

IMANI KAI JOHNSON

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CURRENT POSITION

Assistant Professor of Critical Dance Studies, UC Riverside

EDUCATION

- 2009 MA, Ph.D. U. of Southern California, Department of American Studies & Ethnicity
- 2002 MA New York U., Gallatin School of Individualized Study, concentration in African-American and Afro-Caribbean Literature and History
- 1998 BA U. of California Berkeley, English and Economics majors, African-American Studies minor
Univ. of the West Indies-Cave Hill, Barbados Education Abroad (Fall 1998)
Howard Univ. Black Student Development Center Exchange (Fall 1996)

PUBLICATIONS

Book

Dark Matter in B-Boying Cyphers: Hip Hop in a Global Context, Oxford University Press (under contract).

The Oxford Handbook on Hip Hop Dance Studies, co-editor with Mary Fogarty. Oxford University Press (under contract).

Peer-Reviewed

“Battling in the Bronx: Street Sensibilities in Dance and Life,” *Dance Research Journal*. Submitted April 2017 (revise & resubmit)

“From Blues Women to B-Girls: Performing Marginalized Femininities,” *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory*, special issue “All Hail the Queenz: A Queer Feminist Recalibration of Hip Hop Scholarship,” 24.1 (May 2014): 15-28

“B-Boying and Battling in a Global Context: The Discursive Life of Difference,” *Alij: Journal of Comparative Poetics* special issue n.31 “The Other Americas,” Cairo: American U. in Cairo Press (2011): pp. 173-195

Invited Articles & Chapters

“Black Culture Without Black People: Hip Hop & Dance Beyond Appropriation Discourse,” *Are We Entertained?: New Essays on Black Popular Culture in the 21st Century*, eds. by Simone Drake, David Ikard, & Dwan Simmons. Submitted June 2015. (Under consideration with Duke U. Press)

“A Historical Overview of Hip Hop Dances,” *Cambridge Companion to Hip Hop*. Ed. by Justin Williams. Cambridge: Cambridge U. Press (2015): 22-31

“Music Meant to Make You Move: Considering the Aural-Kinesthetic,” Sounding Off! Sound Studies Blog (18 June 2012). URL: <http://soundstudiesblog.com/2012/06/18/music-meant-to-make-you-move-considering-the-aural-kinesthetic/>

AWARDS, GRANTS, & HONORS

- UC Riverside, University Honors Program Mentor of the Year Award, 2016-2017
- CHASS Proposal Incentive Plan in recognition of the Hellman Fellowship, August 2016
- The Mellon-funded Duke Summer Institute for Tenure and Professional Advancement (SITPA) Scholar, Duke U., August 2015
- U. of California Humanities Research Institute Conference Grant in support of Show & Prove 2016 Hip Hop Studies Conference, April 2016
- Center for Ideas & Society Conference Grant in support of Show & Prove 2016 Hip Hop Studies Conference, April 2016
- Postdoctoral Fellow in the History Department, East Tennessee State U., 2013-2014
- Visiting Assistant Professor of Critical Dance Studies, U. of California, Riverside Fall 2012
- Provost Post-Doctoral Diversity Fellow, Performance Studies, New York U. 2009-2012
- Nominated, David Payne-Carter Award for Teaching Excellence, Tisch School of the Arts, New York U., 2012

RECENT CONFERENCES & LECTURES

Panelist “Performing the Global Cypher: B-Boying, Black Aesthetics, & Soulful Dancers,” American Studies Association, Denver, CO 19 Nov 2016

Panelist “Black Culture Without Black People: Beyond Appropriation Discourse,” Congress on Research in Dance and Society for Dance History Scholars Joint Conference, Pomona, CA 4 Nov 2016

Panelist “Badass Femininity in B-Girling Culture: Or How to Read Black Pearl,” Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora, Charleston, SC 6 Nov 2015

