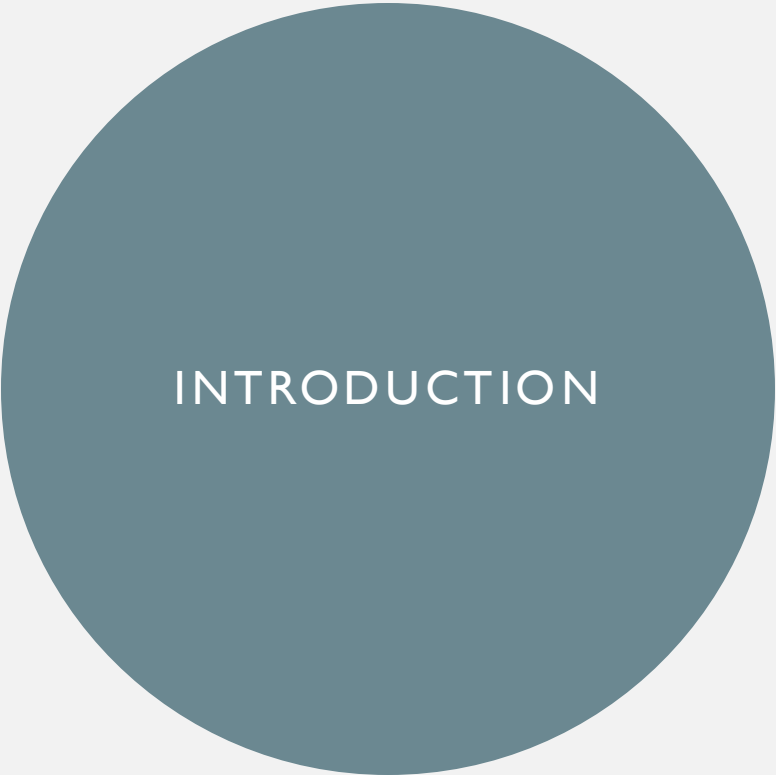


DIGITAL DANCING

Vip Artpradid and Hetty Blades

Centre for Dance Research (C-DaRE), Coventry University,
UK

Funded by Arts and Humanities Research Council via *Moving
Online: Ontology and Ownership of Internet Dance*
[[AH/W01002X/1](#)]



INTRODUCTION

- Dance ontology (eg Pakes 2020; Pouillaude 2017; McFee 2018; Davies 2011, 2024; Van Camp 2019; Carroll 2019; Conroy 2013, 2019; Meskin 1999)
- Ownership: copyright and social norms
- Dance ontology and copyright law (Conroy 2013: 112-119, Kraut 2016:12 and 228-23, Pakes 2020: 179- 182, Van Camp 2019, 2006, Biagioli-Ravetto and Ravetto-Biagioli 2022, Aldape Muñoz 2024)
- The 'work' (Pakes 2020)



OWNERSHIP

- Akin to oral traditions (see Pouillaude 2017, Pakes 2020).
- ‘Free’ circulation online (eg. ‘commons’, see. eg. Bench 202; Burt 2017; Ravetto-Biagioli 2021; Kraut 2016; Ellis 2022; Blades 2022) and the ‘gift’, see Franko 2004; Bench 2020; Ravetto-Biagioli 2021; Leach 2014; Kraut 2016; Foster 2019; Blades 2022) .
- Ownership governed by social norms (see Bench 2020, Blades 2022)
- Dance in digital creative industries challenge ownership frameworks (see Wood and Pavis 2020).



ONLINE OWNERSHIP CHALLENGES

- Legal cases brought against Epic games for the alleged use of people's dances for their Fortnite emotes (see Ravetto-Biagioli 2021, Gover 2023, Kansal and Boruah 2024).
- Uncredited copying on social media. Eg. Charli D'Amelio's initially uncredited use of Renegade by Jalaiah Harmon (see Boffone 2022, Lorenz 2020, Davis 2022, Aldape Muñoz 2023).
- Importance of credit (Lorenz 2020, Boffone 2022, Bench 2020, Harlig et al 2021)
- “Black artists create structures of joy but have little access to the market share in any realm related to that creativity” (De Frantz 2022: 254).



WORKS AND SOCIAL DANCES

- Marginalisation through distinction between woks and ‘social dances’ and ‘routines’ (Kraut 2016. See also Pakes 2020: 181, Johnson 2021).
- The notion of the ‘work’ in philosophy is complex and contested (see Pakes 2020, Pouillaude 2017).
- Distinction between social dance contexts which assume a “dancing populace already in motion” and theatre dance audiences (De Frantz 2019: 90)

SOCIAL (MEDIA)
DANCES

- “dance comes to be understood as generating authored, repeatable, persistent and autonomous works that function both as guiding structures for performers and as a focus of appreciation for audiences” (Pakes 2020: 69).
- Social dances collectively authored (see DeFrantz 2022)
- Single person attribution of works (see Pakes 2020 and Pavis and Wood 2020)



DANCE CHALLENGES

- Dance challenges (eg. Harlig et al 2021, Boffone 2021, Davis 2022, Aldape Muñoz 2023, Griffiths 2023).

