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Dancing with Wooster:
Strengthening Community through Self-expression and Collaborative Art

Jules Davis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for Senior Independent Study

The College of Wooster
Department of Art and Art History

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Advised by Walter Zurko

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Introduction

As I decided what I would undertake for my Senior Independent Study Thesis project, I came across the writings of scholar bell hooks. Hooks writes extensively on love and its role in social structures. To be able to express ourselves and take up the space that we deserve- to share ourselves with the world, and create communities that are happy and healthy- we must start at the root: with love. Love, not necessarily in the romantic sense but, as bell hooks writes of love: as a verb. The verb *to love* is like the verb *to run*: there are verbs within these verbs, actions that can be taken to do these things. To run one must first stand, and pick up one leg after another in quick succession. The actions that we take in order to love aren't so simply laid out but they share common traits. Loving actions are actions that serve the purpose of connecting with, listening to, caring for, opening up to, and nurturing both ourselves and others. When we regard love as a verb we understand that one *does* love and it is not a passive state of being. She writes, quoting Scott Peck "he defines love as 'the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth.'"¹ This definition of love separates cathexis (emotional investment in a person or thing) from love, it places responsibility on those who will to love, and excludes definitions of love that condone abuse and/or neglect. The will to extend oneself can manifest as tending a flower bed, feeding a family, or even artistic self-expression.

Through this definition one can also understand love as a constructive force, as something that affects change in the world. In expressing oneself, one extends something to the world. Self-expression is a mode by which we affirm our existence in the world and relate ourselves to others. In this way, we can see expression as the agent that helps us to love both ourselves and

¹ bell hooks, *All about Love: New Visions*, First (New York, N.Y: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 2000).

others. In opening up, becoming vulnerable, and trusting the world (even through small acts of expression) we may affirm our existence, and, in turn help to nurture, accept, and care for those around us. As discussed by Anna G. Jónasdóttir in *Feminism and the Power of Love:*

Interdisciplinary Interventions, “we can make sense of the human vulnerability resulting from the fact that we need to love and be loved, (...), only in light of love’s constructive power².”³

When we see love as this constructive power, it follows that love is manifested through action.

When we are unable to love, or feel loved we often talk about feeling self-conscious, shy or anxious about taking up space. This lack of love takes the form of apathy. The state of apathy is counter to love because it is passive state of being, if one is apathetic towards their life they give up their agency. But when one loves, one is forced to take up this agency by purposefully occupying mental, emotional or physical space. The manifestation of loving action can take the form of physical artwork. I once had an elementary school art teacher named Anne Brady who told me “I don’t teach art to children, I teach them how to take risks.” When we create artworks, we occupy space in new ways. Asserting oneself in this way can be difficult, it takes courage,

² Constructive power here meaning that love creates physical and emotional force or energy that has the potential to insight change not by breaking down but my building up. Love requires energy (emotional or otherwise), so the idea is somewhat like third law of thermodynamics: no energy is created or destroyed. For instance, if love is not reciprocated by one individual in a relationship between two people then the one putting in all the effort may become emotionally exhausted.

³ Adrianna García-Andrade, Lena Gunnarson, and Anna G. Jónasdóttir, eds., *Feminism and the Power of Love: Interdisciplinary Interventions* (New York, N.Y: Routledge, 2018), 4.

will power and time, but the result can be empowering. At times, I feel anxious about being an artist amidst so many artists. When this happens, I remind myself that *there is room in the world for all the artwork in the world*. If you create a work of art, this hypothesis is confirmed, if it is made it exists, and if you made it, you exist.

To reiterate, in creating an artwork the artist validates that there is room (physical, emotional or mental space) for their self-expression. “The will to extend oneself” may be applied to all forms of self-expression. It is empowering for an artist to engage with the physical space around them and create something from it. As Anne Brady said, when we are taught to create we are taught to take risks and gain more agency in the world. Validating one’s existence in the world (extending ourselves through art making) has the power to bring about positive effects on one’s relationship with oneself and with others.

Even so, the idea is more nuanced than that. As with all forms of expression, the content of artistic self-expression is not to be overlooked. No artwork is created in a void, everything created has the potential to interact with anyone- especially in this digital age- and not all art-making seeks to improve relationships between the self and others. In terms of constructive love power, it can be abused. Countless works of art have been used to objectify the

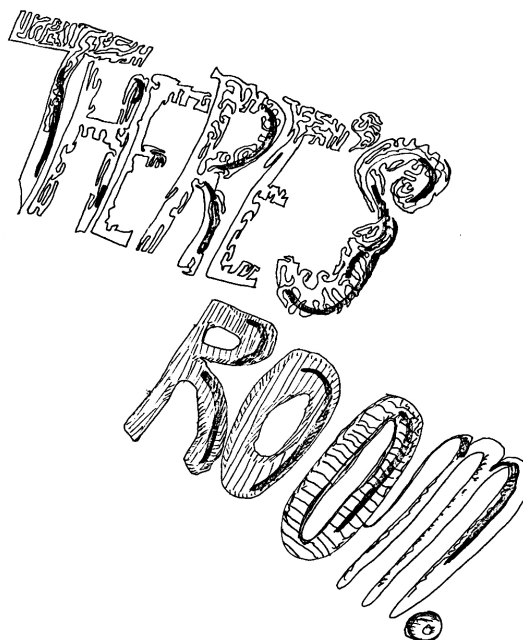


Figure 1. Jules Davis, *There's Room*, 2017, ink drawing.

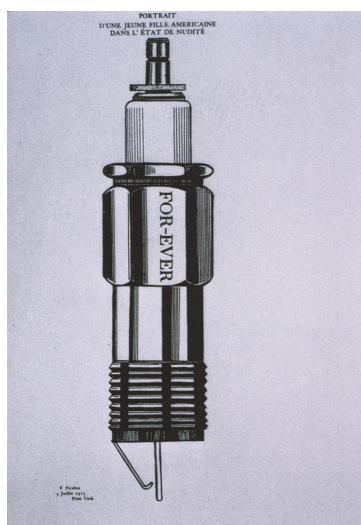


Figure 2. Picabia, *Portrait of a Young American Girl in a State of Nudity (Spark Plug)*, 1915, Ink on

female form, an example of this is Picabia's *Portrait of a Young American Girl in a State of Nudity (Spark Plug)* (fig. 2) which is a drawing of a spark plug and not a portrait of any person at any time. In asserting that this object is a girl, Picabia boils a whole human being down to a single spark plug and proceeds to project the male gaze on to it by declaring that this "girl" is naked. To add insult to injury the sparkplug is what gets an engine going, a culturally engrained innuendo, and thus this "naked girl" has only one purpose. To objectify a person is to remove their autonomy and their humanity. This type of artwork, as silly as it may appear on the surface serves in oppressing women, and who better to attack than the notoriously bold and free twentieth century American woman.

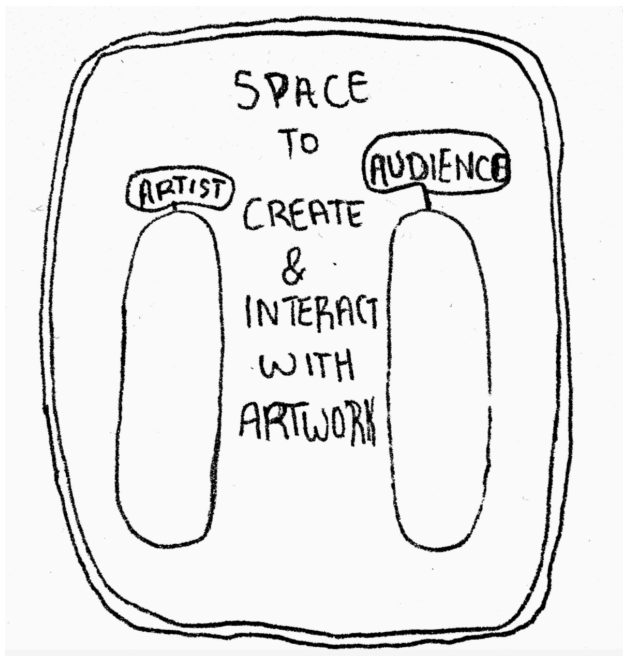


Figure 3. Jules Davis, *Shared Space*, 2019, ink drawing.

Artworks like Picabia's serve to suppress or delegitimize the self-expression of a marginalized identity by dominating social space. This diagram (fig. 3) attempts to show the relationship between the artist, the art, and the audience. In this diagram, we can see that artwork, artist and audience occupy the same space. Artwork occupies shared space, or at least space that has the potential to be shared. Picabia's artwork is a creation of his

own, but it affects the space of anyone who interacts with it. The beauty of this is that the identities of artist or audience aren't mutually exclusive: each of us has the potential to take on either role. Though objectification of female bodies still runs rampant, every artwork that serves

to negate this ideology. To share artwork that validates the humanity and autonomy of women is a rebel against historically dominant narratives around gender in the canon of Western art.

Two give another example, imagine two friends who feel comfortable conversing openly with each other, let's say their names are Susan and Grace. One day while sitting down to talk Susan says to Grace "Your face is ugly and I don't like it." Now, you can imagine how Grace would feel. Here she was in an open dialogue with Susan she cares about Susan, she will take Susan's words to heart, and they hurt. Now imagine Susan is the artist, their conversation is the space her artwork occupies, her sentence "Your face is ugly and I don't like it" is her self-expression, and Grace is the audience.

The analogy above is rather juvenile, but consider those marginalized and oppressed in our country. As stated above, oppression and repression are sustained through the silencing of anyone's narrative except the narrative enforced by the more powerful group. If we go back to the conversation analogy, we can extend it. Susan dominates the conversation space, not letting Grace get a word in edgewise. Oppressors work in a similar way, excluding the marginalized group and leaving no room for their voices. Oppression begins to break down when those oppressed make their voices known. The Gay Pride movement is an excellent example of this. In 1970 the Gay Liberation Front organized Christopher Street Liberation march: the first annual Pride parade in New York City.⁴ In 1975 there were eleven pride parades held in the U.S.A. By 2016 that number grew to one hundred and sixteen Pride events across the country. Worldwide at

⁴ Katherine McFarland Bruce, "From 'Gay Is Good' to 'Unapologetically Gay': Pride Beginnings," in *Pride Parades, How a Parade Changed the World* (NYU Press, 2016), 31–61, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bj4sds.6>.

least 39 countries held pride events in 2016,⁵ and as of 2019 same-sex marriage is legal in twenty-six countries.⁶ This is significant because the key component of Pride is the expression of historically repressed LGBTQA+⁷ identities. There is an upward trend of tolerance, acceptance towards the queer community in America because of an increase in self-expression of LGBTQA+ identities. In summation, self-expression has the power to foster healthy communication, acceptance and inclusion and can help individuals to develop a sense of belonging.

In addition to feeling comfortable enough (or courageous enough) to express oneself, having physical space for self-expression is key to any art making. It is a practicality we can't escape. As human beings, we spend most of our time orienting ourselves in the world. We create mental maps of rooms and houses and ways to drive to work; my hands have memorized the placement of many door handles in the dark. Whether consciously or intuitively, we are always finding our bearings and responding to the spaces we navigate. The way in which we respond to physical spaces- the way we understand our physical presence- can shape whole systems of interaction. From how we use sidewalks to the infrastructure of our cities: our social structures inform how we use space. When we change our use of such spaces (physical and social) we can disrupt these social structures. If every woman walking down the street decided consciously to not move out

⁵ Katherine McFarland Bruce, "APPENDIX C: The Spread of Pride from 1975 to 2010," in *Pride Parades, How a Parade Changed the World* (NYU Press, 2016), 243–48, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1bj4sds.14>.

⁶ "Countries That Allow Gay Marriage Around The World," Pew Research Forum, August 8, 2017, <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/08/08/gay-marriage-around-the-world-2013/>.

⁷ LGBTQA+ stands for lesbian gay bisexual trans queer asexual and all other identities that fall under the queer umbrella.

of the way for men walking in the opposite direction, wouldn't the use of that space be transformed? How we navigate space-- where we are able to go, and how we are able to move-- directly impacts art making. It is one thing to say there is room in the world for all the art in the world and another thing to have it.

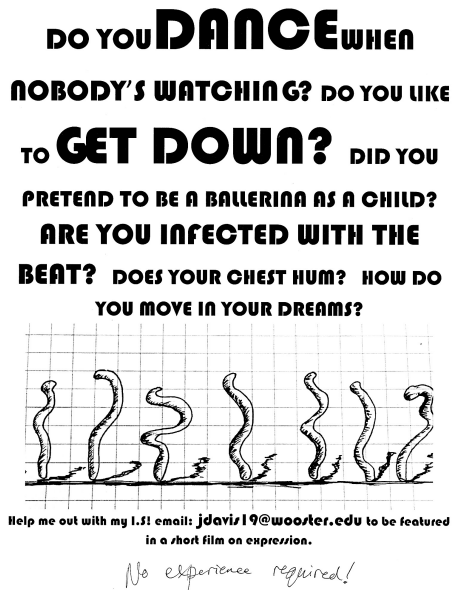


Figure 4. Jules Davis, *Dance Poster*, August 2018, digital media

For my senior independent study project, I had a few goals: to create at least one space to foster self-expression, to facilitate collaborative artwork, and to explore my own understanding of physical and social space. I started with what I had: my studio, a borrowed Nikon camera, a tripod, and my community.⁸ I put posters up around campus (fig. 4) and asked my friends if any of them would be interested in coming to my studio to dance alone in a room, and with their consent, film it. Soon the project was in full swing. Each participant came to my studio where I conducted a

brief interview about what they love to do, why they loved doing it and how they would characterize the feeling. Then I would leave the room and they would dance to a couple of songs they brought and afterwards I would ask how it was and what they thought about while dancing. I conducted nineteen interview/dance sessions in total. As common themes emerged from our conversations, I began to combine the audio from the interviews with the videos of individuals dancing by interspersing clips to create an oral and visual narrative told by my many participants. This will be one of two films I will show at my exhibition in April.

⁸ Here meaning the people that I feel most connected to that relate both to me and to each other.

