



MEMPHIS JOOKIN': THE SHOW

STUDY GUIDE

MOSS
ARTS
CENTER

STUDY GUIDE

MEMPHIS JOOKIN': THE SHOW

Featuring Lil Buck

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Recommended for students in grades 7-12

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The following guide was adapted from content originally developed by the Education and Community Engagement Department at the Orpheum Theatre Group, Memphis, Tennessee, in collaboration with Marico "Dr. Rico" Flake. The Moss Arts Center would like to thank them for providing such an educational resource and permitting its adaptation. For more information about the Orpheum Theatre Group, please visit

orpheum-memphis.com.



WHAT IS MEMPHIS JOOKIN'?

Memphis Jookin' is an urban street dance that originated in Memphis, Tennessee, in the mid-1980s. Rooted in the culture of Black Memphians, Memphis Jookin' developed from an earlier dance that began in the streets and clubs of Memphis known as Gangsta Walking. A strut walk infused with a bounce, Gangsta Walking evolved over time into the full body artform known today as Memphis Jookin', which includes lots of complex footwork, slides, glides, and toe stands. Memphis Jookin' gained popularity as it was documented, named, and shared by the legendary group G-Force and filmmaker/producer Young Jai of Jai Productions.



SEE LIL BUCK IN ACTION!

Practiced widely around the world, Memphis Jookin' continues to evolve while remaining deeply connected to the authenticity of its Memphis roots. Memphis Jookin' has been featured in prominent commercials, video games, live sporting events, and concert dance and theatre stages and has followers on six continents. Well known Memphis Jockers and pioneers of the dance form include Marico "Dr. Rico" Flake, G-Nerd, Surf, Dra'em, Jadyn Smooth, Ladia Yates, She Street, and Charles "Lil Buck" Riley.

GLOSSARY

The following words can be found throughout this study guide and may help inform your experience of *Memphis Jookin': The Show*.

Narrative: A story or account of events.

Metaphor: An image or idea that represents something else.

Collaborate: To work together as a group or team.

Theme: A central idea that is expressed in an artistic work.

Characters: The subjects (e.g., people, animals, etc.) of a story or narrative.

Synopsis: A summary of a story.

Legacy: Something that is left behind or handed down from the past.

Tradition: A custom, belief, ritual, or practice that is passed on and repeated, usually in the same or a similar way each time.

OG: Short for "Original Gangsta."

Cypher: A freestyle or improvisational jam session.

ABOUT MEMPHIS JOOKIN': THE SHOW

Memphis Jookin': The Show tells a story inspired by true events and real people in the history of Memphis through narrative dance, acting, music, film, and spoken word poetry. While Memphis Jookin' as a dance form has evolved over decades from the mid-1980s to today, the artists behind *Memphis Jookin': The Show* have taken creative liberties to condense the story from its early beginnings to present day in just 80 minutes. The time is linear, but a bit amorphous. Themes of the show include creative expression, documentation, tradition, evolution, generational differences, respect, legacy, strife, Memphis culture, street dance culture, healing, community, and joy.

What other themes do you see in *Memphis Jookin': The Show*?

MEET THE CHARACTERS

JJ

A young wannabe filmmaker. Still lives with his mom. Street smart with a nice upbringing.

DJ Fly

JJ's best friend. The resident popular DJ with neighborhood notoriety. He breathes music.

DOUBLE OG

One of the originators on the dance scene. He is feared and respected in the hood.

BUCKTOWN

The dope new guy on the scene. He's cool and mysterious with all the right moves.

JJ's MOM

JJ's loving mother. She is protective. We never see her but only hear her voice.

DOUBLE OG's BOY

Double OG's friend.

DANCE ENSEMBLE

Dancers who play various Memphis Jookers, skaters, and themselves, throughout the show.

