in storylines and performances introducing the style to mainstream audiences (Breakin', Step Up franchise)
 - Inspire viewers to learn and engage with hip-hop dance by showcasing its energy, creativity, and cultural significance
- Television
 - Include hip-hop dance in various shows and competitions highlighting the skill and artistry of dancers (America's Best Dance Crew, So You Think You Can Dance)
 - Contribute to the normalization of hip-hop dance in popular culture by presenting it alongside other established dance styles

Impact of iconic hip-hop performances

- Memorable performances
 - Michael Jackson's "Thriller" and "Beat It" music videos popularized the moonwalk and other signature moves
 - MC Hammer's "U Can't Touch This" music video and live performances showcased high-energy choreography and the iconic "Hammer dance"
 - The Jabbawockeez's performances on "America's Best Dance Crew" demonstrated the power of synchronization and storytelling through dance
- Influence on popular culture
 - Inspire imitation and adaptation of dance moves leading to the spread of hip-hop dance across generations and communities

- Increase interest in learning hip-hop dance as people seek to emulate their favorite performers and routines
- Contribute to the development of new dance trends and styles as dancers build upon and innovate existing techniques

Representation and Appropriation of Hip-Hop Dance

Representation of hip-hop dance in media

- Authentic portrayal of hip-hop dance culture and its roots honoring the African American and Latino origins of the style (documentaries like "The Freshest Kids", "Rize")
- Inclusion of diverse hip-hop dance styles and practitioners showcasing the range and depth of the art form (b-boying/b-girling, locking, popping, krumping)
- Positive representation of hip-hop dance as a legitimate art form worthy of respect and appreciation
- Misrepresentation or oversimplification of hip-hop dance reducing it to stereotypes or caricatures (commercials, parody videos)
- Exploitation of hip-hop dance for commercial gain without proper acknowledgment or compensation for dancers and choreographers
- Lack of acknowledgment or respect for the cultural origins of hip-hop dance leading to cultural appropriation and erasure

Hip-hop dance influence on culture

- Fashion
 - Baggy and oversized clothing styles associated with the comfort and freedom of movement needed for hip-hop dance
 - Sneaker culture and the popularity of dance-specific footwear (Adidas, Nike, Puma) designed for support and style
 - Accessories such as hats, chains, and bandanas that complement the overall aesthetic of hip-hop fashion
- Language
 - Incorporation of hip-hop terminology and slang into mainstream vocabulary (fresh, dope, chill)
 - Use of rap lyrics and references in everyday conversation as a way to express oneself and connect with others
 - Influence on the development of new words and phrases that reflect the creativity and innovation of hip-hop culture
- Other aspects
 - Graffiti art and street art inspired by the visual elements of hip-hop culture and often used as backdrops for dance performances
 - Breakdancing and its influence on other dance styles leading to the creation of new hybrid forms (break-locking, break-waacking)

- The rise of hip-hop dance competitions and battles providing a platform for dancers to showcase their skills and earn recognition (Red Bull BC One, Juste Debout)

11.4 Commercialization and Globalization of Hip-Hop Dance

Hip-hop dance has become a global phenomenon, spreading far beyond its roots. It's now a major force in advertising, music videos, and TV competitions, with brands and artists tapping into its popularity to reach younger audiences.

The internet has supercharged hip-hop's global reach. Social media lets dancers share moves, connect with others, and even launch careers. This worldwide exchange has led to new fusion styles, blending hip-hop with local dance traditions around the globe.

Commercialization and Globalization of Hip-Hop Dance

Commercialization of hip-hop dance

- Advertising incorporates hip-hop dance to appeal to younger audiences
- Brands capitalize on hip-hop dance's popularity and cultural significance (Nike, Adidas, Coca-Cola, Pepsi)
- Music industry heavily influenced by hip-hop dance
- Music videos feature hip-hop dancers to promote songs and artists (rap, R&B genres)
- Choreographers and dancers gain exposure through collaborations with popular musicians
- Dance competitions showcase hip-hop dance to wide audiences
- Televised competitions provide a platform for dancers to gain recognition and launch careers (So You Think You Can Dance, America's Best Dance Crew, World of Dance)

Globalization's impact on hip-hop

- Cultural exchange spreads hip-hop dance globally
- Dancers from different countries learn and adapt hip-hop dance styles
- Fusion of hip-hop dance with local traditions creates new styles and variations
- International events and festivals bring together dancers worldwide
- Facilitate cultural exchange and showcase the global hip-hop dance community (Juste Debout in France, UK B-Boy Championships, R16 Korea)
- Hip-hop dance influences local dance scenes
- Leads to the emergence of regional styles (Afro-Trap in France, Krumping in the USA, Funk Ostentação in Brazil)
- Local dancers adapt and innovate hip-hop dance, contributing to its evolution

Social media in hip-hop community

- Platforms allow dancers to share their work and learn from others globally (YouTube, Instagram, TikTok)

- Online tutorials and classes make hip-hop dance education more accessible worldwide
- Helps dancers connect and build networks with others in the global community
- Facilitates collaborations between dancers from different countries
- Online dance challenges and trends engage dancers worldwide, fostering a sense of community
- Allows dancers to gain visibility and be discovered by a wider audience
- Talent scouts and industry professionals use social media to find new hip-hop dance talent
- Dancers can build their brands and careers through their online presence and following

Challenges for hip-hop dancers

- Stereotyping and typecasting in the commercial dance industry
- Limited opportunities in traditional dance institutions and venues
- Difficulty securing stable income and benefits as a professional hip-hop dancer
- Growing recognition of hip-hop dance as a legitimate art form in the dance industry
- Increased demand for hip-hop dancers in various entertainment sectors (film, television)
- Emergence of hip-hop dance theater and concert dance provides new avenues for artistic expression
- Entrepreneurial opportunities for hip-hop dancers to create their own content, events, and workshops

Unit 12 – Civil Rights Movement in Dance

12.1 Dance as a Form of Protest and Resistance

Dance played a crucial role in the Civil Rights Movement, serving as a powerful tool for protest and expression. Choreographers like Alvin Ailey and Donald McKayle created works that addressed racial inequality, celebrated African American culture, and challenged stereotypes.