The second film will formally resemble the first one, but the soundtrack (the audio backing the video) will be a soundscape of recorded sounds from all over the city of Wooster created by cutting, layering and looping soundbites to create an auditory collage. I will talk at greater length about this sound piece in my section Collaborative Video Art. The creation of my films has involved collaboration with my community, and to me this is their greatest strength. Visually, they will showcase the beauty of self-expression, the vulnerability present in the people who chose to participate.

One reason I chose dance as the activity to film is because it can invoke a feeling of transcendence. Like you are swimming, and the music is the water and you become more aware of your body and your responses to your environment and the space around you. Another reason for filming individuals is that a lot of people are uncomfortable in their bodies or in the way they move. Many people who wished to join the project were concerned that they weren't formally trained dancers. I want my films to show that however we move our bodies is natural and beautiful. To dance in front of a camera (even if you are dancing to your favorite song) is an incredibly vulnerable thing to do.

The third reason I chose to film individuals dancing stemmed directly from my Junior Independent Study project (Spring 2018). To research for that project I photographed my peers dancing at parties. The way that individuals move together in space fascinated me, and I began to observe the dynamic relationships between bodies. Though completely different in setting: dancing with a group of people and dancing alone contain an aspect of performance: self-expression knowingly observed by others. Non-choreographed dancing is an art form,

Early on in creating my film project I decided to highlight the films' connection with dance parties at Wooster. Many of the individuals who ended up contributing to the film are people that

I dance with at Wooster parties. And so, I started to photograph dancing at parties with disposable cameras again. This time around I consciously encouraged guests at the party to use the disposable cameras to photograph dancing too. By having the dancers (myself included) photograph each other I sought to emphasize the beauty of our collective expression.

As I mentioned above, my goals to create a space for self-expression and facilitate collaborative artwork have been realized in many ways through the process of making these films and in photographing dance parties. And though these creations help me to “explore my own understanding of space both physical and social” as an artist, with my own desire for self-expression, I wanted delve deeper into how I personally engage with this community and this space. I began to draw the city of Wooster. This drawing has evolved into a highly personal map of Wooster, a town I have lived in off and on for the past three and a half years. The map is my way of communicating with Wooster as a geographic area and a social space. The more I draw the more I feel that my drawing is a direct expression of the loving attention I have given this place as I am drawing from my memory. To create art whether you are one or many is to occupy space and express yourself to (and sometimes with) your community.

Memory Mapping

“Is a sheet of music a map? An equation? A philosophical treatise or a novel or an abstract painting? In which case, what of? Is a map only a map when you know? Indeed, the more I think about it, the more vexing the whole question of maps becomes, which

makes me wonder what the map of all maps would look like. A barber shaving himself?
A murmuration of starlings?”⁹

-Roland Chambers

I remember trying to place myself in the world from an early age. At two, my family moved from our farmhouse in Nottingham, Pennsylvania to a suburban neighborhood in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Though it was a mere 20 miles away from where I was born, our new home felt starkly different. Perhaps this sharp contrast between the two places created a memory border in my mind, enabling me to cherish those earliest memories of our farm to this day. I have mental maps of what my family still refers to as *the* farm. The back porch—wood soft and weathered—looked out on the outhouse standing on a hill which sloped up to meet a dark tree line. If you walked down the hill on the right side of our stone farmhouse you would meet the drive way, but not before you reaching a door that lead to our cellar. I remember toddling down damp wooden stairs and rounding the corner to the right to see shelf after shelf filled with dusty jars. Our driveway overlooked the land to the left of the house, and continuing down from there one could walk by the barn with the pointy roof sitting at the edge of dense woods. These woods stretched along the fields in front of our house, and if you walked far enough you would find a treehouse, and a sand pile.

Directly in front of our house, across the driveway was my grandpa’s statue of “Sam.” I would sit on her triple-life-size knee, and touch the tops of soft lavender growing all around. If you were to follow the gravel drive way towards the road and walk into the tall grass on the left side, you would come to the sloping bank of a small lake bog, filled with the sounds of the frogs,

⁹ Roland Chambers, “No Boy Scout; with Swallows and Amazons,” in *The Writer’s Map; an Atlas of Imaginary Lands*, ed. Huw Lewis-Jones (London, UK: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2018), 191.

and chipper crickets. On the right side of the driveway the land dropped off just past a stand of evergreens. My mom has since told me that there was springhouse—tucked away at the bottom of this valley, where a cold stream ran—where my Granny Judy would store her freshly canned jam to keep them cool in the summertime.

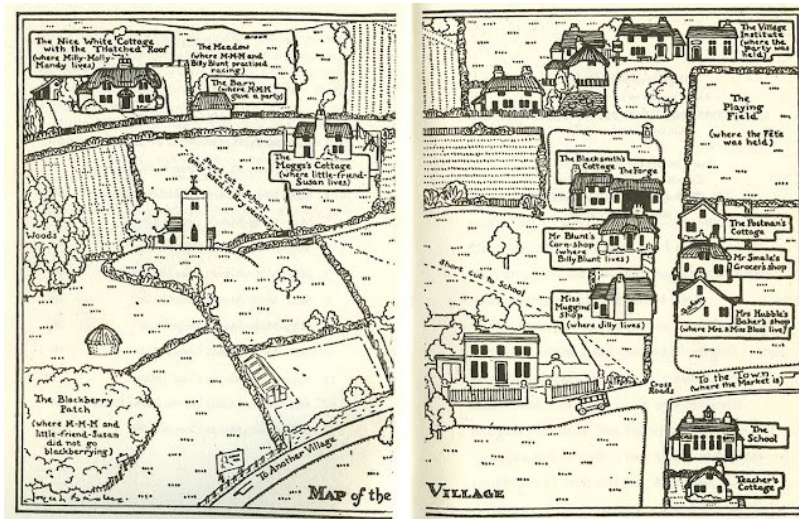


Figure 5. Joyce Lenkester Brisley, *Map of the Village*. 1998, Illustration from "The Milly-Molly-Mandy Storybook."

After living a quarter mile from our nearest neighbor, the suburbs were different for me. As soon as I was old enough to cross the street by myself, I sought eagerly to know every little corner of our new neighborhood, which had *sidewalks* and *paved driveways*! My parents, trying to

foster my independence left my best friend and me to gallivant around with free reign over the whole of the neighborhood. We were constantly finding new ways to traverse our neighborhood. Bushes became tunnels, back yards became avenues, and trees observation towers to be scaled. I came to know every hedge and every tar stripe and every pot hole. When I wasn't exploring my little corner of the world I was exploring worlds of fiction. I poured over maps in books like *The World Christopher Robin* by AA Milne (fig. 6) or Joyce Lenkester Brisley's *The Milly-Molly-Mandy Storybook* (fig. 5). I loved to trace Milly's own neighborhood adventures, as she ran errands for her mother.

When I was eight I started second grade at a new school where my mom had taken a teaching position. Our commute was an hour long to and from school each day, and I became increasingly more curious about the relationship between our home town and the town my school was in. I would ask a thousand and one questions “Is this the road that goes to Mommom’s house?”

“Would we turn there to go to Trader Joe’s?” “Is this the road with the trees painted in along the sides?” But it was not until I was allowed in the front seat of my mom’s Honda civic that my propensity for navigation took off. Fleeting images seen from the backseat window of my mom’s car became real live destinations: locations with their own identities, histories and daily life. I felt like I was unfolding a map in my mind’s eye where ever I would go. By middle-school my older cousins referred to me as the Human GPS which was, in large part, due to my inability to keep my mouth shut and not because of my super-preteen knowledge of where to go.

In sixth grade, my class undertook an ambitious cartography project, using atlases we each created our own six-foot long world maps. I was so proud of my map and I hung it on my wall, dreaming for the next six years of all the places I would go. When I finally got more opportunities to travel, I fell in love with maps: subway maps, railway maps, trail maps, tourist maps with disproportionate monuments. And when it came time for me to drive on my own, the sensation of unfolding a map in mind only grew stronger.

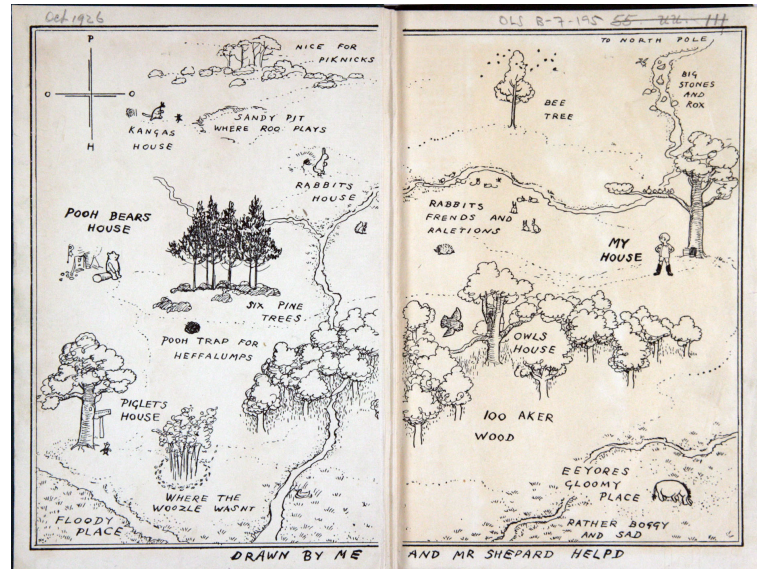


Figure 6. E.H. Shephard, *Winnie-the-Pooh Map*. 1926.
<https://www.tcd.ie/library/epb/blog/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Pooh-map.jpg>

But, despite all my love of maps and orienteering, I was never aware of the cardinal directions until I started at the College of Wooster. Within two months of moving in I had developed a strong inner compass. I think this is because the college's campus is oriented with two central axes: the middle path (which runs east-west from Lowry to the Galpin parking lot) and Beall Avenue (which runs north-south from its junction with Cleveland Avenue in the North all the way to Liberty Street on the Southside.) On the east side of campus, the buildings are oriented to the west, and on the west side of campus the buildings face east. The buildings at the center of campus are oriented either north or south and nothing is askew. By chance or by design, this carefully thought out architecture becomes monumental at dawn and dusk. The rosy morning light shoots between each building, like solstice sunshine through some ancient monument, and the evening light—orange from a day of travel—cuts straight back from the other side.

I am from rural Eastern Pennsylvania. It's all rolling hills and dense little woods out there. Our roads wind this way and that way. When my mid-western friends come to visit, they get carsick when we drive around. The sunlight is different too—filtering through the trees: the light becomes ephemeral and dispersed, moving with the wind. The sky turns pink and lavender at night, in the mornings too, but often it seems the light could be coming from anywhere: like a cloudy day, or a washed-out high-noon. In Wooster, the light is like someone yelling, clear and crisp! The angle of the sun moves South in the winter and North in the summer, it is the same sun after all, but Wooster transformed the sun into a compass.

I spend many hours driving in and around the city of Wooster. I used to drive to clear my head, but now I drive to fill it. As I drive I commit images to memory, I store away textures and the unique feelings of particular spaces. I am drawing the city. I am drawing my memory of the

city. I am drawing a map of my memory of the city. I use four types of felt-tipped fine liners to draw. Their line weights vary in size from a poppy seed to one fifth of a poppy seed. I draw on an expansive sheet of paper, it is nine feet long and four feet high, with three by four section tack on at the top. I tell myself I can make the paper stretch as far as the ink wishes to go. As I draw, I navigate the city in my mind and I think about the distribution of objects (and/or my memories of them) in space.

The nature of space (the distances between) is illusive and plastic in one's mind. We create scales¹⁰ in our minds, based on physical relations between one object and another, *is it larger or smaller than a breadbox?* The toaster oven is either left or right of the breadbox in relation to the self. Which side of the breadbox are you on? If you are exactly east of the breadbox, you are actually both east and west of the breadbox. Unlike the cardinal directions North and South, you cannot walk eastward and reach a point on earth and say "when I continue past this point I will start my journey westward." Therefore, you could walk four steps east to reach the breadbox or you could¹¹ turn around and travel west and circumnavigate the earth to find yourself on the other side of the bread box. Spatial relationships are in constant flux within the mind, one can imagine a whale the size of a peanut, a mouse the size of a moose. So, it's not unfathomable to understand how one can both be walking *away* from a breadbox, and *towards* it at the same time.

¹⁰ *Scale* here meaning

"a standard of measurement or estimation; point of reference by which to gauge or rate." "The Definition of Scale," www.dictionary.com, accessed February 21, 2019, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/scale>.

¹¹ Granted that you had super human abilities.

When beginning a drawing, if one is adhering to representation, it is often the first few lines that determine the scale.¹² But each pictographic aspect within a drawing has its own scale. For example: a person can draw a face with eyes disproportionate to the nose, mouth, ears, hair etc. Scale can be congruent or incongruent within a single image.



Figure 7. Hershey Park Map.
https://www.themeparkreview.com/parks/p_198_11872_hersheypark_2012_park_map

Cartographers often make maps drawn to a precise scale¹³; each road's length on the map is proportional to the length of the road it represents. Some maps are made with less precision. For instance, a map of an amusement park will still function as a guide from point A to point B, but one cm (for instance) may not precisely correspond to half a mile. Tourist maps like these will often disproportionately feature certain destination. For instance, you could have a drawing of a roller coaster that is forty times the size of the symbol for restrooms (fig. 7). We can think of this kind of map in the same terms as an image that can be understood despite the incongruence of its scale. Maps found in fiction, such as village map from *The Milly-Molly-Mandy Storybook*¹⁴, are

¹² *Scale* here meaning “the proportion that a representation of an object bears to the object itself” (“The Definition of Scale” n.d.)

¹³ *Scale* here meaning “a graduated line, as on a map, representing proportionate size.” (“The Definition of Scale” n.d.)

¹⁴ Joyce Lankester Brisley, *The Milly-Molly-Mandy Storybook* (New York, N.Y: Kingfisher, 1998).

often even less quantitatively precise, but despite their vague nature they can provide an added sense of reality to a reader.

