"Being Savion Glover:" Black Masculinity, Translocation, and Tap Dance

Thomas F. DeFrantz

> *The music sounds a Dirty South beat, the bass booming to answer the incessant high-pitched car alarm sound of synthesized strings. A woodblock sets the clavé, determining when and where I enter the beat. Its pulse is a medium tempo, but my only way in is a double-time sixteenth-note patter. I rush to meet the duple measure, stumbling over shifts of weight faster and faster, fulfilling impulses that run down my legs and out my feet before I can understand what they are. The steps flow freely from paddle and rolls - a fast-step wave and stomp performed directly under the body that allows for speed - to abrupt breaks of the beat inevitably followed by a fast volley of sounds. I feel my way into the hard edges of the ideas here, fueled by the unison melodic line sounded in several octaves of voice and instruments calling a cautionary tale of black life in the big city for the thug angels: "You wannt be a thug?/You wanna push drugs?/You want the cars in the videos?/Let me tell you how it really goes."*[1]

In the 1999 Spike Jonze film Being John Malkovich a trio of hapless urbanites discover an unlikely passage into the body of a contemporary "bad boy" stage actor. The translocation of bodies sets in motion two reactions: first, an increased kinesthetic awareness of life as it is lived through someone else, a sort of "eureka" moment of recognition and estrangement predicted by Freud and other psychoanalysts; followed closely by the second, capitalist impulse to make money by charging others admission to this strange opportunity, the appropriating, opportunistic "eureka" moment predicted by Marx and other class theorists. In the film, we see lines of eager body thieves, the paying customers willing to spend a few odd minutes being John Malkovich. This process echoes what audiences and researchers do when confronted by bodies in dance motion.

The point of entry to John Malkovich's being occurs on a half-floor of a Manhattan building, a sort of miniaturized landscape where everyone exists hunched over, always in physical distress, always imagining being an/Other body in another kind of space. The metaphor of in-between-ness - the portal into Malkovich's body is found in a closet on the 6 ½th floor - operates in the movie as it does in many performances, as a portal to desire mixing embodied memories with a prescient naive innocence. In the film, to open the door to the thrill of living, briefly, in another's psychic and corporeal space, we have to pass through an area of shrunken, guileless physicality. This space is also enacted for us by expert child performers, prodigies, who, with no recourse to psychological self-doubt, summon barely imaginable worlds through their expert imitation of adults.

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Miniaturization

The few child prodigies allowed American dance have been tap dancers. This simulacrum is indeed loaded by race, class, and gender. Tap dance is a hybrid American invention, but its African influences are visible and palpable. Consistent with American social constructions that have historically displaced and invisiblized their African wellsprings, tap has been trivialized or infantilized as a vernacular form, accessible to all but without the patina of profundity allowed art.[2]

But is tap dancing an art? Surely it can be, as countless performances by master dancers prove. But how is tap dance art accessed or referenced by its performers - or by child prodigies? More importantly, how is meaning in tap dance - for either audiences or dancers - assigned?

Rusty Frank begins her carefully-researched book of interviews Tap! with a definition of pickaninnies - the usually anonymous small black children who tap danced on minstrel and vaudeville stages to provide a frame for the star act. Pickaninnies offered a coalescence of racialized infantilization and emasculation, as

their cavorting dances signaled an invariant accessibility of black rhythmicity and creativity. Pickaninnies - "picks" for short - did learn useful show business skills while on the job, and often grew into adult entertainers respected for the professionalism they gleaned as children. But as children, performing most often for white adult audiences, "picks" confirmed associations of blackness and the puerile; common American constructions linking guileless physicality to intellectual and cultural naivete.