DOUBLE OG's SON



SYNOPSIS

SCENE ONE

JJ's House

In the early- to mid-90s, JJ sneaks home into his bedroom after curfew, only to be busted by his mom. She tells him to get washed up for dinner, but instead he throws on his headphones to listen to a mix tape from his good friend DJ Fly. JJ is fascinated by the music, and it transports him to another place inside his mind. Dancers begin to appear in this dream-like space, and we see and hear an abbreviated journey of the evolution of Memphis Jookin' and music from its origins as Gangsta Walking to the newer modern styles that we see today. Time dissolves and flows freely. Characters appear—first Double OG as the original Gangsta Walker, then more local Jookers whose styles continue to evolve, until finally the mysterious character of Bucktown arrives, foreshadowing the longer journey ahead. Bucktown's style is smoother and more graceful, the music shifts and he is transcendent. As the dance builds and grows we see all the dancers and styles coming together harmoniously in a final cypher before the dream world disappears, leaving JJ back in his bedroom. Something has changed in him, and the presence of his camera is highlighted. The phone rings and it's JJ's friend, DJ Fly. DJ Fly is calling to invite JJ out to a popular local spot in town where a big event is going down and says JJ must come out because Double OG will be there. Though JJ is unfamiliar with Double OG, he is intrigued, and after DJ Fly explains that the event will be so dope that nobody will believe it, JJ suggests he bring his dad's video camera to document it. DJ Fly is a bit skeptical of this idea but says that if he stays out of the way, it should be fine. They both head out to meet one another at the Crystal Palace.

SCENE TWO

The Crystal Palace

JJ arrives at a well-known Memphis social spot: the Crystal Palace roller rink. He's captivated by the spectacle of skaters, dancers, and a variety of characters. He takes it all in with wide-eyed wonder and joy and begins to film with his video camera. He sees couples in love skating and dancing together, a lonely guy trying to learn to dance, and eventually gets caught up in the middle of a rivalry between two groups of skaters. As things get heated between the rivals, JJ decides to leave the club.

SCENE THREE

The Alley Outside of the Crystal Palace and a Journey Through Time Inside DJ Fly's Mind

After leaving the rollerskating rink, JJ runs into DJ Fly, who is chilling outside in the alley with his boom box. DJ Fly shares that he is working on his mix tape, and JJ is amazed by his skills and abilities. He asks how DJ Fly does it, and DJ Fly explains that he studied many great DJs who came before him, likening his DJ skills to that of a conductor orchestrating a symphony. He turns on some music, and we are magically transported to another dream-like space where we see the DJ's music, beats, and technology. DJ Fly conducts while dancers enter and illustrate what he is doing musically with their bodies through the dance. He takes us on a journey through time, starting with old-school basics all the way through to the present-day modern sound, describing the changes in the music, technology, and the DJ's techniques. As he conducts, the music changes and dance styles evolve. We are hearing and seeing the evolution of the music and dance through DJ Fly's eyes and experience.



SYNOPSIS, continued

SCENE FOUR

The Alley Outside of the Crystal Palace

Still captivated by all he has learned, JJ asks DJ Fly to share more when DJ Fly explains that they are about to witness things live and in person. Double OG arrives, and it seems like things are about to get heated. A live dance battle breaks out with Double OG dominating the scene, and time shifts to the 2000s. DJ Fly calls for some dancers to help him hype the real crowd to give them the experience of what it's like to be at a Memphis Jookin' battle. Each neighborhood—North and South Memphis—takes turns expressing their pride and cheering on their representatives in the battle. JJ begins to film again and captures Double OG's style, music, and moves, which clearly blow the competition away until a mysterious stranger arrives. The music and mood of the space are altered by his arrival. His moves are different—smoother, with more slides and glides than Double OG's Gangsta Walk. People take notice. Double OG is threatened and tries to maintain his style and dominance as they battle. We realize that the mysterious man is Bucktown, who proves he can match Double OG in the battle with his new stylings that intrigue and inspire the crowd. It's a battle of the old and new styles, the past versus the present, and JJ gets in the way as he tries to capture it all on camera.

SCENE FIVE

JJ Gets Pressed

The tension rises as Bucktown steals attention. Filming in the middle of it all, JJ steps on Double OG's foot, giving him an excuse to break out of the battle and take his frustrations out on JJ. Double OG accuses JJ of being a snitch and threatens to smash his camera. JJ explains that he only wants to capture the dance because he is enthralled by it and wants to share it with the world. He negotiates a deal to show the dancers the footage he has captured and, if they approve, continue without penalty or retaliation.

SCENE SIX

The Power of the Camera

Dancers gather around to watch the footage on the camera. As we flashback to the various moments JJ has shot, we see it appear on the big screen and simultaneously get recreated by the dancers on stage. It's a playback of the journey of Memphis Jookin'. The Jookers are won over by JJ's film and feel pride seeing their artform captured and shared. Double OG is still a bit skeptical, especially of the footage of him and Bucktown, but things eventually dissolve peacefully with lots of the younger Jookers asking JJ if he would be willing to record and document them, too.