The map I am drawing is not quantitatively precise, it is a drawing of my memory of the City of Wooster as I have lived it. Its scale is incongruent, and its various subjects are often quite disproportionately represented. As I draw I navigate my internal map of the city. In doing so I become more aware of what I have been paying attention to and what my memory has neglected. Usually the general layout of the city and the larger structural features are the easiest to remember. But certain things surprise me. In neighborhoods that I am less familiar with, the layout of the roads may be tangled but individual houses and smaller details may be clear and easily visualized. In places that I navigate often, it is the smaller details that get left by the roadside (if you'll pardon the pun) but, the distinct feeling of the road (i.e. where it leads, the type of buildings and the number of trees that stand are along it) is clearer. In Reif Larson's essay "Connecting Contours" he talks about the importance of selectivity in map-making saying, "Of all things one could choose to represent in this world, an excellent map usually chooses one or two— or in some cases six or seven— variables to spatially grid within the confines of its borders, and in doing so, maps tell a series of powerful stories that could not be told in any other medium."¹⁵ Unlike most maps, my map contains no key; I do not derive its contents from a specific quantitative data set. My map's selectivity comes instead from the organic nature of memory. Variables such as the time I've spent in any given place, the amount of attention I've

¹⁵ Reif Larson, "Connecting Contours; Carta Marina and More," in *The Writer's Map; an Atlas of Imaginary Lands*, ed. Huw Lewis-Jones (London, UK: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2018), 166.

given to that place, and the quality of memories I've established there directly affect my map's content.



Figure 8. Jules Davis, *Map of Wooster (Detail)*, 2018-2019, ink on paper.

Mapping—whether literally drawing or mentally visualizing a space—has become an intuitive way for me to organize my memories. Time, place, occurrence, and recollection are interlocking. When I mentally or physically return to a place, the memories—of friends' faces, of smells and sounds—flood back. As I map Wooster I relive moments that occurred within the places I draw: that's where I met Kali, this is where I Brittany fell out of tree, and, it was sitting on this bench on the telephone with Eli that he said "I'm just too far away" and I cried because I missed him. This map is by far the most personal aspect of my I.S. project, but it also has the broadest reach. Based on memory, my map is the culmination of three and a half years of lived experience. If you have interacted with this space—Wooster—within this time, you have interacted with this map. As I spoke about in my Introduction, we each contribute to the ever-changing formation of the places we live in. In the same way, my impression of this place has been molded by everyone who lives here. The long and short of it is, I am mapping a place I have lived—and I haven't lived here alone.

The other aspect of selectivity within my map is scale. As I addressed earlier, my map is on the qualitative side of things, I have no set scale in terms of a specific measurement that proportionally correlates with a larger unit of distance in the real world. The representation of the size of objects in relation to the real world is much more like a painting or drawing than like a



Figure 9. Follower of Joachim Patinir, *Battle of Pavia*, c. 1530, Painting. Place: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.
https://library.artstor.org/asset/LESSING_ART_1031075128

map. I often find myself referring to my map as being drawn in loosely *radial* perspective. I think I made this term up, but the closest thing I can compare it to is the linear perspective that started with Dutch painters in the 16th century such as Joachim Patinir, who painted landscapes as if floating above the land. This painting (fig. 9) of a medieval

battle, painted by a Follower of Patinir, is one of my favorite examples of linear perspective. Now imagine linear perspective radiating from one point- this comes close to what I'm doing with my map. That being said, the scale of my objects doesn't strictly follow the rules of any form perspective. For instance, if I draw a block with three houses on it, but I draw two of the houses so large that there is limited space for the third, then I must draw the third house on a smaller scale disproportionate to the first two. There is one house in my drawing that is one-sixteenth the size of the house right next to it despite them being approximately the same size (fig. 10).

When I am working in ink, each stroke of the pen is a decision. Remembering and drawing become synchronous, as I draw I remember, and remembering is not always a linear process. With non-linear memory comes non-linear drawing: there are see-through trees in my drawings, and places where one location is drawn



Figure 10. Jules Davis, *Map of Wooster (Detail)*, 2018, ink on paper

directly on top of another. When we remember places, we don't remember them as static, but as spaces that we moved in. In Elizabeth King's book *Attention's Loop*, she writes "And the eye never sees any but the smallest of things all at once. It flits across the surfaces of the visible like a darter, and the mind is collecting spots of light in an ocean. When I close my eyes, and conjure the house where I grew up, it is not a fixed image, but a set of tiny movements, now right, now left, that I perform in time."¹⁶ I remember the buildings, trees, sidewalks, fields and valleys in my map from multiple perspectives, it is not until I put the pen to the paper that I decide how to represent my memories.

Elizabeth King goes on to say, "To get a good look at something, we back up, we make the thing small. And to remember it?" If I were to answer this rhetorical question I would say that to remember the thing I make a map. I take my vast and complicated memories and by drawing them, make them small. When we remember something, we often scale it down to comprehend

¹⁶ Elizabeth King, *Attention's Loop; A Sculptor's Reverie on the Coexistence of Substance and Spirit* (New York, N.Y: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1999). 18.

it. Traditional landscape paintings represent trees, mountains and lakes at a fraction of their actual size, but when we look at these paintings we can imagine being in the places they depict. My map, though quantitatively imprecise, and often nonsensical, will allow the viewer to occupy my memory of the city.

Photographing Dance

I have been dancing at Wooster parties since I was a freshman, but it wasn't until in my Junior year that they became safe-havens for self-expression. I was living in a house with eleven of my closest friends and we threw dance parties. I think our intention when throwing these events transformed my experience of dancing at college parties. We wanted to provide a space where people felt more comfortable dancing; where the room wasn't pitch black; where we could truly appreciate



Figure 11 Jules Davis, *Get Up Get Down*. Photograph. 2019.

the energy of anyone who came through the door. In the spring of 2018 I started to photograph dancing. Initially, to memorialize moments I shared with people I care for deeply. But after getting a roll of film developed I became fascinated with the aesthetics of people moving through a physical space together. I continued this photo project into this academic year, hosting a dance party nearly every weekend, and photographing dance using disposable cameras

Dancing with other students is one of the most positively affirming and self-validating experiences I regularly take part in on this campus. There is a common practice at these dance parties of “gassing each other up,” giving words of encouragement to each other in praise of their dance moves and energy (fig. 11). These parties are community events like pot lucks, or square dances, but with fewer guidelines. The photographs I take serve to document these parties—they have their own aesthetic beauty—but I use the word document because I intend to show the artful nature of these dance parties. My photographs say, we were here, we moved together, we opened up to each other, we exchanged energy, we created an experience together.

To extend this perspective, I see these gatherings as a form of collaborative artwork; I encouraged guests to also use the disposable cameras I brought to take photos of each other dancing (fig. 12, fig. 13). This act of sharing the experience of photographing was somewhat successful, but the nature of these parties is that anyone can show up or leave at any time, they are in constant flux and it was hard to keep track of who took what photo.¹⁷ At first I liked this level of anonymity but because of



Figure 13. Unknown, *Untitled 1*, Photograph. 2018.



Figure 13. Unknown, *Untitled 1*, Photograph. 2018.

¹⁷ It was initially my intention to display these photographs in April.

the high turnover at these parties it felt impossible to tell everyone about the premise of the project, and I didn't want anyone to feel slighted if they came to my show and saw the work displayed without giving credit. For this reasons I have decided to display between eight and ten of my own photographs printed out to a size of two feet by three feet.

Through photography I have been able to explore the spatial relationships present within groups of people dancing. There are many factors in how we express ourselves while dancing in a group. When an individual has ample room to move, their gestures become wider, there is more horizontal movement (fig. 10) When people have less room to move vertical movement becomes more present. When we dance in groups larger than three we tend to subconsciously fill a room. When there are fewer people there are larger distances between them. If there are more people, these distances become smaller. To express oneself one must have the room to do so. Though some people are more spatially aware than others, we all find enough space to move together.

I want to highlight, through photography, how artful and beautiful the experience of dancing with my community can be, when an individual is dancing, their movements are unpredictable: thousands of possible reactions to one piece of music, one melodies line, one beat. But in a room, full of dancers, the number of potential reactions is multiplied. One would think that more dancers would cause an increase in unpredictable movement. But these spaces reach a



Figure 14 Jules Davis, *Tension*. Photograph. 2018.

saturation point. When the room nears capacity, distinct and autonomous individuals become a group reacting to music together. It is breathtaking to experience a room full of people moving in fluid, rhythmic coordination facilitated by music.

Film photography allows me to capture these visual relationships without removing myself from the moment (as in digital photography where I immediately review the photos I have taken). I snap the photo and I keep dancing. When a photo is developed, and exposed, that moment is brought back to life. Upon viewing a photo, we are invited to remember a moment perhaps forgotten or never experienced. When I look at my photos I read them like a staff of music, each person a note representing their collective rhythm. One can imagine being inside of this photograph (fig. 15), bodies moving all around you. In my memory, it is a complete sensory experience, sound, touch, smell etc. In the photographic memory, what remains is the visual distribution of people and gestures, the visual rhythm a result of the musical one.



Figure 15 Jules Davis, *Gestalt*. Photograph. 2018.

Collaborative Video Art

In the fall of 2017, I was living in Glasgow as a study abroad student in the Glasgow School of Art's Sculpture and Environmental art program. During the second week of the semester I

attended a four-day workshop on environmental art.¹⁸ On the first day, our instructors asked us to select, at random, one of Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt's *Oblique Strategies*¹⁹ a set of phrases written by the pair to help artists find new avenues for creativity. Each phrase is a vague instruction like "Use an unacceptable color" or "Go slowly all around the outside." After each of us had picked one such phrase we were asked to throw wonky dart at a map of Glasgow. Then Peter, our very enthusiastic and exceedingly Irish instructor said "Okay, you are going to go to the exact spot your dart landed and you are going to follow your oblique strategy for fifteen minutes. No more, no less. Do something and report back tomorrow!" And with that, my fate was sealed- my oblique strategy read, "Share your talents" and my wobbly dart had landed on Buchanan Street.

Now, Buchanan is the busiest shopping street in the city—people travel from all over Scotland to shop there—it's crowded and busy and a popular place for buskers to perform. So, I set out thinking maybe I would try to join an act. But for whatever reason when I arrived at the spot I decided I would play music from my phone and just dance. The street was busy, and at first I was very self-conscious, but after a couple minutes I got into it. I fascinated me to see how

¹⁸Going into the Art School I hadn't the faintest idea of the breadth of environmental art, I thought maybe it had something to do with eco-systems and the green movement, or perhaps it could include sculptures that respond directly to an outdoor space. What environmental art has come to mean to me, is incredibly broad: it includes anything from Marina Abramović's performance pieces, to Andy Goldsworthy's cairns.

¹⁹"Oblique Strategies," accessed March 1, 2019, <http://stoney.sb.org/eno/oblique.html>.

little reaction I received, a nod here and there, and one sales representative who watched, laughing, from a shop down the road for nearly the whole time.

But then I attracted the attention of a group of teenagers, and as I was leaving one of them asked me “Are you all right? Why were you dancing? Are you on drugs?” We all laughed together, and I reassured them I was a student at the Art School and, believe it or not, I was following an assignment. I then asked them if they wanted to dance. The girls were all for it and the two boys rather sheepishly agreed. I put the music on, and we danced for about a minute, until someone had filmed it on Snapchat and then the moment was over. I thanked them, and we parted ways.

I felt incredibly free after this experience, reverently so. And in feeling free, I realized the confines of social interaction within public space. Each person staying within the unspoken boundaries of both personal space and social spaces. In performing I had broken the unspoken code of this place: you walk from point A to point B, you don't draw attention to yourself, and you don't show how you're feeling. I don't think there is anything wrong with this, it would be impractical and potentially dangerous to interact with everyone you met in the city. But we carry these boundaries into smaller spaces, into private life, and, in the saddest cases, we reinforce these boundaries within ourselves. Self-expression necessitates that we cross the boundary between the self and the outer world. By dancing, an individual body occupies space in a new way that facilitates communication. It felt good to dance on Buchanan Street, despite what anyone thought, and it felt even better to get others to dance in that space, if not but for a short time.

Trying to encourage individuals to participate in the project was, as I mentioned earlier, difficult at first. We, as people rarely think we are deserving of artistic expression, we say things

like “I’m not good enough,” “I have no talent,” “why would anyone listen to what I have to say?” I think this comes from a pervading ideology under capitalism that fine art is something with no use-value and therefore a luxury good only intended for consumption by the elite. If we, the 99% can’t interact with art than how are we supposed to create art. There should be no one definition of what good art is, and if there was a definition of good art it shouldn’t be “the art that sells for the most money²⁰.” Art is, always has, and always will be created by those who have a will to create. Though we do not all identify as artists, and/or study as artists, we are all deserving of artistic self-expression. How could we expect artwork to be unique, boundless, and inspiring if we didn’t allow our boundlessly unique and inspired population to create artwork?

²⁰ I was reading this paragraph to my friend and contributor Linden Taylor, and she asked the question “*Do you think there shouldn’t be any definition of good art?*” I think there are more descriptive and more interesting qualifiers than “good.” When talking about art there will be artworks that are more photorealistic, art works that are funnier than others—there is artwork that is highly emotional, artwork that is highly conceptual—but good? That’s a matter of taste. What I am trying to get at here is that even some child’s messy painting is worthy of the title art, (hell! Duchamp declared a bottle drying rack a work of art!) If that kid had the bravery to take a risk with a couple of crayons that’s tremendous! I commend them! If every single one of us could express ourselves equitably, (leaving ample room for reciprocation) best case scenario we’ve got a happy planet. Worst case scenario our ability to communicate, empathize, and open up to each other is improved.

To provide space for artistic expression, I began my film project by asking my friends and acquaintances if they would like to participate in my I.S. by letting me film them dance. At first most of the people I talked to were resistant to the idea so I noted their various concerns:

- I am not good at dancing
- No one would not want to film *me* dancing
- People will see it
- I don't know how to learn choreography
- I feel uncomfortable dancing alone

By acknowledging these concerns, I could frame the project with my initial goals in mind: to create a space in which individuals could express themselves and to facilitate collaborative-community art making. Expressing oneself requires vulnerability and vulnerability requires a minimum of two things: trust enough to open up to the world, and courage enough to overcome one's inhibitions. I highlighted a few criteria of the project to ensure participants were comfortable, even when telling them about the project.

- The project is collaborative (in the final videos I will splice clips of you dancing with clips of your peers dancing)
- You choose whatever music you wish to dance to (your music choice will not be in the final video)
- You don't have to learn any choreography
- However you move is beautiful: I use the word *dance* very broadly
- If you want to use the space but you don't want to be filmed, that's cool too!