Anonymous "picks" became less common in the early part of the twentieth century, and the expansion of the film industry, combined with strengthened federal child labor laws, contributed to a decrease of child tap dancers on public stages. Still, children danced professionally, and some of these tap dancers became celebrities on screen. Frank's text continues to document several child dancing movie stars including the obvious Shirley Temple (1928 -) and the lesser known Jane Withers (1927 -), as well as dancers who started young, including Fayard (1914 -) and Harold (1921 - 2000) Nicholas, known professionally as the Nicholas Brothers. With their reputations buoyed by technologies of mass distribution, these youngsters, who might have been "picks" a generation earlier, were termed child tap dance prodigies. This subtle shift in terminology, enabled by the emergence of white girl dancers like Temple and Withers, moved child dancers from the perceived realm of naive mimics toward a more "respectable" imaginary space of artists-in-training. Unlike the "picks," whose usefulness lasted only so long as they were still children, prodigies held the potential to become artists - or at least stars - as adults.

Child tap dancers seem to lack the nagging interiority of mature adult life. In this, the ascendancy of first the "picks" and later the white girl dancers reflected prevalent attitudes toward African Americans and white women. It should not surprise that there are few celebrated white boy tap dancers. If American adulthood is constructed to suit a hegemonic norm of unmarked white masculinity, all Others - including African Americans and white women - fall outside the preferred markers of adult identity. Because tap had been originally identified as an Africanist performance idiom, it could be more readily inhabited by African Americans, white women, and Others than it could white boys.

Ultimately, white male tap dancers found celebrity through a careful side-stepping of implications aligning tap dance with blackness, femininity, or social eccentricity. For the two biggest stars of tap dance, this achievement involved the depiction of a youthful enthusiasm unbounded by concerns of adulthood, as in the several films of Gene Kelly, or a psychologically-motivated reclaiming of desires expressible only through dance, as in several solo dance sequences by Fred Astaire. Still, tap dancing began as a raced, gendered, and classed form of dance best suited to the naive or child-like. More than this, because it developed within the crucible of intercultural collaboration and interracial corporeal interaction of the Five Points district of New York City, tap dancing emerged in the widest American imagination as a hybrid entertainment idiom, and not an art form with respectable provenance.[3]

For black men, tap dancing rarely reflected interior landscapes of, say, ambition, desire, regret, or rage. Typically, tap afforded black men access to circumstances otherwise unavailable, as in the case of dancer Bunny Briggs (1923 -). In his published interview with Frank, Briggs details working on the streets and in private homes throughout the 1930s as a child entertainer. In particular, Briggs remembers being dressed as a page boy and chauffeured from Harlem to parties at the [Vincent] Astor home in Manhattan's tony Upper East Side. Costumed, and displayed for their guests, Briggs functioned for the Astors as a guileless, miniaturized being; an African American totem of innocence, commodity, and boundless energy. For his spectators, Briggs offered what was not unlike a portal to an unknown realm configured by an unknowable, but controllable, pre-modern desire.

> *Dapper in a suit and trademark bowler hat, Bojangles confronts a five-step construction placed unceremoniously on a blank stage. A stationary camera captures the scene as in a documentary, front-on for most of the 3-minute sequence. The piano accompaniment sounds an uninspired but secure stop-time version of a "coon" song, and he dances, without apparent irony, to "Way Down*

Upon the Swanee River." Bojangles smiles, his trademark grin that is almost a grimace in its intensity, eyes almost bulging but not quite. As he approaches the stairs to dance, he focuses attention carefully to the task of bounding up and down the narrow planks. Each stair seems barely long enough to hold his foot in its entirety; he will have to be on the balls of his feet to navigate the stairs successfully. Still, he smiles. The marvel of his dancing comes in the clarity of sound in all its variations. The stop-type rhythm provides an open forum for his innovations; unexpected syncopations and accents emerge into the stuttering accompaniment. Bojangles is clear and precise at every pause. He ascends the stairs on the off-beat, stopping at the top to skirmish briefly with the floor, then continues tripping lightly toward the stage platform. He treats the stairs as the means to create his dance, kicking them, hitting against them, running up and down them, at times patting his fist on the stairs before he ascends. Most of his steps are very simple cramp rolls, but performed with a clarity on gesture on such a small surface that his technique emerges transparently virtuosic. After several pristine choruses, he ends by running up and down the stairs, and then off the set and out of frame.