Panelist “Women Ethnographers of Hip Hop Dance,” Congress on Research in Dance/Society of Dance History Scholars Conference, Athens, Greece, 5 June 2015

Moderator/Respondent “Show & Prove: A Multi-Media Examination of Global Street Dance,” New York U.’s Black Portraits Conference II, Florence, Italy, 31 May 2015

Panelist “Bad Ass Femininity: Africanist Aesthetics & Gender Performativity in the Practice of B-Girling” National Council for Black Studies Conference, Los Angeles, CA, 14 Mar 2015

Panelist “Social Dance & Social Death: Considerations of Affect in Prison Dancing” American Studies Association Annual Conference, Los Angeles, CA 7 Nov 2014

Co-Workshop Facilitator “Making Dark Matter: Black Thought, Africanist Aesthetics, and Funkamental Moveme(a)nt” Dancing the African Diaspora: Theories of Black Performance Conference, Duke U, Durham NC 7-9 Feb 2014

Panelist “Decolonial Aesthetics & the Possibilities of Hip Hop Dance” Critical Ethnic Studies Conference, U. of Illinois Chicago 19-21 Sept 2013

Moderator & Round Table Panelist “Everybody’s On the Beat: The Music-Movement Continuum in New York City,” Experience the Music (EMP) Pop Conference, New York U., Manhattan, NY 18 Apr 2013

Panel Respondent “Site-Specific/Cities: Street Movements, Social Critique, & Dance on Film” for Society of Dance History Scholars at U. of the Arts, Philadelphia PA 14-17 June 2012

By Invitation

Invited Speaker “Breaking, Biting, & Blackness: Hip Hop Dance Beyond Appropriation Discourse,” James Weldon Johnson Institute Race & Difference Colloquium Series, Emory U. 24 Oct 2016

Invited Speaker “Double-Consciousness in Global Cyphers,” Critical Dance Studies Colloquium Series, UC Riverside 12 Oct 2016

Guest Artist in Residence for [UN]WRAP Series (Undoing Writing, Research, & Performance): Women of the Cypher Event, U. of Colorado Boulder. Talk title, “In Consideration of Women Warriors & Badass Femininity” 22-25 Sept 2016

Guest Lecture “From Hood Dances to Youtube: Community, Movement-Based Activism, & Audience Reception,” for Artisia Green’s Reimagining Community course, William & Mary College Theater Department 13 Sept 2016

Invited Speaker “The Global Cypher?: Black Sociality, Soulful Allies, & a Truly Global Culture,” Stanford Colloquium on Dance Studies, Department of Dance, Stanford U. 25 Jan 2016

Invited Speaker “The Cypher as Bridge: Cultural Transmission Through B-boying’s Ritual Dance Circle,” Dance/Change Speaker Series, Department of Dance, UC Riverside 4 Nov 2014

Invited Panelist “A Moral Panic From Below?: American Cultural Hegemony & Black Erasure in Global B-Boying Culture” Global Moral Panics Symposium, Indiana U. Bloomington 10-11 Oct 2014

Invited Plenary Panelist “Decentering Dance Studies: Moving in New Global Orders,” The Society of Dance History Scholars/Congress on Research in Dance Joint Conference, U. of California, Riverside. 14-17 Nov 2013

Invited Panelist “From South Bronx to the World: Hip Hop Dance and the Possibilities of Femininity”, Bronx African American History Project 10-Year Anniversary, Panel “Women in Hip Hop” 6 Apr 2013

Guest Lecturer “Make it Funky: Africanist Aesthetics in B-Boying Culture,” for Sherril Dodds’ Dancing the Popular course, Temple U. 4 Mar 2013

Guest Speaker “The Circle Is Unbroken: Ring Shouts & Cyphers in the Context of African American Ritual Culture,” for Brandon Shaw’s Africana Dance in the U.S. course, Brown U. 14 Feb 2013