We fast forward to the present day and see a variety of footage that JJ has captured to document the Memphis Jookin' scene. JJ arrives with his camera to interview present day Memphis Jookers. As their true, real-life interviews are shown on the video projection, each dancer translates their thoughts and stories through Jookin' movement live onstage. We first meet Elise and learn about her personal experience and how it feels to be the youngest in the crew. Next, JJ interviews Dra'em, who shares the story of the recent loss of his father, OG Willie, and how the Memphis Jookin' community not only wrapped him in love to support him through his grief, but how the dance also gave him a way to process his emotions and heal.

SCENE SEVEN

The Buck Stops Here

Finally, JJ gets a coveted interview with Bucktown, who shares how he came to Memphis Jookin', what his journey has been, and how important it is for him to share this artform with the world and show the beauty of its people. Bucktown is vulnerable and shares his trials and tribulations on the journey. He honors those who came before him and how he wanted to learn all he could from them. He also talks about the need for growth and evolution while still honoring the great dancers of the past, the originators of the style, and the traditions and authenticities of how Memphis Jookin' came to be. At the conclusion of Bucktown's interview, we understand why he wants to share this art form with the world. Double OG reappears and is ready to make a shift toward the ever-growing documenting movement. He is ready to share his hopes and dreams like the younger generation in an interview with JJ, when...

SCENE EIGHT

The Trouble in the Streets

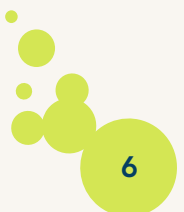
Double OG's Boy bursts onto the scene, informing Double OG that his son is in trouble. They leave in a rush and we follow them to the streets. We get a glimpse into the harsh realities of Double OG's life and what keeps him from pursuing his dancing. We see his son starting to fall into the same legacy of strife, and Double OG wonders if there is ever a way out. Time slows and we see him contemplate what's next as Bucktown appears.

Pass the Torch: Double OG watches Bucktown and how masterful he has become at the artform of Memphis Jookin'. Double OG reflects on how things have evolved. He sees bits of himself, both familiar and different. His reflection shows Double OG's connection to the streets and how he longs for something different. He sees an alternative, a way forward in the future. He begins to dance with Bucktown, each expressing themselves in their own unique style as JJ appears and takes over the poem. We begin to see each dancer through JJ's lens—the past, present, similarities, differences, possibilities, and celebration. What begins as a battle evolves into an invitation to come together. In a moment of transformation, Double OG passes the Memphis Jookin' legacy to Bucktown, and together they embrace the old and the new in a united explosion of joy.

SCENE NINE

Black Boy Joy

Having received the legacy from Double OG, an elated Bucktown erupts in joy and continues to pass the story, history, legacy, and dance to more Memphis Jookers and the community, keeping the culture vibrant and alive while also honoring where it came from. JJ appears to record the moment as he always has, ensuring that the story continues to be documented and told. We see the dance evolve and develop as it builds and expands into an international phenomenon. The dancers come together, old school and new, from Gangsta Walking to the glides, slides, and toe stands of today, exploding in a harmonious and joyous collaboration. They are united in culture and move forward, growing and evolving in the dance that is Memphis Jookin', forever documented and shared with the world through JJ's powerful lens.



MEET THE COLLABORATORS



CHARLES "LIL BUCK" RILEY, dancer, choreographer, and producer

Charles "Lil Buck" Riley is a movement artist known for bringing a freestyle-based street dance involving intricate footwork, called Memphis Jookin', to a mainstream audience around the world. Raised in Memphis, Tennessee, Lil Buck was introduced to urban street dance around age 13. After moving up in the Jookin' ranks, he studied ballet for two years on scholarship. He quickly made a niche for himself by adding his own style and imagination to create signature moves, which include gliding across space as if gravity doesn't exist. In 2011 Lil Buck performed with Yo-Yo Ma to his rendition of Camille Saint-Saëns' *The Swan*. Spike Jonze happened to be in the audience and was so blown away by the performance, he taped it on his phone and posted it on the internet. The video quickly went viral with over 3 million views on YouTube. Since then, Riley has performed with Cirque du Soleil's *Michael Jackson: One*, Benjamin Millepied, Janelle Monáe, and Madonna, to name a few. His dancing abilities combined with his unique style have made him a fashion icon. Lil Buck was awarded the *Wall Street Journal* Innovator Award in 2014. In 2015 he collaborated alongside Mikhail Baryshnikov in a campaign for Rag & Bone's Fall/Winter campaign and has appeared in ads for brands such as Jordan, Karl Lagerfeld, Chanel, Kaporal Jeans, Gap, and more. He also designed a capsule collection for Versace. Lil Buck continues to defy gravity in Apple's Air Pods commercial, which garnered over 8 million views on YouTube within two weeks. He also starred in Lexus' 2017 Super Bowl commercial, and you can see some of his moves through the role of the Mouse King in Disney's feature film *The Nutcracker and the Four Realms*. Buck is co-founder of Movement Art Is, an organization focused on using movement artistry to inspire change in the world. Lil Buck collaborated with dancer Jon Boogz and artist Alexa Meade to create *Color of Reality*, a short film addressing gun violence. The film won CNN's Great Big Story Art as Impact Award and Toronto Short Festival's Best Experimental Film and was also nominated for World of Dance's Concept Video of the Year. Buck also starred in the nature-inspired short film *Honor Thy Mother*, which addresses the need for humans to take better care of our planet. Lil Buck continues to share his art, activism, and one-of-a-kind style of movement with the world.