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Visuality

How tap dance achieves meaning is still open to great debate. The aesthetic principles of tap - the formal properties that allow us to recognize excellence in the form - follow Robert F. Thompson's canons of fine Africanist form: percussive attack, multiple meter, apart playing, call and response, the aesthetic of the cool, and the prevalent use of dances of derision.[4] In tap these are obvious and self-fulfilling prophecies. Musicality, though, while an essential element of almost any dance, is especially difficult to determine in tap. Is it embedded in the musical accompaniment and the dancer's relationship to that, or is it actually in the rhythm performed by the dancer? Is musicality a quality that can be detached from rhythm, or is this "visual musicality" actually an element of style? Why is it so much easier to be musical in a "soft shoe," with its lilting rhythmic phrases, than in the hard percussive stamps of a "buck and wing?"

In the film of Bill "Bojangles" Robinson's legendary stair routine,[5] Bojangles (1878-1940) predicts profound meaning available to tap dancers through a strange modernist translocation. As he dances while climbing stairs that go nowhere and exist only on the stage as a means to produce the dance, we witness the tension between his physical restraint, trim appearance, and aural accuracy against the abstraction of a physical task. The labor of his dance is its own reward. Race, class, and gender provide primary markers for meaning here; historically, black men had no mainstream public space for tap dancing unless that space had been naturalized, or infantilized, as "vernacular" dance, available to "anyone." Black men like Robinson were automatically assumed to be laborers; the occasion of a grown black man's labor that seemed to be the production of his own pleasure - since tap had been unconditionally drawn in the American imaginary as non-threatening fun - pointed toward an inevitable re-articulation of labor as rhythm, or as dance. Robinson's stair routine reconceived labor as the production of rhythm as pleasure; it demonstrated accuracy and mastery as elements of an emergent black masculinity available on public stages and here, on screen.

Robinson's excellence trumps expectations of tap dance as visible labor. For black men, the work of tap dance often had to be visible in order to be recognized as labor, and therefore consistent with mainstream configurations of black male identity. Tap dancers like the Nicholas Brothers or the Berry Brothers had to "show" their work, in extravagantly excessive physical tasks such as jumping or cartwheeling over each other to land in the splits. In this acrobatic landscape, rhythmic subtlety or self-reflexive nuance could be considered transgressive. Although the stairway Robinson confronts does offer an unlikely but obvious physical challenge, its wages are abstract. The stairway goes, literally, nowhere and Robinson's dance with it will succeed on its own, self-defined terms.

Self-definition in tap as a solo expression represented a turn from its origins as a competition form. Tap dancing began as a competitive idiom that threatened to upset local social order in its execution. As Irish and African dancers challenged each other at regular contests, local configurations of winners, losers, champions, and the humiliated shifted. These judged competitions encouraged an active spectatorship of dance challenges that were not unlike sporting events, and audiences came to identify closely with the competitors and their techniques. From these spectacle-driven origins, tap moved easily onto the entertainment stages of minstrelsy and then vaudeville. Its transition toward reflexive expressivity, rather than competitive communication - from dance that *does* something through its implications in competition to dance that is explicitly concerned with the shape of its interior meanings - has been negotiated with difficulty. How audiences experience tap depends, in large part, on their ability to comprehend complex constructions of rhythm. The expressive dimensions of tap are linear and supremely temporal; its audiences hear rhythmic inventions in the very moment of their creation. Unmoored from palpable consequences, tap dancing, like ballet, produces meaning within its own execution.

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Aurality

> *The melody emerges in bitter, jagged edges, its essence pushed violently into the keyboard by the fingers of Thelonious Monk. What had been a wistful standard tune, "Just a Gigolo," sounds now as an indictment of desire unduly pursued; as a counter statement to the wistful ambition of loving many without consequence. In Monk's hands, the tune is powerful and angry. I reach for the phrase in its overarching entirety - ignoring the crashing stops of dissonant chords, to grab at the impulse connecting the sad irony of having nothing to show for so many couplings. In a second verse, Monk imbues the dissonance with musical regret through a stride rhythm accompaniment; the stride gives a rhythmic base that I can join, and ultimately, ignore. As the beat sounds steadily, the tune lilts briefly, and the gigolo's solitary pleasure seems - not so bad. But when Monk misses a note at the top of a run - and then corrects himself, in this recording - I stutter involuntarily with him, slipping off-balance into a distended 9-sound flourish. My dance molds to his interpretation. But is my musicality here actually contigent upon Monk's playing?*[6]