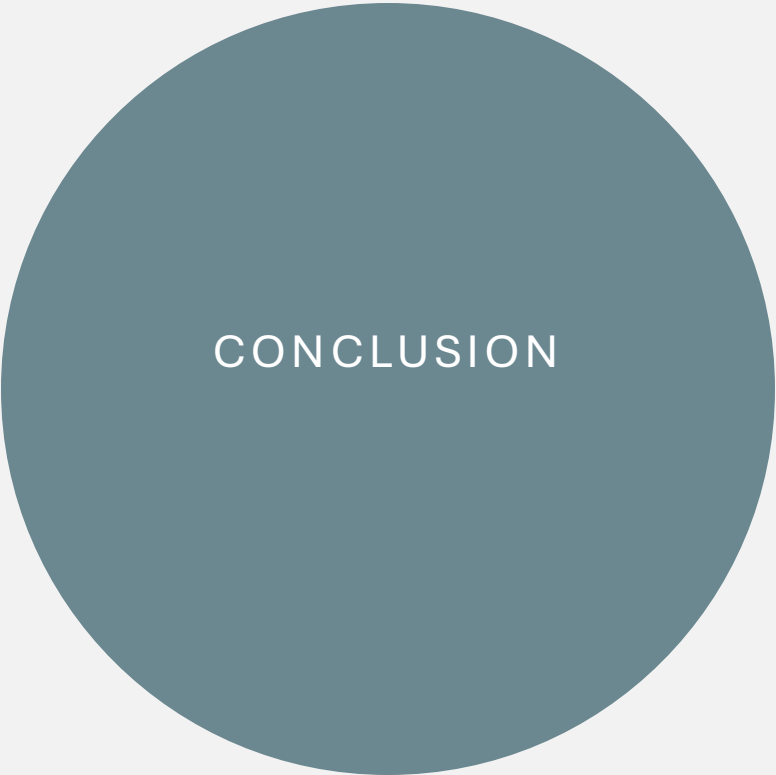
SOCIAL (MEDIA)
DANCE
AUTHORSHIP

- On TikTok, remix cultures are built into the platform norm' (Abidin in Harlig et al., 2021: 192).
- “circumscribed creativity”, Kaye et al. (2022)
- Hip Hop “began with the construction of an aesthetically enveloping environment within which creative feats of skills were performed to gain honor, respect, and thus community standing” (Vernon, 2021:15).



CREATIVITY

- Kaye et al.'s (2022) *four* types of creativity on TikTok:
'vernacular, social, distributed, and circumscribed creativity.... [where vernacular] creativity refers to TikTokers' affective and platform-specific communication style; social creativity means the involvement of a mutually shaped creative process; distributed creativity describes TikTokers' participatory production among community members; and circumscribed creativity refers to both the affordance of TikTok platform and its boundary limit of TikTokers' autonomous productions.' (Kuo 2023: 6877).
- 'de-authoring' (Laermans 2015: 298)



CONCLUSION

- In legal contexts, the author is generally understood as the owner of the dance (see Pavis and Wood 2020: 8)
- Distinction between works and social dances not necessary or helpful in the online context, and does not reflect the way that dances circulate online.
- Need to strengthen and develop social and ethical ownership practices, so that they can withhold and support dance's transmission into the digital creative industries and technological change
- Moving Online symposium, 30 January 2025. Coventry Uni
- hetty.blades@coventry.ac.uk
- X: [@MovingOnlineCU](https://twitter.com/MovingOnlineCU)
- Instagram: @movingonlinecu

Aldape Muñoz, J.M. (2023) 'Love and Theft in Dance Economies,' *Performance Philosophy*, 8(2): 223-248

Bench, H. (2020) *Perpetual Motion: Dance, Digital Cultures, and the Common*. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press

Biagioli-Ravetto, M. and Ravetto-Biagioli, K. (2022) 'Riffing off Intellectual Property in Contemporary Dance,' *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 29(2), 1-16

Blades, H. (2022) 'Ownership, Ontology, and the Contemporary Dance Commons'. *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 29(2), pp.123-140.