These specifications were all very helpful in bridging gaps in understanding my intentions for the project. As more people got involved in the project, and word spread, the more people

who wanted to engage in the project. Though a couple of individuals, Claire Smrekar and Claire Miller approached me because of the posters I put up, the majority found their way to by word of mouth. And many participants are people I have had the pleasure of dancing with at parties over the course of the year.

The next step was to film these dance sessions. I decided to conduct interviews before and after each contributor would dance; both to help them get more comfortable and to further our mutual understanding. Before the interview I would ask four key questions: “How are you feeling today?”, “Is there something you love to do? If so, why do you love to do it?”, and “If you had to, how would you characterize the feeling of doing what you love to do?” In the post-interview, I again checked in on how they were, and then I asked them to reflect on the experience, often asking questions such as: “Did you have a thought process as you danced?”, “How was that for you?” or “How aware of the camera were you?”

Right off the bat, I had a learning curve to overcome. Here are some lessons I learned along the way:

- Make sure to charge the camera battery before filming
- Make room for footage on your SD card
- Save every file in two locations
- Double check that you are recording!
- Make sure to film three separate video files per session, one for each segment (my camera only films for twenty minutes at a time)
- Don't say “yeah” or “hmm” or interject in anyway while your interviewee is talking- just nod politely.

Any gaps in the transcripts of my interviews (or in one sad case where I lost a whole dance session) can be attributed to instances when these strategies went unfollowed. In this instance, it is lucky that I'm an artist and not a scientist as the validity of my data is not grounded in



Figure 16 Jules Davis and collaborators, *Collage of Dance Stills*. 2018-2019, digital photo collage.

procedural consistency and perfection. As I started to collect interviews a few common threads began to emerge.

While everyone had varied experiences dancing, all participants reported having positive experiences over all. Some who had shared feelings of anxiety beforehand expressed relief and pride in having danced despite it being out of their comfort zone. When asked about the presence of the camera most said that they went in and out of awareness of it, some saying that they felt like they had put on a show, (Sam Royer²¹, Sarah Hutson²²). Aminah AlBashaireh commented that it made her feel like she was a kid again, dancing with her Puerto Rican cousins who lived in New Jersey²³. Cassidy Ktsanes shared this reminiscence of childhood, noting “I was a little like *okay, they’re gonna be filming me dancing and I feel a little like somebody’s watching me* but then after Dua Lipa kept singing, I just kind of got into it! It reminded me of fourth grade when I used to dance in my room alone for like hours.”²⁴ Many contributors expressed feeling lighter, looser, less stressed out, or more awake. One or two participants expressed frustration in themselves for not being able to let go more. In each case I asked if they would want to come back and dance without the camera and they thought that might have helped. Despite varying comfort levels everyone shared a desire to contribute to the project.

In the interviews, I conducted before each dance session, I asked each participant to talk about something they love to do. Although every person had a unique favorite activity, their reasons for

²¹ Sam Royer, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2019, Appendix: Interview Transcripts.

²² Sarah Hutson, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2019, Appendix: Interview Transcripts.

²³ Aminah AlBashaireh, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2018.

²⁴ Cassidy Ktsanes, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2018, Appendix: Interview Transcripts.

loving their respective activities and the way they each qualified their feelings of loving what they love, were thematically concurrent. Early on, before conducting most of my dance sessions I experimented by creating a two-minute-long film using the audio from six of the participants' pre-interviews in conjunction with the footage from the dance sessions. A narrative surrounding the love that individuals held for specific activities emerged. Interviewees said these activities made them feel more connected, freer and more peaceful. Linden Taylor '19 talked about loving to be by a lake. Ciaran Lyons '20 spoke about his newly found love of listening to Christian religious hymns, and Corey Holt '19 talked about her love of singing.

These three activities are very different and yet they share common ground. Linden's love for being on a lake in part because of both the ecosystem (a community of living organisms) that is formed inside a lake but also the various communities (summer camps and research bases) that form around a lake all because of a lake's unique properties.²⁵ Ciaran hasn't quite come around to any religious doctrine yet but talked frankly saying²⁶ "I've begun to appreciate the beauty of religion more. I think it's really very, very beautiful" and says that he would associate the feeling of listening to hymns "(with) a sort of all-encompassing, all-pervading sense of community." Corey expresses her love for singing alone: feeling open and free, and her love for harmonization, noting²⁷ "if I'm at a concert I want to be singing every word because it makes me feel so much more connected to it." Throughout my experiencing interviewing my peers I am struck by the fact that we each pour time into the things that fulfill us and make us feel more connected.

²⁵ Linden Taylor, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2018, Appendix: Interview Transcripts.

²⁶ Ciaran Lyons, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2018, Appendix: Interview Transcripts.

²⁷ Corey Holt, Interview, interview by Jules Davis, 2018, Appendix: Interview Transcripts.

This theme continues in both of my short films, the first of which is titled “Why we love” which contains a narration, using audio clips from interviews alongside footage of dancing. And the second which I plan on calling “How we love.” This piece is more rhythmic and expressive: moving bodies dance to an ever-changing soundscape. Formally, the two pieces draw visual relationships between the dancers’ movements, while highlighting each dancer’s unique way of carrying themselves. As I edit, I endeavor to stay authentic to these vulnerable contributions of self-expression. There is a balance between flow and texture, each person has such unique motions that rhythm becomes the unifying factor, determining when I make a cut so that the piece flows or stops short as the music dictates. Editing without a rhythmic element is much more of a challenge, instead I make cuts and decide which go where based on what movement best illustrates the narrative.

One challenge I faced while editing was the matter of finding a soundtrack. My first instinct was to reach out to anyone and everyone to find someone within the College community. At this point I had no idea what kind of music I wanted to make, just that I wanted it to relate to Wooster in some way. I started a search and began early conversations with two intrigued individuals. But ultimately, the time commitment and my uncertainty around what I wanted led me to realize I would need to find another path. Early one morning I was lying in bed when I heard the train whistle blow. A haunting sound, a sound that brings with it memories and emotions. And then I remembered a conversation I had with my advisor earlier in the year. When I first envisioned my map piece, I imagined including sounds, fragrances: sensory details from the city.

Since then I have collected sounds from around the city and the college to create a sound scape. I have collected the sounds of leaves rustling, lakes lapping, stairwells buzzing, busy libraries, fingers typing, the clang of flag poles in the wind, cows mooing, and the list goes on. In

these sounds, I find a rhythm through a process of layering, manipulating and mixing them together. Then I edit my clips of folks dancing to match the rhythm of the city's music. Afterward, I edit the audio and the video together, building up the layers. When editing sound digitally you have different tracks, like lines of melody and harmony, so the number of sounds you can play at the same time isn't limited. When shorter bursts of sound play, like a twittering line of birdsong, they correspond with faster or shorter clips. The spacing of video clips correlates directly to the rhythms within the sound track.

These films are the most deliberately collaborative aspect of my thesis. To make them I had to reach out to the people around me and keep lines of communications open with my collaborators. The dancing that occurred in my studio space was done in anticipation of it being shared with the larger Wooster community.²⁸ Establishing my studio space as a place for individuals to express themselves, in turn, made Wooster a place for their self-expression. The films provide yet another way for the audience to enter Wooster life. Furthermore, in receiving each dancer's vulnerable self-expression, the audience becomes a part of a process of self-expression, reception and validation.

²⁸ *Community* here meaning the school and the city of Wooster.

Exhibition

When I show my work, I will use the second-floor critique space of the Ebert Art Center. Below is a sketch of how I plan on using the space (fig. 17). On the east wall, I will hang my map, and on the west wall I will hang eight photographic prints, each about two feet by three feet in size (not drawn to scale). In my diagram, I show two video monitors placed near the center of the gallery facing out, this is one (possible) orientation. Another option I am leaning towards is to place the two monitors on either side of the gallery facing inward so that the audience is surrounded by artwork on four sides when they enter the space. I also plan on having four magnifying glasses that guests can use to get a closer look at the map. I want to allow even my grandmother, who has poor eyesight, to see the finest details.

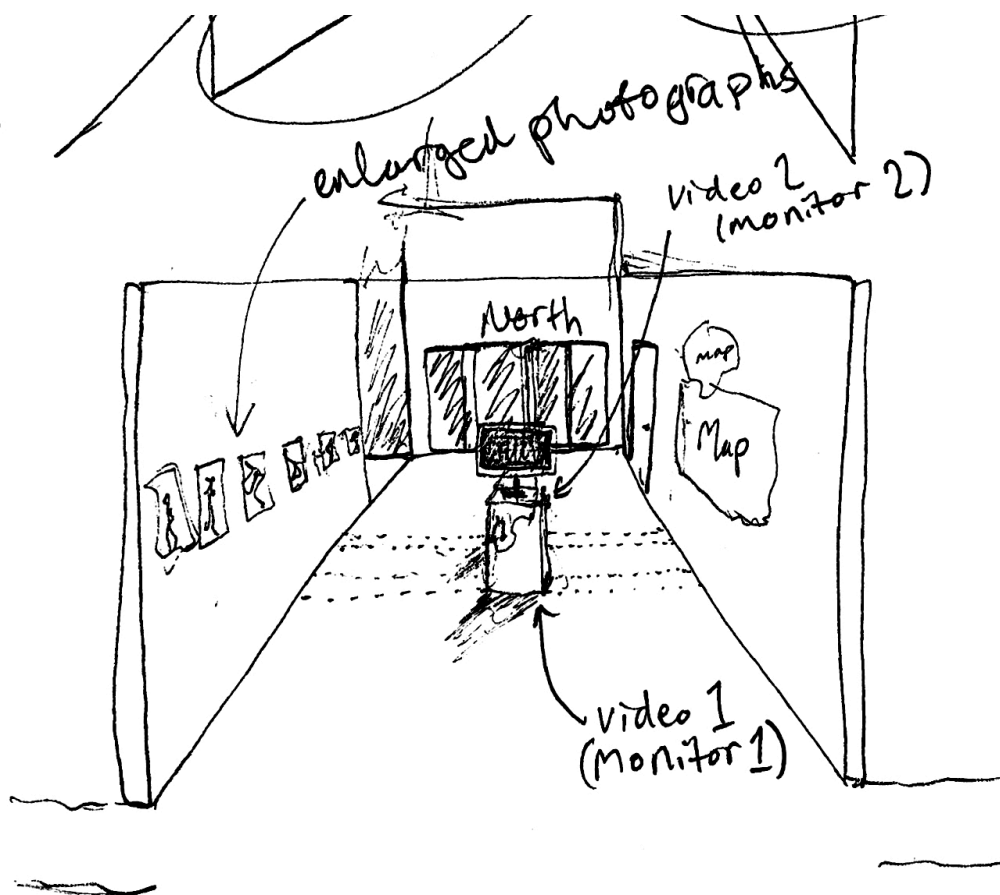


Figure 17. Jules Davis, *Exhibition Diagram*. Ink Drawing. 2019.

Conclusion

If I were to interview myself today and pose the question “What do you love to do?” I would say that one thing I love to do is meditate. I used to meditate alone for about five minutes each morning after getting out of bed, but my practice was inconsistent and sometimes days would pass without even touching the idea of meditating. Exactly one month ago today, on February 6th 2019 my friend Bekah said “Would you like to come to meditation with me?” and I said “I sure would!” This meditation group meets every day and sits for fifteen or twenty minutes before parting ways. I have not missed a single meeting since I began. I look forward to it every day. We are a small group of four people, but having them practice with me has helped me to solidify my practice. Through sharing this time each day, my meditation group has established a small community.

I keep coming back to a line from Lewis Hyde’s book *The Gift: Creativity and the Artist in the Modern World*. Hyde says “Spatial proximity becomes social life through an exchange of gifts.”²⁹ I had been meditating alone for so long, living in close proximity to other students meditating, alone or together. It wasn’t until I shared meditation with others that I found community within the practice.

In art, we talk about *sharing* a body of work with a group of people. We often mean *to show* when we say *to share*, but I think the word *to share* is perfect when talking about art making. In my introduction, I talk about self-expression in terms of extending oneself, in creating art work we share a part of our being with the world. Being able to take part in the reception and sharing of artistic self-expression throughout the creation of this body of work has been nothing short of

²⁹ Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Creativity and the Artist in the Modern World*, Second Vintage Books Edition (New York, N.Y: Random House, Inc., 2007).

“an exchange of gifts.” Be it the enthusiastic energy of a dancing party-goer; or the tender vulnerability of someone dancing alone; or the daily experiences offered up by this small city, it was through the sharing of gifts that this body of work came to fruition. And come April 14th, I will share this body of work with the Wooster population.

In *All About Love* bell hooks’ writes, “Mutual giving strengthens community.”³⁰ The reciprocity of the gift is key. I could not have created this body of work alone. Single-handedly my project could have been a gift: an homage to the city and the community perhaps. Instead I facilitated work that engages the artistic self-expression of others, and as a result, strengthened trust between individuals and their Wooster community. Diana Boros articulates this particularly well in the introductory section of her book *Creative Rebellion for the Twenty-First Century*:³¹

“More art, and more interactive art, in public spaces would first individually, and ultimately collectively, revive and animate communal environments; create new relationships between individuals and the public; strengthen feelings of community; and foster the desire to participate in public life on the basis of new relationships both to the self and to the public. Individual experience with creativity and the arts has been shown to lead to higher rates of civic engagement, and to an increased interest in public life as well as an empowerment in one's own personal life. Artistic experience, especially powerful and frequent experience, enables access to an inherent but latent spirit of community that exists within all individuals.” (5)

³⁰ hooks *All About Love: New Visions*, 143.

³¹ Diana Boros, *Creative Rebellion for the Twenty-First Century: The Importance of Public and Interactive Art to Political Life in America*, First (New York, N.Y: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

By creating this body of work my collaborators and I opened ourselves to share vulnerable moments of self-expression with our greater Wooster community and the world. My hope for my show in April is for the work to be received by the audience, primarily comprised of residents of the city of Wooster, and taken in. As Boros states, “Artistic experience (...) enables access to an inherent but latent spirit of community that exists within all individuals.” There is something incorporeal about interacting with collaborative artwork—something given and received internally— that empowers individuals, heightens feelings of belonging, and ultimately, creates stronger communities.