These performances raised awareness, fostered unity, and inspired action within the community. Dance became a platform for asserting identity, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting social change. It also helped desegregate dance institutions and shift public opinion on racial issues.

Dance as Protest in the Civil Rights Movement

Dance in Civil Rights activism

- Dance served as a powerful medium for expressing resistance and advocating for change during the Civil Rights Movement
- Choreographers created works that addressed racial inequality, segregation, and violence (Alvin Ailey's "Revelations", Donald McKayle's "Blues Suite")
- Performances aimed to raise awareness about the struggles faced by African Americans and inspire action
- Dance provided a platform for African American artists to assert their identity and cultural heritage
- Incorporated elements of African dance, spirituals, and blues music to celebrate and preserve cultural roots
- Challenged stereotypes and negative representations of black bodies in mainstream media (minstrel shows, exoticization)
- Protest dance fostered a sense of unity and solidarity within the African American community
- Encouraged collective action and participation in the Civil Rights Movement through shared artistic experiences
- Created spaces for shared experiences and emotional catharsis, allowing for communal healing and empowerment

Choreographers addressing racial inequality

- Alvin Ailey's "Revelations" (1960)
- Celebrated African American culture and spirituality through a fusion of modern dance, ballet, and African dance
- Depicted the journey from slavery to freedom and the resilience of the human spirit in the face of oppression
- Donald McKayle's "Blues Suite" (1959)
- Portrayed the experiences of African Americans in the rural South, highlighting the struggles of sharecroppers and laborers

- Addressed themes of poverty, oppression, and the search for identity through a blend of modern dance and blues music
- Talley Beatty's "The Road of the Phoebe Snow" (1959)
- Critiqued the racial segregation in the transportation system, particularly the disparities in train travel
- Highlighted the indignities faced by African Americans during train travel and the fight for desegregation
- Katherine Dunham's "Southland" (1951)
- Exposed the brutality of lynching and racial violence through a powerful and provocative dance performance
- Used dance to confront the harsh realities of racism in America and call attention to the urgent need for change

Impact of protest dance

- Performances by African American dance companies challenged prevailing stereotypes and misconceptions
- Showcased the artistry, creativity, and humanity of black dancers, countering degrading representations
- Helped to shift public opinion and garner support for the Civil Rights Movement by presenting a positive image
- Dance performances served as a form of cultural diplomacy and outreach
- Tours by companies like Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater promoted understanding and empathy across racial lines
- Exposed international audiences to the struggles and aspirations of African Americans, building global solidarity
- Protest dance contributed to the desegregation of dance institutions and venues
- Integrated audiences and challenged discriminatory practices in the dance world (segregated seating, limited opportunities)
- Paved the way for greater opportunities and recognition for African American dancers and choreographers in the mainstream

Dance as protest across eras

- Similarities with dance in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa
- Used dance to assert cultural identity and resist oppressive regimes (gumboot dance, toyi-toyi)
- Performances served as a means of community mobilization and empowerment in the face of racial discrimination
- Parallels with the use of dance in the Chicano Movement of the 1960s and 1970s
- Employed dance to celebrate Mexican American heritage and challenge cultural marginalization (baile folklórico, Aztec dance)

- Addressed issues of labor rights, education, and political representation through dance performances and festivals
- Contemporary examples of dance as protest, such as the "Dancing for Justice" movement
- Responds to incidents of police brutality and racial profiling through choreographed demonstrations and flash mobs
- Uses dance as a means of peaceful resistance and calls for systemic change in law enforcement and criminal justice
- Differences in the specific cultural and political contexts of each movement
- Reflects the unique histories, struggles, and goals of different communities (African American, South African, Chicano)
- Adapts dance forms and styles to suit the particular needs and expressions of each protest movement (modern dance, traditional dance, street dance)

12.2 Alvin Ailey and the Celebration of African American Culture

Alvin Ailey revolutionized dance by blending modern, ballet, and African American styles. Born in 1931 Texas, he founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 1958, creating a platform for Black dancers to showcase their talent and celebrate their heritage.

Ailey's choreography, like "Revelations" and "Blues Suite," explored themes of struggle, resilience, and joy in African American culture. His work challenged stereotypes, promoted diversity, and continues to inspire dancers and audiences worldwide through powerful performances and community outreach.