In Africanist aesthetics, rhythm is a participatory gesture. We shape, and then break, the beat to allow a communal entry into its potential, to fall into an expressive time not encompassed by the everyday. In this creative aesthetic space, interiority is a respected performance practice, not unique to any single idiom, but rather a means of reaching for the flash of the spirit, accessed physically, and sometimes more quickly than thought. Here, rhythm itself is a nuanced expressive practice, widely respected and admired. The beat, like the heartbeat, is eternal; expression within and against the encompassing beat marks, at least, individual identity and artistic maturity.

Tap's transition from an exhibition form to an expressive form - from "buck and wing" to "rhythm tap" - can be mapped according to changes in musical forms invented by African Americans through the twentieth century. As swing gave way to bebop in the late 1940s, tap found its first inward-looking artists willing to explore their own rhythmic inventions to create percussive accents implied, but not bound to, the underlying beat. This confirms an important observation about bebop and the idiom's radical displacement of the beat. On one level, bebop replaced the primacy of the beat, so evident in swing music, with virtuosic renderings of harmonic and melodic structure. Bop assumed the presence of the beat, whether it was barely implied or clearly defined. This sense of assurance - of public entitlement to the process of making music - could not have come before World War II and the strong African American presence in the United States military. Bebop expressed an expanded experience of blackness, in which rhythmic structures, even when submerged, are presumed to be eternal. The bebop era taught dancers that we don't have to hear the beat to know that it is there.

The association of military service with the articulation of bebop here is not for nothing. In many ways, African American military service evoked a construction of black masculinity coherent to hegemonic white masculinity. The invention of bebop as a hyper-masculine idiom able to contain newly-found public expressions of blackness also tied its creative innovations to maleness. The emergence of rhythm tap from bebop aligned the form with a propulsive, self-reflexive expression previously absent from public dance performances by black men.

To understand bebop, audiences had to learn how to hear the implicit beat in order to understand how the music=s explicit, "off beat" riffs worked with and against the dominant pulse. Social dance historian Marya McQuirter documents that dancers did eventually adapt to bebop and its complex rhythmic structures, even if that adaptation took time.[7] Eventually, bebop audiences came to appreciate the evocative, interior score that the music provided for dance. Mature rhythm tap emerged from bebop, signaling an association of musical thought with rhythmic innovation.

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Apprenticeship

> *The shabby Siberian theater fills with attentive energy as the dapper performer launches into "Dere's A Boat Dat's Leavin' Soon for New York." Costumed as the character Sportin' Life in a concert version of Porgy and Bess, Gregory Hines sings and struts, matching simple boasts in the lyric with flashy melismatic vocalizations or the abrupt physical interruptions of spins. After a rising accompaniment figure, the song reaches a climactic musical moment and the musicians lay out. Suddenly, Hines launches into an extended cadence of tap dance that Gershwin never wrote, his rhythms cutting against the swing feel of the tune. He seems to dance spontaneously, building rhythmic ideas on top each other in a deconstructive rush of metric subdivision. He establishes a pulse, then divides it with cross-rhythms, the entirety amplified by the film's sound designer to sound with a crystalline liquidity, at once crisp and resonant. He works his way off the small stage to dance in the aisle, winding between the silent Siberian audience members. The solo ends only because the musicians reenter, coaxing Hines back to the stage to finish the song vocal.*

Constance Valis Hill has written convincingly about how the challenge dance that spawned tap became embedded within the structure of tap dance performance, so that dancing bodies eventually offered competitive accents in the very rhythms they perform.[8] By extension, a single tapping body can compete with itself, as Gregory Hines does in the 1985 film White Nights. In this film, Hines plays an expatriate New Yorker living in Russia, who escapes everyday American racism by his dislocation, but feels stymied by a lack of familiar cultural markers that could enable his musicianship full expression. Ironically, at the film's beginning, he dreams of returning to his native land with his Russian wife - a circumstance that would likely cause more blatant racist response to their inter-racial marriage. Hines plays an entertainer here, of course, which allows for set pieces of tap performances and an unlikely plot turn in which he aids Russian expatriate Mikhail Baryshnikov through a dance challenge pitting tap against ballet.