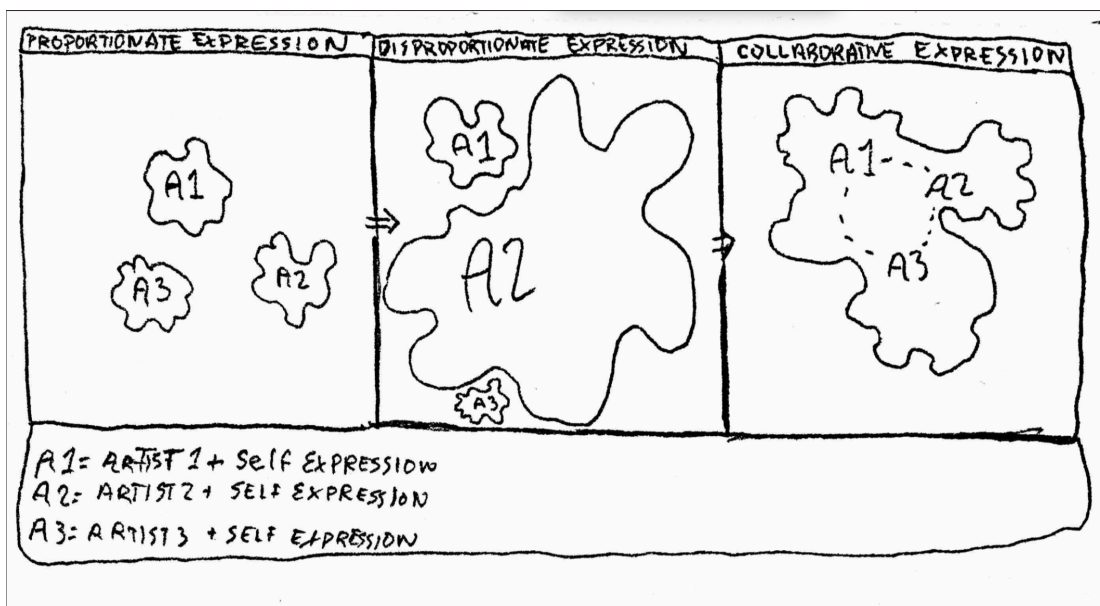


Figure 18 Jules Davis, *Self-expression Three Ways*, 2019, ink drawing.

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Appendix: Interview Transcripts

Amineh AlBashaireh

AA: (When you dance) **your whole body is in the moment, and you like have to not think about everything around or else you'll hurt yourself. At least that's how I think about it- like I'll run into something if I think about it too much, or people stare at me weirdly, so like, either way I'm hurting.**

-we laugh-

JD: I have a question for you, is there something that you do in your life that you love?

AA: **Should I answer what it is that I love?**

JD: Yeah!

AA: **Okay. I love to, and this is with art and science specifically— with my artistic expression and scientific ventures, the basis for all of that is my passion for this world and just my experiences in this plane. And so to be able to take all of that knowledge and like, experiences, from everything in my life, and just take everything that I've seen and engaged with. Not in a formal sense specifically, but in any version, because everything is interconnected at the end of the day...nothing, at all, in any universe, happens in isolation, so it's all within the universe. So, like, having that power, that knowledge like- we do matter, we aren't specs of dust! That's empowering, and to take all of that- all the shit I've been through and all the stuff I've studied tirelessly, all the bullshit, and all the glory! To take that and regurgitate it in some way, that is understandable in whatever medium or context or- and other entities, like anything that is on this sphere with us- to be able to have a product at the end of the day, whether it be like an affirmation, whether it be verbal or otherwise: to have energy, and have that energy organized into something beautiful, into something understandable, that's just like the reason I do anything, you know?**

So, take that passion and like –she yells- I just like get tired running around screaming in my head, waiting for my hat to pop off, just like plop down and be like *where's the paper, the paint? Where's my computer? We gotta get this down.* And just like rest and have that clarity and step back afterwards and be like *holy fuck, I did that! That's fucking awesome!* And that's amazing, that's why we do everything. It's beautiful.

Thank you! I love that this is on record-baby, I'm coming for you!

we laugh

Emily Anderson '19

¹ Throughout this document I am referred to as “JD” everything in **boldface** an my interviewee.

JD: So, for my project I am asking people to dance for me. To explore expression and how it can be “A will to extend oneself for one’s own spiritual growth.” I don’t know if—do you have a song you have been listening to lately?

EA: Let me think of a really good dance song.

JD: You can queue up a couple... I’m gonna leave the room-

EA: I know, I’m stressed! I’m so stressed! I’m trying to think of songs I really like so I can really just fucking get into.

JD: The music won’t be included in the video, so, it’s really whatever you want to listen to.

EA: Ahoh. Okay well put up Boo’d Up first.

JD: Alright it’s queued.

EA: “Love on Top” by Beyonce

JD: I have another question for you...Is there anything that you do that you really love?

EA: I love portrait drawing, I love hugging my friends *giggles* uhhh

JD: Those are two great things!

EA: Yeah those are the things I love: portrait drawing and hugging my friends. *Laughs* And *nothing else* in the world!

JD: One last thing, I just want to say, to dance is to in some way love oneself and I feel like you are a person that practices self-love in a big way.

EA: She certainly tries!

JD: And that’s what it is. It’s the will to do it, right?

EA: Yes.

JD: It’s just the will.

EA: Yes. I’m excited to dance! Thank you for including me in this project. I’m so excited! How much space do I have?

I show them parameters

Follow up interview:

JD: How did it feel?

EA: Really hot. Really toasty.

-we laugh-

There were a couple of times where I tripped over my own feet, so that's always fun- trying to figure out- *Oh, how am I supposed to dance while I'm about to fall over?*

JD: How do you feel now in comparison to when-

EA: -I want to dance more! I want to do more dancing! I feel a lot better, and I think part of that was to do with my second song, which was just a pop-punk song and I just got to do a lot of just like –they head bang- UHN!

That's probably why I'm so sweaty now.

JD: At what moment did you feel the most comfortable?

EA: Probably when “Love on Top” started- by Beyoncé- and I was like *I've got to take my shirt off it's too fucking hot!* And then I was like *I'm just gonna dance!* So that was very- especially when I got to the third song- like *I'm dancing! My inhibitions are gone!* Like *I get to really dance now.* Also because I really like that song.

JD: Do you feel like the music was a definitive aspect of making you feel-

EA: I almost wish that something I didn't know had been playing, just so like I danced a bit like *this is music that I'm feeling* as opposed to *these are songs that I know the words to, that I like to listen to frequently.* Because- I- maybe- I probably would have danced the same, because I always feel like I have some moves that I go to! But it probably would have been a little less formulaic? Like I wouldn't have known what was coming maybe?

I'm so glad that I got to dance today!

JD: *I'm* so glad you got to dance!

EA: This one's for you, future Jules, I love you!

Lauren Brown '21

JD: So, I have a couple of questions I like to ask people when they come in

LB: OK

JD: I think I've talked about this project with you, like a lot, but maybe not?

LB: I don't know. I've heard pieces of it, yeah

JD: But basically the essential idea is to explore how expression and community are intertwined, and like how, when we allow ourselves to express ourselves with each other it like, enables us to, I don't know, have a more communicative, effective, happy, community I guess?

LB: Yeah.

JD: But yeah, just wanting to give people a space to express themselves

LB: Yeah

JD: So, just so you know, when I do include your dancing, only maybe thirty seconds of you dancing will actually end up at the end of it. But I do feel like that does kind of take the pressure off.

LB: Yeah, that's fine! Cause it doesn't have to be perfect.

JD: Exactly! I'm gonna cut it all up.

we laugh

Okay! So question number two, kind of a two-parter. Is there something that you love to do? And, if so, what is it?

LB: Yeah! I love to do a lot of things, I love to drive a lot. Like, with people is fun but by myself is what I like to do the most. Because I can just blast music and I can also just like yell and I know that no one can hear me. Or sing- but I'm usually just yelling.

And yeah, like no one can hear my music and no one... like only the drivers can see me, but they just don't care, and it's so pretty, like, it sounds like really um I don't know! It's strange to say, but the fact that we can travel so easily, and like see so many things, like so fast. I just appreciate being able to drive and being able to move so fast somewhere and see things, and I'm in control like, the power of driving, like I can go wherever I want!

Yeah, that's like one of my favorite things to do.

JD: That's awesome.

LB: That's what's up!

JD: I too love driving.

LB: Really?

JD: I totally relate. Yeah. I think you kind of answered my second question-

LB:-oof-

JD: I normally ask like, what is it about driving?

LB: Yeah, yeah! It's like the control that I have, the power I have, to go wherever I want and see things so quickly, I don't know. Like scenery can change so fast when you're driving: like

forest to swamp to like field—to like strip mall. Yeah and like cities! They're so much fun to drive through.

JD: Yeah

LB: Yeah. I'm surrounded by people but I'm still by myself.

JD: Totally, yeah.

LB: That's it.

JD: That's cool. How would you characterize the feeling of driving?

LB: Liberating I guess? It's funny to say- but like, I can do whatever I want, in multiple forms, yeah.

JD: That's really cool.

LB: Yeah.

Follow-up interview:

JD: First of all, how are you?

LB: Good!

JD: Yeah?

LB: I'm tired! I just danced a lot.

JD: Yeah!

LB: I'm exhausted.

JD: That's great! Did you have any thoughts while you were dancing?

LB: I thought it was fun! I felt like, more comfortable than I thought I would be. I also felt like "I'm tired" cause I was dancing the whole time, and usually at a party or something, you know like, you stop for a while. But here I was dancing for like three songs straight.

JD: Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! It's so much work.

LB: I feel happy! I love to dance.

JD: Me too, I'm thinking that after you go I'll dance.

LB: Yeah, yeah, nice!

JD: Did you have any like, weird thoughts?

LB: Hmm, I don't think so. I guess usually when I dance I dance in front of a mirror, so I wasn't able to see myself but- uh still dancing!

JD: That's funny, that's fun. I love that almost everyone who comes in says *I dance a lot in my room!* I love that it's like a common thing.

LB: Oh yeah, I for sure do. Mostly at home, but yes.

JD: Makes sense.

LB: Yeah.

JD: Yeah, well, you're good to go!

LB: Yay!

JD: Thank you so much for doing this.

LB: Oh, thanks for having me, it's been fun, fun, fun!

Morgan Day

JD: So, first I'd just like to ask you a couple questions!

MD: Cool

JD: Like, how are you emotionally today?

MD: Um, I feel fine, I'm excited to go to the concert but I'm feeling a little stressed in general, and it's been a low week in general, so I don't know, it's been. I'm okay.

JD: Yeah, do you feel like anxious about tonight, or mostly just like stressed out about school?

MD: Um, yeah mostly just stressed out about school, just kind of anxious in general, yeah.

JD: How do you feel about dancing today?

MD: Good! I love dancing!

JD: Actually, so that's my next question: is there something that you love to do, and what would that be?

MD: I love dancing, and I love, like, working with people, and I especially love working with kids, because there the main things I feel, I feel like at this point in our lives it's like "figure out what you want to do" like those are things that keep me grounded cause like I think I'm pretty good at communicating with people and I think I'm pretty great at working with kids.

JD: Yeah that's great. How would you, like how does it make you feel, or how does it satisfy you? Or?

MD: I think like young people, when there in a place where they are learning so much have a lot more open-mindedness than other people, and a lot of childhood is like unwinding and being goofy, but I really like leaning into being goofy with kids and um, like I don't know, kids just have awesome imaginations and love like just want to like learn things, and not in a prejudiced way. And I think it's really important that kids are supported, and like, I know that some kids have a great life, and parents, and are supported there but I think like providing other support systems for kids is like something that I love to do.

JD: Yeah. It is so important.

MD: Yeah,

JD: It's so important to everyone to have some other community.

MD: Yeah.

JD: Especially, yeah, my mom's a teacher.

MD: Yeah my mom's a teacher too.

JD: Yeah! We've talked about this.

MD: Yeah!

JD: But like, yeah, it's so very clear that people need other outlets, and sometimes structure but sometimes just like a loving presence. And someone to respect their opinions, cause kids don't always get that.

MD: Yeah. And neither do adults, but like kids are easier to work with and need support systems more, also like, they're more willing to learn things to grow.

JD: Yeah, so true.

MD: Yeah.

Sam Green

JD: I know we've been together for the past half an hour but- how are you?

SG: I'm good! I'm feeling a surge of energy this evening, which is very welcome. How are you?

JD: I'm good, I'm very good, I think you are the first nighttime dancer I have had. It's kind of exciting, it's a different energy!

SG: The day is done, I have no more energy I need to use-

JD: Yeah!

SG: -so I feel like it's all gonna come out!

JD: Oooh! That's a really nice feeling, to have more energy than you need to use.

SG: I have some left! I have a little bottle left. Ready to pour out.

JD: Is the bottle like located somewhere in you? Where would it be?

SG: Hmm, well right now...

JD: This is a question I ask everyone by the way.

SG: Really?

JD: No!

We Laugh

SG: I would say it's, right in the chest, right in the heart.

JD: Right there. That's really sweet.

SG: Thank you!

We laugh

JD: Sam, do you have something you love to do?

SG: Yes. I love to connect with people, I love to make people laugh, I like to make people smile.

JD: Doing it right now!!

SG: I love to uh, listen to people's stories, and yeah! I just like sharing intimate moments with people because it's something I'm getting a lot better at and it's really exciting and really special.

So, I love to do that...

JD: Yeah, that's perfect! I mean that's a great answer. Yeah, like, what- how would you characterize that: the feeling of connecting with someone in that way.

SG: Hmm sure, I don't know... I don't know if this is helpful but I've really learned the value of asking people questions. In the past year I've just started doing it more, and like asking people questions about anything- like about their day, also like asking people "what's your favorite part about this?" "What's your favorite part about that?" "How are you doing?" "How are you feeling about this?" Um, cause people- we like, we like to talk about ourselves, I think. So I've learned that, by asking more of those questions, and just like listening to people's stories, they feel welcome, and comfortable, and they reciprocate. And that's then, a way, that I've learned to connect with people more

JD: That's really nice.

SG: Yeah.

JD: Yeah. Thank you for coming in today.

SG: Thank you for having me.

JD: Yeah and like, being vulnerable and all that. I feel like so much of like through any form of expression, just like talking right now, um, you know, you affirm yourself in the world like "hey, I'm here!"