Alvin Ailey's Life and Contributions

Life and work of Alvin Ailey

- Born in 1931 in Rogers, Texas during the Great Depression era marked by widespread poverty and racial segregation in the United States
- Exposed to dance through performances by the Katherine Dunham Dance Company and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo which inspired his passion for the art form
- Trained under Lester Horton in Los Angeles, learning the Horton technique that emphasized flexibility, strength, and expressive freedom, later becoming a foundation for Ailey's unique choreographic style
- Established the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT) in 1958 with a mission to provide opportunities for Black dancers and celebrate African American cultural heritage through dance
- Choreographed 79 innovative ballets throughout his career, seamlessly blending elements of modern dance, classical ballet, and African American vernacular dance (blues, jazz, spirituals)
- Earned prestigious accolades for his contributions to dance, including the Kennedy Center Honors (1988) and the United Nations Peace Medal (1992)

Ailey's choreography and African American culture

- Drew creative inspiration from his Southern upbringing, exploring themes of struggle, resilience, and joy that resonated with the African American experience

- Incorporated African American musical traditions (blues, jazz, spirituals) in his works, collaborating with renowned musicians like Duke Ellington and Alice Coltrane
- Showcased the talent and versatility of African American dancers, challenging stereotypes and limited roles prevalent in mainstream dance during his time
- Celebrated African American history, cultural heritage, and the African diaspora through his thought-provoking and emotionally charged choreography

Significance of Ailey's dance theater

- Founded during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, AAADT served as a vital platform for African American dancers and choreographers to express themselves and address social issues
- Toured extensively both nationally and internationally, acting as cultural ambassadors and helping to shift global perceptions of African Americans through the power of dance
- Continues to be a driving force in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the dance world through its performances, educational programs, and community outreach initiatives
- Remains a cornerstone institution in celebrating and preserving African American culture and artistry, having performed for an estimated 25 million people across 48 states and 71 countries

Interpretation of Ailey's selected works

- "Revelations" (1960), Ailey's signature masterpiece, draws from his childhood memories and the collective African American experience, exploring themes of faith, hope, and resilience in the face of oppression through a powerful fusion of spirituals, blues, and gospel music
- "Blues Suite" (1958) offers a vivid portrayal of African American life in the rural South, celebrating the indomitable human spirit and the profound influence of blues music as a means of expression and storytelling
- "Masekela Language" (1969) pays homage to South African trumpeter Hugh Masekela and the anti-apartheid movement, highlighting the shared struggles for freedom and equality between African Americans and their African counterparts
- "Cry" (1971), dedicated to "all Black women everywhere – especially our mothers," is a solo tour de force that encapsulates the struggles, strengths, and raw emotions of African American women through a deeply moving and technically demanding performance

12.3 Integration of Dance Companies and Venues

The dance industry has a complex history of segregation and discrimination. Black dancers faced limited opportunities and racial stereotypes, while systemic barriers hindered their advancement. Pioneering artists challenged these barriers, establishing their own companies and fighting for integration despite resistance.

Integration gradually transformed the dance landscape, creating more opportunities for Black dancers and choreographers. It expanded repertoires, challenged stereotypes, and contributed to the broader movement for racial equality. Today, the industry recognizes the need for continued efforts to address systemic inequalities and promote diversity.

Historical Context and Challenges

History of dance industry segregation

- Segregation and discrimination prevalent in dance industry before and during Civil Rights Movement
- Dance companies and venues often segregated based on race (separate "white" and "colored" sections)
- Black dancers faced limited opportunities, excluded from mainstream dance institutions (ballet companies, Broadway shows)
- Racial stereotypes and prejudices influenced perception and representation of Black dancers
- Black dancers typecast into specific roles or genres (exotic or primitive dance styles like "jungle" or "tribal" dances)
- White dancers favored for lead roles and classical ballet positions (principal dancers, soloists)
- Systemic barriers hindered advancement of Black dancers and choreographers
- Lack of access to quality dance education and training facilities (segregated schools, underfunded programs)
- Limited funding and resources for Black-led dance companies and productions (discriminatory grant policies, lack of sponsorships)

Integration efforts in dance companies

- Pioneering Black dancers and choreographers challenged racial barriers, fought for integration
- Trailblazers pushed for change (Katherine Dunham, Pearl Primus, Alvin Ailey)
- Established own dance companies, created works celebrating Black culture and experiences (Dunham Dance Company, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater)
- Resistance and backlash from white-dominated dance establishment
- Some white dancers, choreographers, and audiences opposed integration efforts (boycotts, protests)
- Integrated performances and companies faced threats, protests, and violence (hate mail, physical assaults)
- Financial and institutional challenges in sustaining integrated dance companies and productions
- Difficulty securing funding, grants, and sponsorships due to racial biases (discriminatory practices by foundations and donors)
- Limited access to prestigious venues and performance opportunities (exclusion from major theaters and festivals)

Impact and Ongoing Work

Impact of integration on dance

- Integration gradually transformed dance landscape, created more opportunities for Black dancers and choreographers

- Increased visibility and recognition of Black talent in mainstream dance productions (Broadway shows, ballet companies)
- Expanded repertoire and narratives that included Black experiences and perspectives (works addressing racial injustice, celebrating African-American heritage)
- Integrated dance companies and performances challenged racial stereotypes, promoted understanding
- Audiences exposed to diverse artistic expressions and cultural narratives (works blending African and European dance styles)
- Collaborations between dancers of different racial backgrounds fostered mutual respect and appreciation (cross-cultural exchanges, shared creative processes)
- Integration in dance contributed to broader movement for racial equality and social justice
- Dance became platform for activism, protest, raising awareness about racial issues (performances addressing civil rights, police brutality)
- Dancers and choreographers used art to challenge discrimination and advocate for change (works promoting unity and equality)