In the short sequence described above, we respond not only to what Hines does, but to what he tries to do; the hint of interior drama that drives him to produce dance. Our participatory space in this rhythm comes in noting the formation of his accomplishment and its innovations, its improvisations in process. Hines surprises his Siberian audience through the broad vista of his rhythmic ideas and his generative creative force. He dances on the stage platform, on the stairs leading to the stage, in the aisle, and even against the walls of the proscenium space. His rhythm tap solo seems to have no musical, physical, or metaphorical boundaries.

Hines began performing as a child in the late 1940s with his brother Maurice in an act billed as "The Hines Kids." He studied tap briefly with Henry LeTang, and performed on various bills with adult dancers including

Charles "Honi" Coles (1911-1992), Sandman Sims (), the Nicholas Brothers and Teddy Hale (). Each of these artists were masters of the challenge dance that animated rhythm tap, and each of them had a profound effect on how Hines imagined himself as a dancer. Because rhythm tappers do not "train" in classrooms, in the manner of ballet or modern dancers, the impact of tutelage becomes paramount to the development of individual style. Tap dance is passed body to body, across generations, but usually through sustained apprenticeship. To date, technologies of mass distribution - including film and internet - have not disrupted the need for sustained physical interaction in the emergence or maintenance of form.

In the 1989 film Tap, Hines plays a paroled convict seeking his way back into civilian life who finds the strength to stay honest through his love for dance. The film builds to a climactic sequence in which Hines performs in a night club, his shoes amplified through an electronic sequencer that transforms his dancing into an aural landscape of deep funk. The film boasts an amazing complement of legendary hoofers, including Arthur Duncan (), Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde (1927 -), Steve Condos (1918-1990), Harold Nicholas, Sandman Sims, and Sammy Davis, Jr. (1925-1990), who participate in a challenge dance sequence earlier in the film. While some of these artists may have identified with the bebop era, none of them can claim to be of its successive musical genres, rock and roll or funk. In the narrative of the film, Hines is clearly positioned as heir to a tap tradition, and ultimately, the bearer of that tradition to an audience responsive to funk music. Tap offered a generational story of tradition and innovation explicitly concerned with black masculinity, apprenticeship, and technology.

Like Hines, Savion Glover (1974 -) studied tap dance with Henry LeTang as a child. Like Bunny Briggs, Glover traveled by limousine to work as a child tap entertainer, dancing professionally as the 12-year-old title character in The Tap Dance Kid on Broadway.[9] Glover began as a child prodigy in circumstances that allowed him sustained physical proximity to veteran dancers. He appeared in the remarkable musical Black and Blue, first produced in Paris in 1987, surrounded by mature cohorts Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown (1922? -), Chuck Green (1919 -), and the adult Bunny Briggs. Glover also worked extensively with Hines on film and on stage, dancing in Tap, and the Broadway musical Jelly's Last Jam (1992). In these circumstances, Glover absorbed a professional ethic of dancing, as well as an awareness that tap could potentially hold profound expressive meaning for its performers.