SG: Yes.

JD: And yeah, I think that—maybe also that's why you love giving that space to let people express themselves and connect, cause that means that they're comfortable?

SG: Yeah, and I think as you said, in giving myself that space and saying "hey, I'm here!" and connecting with others, kind of- it's made me more confident in myself and more comfortable.

JD: I love that you brought up asking questions, too, because I feel like that's a huge part of a lot of anxiety that we all have. Like when we have questions and we don't ask them, or when we look at something and don't ask anything for fear of, I don't know.

SG: Yeah, I know what you mean.

JD: You know what I mean?

SG: I know what you mean. And Yes! Okay! Here's a good thing- one of my manifestos for the year is to leave less things unsaid. And I think questions comes into play-

JD: Oooh, yeah.

SG: Um like, just leaving less questions unasked! And having more conversations with friends and loved ones about, just anything. And like, my version of not leaving those things unsaid, is like, if I really care about a person or like, I just love something about a person, I've decided this year that I'm just gonna tell them. Because I think that sort of vulnerability is really special, and I think it's something that's reciprocated. And, I think it's cheesy, but life is too short to not have those sorts of conversations and ask those sorts of questions.

JD: I think you're right! I think all questions shouldn't be left unasked.

Yeah, cause like, I don't know, I think that if any question we have is left unspoken, it sits in you, like a little corner of your mind where you're asking a question but it's not really being manifested. Yeah, I agree! I also think that's really a part of- like asking questions of other people really asks them to expose a part of themselves to you and there's like, a beautiful, learning that happens. That's why I want people to be involved in my artwork, because I want them to know that I pay attention to them, and that what they are being in the world is wonderful and deserves attention.

SG: That's sweet.

JD: Thanks for being here. Thanks for the good little chat.

SG: Thank you, Jules.

Sharah Hutson

JD: I usually ask a few questions. First, how are you?

SH: Right now?

JD: Yeah! How are you?

SH: I'm good!

JD: Yeah? You had a good day?

SH: Uh, I didn't get much done, so I feel bad, but I shouldn't feel bad, cause it's the Sabbath and I should be resting.

JD: It's a Saturday *who does work anyway?* And it's the Sabbath!
Were you just inside all day?

SH: Yeah, in the library

JD: Well, you tried harder than I tried, I was literally anywhere but here.

SH: It's okay!

JD: Yeah, no, it was good. Okay yeah! Next question: is there something that you love to do?
And-
They laugh
if so, what is it?!

SH: Collages! Right now, I'm like- during the summer, Hannah Lane-Davies sent me a postcard that she made. So right now, I'm making postcards. It's kind of stressful, but really fun.

JD: That's so cool! What is the process of collaging like? What is it about it that you love?

SH: I would say the final product, but sometimes it doesn't like, turn out well, and that makes me a little anxious. What I should probably stop doing is looking up what other people have done cause then I'm like "oh no, it has to look good."

What is it like? It's really calming, really fun, sometimes a little hard cause the glue is really sticky. But when I'm done and I scan it, it's like ah! I'm done.

JD: If you had to describe that feeling in emotional terms how would you describe that?

SH: Making it feels like, really calm, cause like throughout the week in my body there's a lot of stress, so with colleges I like put on a podcast I've been meaning to listen to or like some music that I really like and it's like *oh! This is fun!* And I don't like check the clock, and sometimes hours will have gone by and I'll be like, oh! I only made like one little thing! Also I've been finding it important to make art for myself instead of like things to put on the internet. Cause then it makes it really frustrating if it doesn't look like something I would want to post on Instagram. It's kind of scary.

Follow-up Interview:

SH: I need to go to the gym!

JD: Was it fun?

SH: I guess so!

JD: Yeah, how was it for you? How are you?

SH: I'm out of breath, I need to go to the gym!

JD: I need to go to the gym to.

SH: Yes, I'm fine.

JD: You're fine. Can you describe your emotional state?

SH: (They squeak) Um! Okay! I picked the first song, um so, my Papa passed away a while ago, and he really, really, really, really, really, really, loved Stevie Wonder, so whenever I'm in a public space, and it's on a person's playlist, that song makes me think of him. So I danced for him, even though he's not in the space. And the second song, I dance a lot too with Cydney, and I have a really bad memory, but I can remember maybe like the three times we've been in the same room and danced to that song. So that's why I picked the songs.

Emotional state? I'm not good at being descriptive. I feel sweaty.

JD: No, it's okay. I loved that! So like you were thinking about these people?

SH: Mhmm.

JD: That's cool. That's nice. That's really the only question I ask, just if you had any other thoughts... How is it being filmed?

SH: I kept pushing up my glasses and I was worried that that would be annoying when you re-watched the footage. But while I was dancing, I was also, I know it's like kind of weird, like there's not any people here, but I was thinking, how am I gonna dance in front of other people?

JD: It was hard to let go?

SH: Yeah, especially with the camera, I mean, the camera's fine, but I was like, *oh, people will be watching this*. I don't know how I look when I dance. But I wasn't like anxious.

JD: That's good, that's good. Cause I do tell people, you know, it will probably only be like 30 seconds of you dancing in the final video. But like I feel like it's comforting, cause it's just me watching whatever.

SH: I was also thinking about like space. Like the space of the room is pretty big for me to move around in and usually if I'm like at a party, or a place where people are dancing, I don't want to stay still. I want to take up space. I don't know if this stems from me being black, but like I can't- maybe like, can't and shouldn't, like take up space in a room. Like maybe my presence there feels like I shouldn't be taking up space? So, one of the things I did a lot while I was abroad. Like when I went to various clubs was to like, take up a lot of space. Um, which is like really fun, cause I was like basically one of the only black people in the room and it's like, everyone's eyes were on me. I secretly love that. Ew! That sounds gross!

JD: No! Yeah! Over my door, so it says “There is room” and like yeah, I think a lot about space in terms, yeah, in terms of social justice and like how expression is the occupation of space, and like allowing yourself to fill the room that you deserve to fill. Like I don’t know. There is room for everything that is in the world. That’s just a sort of a priori truth. Like, if it exists then there is room for it because it has been brought into existence. I’m glad you talked about that, because that’s definitely one reason I wanted to provide a space for people to express themselves.

Cydney G. Hall

JD: I really want to look at how expression can be a form of love. I think dance is one way that we can step out of ourselves a little bit, or gain even more confidence around who we are.

So a question that I’ve been asking people is: Is there something that you do in your life that you love, that you feel brings you something?

CGH: I think something that has been meaningful for me has been working with kids. I think that has brought me a lot of joy, and I think it’s a lot of like me learning from the innocence and they’re kind of like not-tainted yet, like pure, like it feels so genuine. I wish that I could feel that way about all of my experiences but even when kids are just straight-up with you, I don’t know, I just feel like I have genuine interactions with people who are really young.

JD: How would you characterize that feeling?

CGH: I feel valued. I feel really valued when I’m with kids, because- maybe they do this with a lot of people who are older than them- it feels so personal, I feel really valued by them. They’re like *Oh really? That’s how that works?* They’re just so excited to learn from you.

JD: Do you have songs you would like to dance to or would you rather me provide music?

CGH: I can put on my music.

JD: You can react to the music in whatever way you want.

CGH: Okay, yeah!

Follow up interview:

CGH: The party we were at- the room was filled- filled! And I was conscious of the fact that people were watching but I felt so confident, and I was so performing for myself- I tried to remember that, but I think I was more cognizant to the fact that people would be watching (while filmed) that I know.

JD: Was it harder to get into?

CGH: No. I think it was a similar feeling, it was just different.

JD: Did you feel like you got to a point where you stopped thinking about the camera?

CGH: On and off. On and off, because the music just takes me away naturally! And I did two songs that make me feel different ways but did kind of take me (raises arms), you know?

JD: Do you feel any differently than when you began?

CGH: Yeah I feel lighter, happier! Cause if you build it up like *I'm gonna be nervous* and then you just do it- it's the same thing like parties I guess. If I get anxious at a party and I'm just like *Whatever!* And I just dance! I feel better- more confident. You know?

JD: I do. Yeah, that's cool- I'm glad! You seem visibly more relaxed and happier.

CGH: Yeah, especially after school is so intense.

Corey Holt

JD: How's this week been for you?

CH: It's been okay, you know, worrying about deadlines and that sort of thing, self-motivating is always hard.

JD: Yeah I feel that. This week, even though it was fun, like with Party on the Green was so fun but also so cold and wet and my nipples are chafing now and that's terrible. *We laugh* I was just dancing the whole time in wet clothes! Bad. Very bad.

CH: Oh my god, I hope your nipples get better. *Nervous Laughter*

JD: Thank you!!

We laugh

So yeah, this project, I've told you a little bit about it but it's all about expression and self-love, and I have come to believe that the two are entwined together and a part of that is that we feel a fair amount of pressure from the people around us. The ways in which we've been raised to be one way or another way. Even in like this small space, I think self-expression can be a rebellion against that.

CH: Right.

JD: But in order to take affect there has to be a fair amount of love there- either love of yourself or coming from those around you. So, that's a little bit what my project is like and getting folks to talk about what they love! It's kind of cheesy!

CH: No! I love it that's really cute.

JD: Thanks! So, there's one definition of love that I really like, from this guy Scott Peck and he says "Love is the will to extend one's own spiritual growth or the spiritual growth of another person." And I think of spiritual growth as emotional well-being.

Okay, well that's that.

But do you have anything that you do that you really love?

CH: I love singing, it's just like, you know, it's my one thing that I feel really good about, about myself. I know that I'll always have it and hearing harmonies and just being able to sing.

JD: Yeah, how does it feel to sing? What is it about it?

CH: It's just the best. I'm someone that, if I'm at a concert I want to be singing every word because it makes me feel so much more connected to it. And it's just like, I don't know, there's something about how it's really just you and your body and you can do so much with it and put so much feeling into it- And also it just feels good! It's really just hard to describe, honestly.

JD: I can definitely relate to that. If you think if you had to characterize the feeling of it how would you do that?

CH: It's interesting because I think my singing has grown so much as I've grown confidence as a person. I used to be very very shy, I would never want to sing in front of people, cause it was just very personal, and that probably meant that it's always felt to me like bearing your soul but making it art in way.

JD: Yes Absolutely!

CH: It's very freeing. Sometimes I'll be sitting in the library and I'll have been in the same spot for a long time and I just get antsy and I just want to be able to sing. I want to be able to be in my room and not worry about how I sound or anything.

JD: I totally get that, I love to sing. And you're right it is totally different when your (singing) with people vs. not. Both are wonderful but- yeah it's kind of how I feel about dancing to. I love dancing with people but it feels so completely different to be dancing alone.

CH: Cause, you can just feel. I feel like dancing and singing are almost very similar in that way

JD: Yeah! Kind of transitory, like the music helps you to move into a different mode.

CH: yeah!

Amelia Kemp

AK: Hey

JD: Hey! So, how are you? What's your mental state?

AK: I'm good! I have a headache, and the ibuprofen's not working, so I'm gonna take a nap.

JD: That'll be so nice!

AK: But otherwise I'm doing okay, it's been a busy day.

JD: Yeah? So I have a couple of questions,

AK: Okay.

JD: The first question is, is there something that you really love to do?

AK: Yeah, besides napping, um I really love to perform. I haven't done it since being in college really, because, I don't know, I just didn't feel like pursuing musical theater was like my final calling, but it's what I did in high school, and it's what I always enjoy so I miss it more than I ever thought I really would.

JD: Yeah. What is it about musical theater?

AK: I don't know, there is like a rush that you get being on stage that you don't really get from anything else that I've found. Like at first you feel like you're going to vomit and then afterwards you're like, *Oh my God, I did that!* Yeah.

JD: Yeah! If you had to like, characterize that feeling, how would you? It doesn't have to be in emotional terms either, it could be a metaphor?

AK: It's like- hmm. What's a good metaphor? Like that feeling- okay, I know you're a fellow lover of stepping on acorns-

JD: Yes!

AK: It's like that feeling when you see an acorn, and you're like *ooh, is that one too big? Am I going to be able to squish it?* And your like *I'm gonna go for it anyway*, and then you step on it and your like *Ohh, this feels like, maybe it's going to be too hard*. And then you push a little harder and it crunches, and your like *Uh!* That sweet, wonderful release, it's kind of like that. Like you're really not sure that you're going to be able to get it done this time. But when you do get it done there is no more satisfying feeling than like successfully getting it done.

JD: Yeah. I can definitely relate. Um yeah, those are like, the basic questions that I ask. I- I do find it fascinating like-

AK: What people love?

JD: Yeah! Do you think that love is something that can be applied to action?

AK: Yeah!

JD: Yeah?

AK: Yeah, I don't see why not. You can absolutely act through love, and love doing things in addition to people, or whatever, or experiences. Like I feel like it's a widely applicable sort of emotional experience.

JD: Yeah. Is that how you would describe love? An emotional experience?

AK: Yeah, I feel like it's generally- it's sometimes physical- but you know the feeling that you get when you see someone you love, and your chest gets warm and your like- *uh, I love you!* Um, but, I definitely think it's more of an emotional experience for sure.

JD: Yeah. So! How are you feeling about dancing?

AK: Uh, self-conscious about it? I'm no dancer, so...

JD: Well, that's common. I mean I think, what I like to tell people is that, first of all- I select probably like twenty seconds total of you dancing and you know, the time is for you. This is for this project, and I'm grateful for you to be here and be vulnerable with me, um, but like, this is for you. And, um yeah, this space is yours for now.

And I also just really genuinely think that we're all like so awkward in a way, it's hard to like, feel confident in our meat prisons.

(we laugh)

AK: Meat prisons! What's that from?

JD: It's from something for sure! Maybe just a meme?

AK: Maybe a show?

JD: Mmhmm yeah, but-

AK: I feel like the beginning, like the first twenty seconds of the video is just them like, *uhhrhr*.

JD: Yeah. Exactly! But like, even our awkwardness is beautiful, and I think that's the thing

AK: Yeah

JD: That's the challenge! That's it!

It's accepting this, whatever that may be.

AK: Yeah, I agree.

Follow-up Interview:

JD: How was that for you?

AK: Kind of weird at the beginning, but fine by the end. Yeah.

JD: Was there a clear transition?