Diversity in modern dance industry

- Recognizing need for continued efforts to address systemic inequalities and underrepresentation
- Acknowledging historical legacy of racism and its ongoing impact on dance world (lack of diversity in leadership positions, limited opportunities for dancers of color)
- Identifying and dismantling barriers that hinder diversity and inclusion (biased audition practices, typecasting)
- Implementing initiatives and programs to support and empower dancers of color
- Providing scholarships, mentorship, and training opportunities for underrepresented communities (dance education programs in diverse neighborhoods)
- Establishing diversity and inclusion committees within dance organizations to guide policy and practice (equity audits, anti-racism training)
- Promoting diverse representation in leadership positions, choreography, and artistic direction
- Encouraging and supporting advancement of dancers and choreographers of color into decision-making roles (artistic directors, board members)
- Commissioning works by diverse choreographers, showcasing wide range of cultural perspectives (festivals featuring artists from various backgrounds)
- Fostering dialogue, education, and community engagement around issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Organizing workshops, panels, and discussions to raise awareness and promote understanding (community forums, artist talks)
- Collaborating with community organizations and advocates to address systemic challenges and create change (partnerships with social justice groups, outreach programs)

Unit 13 – Feminist Perspectives on Dance

13.1 Women Pioneers in American Dance

Women pioneers in American dance revolutionized the art form. Isadora Duncan, Loie Fuller, and Ruth St. Denis broke from classical ballet, introducing natural movements, innovative lighting, and cultural diversity. Their work laid the foundation for modern dance and challenged traditional gender roles.

Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Katherine Dunham further expanded dance vocabulary with new techniques and styles. These trailblazers faced limited opportunities and stereotypes but persevered, paving the way for future generations and influencing other art forms and cultural movements.

Women Pioneers in American Dance

Women pioneers in American dance

- Isadora Duncan (1877-1927)
 - Considered the "Mother of Modern Dance" for her revolutionary approach to dance
 - Rejected the rigid constraints of classical ballet in favor of more natural, expressive movements inspired by ancient Greek art and philosophy
 - Emphasized the importance of individual expression and emotion in dance
- Loie Fuller (1862-1928)
 - Pioneer of modern dance and theatrical lighting design known for her innovative use of costumes and lighting
 - Created the "Serpentine Dance" using long, flowing silk costumes that billowed and swirled around her body
 - Collaborated with scientists and inventors to create groundbreaking stage lighting effects that enhanced the visual impact of her performances
- Ruth St. Denis (1879-1968)
 - Co-founded the influential Denishawn School with her husband Ted Shawn, which trained many future modern dance stars
 - Incorporated elements of Eastern dance styles and spirituality into her choreography, bringing a new level of cultural diversity to American dance
 - Created iconic works such as "Radha" and "Incense" that showcased her unique blend of exoticism and expressionism

Innovations of female dancers and choreographers

- Martha Graham (1894-1991)
 - Developed the Graham technique, a foundational modern dance style that emphasized contraction and release of the torso and emotional expression through movement
 - Created groundbreaking works such as "Appalachian Spring" and "Lamentation" that explored universal human themes and experiences

- Established the Martha Graham Dance Company, one of the oldest and most influential modern dance companies in the world
- Doris Humphrey (1895-1958)
 - Pioneered the concept of fall and recovery in modern dance, which explored the natural rhythms and dynamics of the body in motion
 - Co-founded the Humphrey-Weidman Company with Charles Weidman, creating works that emphasized the interplay between dancers and their environment
 - Choreographed seminal works such as "Water Study" and "The Shakers" that showcased her innovative approach to group choreography and spatial design
- Katherine Dunham (1909-2006)
 - Anthropologist, dancer, and choreographer who integrated African and Caribbean dance elements into her work, bringing a new level of cultural authenticity to American dance
 - Founded the Katherine Dunham Company and developed the Dunham Technique, which combined elements of ballet, modern dance, and African-Caribbean dance
 - Choreographed for Broadway shows (Cabin in the Sky) and Hollywood films (Stormy Weather), bringing her unique style to a wider audience

Challenges for women in dance

- Limited opportunities for women choreographers
- Male choreographers often received more commissions, funding, and recognition than their female counterparts
- Women had to fight for the chance to create and lead their own companies in a male-dominated field
- Stereotypical gender roles in dance
- Women were often relegated to supporting roles or expected to conform to specific body types and aesthetic standards
- Breaking free from traditional gender expectations and asserting artistic autonomy required courage and determination
- Balancing personal life and career
- Many women pioneers had to navigate the challenges of marriage, motherhood, and societal expectations while pursuing their passion for dance
- Some, like Isadora Duncan, defied conventional norms of femininity and faced criticism for their unconventional lifestyles and choices

Impact of pioneers on dance evolution

- Expansion of dance vocabulary and techniques
- Women pioneers introduced new movements, styles, and philosophies that broadened the scope and expressive potential of American dance
- Their innovations (Graham technique, fall and recovery) laid the foundation for future generations of dancers and choreographers to build upon

- Increased opportunities for women in dance
- The success and visibility of women pioneers helped pave the way for greater gender equality and representation in the dance world
- More women were able to pursue careers as dancers, choreographers, and company directors, challenging traditional gender roles and expectations
- Influence on other art forms and cultural movements
- The work of women pioneers often intersected with and influenced other art forms, such as music (collaborations with composers), visual arts (costume and set design), and theater (Broadway choreography)
- Their contributions played a significant role in shaping broader cultural movements, such as feminism (challenging gender norms) and modernism (embracing experimentation and innovation)

13.2 Feminist Choreography and Themes

Feminist choreography challenges traditional gender roles in dance and society. It empowers women and marginalized groups through movement, addressing issues like inequality and body image. This dance form uses collaborative processes and personal narratives to express feminist themes.

Notable works like "Rosas danst Rosas" and "Revelations" showcase feminist themes in dance. These performances explore feminine identity, challenge societal norms, and celebrate diversity. Feminist choreography plays a crucial role in raising awareness and inspiring dialogue about gender issues.