Boffone, T. (2021) *Renegades: Digital Dance Cultures from Dubsplash to TikTok*. New York: Oxford University Press

Caldarola, E. (2020) 'Methodology in the Ontology of Artworks: Exploring Hermeneutic Fictionalism' in Falguera, J. L. Martínez-Vidal, C. (eds.), *Abstract Objects*, Synthese Library, Cham: Springer, 319-337

Conroy, R. (2013) 'The Beat Goes On: Reconsidering Dancework Identity' in Bunker, J., Pakes, A. and Rowell, B. (eds.) *Thinking Through Dance: The Philosophy of Dance Performance and Practice*. Hampshire: Dance Books, pp.102- 126

Conroy, R. (2019) 'Dances, Danceworks, and Choreographic Works: A Plea for Conceptual Clarity,' *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 44: 7-20

Davies, D. (2011) *Philosophy of the Performing Arts*. Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell

Davis, C. (2022) "Digital Blackface and the Troubling Intimacies of TikTok Dance Challenges" in Boffone, T (ed.) *TikTok Cultures in the United States*. Oxon: Routledge, 28-38.

De Frantz, T. (2020) 'Breaking in my House: Popular Dance, Identity Politics and Postracial Empathies' in Fogarty, M. and Johnson, I. (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Hip Hop Studies*. New York: Oxford University Press

Defrantz, T.F. (2019) 'What is Black dance? What can it do?' in Bleeker, M. et al.(eds), *Thinking Through Theatre and Performance*. London: Methuen Drama, pp.87-99

Ellis, S. (2022) 'Lithium Dancing (Hidden in Plain Sight),' *The International Journal of Screendance*, 13(1)

Foster, S.L. (2019) *Valuing Dance: Commodities and Gifts in Motion*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gover, K. for Intellectual Property Practice Group of McDermott Will & Emery (2013) "A Step Forward for Choreography and Copyright," *The National Law Review* [online] November 16, 2023: <https://natlawreview.com/article/step-forward-choreography-and-copyright> [Accessed 23.04.2024]

Harlig, A., Abidin, C., Boffone, T., Bowker, K., Eloi, C., Krayenbuhl, P., & Oh, C. (2021). TikTok and Short-Form Screendance Before and After Covid. *The International Journal of Screendance*, 12. <https://doi.org/10.18061/ijsd.v12i0.8348>

Johnson, A. (2021) 'Copyrighting Tik Tok Dances: Choreography in the Digital Age', *Washington Law Review*, 96 (3): 1225 – 1274

Kansal, L. and Boruah, M. (2024) 'Copyright in Choreographic Work with Special Attention to the Hanagami Vs Fortnite Case,' *Naik Naik and Company* [online] 24 March 2024: <https://naiknaik.com/2024/03/24/copyright-in-choreographic-work-with-special-attention-to-the-hanagami-vs-fortnite-case/> [accessed 23.04.2024]

Kaye, D.B.V., Zeng, J. , and P. Wikström. (2022). *TikTok: Creativity and Culture in Short Video*. Polity: London.

Kuo, L. (2023). 'D. Bondy Valdovinos Kaye, Jing Zeng, and Patrik Wikström, TikTok: Creativity and Culture in Short Video, London, UK: Polity, 2022, 251 pp., \$22.00 (paperback).' Book review in *International Journal of Communication* (17).

Kraut, A. (2016) *Choreographing Copyright: Race, Gender, and Intellectual Property Rights in American Dance*. London, New York: Oxford University Press

Laermans, R. (2015) *Moving Together: Making and Theorizing Contemporary Dance*. Amsterdam: Valiz

Lorenz, T. (2020) 'The Original Renegade: A 14-year-old in Atlanta created one of the biggest dances on the internet. But nobody really knows that,' *The New York Times* [online] 9 accessed 15.12.2023)

McFee, G. (2018) *Dance and the Philosophy of Action: A Framework for the Aesthetics of Dance* Hampshire: Dance Books

Meskin, A. (1999) "Productions, Performances and their Evaluation," in McFee, G. (ed). *Dance, Education and Philosophy*, Oxford: Meyer and Meyer Sport, 45– 62

Pakes, A. (2020) *Choreography Invisible: The Disappearing Work of Dance*. New York: Oxford University Press

Wood, K., & Pavis, M. (2020). Creative Industries and Copyright: Research into Collaborative Artistic Practices in Dance. In M. Blain, & H. J. Minors (Eds.), *Artistic Research in Performance through Collaboration* (pp. 165-184). Palgrave Macmillan

Pouillaude, F. (2017) *Unworking Choreography: The Notion of the Work in Dance*. Translated by Pakes, A. New York: Oxford University Press.

Ravetto-Biagioli, K. (2021) 'Whose Dance Is It Anyway?: Property, Copyright and the Commons', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 38(1), pp.101-126.

Van Camp, J (2019) 'Identity in Dance: What Happened?' *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, 44: 81-91

Vernon, J. (2021) *Sampling, Biting, and the Postmodern Subversion of Hip Hop*. Springer Nature.