Guest Speaker “Badass Femininity & the Aesthetics of B-Girling,” for Shanté Smalls’ Hip Hop, Gender, & Sexuality course, Davidson College English Department, Davidson NC 3 Oct 2012

Invited Speaker “Dark Matter in B-Boying Cyphers” at Manifesto B-boy/B-girl Council, in conjunction with the York U. Dance Department. Toronto CA. 19 Jan 2012

Guest Interview “Dark Matter in B-Boying Cyphers” for Bigger Than Hip Hop Radio Show, CHRY 105.5FM, sponsored by York U. Toronto CA. 19 Jan 2012

COMMITTEE & ADVISOR SERVICE

2015-2016 *University Honors Capstone Thesis Faculty Mentor* for Emma Matis, Psychology, UC Riverside.

2015-2016 *University Honors Capstone Thesis Faculty Mentor* for Brennen Brixey, Anthropology, UC Riverside.

2015-2016 *Dissertation Prospectus Defense* for Katie Stahl-Kovell, Dance, UC Riverside.

2015-2016 *Dissertation Prospectus Defense, Outside Member* for Elizabeth Hughes, Sociology, UC Riverside

2014-15 *Qualifying Exam Committee Member, Dissertation Prospectus Defense* for Denise Machin, Dance, UC Riverside.

May 8, 2012 *Thesis Committee “Dance Like No One is Watching: A Look at Spectatorship in House Dancing” MA Defense* for Dominique-Sophie Sarrazin, Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York U.

May 2, 2012 *Thesis Committee “Race, Space, & Visual Culture” BA Colloquium* for Hannah Daly, Gallatin School of Individualized Study, New York U.

EVENT ORGANIZING

June 16, 2016 *Panel Curator, Moderator “Ain’t No Half Steppin’: Hip Hop Dance From Soul Train to B-Boying”* for the Grand Park Hip Hop Festival, Los Angeles, CA
Opening panel for the inaugural Hip Hop Festival at Grand Park in Los Angeles, featuring Damita Jo Freeman, Thelma Davis, Julio “Lil’ Cesar” Rivas, & Rennie Harris.

April 8-10, 2016 *Conference Chair, Curator, Speaker “Show and Prove Hip Hop Studies Conference”* in the Dance Department, UC Riverside. A 3-day conference featuring plenary panels,

paper presentations, speakers, workshops, master classes, and performances. This is an international and interdisciplinary conference attended by over 150 guests (including students, artists, scholars, and community members).

- Apr 18, 2012 *Curatorial Board* Experience the Music (EMP) Pop Conference, New York U.
- March 30-31, 2012 *Conference Chair, Organizer, Panel Moderator* “Show and Prove: the Tensions, Contradictions, and Possibilities of Hip Hop Studies in Practice” in the Performance Studies Department, New York University. A day-long symposium featuring new work in the burgeoning field through panels, discussions, and performances. New York U.
- Sept. 18-19, 2010 *Conference Chair, Organizer, Writing Workshop Coordinator* “Show and Prove: the Tensions, Contradictions, and Possibilities of Hip Hop Studies in Practice” in the Performance Studies Department, New York University. A day-long symposium featuring new work in the burgeoning field through panels, discussions, and performances. A half-day, small group workshop on paper draft. New York U.
- July 30, 2008 *Curator* “Breaking In Its 30s: The Maturing of Hip Hop’s Dance Art” presentation, performances with Rafael Xavier and Edmundo Loayza for the ALOUD Lectures, Readings, Performances & Discussion Series, Los Angeles Central Public Library.

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Spring 2013 *Dramaturge and Assistant to the Director* Delroy Lindo. *Oo-Bla-Dee* New York U. Department of Drama Main Stage Production
- Spring 2013 *Dramaturge, Milk Like Sugar* New York U. Department of Drama Main Stage Production

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Studies Association
Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora
Society of Dance History Scholars
Collegium on African Diaspora Dance