Feminist Choreography

Definition of feminist choreography

- Form of dance explores and expresses feminist themes, ideas, and perspectives
- Challenges traditional gender roles, norms, and stereotypes in dance and society
- Empowers women and marginalized groups through movement and storytelling
- Addresses issues of gender inequality, body image, sexuality, and identity
- Key characteristics include:
 - Collaborative and non-hierarchical creative processes
 - Emphasis on personal experiences and narratives of women and marginalized groups
 - Rejection of traditional dance techniques and aesthetics that objectify or limit the female body
 - Incorporation of diverse movement styles, improvisation, and unconventional performance spaces (site-specific works, public interventions)

Expression of feminist themes in dance

- Feminist choreographers use various strategies:
 - Subvert traditional gender roles and power dynamics in partnering and ensemble work
 - Celebrate the strength, resilience, and diversity of the female body and experience
 - Address taboo topics through movement (menstruation, abortion, sexual violence)

- Incorporate text, spoken word, and multimedia elements to amplify feminist messages (projections, soundscapes)
- Feminist themes often focus on:
 - Reclaiming agency and autonomy over one's body and identity
 - Challenging societal expectations and pressures placed on women and marginalized groups
 - Exploring the complexities of intersectional identities and experiences (race, class, sexuality)
 - Promoting solidarity, empowerment, and social change through collective action and expression

Notable works and cultural significance

- "Rosas danst Rosas" (1983) by Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker
 - Explores themes of feminine identity, repetition, and exhaustion through minimalist movement and staging
 - Challenges traditional notions of virtuosity and spectacle in dance
 - Iconic work of postmodern dance and feminist expression
- "Revelations" (1960) by Alvin Ailey
 - Celebrates the resilience and spirituality of African American women through modern dance and gospel music
 - Addresses issues of racial and gender oppression and the struggle for civil rights
 - Beloved and influential work of American dance theater and cultural heritage
- "The Dinner Party" (1979) by Judy Chicago and Susan Hill
 - Multimedia performance installation honors the lives and achievements of historical and mythical women
 - Features a triangular table with elaborate place settings and a floor inscribed with 999 names of notable women
 - Challenges the male-dominated canon of Western art and history, asserts the significance of women's contributions to culture

Challenging norms through choreography

- Feminist choreography plays a crucial role in:
 - Providing a platform for women and marginalized groups to express their experiences and perspectives
 - Raising awareness about issues of gender inequality, discrimination, and violence
 - Inspiring dialogue, empathy, and action around feminist causes and movements
 - Empowering dancers and audiences to question and resist oppressive gender roles and expectations
 - Contributes to social change by:

- Challenging and transforming traditional gender representations and power dynamics in dance and beyond
- Advocating for greater diversity, inclusion, and equity in the dance world and society (more women in leadership roles, diverse casting)
- Inspiring new generations of feminist artists and activists to continue the fight for gender justice and liberation
- Demonstrating the power of art and movement to shape cultural attitudes, values, and policies around gender and social justice

13.3 Body Image and Gender Representation in Dance

Dance shapes and is shaped by body image and gender norms. Performances can reinforce or challenge stereotypes about ideal bodies and gender roles. This impacts dancers' physical and mental health, as well as opportunities in the field.

Promoting inclusivity in dance involves diverse casting, body-positive education, and increased representation. Shifting industry standards and redefining beauty ideals can create a more welcoming dance world for all body types and gender expressions.

Body Image and Gender Representation in Dance

Dance and body image relationships

- Dance as a visual art form
- Emphasizes physical appearance and aesthetics of the dancer's body
- Utilizes the dancer's body as an instrument of artistic expression (lines, shapes, movements)
- Societal expectations and stereotypes shape perceptions of dancers
- Gendered expectations for dancers' bodies and movements (graceful for women, powerful for men)
- Pressure for dancers to conform to idealized body types (thin, lean, muscular)
- Historical and cultural context influences body and gender norms in dance
- Evolution of body and gender norms in dance over time (changing ideals of beauty)
- Cultural values shape dance aesthetics (valuing certain body types or gender expressions)

Gender norms in dance performances

- Perpetuating gender and body norms through dance
- Traditional gender roles in dance styles reinforce stereotypes (ballet, ballroom)
- Choreography often includes stereotypical masculine and feminine movements (strong vs. delicate)
- Favoring specific body types limits diversity in dance (thin, muscular, tall)
- Challenging gender and body norms through innovative performances
- Exploring non-traditional gender roles and expressions (androgynous or gender-fluid dancing)
- Incorporating diverse body types and abilities in choreography (plus-size, disabled dancers)

- Subverting expectations through unconventional choreography and performance choices

Body image pressures for dancers

- Physical and mental health consequences of body image pressures
- Eating disorders and disordered eating behaviors (anorexia, bulimia, orthorexia)
- Body dysmorphia and self-esteem issues stemming from negative body image
- Increased risk of injury due to overexertion and unhealthy practices (overtraining, dancing through pain)
- Exclusion and discrimination based on body type in the dance world
- Limited opportunities for dancers who don't fit the "ideal" body type (typecasting, fewer roles)
- Typecasting dancers based on physical appearance rather than talent or skill
- Perpetuating unrealistic body standards affects the broader dance community
- Influencing aspiring dancers and dance students to strive for unattainable ideals
- Reinforcing narrow definitions of beauty and acceptability in dance (only certain bodies are valued)

