



Humanities Seminars Program

Spring 2021

Celebrating Tap!-An American Art Form

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Thursdays, 1:00-3:00pm (selected dates)

Since it first appeared in the dance world, tap dancing immediately enchanted the public in North America, becoming a vital part of Jazz music culture and broader mainstream musical culture. Tap dancing is an American art form. It was born in the 1800s, from the meeting and meshing of the percussive dance styles brought to the United States (predominantly African, English, Irish and Scottish). It's staccato and style are homegrown. Come explore the history and significance of the American art form of tap dance. Tap has evolved through the years thanks to many significant tap dancers and choreographers. Each week we will discuss different tap dancers and their contributions to the dance world. Examples and video footage of these dancers will be shown and discussed. Additionally, we will focus on what makes each tap dancer unique regarding their style. Assigned readings will enhance the learning as we explore the evolution of this American art form. This course will celebrate the following tappers to include: Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell, Ann Miller, Gregory Hines, Savion Glover and many, many others. We will watch and learn as people "shuffle along" in this 2-hour lecture that will span 10 weeks.

Schedule

Week 1- January 28

Introduction: The roots and history of tap dance.

Early beginnings: Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Ruby Keeler

Discussion: Reading

View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 2-Feb 4

John W. Bubbles, Charles "Honi" Coles, Peg Leg Bates, Buster Brown

Discussion: Reading

View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 3-February 11

Eleanor Powell, The Nicholas Brothers
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 4-February 18

Shirley Temple, Bunny Briggs, Leonard Reed
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 5-February 25

Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Ann Miller
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 6-March 4

Gene Kelly, Fred Kelly
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 7-March 18

Jimmy Slyde, Gregory Hines, Sammy Davis Jr.
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 8-March 25

Brenda Buffalino, Savion Glover, Chloe Arnold
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 9-April 1

Ayodele Casel, Michelle Dorrance, Jason Samuels Smith
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Week 10-April 8

Dianne Walker (Lady Di), Anthony Morigerato and wrap-up of course
Discussion: Reading
View video clips in-class and discuss

Required Text:

- *Seibert, Brian*-What the Eye Hears; A History of Tap Dancing
ISBN: 978-0-374-53651-0
- *Frank, Rusty*-TAP! The Greatest Tap Dance Stars and their Stories
ISBN: 978-0306806353
- Selected readings posted on Box (by Jan 1, 2021)

Recommended Text:

- *Cramer, Lyn*-Creating Musical Theatre: Conversations with Broadway Directors and Choreographers
- *Kislan, Richard*-Hoofing on Broadway, A History of Show Dancing