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The Noize

> *Thrown bodily into the alley, he stumbles into a dance of frustration and outrage. He starts in at full tilt, with impossibly fast sixteenth-note patter thrust raucously into the air of the deserted nighttime space. There is no musical accompaniment for his outburst. Instead, rhythmic ideas careen faster and faster from his feet, with nearly imperceptible breaks improbably sounded at the same breakneck tempo of the primary pulse. He holds his upper body with great tension, allowing his arms jut out like unwieldy projectiles from his hunched-over torso. Suddenly, he shifts to a half-time groove, but abandons it abruptly for a traditional soft-shoe traveling step performed now as an angry indictment of the concrete pavement. He travels onto the top of a metal dumpster where the striking of metal against metal amplifies his efforts. He settles into a swinging paddle and roll step, attacked here with a twisting physicality reminiscent of an agitator in a washing machine. He holds his head forward, bent over toward the ground, and the camera capturing the scene restricts our view to an overhead angle, bearing down on his performance like a judge in the bench. We never see his face, and can barely make out the dark, loose-fitting jeans and sweater he wears. He emits groans of effort, making audible a connection between his interior emotional journey and the sound his feet produce. Jumping to the ground again, he calls a rhythm with four definitive stomps, then answers his own call with a complex syncopated volley of sixteenth-note beats. Satisfied at his invention, and assuaged for the moment, he ends with a shrug and disgusted dismissive gesture, striding from the alleyway with remarkable cool.*[10]

Although it follows the "soul" idiom chronologically, hip hop is the first black music born as youth culture; that is, nurtured as a component of intertwined Africanist aesthetic imperatives and the needs of the commercial marketplace. Hip hop stands in uneasy tension with commerce, and its musical processes are invariably troubled by an overabundance of market demands and expectations. At the end of the twentieth century, hip hop - which had emerged, like bebop, as recognizable black musical expression - seemed to be co-opted by its uses as a marker of youth, virility, the new radical chic, and anti-conservative positionalities. In its style and attitude, hip hop came to stand for athleticism and mobility, individuality amidst obscured ancestor worship, and, remarkably, modernity.

Savion Glover is, ostensibly, a hip hop tap celebrity. In concert, Glover typically wears hip hop accouterment: baggy pants by FUBU or Phat Farm, two Afro-conscious clothing companies that market goods to self-identified hip hop "hedz." He dances with dreadlocked hair worn free, so that it often obscures his face. His signature style favors machine-gun fast volleys of sound, with almost imperceptible rhythmic breaks hidden amidst a veritable wall of crashing sound. Glover seldom gazes toward his audience, or allows his spectators easy visual access to his face or the emotions it might register. Significantly, Glover aligns himself with hip hop culture in its many manifestations, and most prominently with its music through his appearances in several music videos and television commercials directed toward a hip hop demographic of young urbanites.[11]

Glover's performance persona expresses interiority and emotion, passions not bound by the marketplace, but also not indulged by him to the level of melodrama. His emotional palate is limited by the time allotted to it and our ability to understand its subtle gradations. To get us there - to get us to be with him more quickly, Glover tries to erase his body in his dancing; he displaces the fact of torso, arms, elbows, hands, or even hips as he works through rhythm. He offers dances that we can hear and feel but not see. In this, Glover defines his version of the hip hop "real" - his masculinity - to be located in his commitment to the beat, buoyed by his interior life, which can only be partially represented by his dance.

Glover matured from child prodigy status to the in-between category of "youth dancer" - when, at the age of twenty-one, he created Bring in 'Da Noise/Bring in 'Da Funk (1995) with director George C. Wolfe. Subtitled "A Rap/Tap Discourse on the Staying Power of the Beat," the show made a spectacle of hip hop tap - that is, dancing to music with a prominent booming bass and complex layering of rhythms programmed by electronic equipment. Glover's startling innovation as a choreographer and performer redefined tap to be urban, aggressive, masculine, and profoundly "black."

The original Broadway production featured an ensemble of young men - Glover's "crew," if you will - who danced about the transition from adolescence to black male adulthood. In one sequence, the show employed a curious "confessional" device in which recorded interviews with the dancers served as the musical score for their live dancing. This reductive idea seemed to respond to a spectatorial desire to "be with" the dancers as they work through rhythms. The texts offered an inevitable conflation of youth, blackness, underclass, violence, and immutable masculinity. Glover, himself, ventured a "tap as salvation" message, saying, "If I didn't have the dance to express myself, I would probably be stealing your car or selling drugs right now. I got friends who do that, but tap saved me." While these words diminish the liberatory potential of tap to a pedantic role as a socializing discipline, they also suggest a nuanced interior life of a tap dancer who makes choices to become himself through his dance. This articulation of identity formation as contingent on musicality and creative expression in tap may encompass the central revision of Glover's accomplishment for the form. On stage, Glover draws his audience in by resisting its gaze; witnessing him reaching for rhythms and beats he has not yet achieved, we go on a journey with him; we chase after the thought process that produce the rhythms; we come to want to be Savion Glover.