Promoting Inclusivity and Body Positivity in Dance

Strategies for dance inclusivity

- Inclusive casting and choreography practices
- Featuring dancers of various body types, ages, and abilities in performances (body diversity)
- Challenging traditional gender roles and expressions through casting and choreography (gender-neutral dancing)
- Promoting body-positive dance education and training
- Emphasizing healthy practices and self-care for dancers (proper nutrition, rest, cross-training)
- Encouraging self-acceptance and body appreciation among dancers (positive self-talk, gratitude)
- Providing resources for mental health support (counseling, workshops, support groups)
- Increasing representation and visibility of diverse dancers
- Showcasing diverse dancers in performances and media (marketing materials, social media)
- Amplifying voices of marginalized communities in dance (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, disabled dancers)
- Advocating for equal opportunities and recognition for all dancers regardless of body type or gender expression
- Shifting industry standards and expectations in the dance world
- Collaborating with dance organizations to promote inclusivity (diversity initiatives, inclusive policies)
- Encouraging critical discourse and dialogue within the dance community (panels, forums, publications)

- Challenging and redefining narrow beauty standards in dance (celebrating all bodies and gender expressions)

Unit 14 – Contemporary American Dance Trends

14.1 Fusion and Interdisciplinary Dance Forms

Fusion dance blends elements from different styles, creating hybrid forms that reflect cultural diversity. It incorporates influences from African, Latin, Asian, hip-hop, and folk traditions, expanding the definition of dance and challenging traditional boundaries.

Interdisciplinary dance integrates other art forms, emphasizing collaboration between artists from various disciplines. This creative process fosters innovation, pushing boundaries and redefining what dance can express. It also drives technological advancements and influences other artistic fields.

Fusion and Interdisciplinary Dance Forms

Fusion and interdisciplinary dance characteristics

- Fusion dance forms
 - Blend elements from two or more distinct dance styles or genres (ballet, hip-hop, salsa)
 - Create a new, hybrid style that incorporates characteristics of the original forms
 - Fusion styles often reflect cultural diversity and evolving dance trends
 - Examples: Afro-Latin fusion combines African and Latin dance elements, Bollywood-jazz fusion blends Indian and Western dance styles, hip-hop ballet fuses street dance with classical ballet technique
- Interdisciplinary dance forms
 - Integrate dance with other art forms, such as music, theater, visual arts, or technology
 - Emphasize collaboration between artists from different disciplines (dancers, musicians, visual artists)
 - Often explore themes or concepts that transcend traditional dance boundaries
 - Interdisciplinary works challenge conventional notions of dance performance
 - Examples: dance theater incorporates theatrical elements and storytelling, multimedia dance performances use video projections and interactive technology, site-specific dance installations engage with unique architectural spaces

Influences on contemporary fusion dance

- African dance influences
 - Polyrhythmic movements, grounded stance, and improvisational elements
 - African dance emphasizes connection to the earth and spiritual expression
 - Incorporated into styles like Afro-Latin fusion and Afro-contemporary dance
- Latin dance influences

- Salsa, merengue, and bachata footwork and partnering techniques
- Latin dances often feature sensual movements and intricate rhythms
- Evident in Latin-jazz fusion and Latin-contemporary fusion styles
- Asian dance influences
- Classical Indian dance mudras (hand gestures) and bharatanatyam footwork
- Asian dance forms emphasize precision, grace, and storytelling through movement
- Incorporated into Bollywood-contemporary fusion and Asian-modern fusion
- Hip-hop and street dance influences
- Breakdancing, popping, and locking techniques
- Hip-hop dance originated in urban communities and reflects social and political issues
- Integrated into hip-hop ballet fusion and hip-hop contemporary fusion
- Cultural traditions and folk dance influences
- Traditional steps, rhythms, and costumes from various cultures (flamenco, Irish step dance, Hawaiian hula)
- Folk dances often celebrate community, history, and cultural identity
- Incorporated into world dance fusion and culturally-specific fusion styles

Creative process in interdisciplinary dance

- Collaborative process
- Artists from different disciplines work together to conceptualize and develop the project
- Dancers, musicians, visual artists, and technicians contribute their expertise
- Open communication and mutual respect are essential for successful collaboration
- Collaborative process fosters innovation and pushes creative boundaries
- Creative exploration
- Experimenting with new ideas, techniques, and technologies
- Pushing boundaries and challenging traditional notions of dance
- Embracing improvisation and unconventional approaches to movement and performance
- Creative exploration leads to groundbreaking and thought-provoking works
- Integration of elements
- Finding ways to seamlessly blend dance with other art forms (music, visual art, technology)
- Creating a cohesive and meaningful experience for the audience
- Ensuring that each element enhances and supports the overall artistic vision
- Successful integration results in a powerful, multi-sensory performance

Impact of fusion on American dance

- Expanding the definition of dance
- Challenging traditional boundaries and categories
- Encouraging experimentation and innovation in choreography and performance
- Attracting new audiences and broadening the appeal of dance
- Fusion and interdisciplinary works redefine what dance can be and express
- Reflecting cultural diversity
- Incorporating influences from various cultural traditions and dance styles
- Celebrating the richness and complexity of American society
- Promoting cross-cultural understanding and appreciation
- Fusion dance reflects the multicultural tapestry of the United States
- Driving technological advancements
- Integrating new technologies, such as motion capture, projection mapping, and interactive media
- Enhancing the visual and immersive aspects of dance performances
- Inspiring the development of new tools and platforms for dance creation and documentation
- Technology expands the possibilities for dance expression and audience engagement
- Influencing other art forms
- Collaborations with musicians, visual artists, and theater practitioners
- Inspiring new approaches to composition, staging, and performance in other disciplines
- Contributing to the growth of interdisciplinary and multimedia art practices
- Fusion and interdisciplinary dance push the boundaries of artistic expression across fields

14.2 Technology and Digital Dance

Contemporary dance is embracing technology in exciting ways. From multimedia projections to motion capture, dancers are exploring new frontiers of movement and expression. These innovations are reshaping performances, creating immersive experiences for audiences.