AK: Yeah, I'd say so. Pretty clear.

JD: Mmhmm? How did you end up feeling about the music?

AK: Yeah, I think it was good choices, I tend to know what I will and won't dance to.

JD: Yeah! I feel like we do! Sometimes I'll like think I'm in the mood for something and-

AK:- and then I'm like no, yeah!

JD: Yeah, how do you feel?

AK: Good! It is like a good feeling. Like sometimes last year, if it was a morning when my roommate was gone, like had to leave earlier than me, I would like play a pump up song and dance in the mirror to get myself ready for the day. So, it was kind of reminiscent of that.

JD: Were there any observations you made while you were dancing?

AK: Yeah! I felt really aware of myself for most of it, which is really, I always kind of do. Cause I'm self-conscious. That's part of the reason I didn't pursue musical theater, cause I'm not very good at dancing, it's kind of a deal breaker. So yeah, I felt very aware of what my body was doing? Eventually, I kind of was just like, whatever, but for like a minute or two I was like- you know.

JD: Pssht. I don't think I have any more questions.

AK: Cool!

JD: But overall, net positive experience?

AK: Net positive!

JD: Would you, like, have liked to do it without the camera? How do you think that would have changed the?

AK: I think the camera probably made me feel a little bit more conscious about what I was doing but at the same time like it does feel weird to have someone just leave and just be like “Okay, dance!” I think it probably would have been a little bit weird either way.

JD: Do you feel like, I don’t know. How does it feel to participate in this sort of thing?

AK: It’s cool, because it’s unique, like there’s never been a time when someone’s been like “I just want you to dance to two songs that you like.” “This time’s for you” “Just use the space!” I’ve never had something like that! I just helped someone with their neuro science thing, and they were like “Whatever you do, please don’t blink” so of course my eyes get so dry right as they’re doing an EEG.

JD: That’s terrible! How are you- how long do you have to not blink?

AK: It was usually probably like thirty seconds, but I like always blinked because my eyes were burning. I was like *why is it that I can stare when I just want to but when I’m asked to not blink my body is just like !!*

JD: Actually that’s funny cause there’s this one guy who came in, and you know, I watched the footage and he had his eyes closed the whole time!

AK: I definitely kept my eyes closed for a solid minute. I never looked at the camera!

JD: Well, yeah! It’s good to get into it.
Thank you for coming in, Amelia.

AK: Thank you for having me! I’m sorry I won’t be here to see it in the Spring. I will be in Spain.

JD: Yeah! I’ll just send it to you!

AK: Hip-hip-hoorah! Love technology.

JD: Love it.

Cassidy Ktsanes ‘19

Follow Up Interview:

JD: How do you feel? Like, is there any difference in how you feel from when you started to the end of it?

CK: I was a little like *okay, they're gonna be filming me dancing and I feel a little like somebody's watching me* but then after Dua Lipa kept singing, I just kind of got into it! It reminded me of fourth grade when I used to dance in my room alone for like hours. You know?

JD: Yeah, yeah, I really know. That's wonderful.

CK: I bet I'm really red-faced right now, I'm sorry!

JD: No, don't be sorry, you're fine! It's beautiful!

CK: I just kept like laughing after I was done, because it's fun! I just feel like- you know when *we* (pointing to JD) threw parties at Corner (house) last year, or when *we* throw them this year at Henderson, and we're just with our friends? And like, we're seniors, and it doesn't matter what we're doing, cause like, we're *leaving*? Who cares? That's how I felt! I felt like I was dancing with you and Linden.

JD: Yeah! How would you characterize that feeling if you had to?

CK: Just like free, and fun and careless, and joyous. It was a celebration, like with myself here, but with my friends while we're dancing.

JD: That's cool! Thanks for participating!

JD: How's your day been?

CL: My day's been pretty good, I had my class—my one class of the day, my Thursday class.

JD: That's really nice, I also only have one Thursday class but I have work in the afternoons but it's fine, I have like the same work hours almost every day.

So, I have a couple of questions for you, that I ask everyone who comes and sits on that stool for me. Do you have something that you love to- actually, do you want me to give you a little definition of love?

CL: Yeah give me a definition.

JD: So, one definition that I really like, is "The will to extend oneself for the purpose of one's own spiritual growth or the spiritual growth of another being. Or even another thing- I like to think that expression in art is that will to extend oneself.

CL: Yeah. I mean, so with that in mind I'd say that, especially recently, I've been going to more parties, I do actually really like to dance! It's really fun! It's a really great way to express myself. And I don't feel judged, I don't feel judged- you know, expressing myself that way. So that's something I love to do.

JD: Yeah! It's so nice when everyone's dancing right?

CL: Yeah! Especially when everyone's like, "Oh shoot, look at Ciaran, he's really killing it out there" it's- it's- it's really affirming, ya know?

JD: Yeah! If you had to characterize that feeling, what would that be?

CL: It would be... How to characterize it...Um it feels really free. It's exhilarating definitely, it's a really great form of exercise, that's for certain, and it feels cathartic. Cathartic, yeah that's such a great word *I agree* ... Um something I love to do... I did actually just think of something.

JD: That's wonderful, I'd love to hear about it.

CL: So, I'd say something recently that I've really grown to love is- I don't know how exactly to describe it- I'd say, the idea of religion. I feel I've become more spiritual recently. I have really grown a particularly strong attachment to spiritual hymns. I think they are really powerful.

JD: So, do you sing them? What do you do to engage-?

CL: I've listened to them mostly. I haven't- I don't know, I'd like to start going to church services, I don't know I wouldn't. I mean at this point I'd say I'm not sure that I believe in God still. Because I didn't really come from a very religious household, so God wasn't really a part of our lives. And I'd say since coming to college I've begun to appreciate the beauty of religion more. I think it's really very very beautiful. That being said, I'm still figuring it out, I'm not sure if I entirely believe in a religious doctrine yet.

JD: So, yeah. Something about thinking about love makes you think of this new spiritual...

CL: Yeah! I would associate that feeling with a certain kind of love. A sort of all-encompassing, all-pervading sense of community, definitely.

JD: Yeah, that's beautiful.

He chooses to listen to "It's the Being in Love" by Late Night Tough Guy

Kathryn Miles

JD: How are you today?

KM: I'm lovely, had a good breakfast with good people- person.

JD: People person

KM: Yeah

JD: Yeah! I'm really glad you got to meet Brittany

KM: Yeah, Brittany was great. I also really liked Teagan!

JD: Yeah!

KM: She's so cute!

JD: Yeah, I feel like, you'd get along with her a lot.

KM: Also that girl in the doorway was so cute! "I'm so jealous that you got to grow up with Juliana."

We Laugh

JD: Yeah, love her. That's Reagan. Her studio is right over there, she's a sweetheart. Yeah, um I'm glad I got to grow up with **you!**

KM: I know! Well, I didn't really get to grow up with you-

JD: But I'm glad I got to- I'm glad I was part of it-

KM: It was more-

JD: You were definitely a huge part of my development like when I started becoming a real person.

KM: Yeah that's true. And we had those moments where we kind of had a falling out, kind of,

JD: Yeah

KM: We didn't really see each other anymore.

JD: Yeah. Sad.

KM: But we always came back to each other.

JD: I feel like we just like, it wasn't even

KM: it wasn't crazy!

JD: it just kind of happened

KM: yeah,

JD: Yeah.

KM: Like we forgot to make the effort or something I guess.

JD: Yeah

KM: Maintaining friendships is hard.

JD: It is hard it is hard. But it's so natural with you, maybe that's why

KM: Yeah like we don't really have to try

JD: Yeah

KM: Yeah

JD: So we have to try more at trying I guess

KM: yeah

JD: I dunno!

KM: Yeah

JD: Is there something that you love to do, and what is it, if there is something?

KM: There are a lot of things that I love to do. Um. Yeah, it's definitely changed, like currently it's much different than it was, I think since Dickinson it has changed a lot. I have gotten so much more into gardening and agriculture. That's one of my favorite escapes at Dickinson is going out to the farm, and it's so beautiful out there, and there's this dog Bella and she like comes running out to the truck when you drive on to the farm. So, yeah it's like I get to the farm and I forget that I'm at school. So that's like one of my favorite escapes at Dickinson.

JD: That's so nice.

KM: Yeah it's so nice. And everyone at the farm is so nice, and all round it's such a good circle to be a part of. And I really love rock climbing, but I don't get to do that as much, since being at school especially. So that is another thing. Dancing, I love dancing, another like, release, stress-reliever I'd say.

JD: Do you think that most things that you love share that quality?

KM: Yeah, I'd definitely say that. Especially at school I feel like everything I do that isn't like required is just to like get out of my head.

JD: If you had to characterize that as like a feeling? Maybe not even in emotional terms but like the feeling of, idk.

KM: Yeah, I guess it's like a different kind of concentration, like you're really engrossed in it

Claire Miller

Follow-up interview:

JD: How was it for you?

CM: It was relaxing and freeing as well

JD: How did you feel coming in vs. now.

CM: A lot better I guess- I mean, what do you mean?

JD: Yeah just in general- were there any observations you made while you were doing it? Like, were you super aware of the camera? Or how did you feel?

CM: Yeah I was kind of aware of the camera, but I tried to not let that influence my dancing. *Giggles*

JD: Okay great! Yeah I just like to give people an opportunity to reflect because...it's really interesting to me.

How is it coming in not knowing me? Was it nerve wracking not knowing who I was?

CM: Yeah a little, but I've helped other seniors with their I.S's.

JD: Yeah, well thank you for helping out, it means a lot to me. I'm glad it was a net-positive experience for you. I really do appreciate it. Also do you have a movie recommendation for me?

CM: Yeah, so I get really nostalgic and I watch a lot of kid's movies... I really like Pixar movies. Like have you seen a lot?

JD: I've seen a lot of Pixar movies, yeah. Do you have one that- or if you could watch any movie right now, what would you want to watch?

CM: My favorite Pixar movie is either Toy Story 2 or 3. I like the first one, but I like the rest of the series even more.

Taylor Myers '19

JD: Okay, So I have a couple of questions...

TM: Cool

JD: That I like to ask everyone. Um, the first one is, is there something that you love to do, and if so, what is that thing?

TM: Like- in my life?

JD: Yeah-

TM: Wow-

JD: anything you love to do. And really I guess, actively love doing this thing.

TM: Yeah, I guess it's Ultimate for me. Like whenever I play Ultimate I can just like let go of everything outside and just focus on that game and like, if I'm not playing I can be like super silly and stuff like during practice I can just put on my bops and like if I'm not running the drill I'm just like you know, doing a little hip turn and stuff, doing a little dance. Everyone thinks I'm weird like it's pretty cool. Yeah I don't know, I love Ultimate, it just makes me really happy, helps me get through a lot of like esteem issues, and I really push it out.

JD: Yeah, how would you characterize that feeling if you had to?

TM: It's um, it's a controlled, ooh- I don't want to say aggression. But it's like a controlled, fire I guess.

JD: Yeah?

TM: Yeah. It's like, it's like the boy scouts making a fire, you know there's some like "Oh, they could burn down the whole entire forest-

JD:-there's risk!

TM: There is risk involved! But it is managed.

JD: Managed risk. I like that.

We laugh

Yeah, yeah that's great. People have so many fascinating answers for like "what do you love to do?" Um yeah, I don't even know what I would say- there are so many things

TM: So many things

JD: So many! But probably making art as a more general category.

TM: (referring to my house parties) I mean, that like, 12:30 on a Friday or Saturday, where your like, wow, let's just dive right deep into being my true dancey-self, you know, it's like, a pretty wild time. I mean, half the people you don't know aren't there anymore and it's really just a good thirty and your just like fuck it! Let's really, let's really do it.

JD: Oh yeah! I love it! It's really- that's the best part of my weekend. Yeah, so good, I'm glad we get to dance together so often!

TM: Yeah exactly!

JD: It's rad!

Follow-up interview:

JD: How are you feeling?

TM: A little tired!

JD: Lil' tay is worn out.
So, tired?

TM: Yeah!

JD: Any other feelings?

TM: I feel happy.

JD: That's good, yeah- how do you feel now compared with when you came in here?

TM: I, I have a lot more adrenaline! I don't know, those two songs were, not even close to being together. But like "La-di-dah" is just more like, a lil' funky thing, and "Boogie" is just like, *I'm jumping for three minutes!*

(we are laughing this entire time)

JD: Yeah! Did you do "Boogie" second?

TM: Oh yeah!

JD: Yeah! "Oh I'm jumping for three minutes" I love that!

TM: Yeah, so, my heart is racing but uh, I don't know, "Boogie" you know, I have this wild relationship with "Boogie" right? You know? Cause I mean, I saw Brockhampton, and that was the first thing they played and I was just like, this is my favorite band and we're fucking doing it! And that was like one of the *best* experiences of my life, and then literally eight hours later I get hit by a semi.

JD: No!

TM: Yeah!

JD: I didn't know this!

TM: -we were coming back-

JD: -was this last fall?

TM: It was February (2018)

JD: Oh damn! That's right, I wasn't even here last fall.

TM: Yeah, we were coming back, it was like nine. We were chilling and someone just cuts us in the lane so Emma puts on the breaks, and we hit some ice, some dark ice, and we just start fishtailing. And we fishtail into the left lane, through the center lane, all the way one hundred and eighty, and it's a semi and we just smash. And we swerve into the right, um, ditch, and I was terrified. Like, we *absolutely* could have died- you know? And the only thing that was happening in my mind, it literally slowed down so, so slow, and the only thing that I could hear was "Stars" by Brockhampton. That was the only thing in my mind. So, it's just like, when that shit happens, it's just like all of these emotions happen, and it's like- let me just unleash all of them.

JD: Yeah, it's like this layered experience?

TM: Yeah.

JD: Yeah, that's really intense, I didn't realize that had happened.

TM: Yeah, I had a concussion for two weeks after it, because of it. And I was the only one who got hurt too, which is, is good.

JD: That is, that is good, I mean, I'm sorry you were injured.

TM: Nah it's good.

Uh, now I'm sweating. This is a very sweaty room.

(we laugh)

JD: Yeah, it's damp.

TM: Yeah.

JD: Well, thank you so much for like, coming in, and dancing-

TM: Of course!

JD: - and I don't know, if there's any other thoughts on your brain you can share 'em.