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> "The beat is basically what takes you through life. Whether we have an up-tempo beat or a slow beat. It's just a beat. There will always be the beat, you know, and there's rhythm in everything."

-Savion Glover[12]

In this essay I've tried to map a strange landscape of miniaturization, aurality, legacies of apprenticeship on the production of form, visuality, and how black masculinity is constructed in tap through its own movements in process. Remarkably, many of these ideas converge in the 1999 Spike Jonze film.

Savion Glover appears briefly in Being John Malkovich, in a mocumentary sequence describing a possessed John Malkovich who becomes a puppeteer of tremendous skill and renown. The image of Glover with Malkovich entertaining a packed stadium on an outdoor stage makes little sense in the flow of the film, but Glover's presence offers a cipher of both pop and dance currency. Glover stands here for the young, the hip, the urban, the meeting of vernacular forms as art in large public spaces. This may be just right for Glover, who in 2001, headlined a sold-out performance at the 3,000 seat Beacon Theater in New York City. Reaching inside himself toward his own emotional life to express the rhythms of hip hop predicts a future in which tap dance may become an expressive form able to support psychological narrative and nuanced emotion as a concert art; a transbodied site where many may want to "be."

An irony here is that hip hop, an aggressively radical black expressive form inevitably configured as masculine and indebted to the power of technological amplification, might be the sound that releases the fury of translocation.

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Tap, Nick Castle, Jr. dir. And screenplay, USA, Columbia TriStar Films, 1989

White Nights Taylor Hackford, dir., Nancy Dowd, James Goldman, and Eric Hughes, script, USA, Columbia Pictures Coporation, 1985

Endnotes

1. Wyclef Jean, "Thug Angels," Ecleftic: II Sides to a Book, Sony/Columbia Records, 2000.

2. In this, I refer to an argument raised in Brenda Dixon Gottschild's writings, that divisions between high and low art are often drawn along fault lines of culture and race. In her most recent book, a

discussion of African American social dance formations leads Gottschild to assert, "We need to do away with the labels that separate the popular and the so-called art culture. In the case of the Lindy and so-called modern dance, these labels serve the function of racism by separating the realms of endeavor that have traditionally been reserved for blacks - that is, vernacular or pop culture - from those that are the exclusive property of whites - namely, the world of 'art.'" See Gottschild, Waltzing in the Dark, pp 214-215.

3. While there is no authoritative history of tap dance, several books devoted to the form recount a history that traces the emergence of tap dance to the Five Points district of New York City, where African and Irish immigrants competed in public dance displays. See Tyler Anbinder, Five Points; Constance Valis Hill, Brotherhood in Rhythm; Anne E. Johnson, Jazz Tap; and Marshall and Jean Stearns, Jazz Dance.

4. Robert F. Thompson, "Dance and Culture, an Aesthetic of the Cool," African Forum 2, Fall 1966, pp. 88.

5. The film is included on the DVD At the Jazz Band Ball.

6. Thelonious Monk, "Just a Gigolo," Monk's Trio original recording 1952, reissue Japan: JVC/Victor, 2002.

7. Marya A. McQuirter, "Awkward Moves: Dance Lessons from the 1940s" in Dancing Many Drums edited by Thomas F. DeFrantz (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002).

8. See Hill, Brotherhood in Rhythm.

9. For more biographical information on Glover, see Savion! My Life in Tap.

10. This astonishing performance by Glover is a *deleted* sequence from the 2000 Spike Lee film Bamboozled included as a "special feature" on the DVD.

11. Glover has recorded with several artists including Prince and Puff Daddy.

12. Interview with Charlayne Hunter-Gault, 30 May 1996, available at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/entertainment/funk_5-30.html.