Digital tools are transforming how dance is created, documented, and shared. Choreography software, online platforms, and social media are expanding access to dance education and performances. This digital revolution is pushing the boundaries of what's possible in dance.

Technology in Contemporary Dance

Technology in contemporary dance performances

- Incorporates multimedia elements such as projection mapping, video backgrounds, and interactive visuals to enhance the visual experience and create immersive environments (3D projections, LED screens)

- Utilizes motion capture technology to capture and manipulate dancers' movements in real-time, creating digital avatars or virtual dancers that interact with live performers (Kinect, Vicon systems)
- Integrates sensor technology through wearable sensors that trigger audio, visual, or kinetic responses based on the dancer's movements, creating interactive and responsive stage elements (accelerometers, gyroscopes)
- Involves collaboration with digital artists and technologists to develop interdisciplinary performances that combine dance with cutting-edge technology, often requiring custom software and hardware development (Max/MSP, Arduino)

Digital tools for dance creation

- Employs choreographic software and digital tools for dance notation, composition, and virtual rehearsal spaces, enabling remote collaboration and streamlined creative processes (DanceForms, LabanWriter)
- Utilizes digital documentation and archiving techniques such as video recording, editing, and the creation of digital dance portfolios to preserve and share dance works (Final Cut Pro, Vimeo)
- Leverages online platforms for dance education and training, offering virtual classes, workshops, instructional videos, and tutorials to expand access and reach (Zoom, YouTube)
- Harnesses social media and streaming services to promote and disseminate dance content, including live streaming of performances and events to engage wider audiences (Instagram, Twitch)

Aesthetic impact of technology on dance

- Expands choreographic possibilities by incorporating non-human elements, virtual dancers, and exploring new movement vocabularies and aesthetics, pushing the boundaries of traditional dance forms (motion tracking, AI-generated choreography)
- Blurs the boundaries between dance and other art forms, integrating visual arts, music, and technology in performances, leading to the emergence of hybrid and interdisciplinary dance practices (multimedia performances, interactive installations)
- Redefines the role of the dancer, requiring interaction with technology as a partner or extension of the body and demanding adaptation to new technical skills and performance demands (dancing with projections, controlling digital elements)
- Shifts audience perception and engagement, offering immersive and interactive experiences that alter the sense of presence and embodiment in virtual performances (VR dance experiences, participatory performances)

Technology's role in dance education

- Enhances accessibility and reach of dance education through online classes, resources for remote learning, and the potential to engage diverse and global audiences (MOOCs, virtual workshops)
- Introduces new modes of audience participation, such as interactive performances and installations, and personalized, immersive viewing experiences (motion-activated displays, choose-your-own-adventure performances)
- Presents challenges in preserving the essence of live performance, requiring a balance between technology and the immediacy and authenticity of dance, while maintaining the value of physical presence and human connection (live vs. virtual performances)

- Raises ethical considerations and highlights the digital divide, addressing issues of access to technology, digital literacy among dancers and audiences, and intellectual property and ownership in digital dance content (copyright, fair use)

14.3 Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in Contemporary Dance

Contemporary dance in America embraces diverse communities, bringing unique cultural perspectives to the art form. African American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American dancers enrich the landscape, integrating traditional styles with modern aesthetics to create innovative works.

Cultural identity profoundly impacts choreography, with dancers drawing from their heritage to tell authentic stories. This diversity challenges stereotypes, breaks gender barriers, and fosters inclusivity. Dance becomes a powerful tool for cross-cultural understanding and social activism.

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in Contemporary Dance

Diverse communities in American dance

- Increased visibility of dancers and choreographers from diverse backgrounds
- African American, Latino, Asian American, Native American, and other underrepresented communities bring unique cultural perspectives and experiences to the dance world (Katherine Dunham, Alvin Ailey, Jawole Willa Jo Zollar)
- Their contributions enrich and expand the artistic landscape of contemporary dance
- Influence of cultural dance forms on contemporary dance
- Integration of traditional dance styles and techniques from various cultures (African dance, Bharatanatyam, Flamenco) into contemporary choreography
- Fusion of cultural elements with modern and postmodern dance aesthetics creates innovative and dynamic works
- Emergence of dance companies and organizations focused on promoting diversity
- Companies such as Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ballet Hispánico, and Nia Dance Company provide platforms for dancers and choreographers of color to showcase their work
- These organizations play a crucial role in advancing diversity and representation in the dance field

Cultural identity's impact on dance

- Cultural identity as a source of inspiration and expression in choreography
- Dancers and choreographers draw from their cultural heritage and lived experiences to create meaningful and authentic works
- Incorporating cultural symbols, narratives, and themes into dance works allows for personal and collective storytelling (Rennie Harris' "Puremovement", Ronald K. Brown's "Grace")
- Race and ethnicity influencing the perception and reception of dance performances
- Audience expectations and biases based on the racial or ethnic background of dancers and choreographers can impact how works are interpreted and valued

- Challenging stereotypes and promoting diverse representations through dance helps to broaden perspectives and foster inclusivity
- Gender roles and expectations in dance
- Historical and cultural norms have shaped traditional gender roles in dance (male-female partnering in ballet, all-male dance companies)
- Contemporary dance breaks gender barriers and challenges expectations by featuring gender-fluid and non-binary performances and choreography (Sean Dorsey Dance, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company)