TM: Nah, no, not really.

JD: It's uh, I'm having a sleepy day, I think maybe I would have more questions if I wasn't but yeah I think that's pretty much it.

TM: Cool! Awesome!

JD: Thank you!

TM: You're welcome!

Teagan Robinson '19

JD: How are you? What's up? What's going through the brain?

TR: Well I'm doing very well, because I'm seeing a lot of my friends today! I woke up late to work, as you know, but I got there and I got to like just keep working for 5 hours because I didn't have class. So, that was really nice, cause I was just like, okay, *I'm gonna eat my vegan Caesar salad, my favorite lunch of all time. And! I wasn't even asked to do this: but I was like, I'm just gonna go take down all the posters that are out of date. And I love to organize them on the wall so none of them are over-lapping. It's so soothing. I want to do it in places I don't work!*

(We went off on a tangent and I decided to omit it)

JD: Okay, so, now that we've established that! What is something that you love to do?

TR: You're never gonna guess. *Laughs*

JD: yes!

TR: I love to dance. I've danced, in like an, organized way, from the age of three to the age of present.

JD: What is it that you love about dance?

TR: Well, I really like performing, and just- Like it's such a pure thing to me, just being like- like it's entirely just for the audience, you're just like "Hey, I want you to have a good time!" or "hey I want you to be really sad" or "hey, I want you to think this is about two beavers that can talk but THEY ALSO CAN TAP DANCE!"
We laugh

JD: So is that how you would characterize it? *I want you to think of this as two beavers tap-dancing?*

TR: Only when I was one of those beavers tap dancing.

JD: More generally, more generally, how would you characterize that?

TR: Just like you're only giving. You're not trying to take anything, and that's nice.

JD: Yeah, that's a good feeling.

So, if the giving is like this crucial part of that, is that where the feelings of love come from?

TR: I guess yeah. But I also do, like I don't always feel like it's giving when you're just dancing. Like maybe that is just more of a broad giving? Like you don't know who the audience is, but it's still a gift, even if you just dance alone. You're just like "hey, universe, it's for you!"

JD: Do you feel like it's for you?

TR: No! Cause it's selfless, you're not like "oh, this is going to make Teagan happy!"

JD: Right. Does that bring you to something?

TR: Joy... I thought it was too sincere so I had to do it in a funny voice.

Sam Royer

SR: How are you doing?

JD: I'm doing well, yeah

SR: You staying warm?

JD: Yeah, I'm staying warm, I did not leave the house once on Wednesday.

SR: Me neither, not once.

JD: Yeah, I didn't leave until like 12 the next day, so it was especially cozy.

SR: Ooh, did you have some tea?

JD: I did not have tea, I had a lot of coffee though

SR: Oh okay, okay.

JD: I had a lot of warm beverages.

SR: I just, I just, whenever I think about you I think about tea.

JD: I know! I think of tea also.

SR: You scream tea.

Also because we were in London that one time and we had tea.

JD: I love tea.

SR: Yeah

JD: Yeah, we went to that little tea shop.

SR: And I remember you started drawing out potential tattoo ideas- like eggs.

JD: Yeah! I remember that!

I have those! Wait, this is that notebook!

SR: Wait, that would be insane to look at that right now.

JD: Do you want to see?

SR: Yes!

JD: Yeah there's the page!

SR: That is so funny! I love that you remembered.

JD: Yeah, and I got an egg tattoo!

SR: You did?

JD: Yeah! Just last week! Fritze and I got 'em.

Here you can see.

SR: Aww.

JD: Yeah, kind of looks like an avocado but it's cute.

SR: It can be whatever you want it to be!

JD: Yes, exactly.

SR: It's all about fluidity.

JD: Yeah.

So, this whole project, um, it started out, uh, I really want to express, explore, expression- and like how that's related to self-love and also related to like occupying space? So like, I feel like in the

queer community we do talk about this a lot but like, how important expression **is**. Because it's like asserting your existence in the world and putting yourself out there, being vulnerable with others, and people within the community. So, I wanted to give people a place that could express themselves and feel vulnerable, but also be with themselves. Cause yeah I don't think we have a lot of time to let loose a little bit. Like we **do** at parties and stuff, but it's a completely different environment.

SR: Right, like a social experience too.

JD: Yeah! Exactly!

SR: Wow. I love this project. One of my first chapters is about me as a kid going downstairs and dancing in my father's workout room while my parents were at work on Saturday mornings to like pop music. This is crazy. I love how connected I.S.'s are.

JD: I know, or just this community, like especially-

SR: Qu-

JD: Queer people...

SR: Yeah.

JD: I've realized- not everyone- but a large percentage of the people who have done this are queer. I don't know- it's really interesting. I guess if you know me...

SR: It makes sense.

JD: I guess I gravitate towards queer people.

SR: That makes sense. Are you gonna write about that at all in your IS?

JD: Yeah, I will. I think I will.

So anyway, I have a few questions that I like to ask.

The first is- it's kind of a two-parter. Is there something that you love to do, and if so, what is it?

SR: Like related to dancing?

JD: No! Like anything in the world that you love to do.

SR: Oh God, I mean, like, yes!

I think right now, because we're talking about this, I feel like my self-care thing right now is like putting on headphones and walking round by myself listening to music. Like that's what I like to do for myself. I also love other things, I love to write, I love to dance.

JD: What is it about listening to music?

SR: Okay, so a couple things, I love the idea of like having certain songs that represent certain areas in your life, so like, when I'm going through something I like to listen to the same songs. But I also like intimate experience. I feel like listening to music by yourself is kind of intimate and even just listening to it with a few friends is pretty intimate.

JD: Yeah, cause music has a quality of unifying a feeling?

SR: Yeah! Right! Even if everyone is reacting to it differently. One of the articles I read for my I.S. is about this queer man, who went to a gay bar with his queer friends and this song plays and one of the gay friend's is like "Oh my God, this is THE gay anthem!" and the other guys were like "No, it's not." I'm kind of getting off topic, but it's just interesting how people have different reactions to music, and what it means. It's cool.

JD: I actually talk about that a little in my I.S. too. Like, not that specific scenario, obviously, but actually like at our parties- I've been thinking a lot about how everyone has their own response to music, and everyone is responding both to the music and to each other.

SR: That's so cool how like, your parties on the weekends have contributed to your research on IS.

JD: It's really, I don't know, I love that it happens organically because I do feel like that is art making for me. Like those parties, dancing with everyone? It's one of the most beautiful things in my life.

SR: Right, right right.

JD: So I want people to be able to share that with everyone.

SR: That makes sense, that makes sense, like for an artist, people experiencing art.

JD: Yeah, and I've been reading a lot about community and how community art can be radical, and how just expression itself can be rebellion.

SR: Yeah, especially because I feel like the people that come to your parties tend to have similar ideals.

JD: Okay, so (you're) walking around, listening to music, how would you characterize that feeling if you had to?

SR: Dramatic.

JD: Yeah?

SR: Very Dramatic. Because sometimes it will be like I am in a movie, or sometimes I'll get really into the song- it won't be like I'm in a movie but- I'll be like really into it, and kind

of even- sometimes I'll be walking, sometimes I'll just walk around the library with headphones in and I'll start like dancing- it feels very- it feels like even though it's just me, and it's just for me it feels very much like a performance, and like a, you know, it feels like a drama. You know? You know.

JD: Yeah! And maybe like, more in touch with like being alive?

SR: Yes! Yes, I think so. Yeah, and that's what my I.S. story is about, it's just like about expressing yourself, and really like- and now, really I'm connecting all of this to your I.S.- but it really is just like, it's a really good way to like express yourself in ways that like, people can't really judge. Cause like, it's not like- okay I feel like sometimes when. I'm dancing or when I'm listening to music, I'm reacting even if it's not dancing. Like I'm doing a lot of things that are like paralleled with like other things I might say or do that people might judge, but when you're dancing or your experiencing it through music it's just like- no one can really touch it.

JD: Yeah it's just you in that moment?

SR: Yeah, yeah, yeah yeah.

JD: Nice! That's really cool.
Well, thank you. That was really interesting.

SR: Thank you!

Follow-up interview:

SR: Oh yeah! I used some props.

JD: That's great! Love it.

SR: I did notice that I was thinking more about my dancing when I was in front of the camera.

JD: Yeah

SR: Yeah.

JD: Would you have liked to do it again without the camera?

SR: Yeah, that would be interesting! Maybe not-

JD: -not today

SR: -not today. Yeah.

JD: And I, I like leave it as an option for people.

SR: That's really, that's really interesting.

JD: Um, also like. Cause I want- I feel like if there camera inhibits you in some way then like people should be able to use this space- like I want this to be

SR: That kind of space.

JD: Yeah.

SR: I wonder also, like, I wonder how it would be different in a couple hours even. Or every day, I feel like it could change.

JD: Yeah,
(camera died unfortunately)

Linden Taylor '19

LT: *reading* "There is Room"

JD: Yeah! There is room/ for everything/ and it's crazy. Everything that exists! There is room for it. Um, yeah, I started recording by the way...

LT: Okay!

JD: We're just gonna talk- chat for a second! I have a set of questions that I ask everyone when they come in. How are you?? How has your day been?

LT: It's been a good day. I just napped.

JD: Oh that's amazing!

**LT: Yeah, so, when you texted me at 3:20 I was still in bed. And that's why I was like "perfect!"
*we laugh***

JD: A good nap is such a blessed thing. I'm grateful the sun is starting to come out.

LT: Yeah, I'm used to waking up from a nap and it's like darker outside but it's brighter!

JD: Yes! That's an amazing feeling!

Okay, next question, is there something you love to do and what is it?

LT: I love to be on a lake. Either working or just being on a lake.

JD: What do you do on the lake that makes the lake special? Or, what is it about a lake?

LT: Just the whole community, inside a lake. It's like an ecocosm. And yeah, I just love to be around it and be able to swim in it.

JD: You study lakes.

LT: Yes.

JD: Do you think loving lakes helps you study them?"

LT: Yes. Yeah. *Nods*

JD: That's cool. I love that answer, it's a very unique one. Everyone says something completely different-

**LT: I love a lot of different things, but I thought of lakes just right away!
*we laugh***

JD: That's so pure! That's so beautiful. If you had to characterize the feeling of being near a lake, what would be the first thing to come to mind?

LT: I want to say at peace but you know sometimes it's a really choppy day on the lake and it doesn't necessarily feel at peace but it feels... um.. I'm trying to think of a word!

JD: Is it that **you** feel calm consistently?

LT: Yeah, no matter what.

JD: That's really nice.

Yeah, I think so much of love is like feeling comfortable, like completely comfortable. But like, you can be vulnerable with a lake.

LT: Yeah definitely!

JD: What songs did you bring

LT: I brought some funky songs.

JD: Nice! Yeah, are you gonna do two or three:

LT: Two I think.

JD: Yeah that's good. Three is good, but it's a lot, it can be more than you think. Do you want the dance to be filmed?

LT: Sure! Why not?

JD: I appreciate it!

Follow up interview:

JD: How do you feel?

LT: I feel good!

JD: Yeah?

LT: Yeah! I feel ready to start the next half of my day I guess.

JD: Do you feel any different from how you did when you first came in?

LT: Yeah, I was still sleepy. I don't feel as overwhelmed which is cool.

JD: That's so nice. Thanks for being vulnerable.

LT: Yeah!

JD: How aware of the camera were you?

LT: Somewhat aware I guess. There were some dance moves that I might avoid because of that but, I don't know, maybe it was also the songs I picked though. Like maybe if I'd picked a heavy bass song the booty would have been out.

uproarious laughter

I kind of picked songs I could just mop out to, you know?

JD: Temporally, like through the progression did you notice and differences as you went along?

LT: I just loved the way the first song starts, so, I was really in it, and then I got sort of tired by the end.

JD: Yeah, I'm just curious to see how people feel. Do you feel like the experience would have been any different, had you not known me?

LT: That's a really good question, probably a little bit, I might have held myself back a little bit even if it was subconsciously.

JD: Thank you so much for coming in!

LT: Thank you! It was fun!

Laney Zuver '21

Follow-up Interview:

JD: Do you want to reflect at all?

LZ: Oh, yeah! Okay!

JD: How'd it feel?

LZ: Really good! Of course! I was thinking about it- like, *how am I gonna feel?* You know what I mean? Just standing in a room dancing? It made me feel a little awkward and then you just start listening to the music.

It felt really good. I picked two songs that I don't normally dance to, you know what I mean? I picked two songs- one that's really meaningful, which was the Tune Yards one, and the other one is just guitar like grrrrr! All your frustrations. So, it was fun! To experiment. And I like how I dance!

JD: Yeah! That's so beautiful!

LZ: I like how I dance, I like how my body moves, and I don't reflect on it enough, you know? Cause at the time I could reflect on it- you know?

JD: That's really nice, yeah! Cause any movement we make, even if it is awkward—I was talking to Sam about this because I don't expect people to come in here and be super suave. Just to be yourself is so beautiful, and it's hard! It's hard, that's why it's so beautiful just being our bumbling awkward selves.

I think when a lot of people talk about self-expression and say "Oh, just be yourself," it's implied that you weren't being yourself before.

LZ: Right!

JD: I think a lot of it is just accepting how we are, but also allowing us to extend ourselves and allow for growth within ourselves.

LZ: Yeah! I also feel like when people say "oh, be yourself" that can kind of mean: "be my perception of you," you know what I mean? Like, "fulfill my impression of you."

JD: Yeah! I love letting people choose their own music cause you could be in a super somber mood and then just get into it. You could sing your heart out- the audio won't be on here!

LZ: Yeah!

JD: Yeah!

LZ: Yeah, I just think that if I were to see you at a party and you weren't dancing, it would of course be different, but that's you, and that's still you being yourself. Whereas if I was like "come on, Jules! Just be yourself out there!" like blah blah, you know what I'm saying?

JD: Yes!

LZ: Ooh I have a lot to think about!

JD: Ooh!

LZ: Ooh! So good. Um, this was awesome, I loved it.

JD: Thank you Laney! This is so beautiful.

LZ: You're welcome! Thank you for having me, I think this is so beautiful. I'm gonna write, I've got a lot of things to write. So, a note about what I think about this is coming your way! Cause I feel like I can't express all my thoughts right now.

JD: Sam was saying the same thing.