

Choreographic Exploration of Misappropriation in Hip-Hop Dance

To examine the properties that comprise hip-hop dance, a choreographic work will be shown that aims to intentionally misappropriate traditional hip hop vocabulary and philosophies. Drawing from post-modern ideologies such as repetition, accumulation, improvisation for choreography, and chance procedure, the work will scrutinize movements classified as hip-hop alongside contemporary dance material. Spurred by the popularity of Ian Eastwood's dance videos, this work will embody similar movements and visual expressions portrayed in Eastwood's films. Although Eastwood's choreography seemingly exemplifies the hip-hop aesthetic, a large majority of the way Eastwood presents his work misaligns contextually with hip-hop ideologies. However, because of his embodiment of the 'cool' aesthetic, the use of hip-hop music, and some traditional hip-hop vocabulary, the content of his work is not questioned in terms of authenticity. If this post-modern depiction employs the same tactics as Eastwood, will the work be considered hip-hop? Consequently, viewers are asked to question what exactly qualifies hip-hop... is it the content? Or context? If a dance is set to hip-hop music and implements traditional hip-hop movements but is contextually out of the hip-hop culture, is it really hip-hop? Through this analysis, perhaps we can begin to recognize cases of misappropriation not only in hip-hop, but also in various cultural expressions.