Diversity initiatives in dance

- Increasing access and opportunities for underrepresented communities
- Outreach programs and partnerships with schools and community organizations expose diverse populations to dance and provide entry points into the field
- Scholarships, mentorship, and training initiatives support the development of dancers from diverse backgrounds (Dance Theatre of Harlem School, Alonzo King LINES Ballet Training Program)
- Fostering inclusive and equitable practices within dance organizations
- Implementing diversity and inclusion policies and committees ensures that organizations are accountable and proactive in promoting equity
- Addressing systemic barriers and discrimination in auditions, casting, and leadership positions creates a more level playing field for dancers and choreographers of all backgrounds
- Promoting diverse programming and collaborations
- Showcasing works by choreographers from diverse cultural backgrounds expands the range of voices and perspectives in dance
- Collaborations between dance companies and artists from different cultures and disciplines (Akram Khan Company, Nrityagram Dance Ensemble) foster cross-cultural exchange and innovation

Dance for cross-cultural understanding

- Dance as a means of cultural exchange and dialogue
- Performances and workshops that bring together dancers and audiences from different cultures promote mutual understanding and appreciation
- Engaging in dance experiences from diverse traditions fosters empathy, respect, and curiosity about other cultures (DanceMotion USA, Battery Dance Company's Dancing to Connect program)
- Dance as a tool for social and political activism
- Choreography can address social issues and advocate for change by raising awareness and inspiring action
- Performances that highlight inequality, discrimination, and marginalization (Bill T. Jones' "Still/Here", Kyle Abraham's "The Watershed") provoke thought and dialogue around pressing social concerns
- Dance as a unifying force in diverse communities

- Community dance projects and events celebrate cultural diversity and bring people together through shared artistic experiences
- Participating in and witnessing dance from various cultures fosters a sense of belonging, pride, and shared identity within diverse communities (Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Dance/NYC's Disability. Dance. Artistry. initiative)

14.4 Dance Education and Community Engagement

Dance education shapes bodies, minds, and hearts. It improves physical fitness, sparks creativity, and builds confidence. From schools to studios to community centers, dance classes offer something for everyone.

Teaching dance blends instruction and exploration. Educators follow standards, create age-appropriate content, and connect dance to other subjects. This approach ensures students get a well-rounded dance education that goes beyond just learning steps.

Dance Education

Importance of dance education

- Benefits of dance education encompass physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development
- Physical development improves coordination, balance, flexibility, and enhances cardiovascular health and fitness
- Cognitive development stimulates creativity, problem-solving skills, spatial awareness, and kinesthetic learning
- Social and emotional development promotes self-expression, confidence, teamwork, and social interaction
- Importance of dance education spans various settings
- Schools integrate dance into the curriculum as a core subject, providing equal access to dance education for all students
- Studios offer specialized training in various dance styles and techniques (ballet, jazz, hip-hop), preparing students for professional careers in dance
- Community settings engage diverse populations in dance activities, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural identity

Approaches to dance pedagogy

- Teaching methods and strategies include both teacher-directed instruction and student-centered learning
- Teacher-directed instruction involves demonstration, modeling, verbal cues, and feedback
- Student-centered learning emphasizes exploration, improvisation, collaborative, and peer-to-peer learning
- Curriculum development aligns with national and state standards, designs age-appropriate and culturally relevant content, and integrates cross-disciplinary connections

- Aligning with National Core Arts Standards and state-specific dance standards ensures comprehensive and consistent education
- Designing content considers students' developmental stages, abilities, and incorporates diverse dance styles and cultural traditions (African, Latin, Asian)
- Integrating cross-disciplinary connections links dance with other subjects (math, science, literature), enhancing learning through interdisciplinary projects and performances

Community Engagement and Well-being

Dance for community engagement

- Community dance programs offer accessible and inclusive dance classes and workshops, and foster intergenerational and multicultural dance projects
- Accessible programs provide low-cost or free classes for underserved populations (low-income, minority communities)
- Inclusive programs adapt dance instruction for participants with disabilities (wheelchair dance, dance for the visually impaired)
- Intergenerational and multicultural projects bring together participants of different ages and backgrounds, fostering understanding and respect for diverse cultures and traditions
- Dance serves as a tool for social change by addressing social issues and collaborating with community organizations and activists
- Dance performances and workshops raise awareness about topics such as racism, gender equality, and environmental sustainability, encouraging dialogue and action within communities
- Collaborating with local non-profits, schools, and advocacy groups amplifies marginalized voices and supports grassroots movements

Benefits of dance for well-being

- Physical benefits of dance improve overall fitness, body awareness, balance, coordination, and mobility
- Increasing strength, endurance, and flexibility reduces the risk of chronic diseases (heart disease, diabetes) and injuries
- Enhancing balance, coordination, and mobility benefits older adults and individuals with movement disorders (Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis), facilitating rehabilitation and recovery processes
- Mental health benefits of dance reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and boost cognitive function and memory
- Providing a creative outlet for self-expression and emotional release promotes mindfulness and relaxation through movement
- Stimulating the brain through complex movement patterns and rhythms delays the onset of age-related cognitive decline (dementia, Alzheimer's)
- Social well-being through dance builds social connections, support networks, and promotes cultural understanding and empathy

- Encouraging interaction and cooperation among participants fosters a sense of belonging and community
- Exposing participants to diverse dance traditions and perspectives (folkloric, contemporary) facilitates cross-cultural dialogue and appreciation