AMY "CATFOX" CAMPION, director

Amy "Catfox" Champion is a dance art maker, activist, and educator who empowers people through hip-hop culture. Champion's work crosses artistic and cultural boundaries: transplanting hip-hop dance from street to stage, remixing street dance vocabularies, and telling stories through a multimedia intersection of dance, theatre, film, poetry, graffiti art, and music. Through a collaborative creative process, Champion partners with performers to create choreography that is both virtuosic and expressive. Her work showcases the innate capacity of hip-hop artforms to advocate for positive social change. Champion's dance art experience spans two decades and includes multiple dance styles, most prominently breaking, hip-hop, and capoeira. In 2006 Champion graduated from UCLA's Department of World Arts and Cultures with a master of fine arts in choreography. From 2007 to 2019 Champion founded and directed Antics, a multimedia hip-hop dance theatre company. Champion's work has been presented internationally, nationally, and extensively throughout greater Los Angeles. She is a part-time faculty member at California State University Long Beach Dance Department. For more information, please visit anticsperformance.com.



Tell us three little known things about yourself:

- I have released over 100 wild Monarch butterflies on the milkweed plants in my backyard.
- I like to surf in my free time.
- I learned how to do standing back tucks (back flips) in my 40s.

What was some of your creative inspiration for the show?

The cast has been my largest source of inspiration. I do my best to listen closely to their thoughts, ideas, concerns, hopes, etc. They are Memphis Jookers and this show is about Memphis Jookin', so they hold many of the answers. It's my job to ask the right questions and guide them towards a deeper understanding of the characters they are playing, the story they are bringing to life. Through a process of play and experimentation and continual revisions and additions, many inspired by the dancers themselves, this show eventually emerged.

What have been some of the hardest struggles on your journey?

COVID. And more COVID. And then still more COVID. Also, the unusually short timeline of the creation process. I just try to keep my head up, remind myself why we're doing this, and keep going. I, for one, am doing this because I want my four-year-old daughter to see how incredible, powerful, beautiful, and expressive Memphis Jookin' is.

Why is it important for people to share their personal stories?

Humans need stories to understand the world around us. Stories help us understand people who are different from ourselves. Now more than ever humans really need to get better at understanding one another and building bridges across differences. We need that skill to face and solve climate change and racism. My hope is that this show opens the minds of a few people along the way and is the spark that inspires some folks to do good in the world.



AMEENAH KAPLAN, *writer*

Ameenah Kaplan holds a bachelor of fine arts in directing from the Academy of Art University Film School. Kaplan also attended New York University's Tisch School of the Arts for acting. She has served as resident director for Disney's *The Lion King* on Broadway and the show's North American tour and appears on the ABC+ show *Encore!* as a choreographer and director. She spent her early career working as an actor, choreographer, and drummer. Her acting credits include *Avengers: Infinity War*, guest star and recurring roles on *The Office* and *Grey's Anatomy*, and she was in the original American cast of *Stomp*. She's been a drum coach with Blue Man Group for 18 years and played drums for Rihanna, Macy Gray, Adam Lambert, and Rod Stewart. Other directing

credits include *The Wiz* for First Stage Milwaukee, *Our Country's Good* at American Players Theatre, *Meet Vera Stark* at Purdue University, *How to Break* for the Village Theater Seattle, *The Royale* at ACT Theatre Seattle, and *Bash'd* for Los Angeles's Celebration Theatre. She directed *Molodi: Up Close and Personal* for Las Vegas' premiere body percussion group and consults for Antics, a hip-hop theatre company in Los Angeles. She has twice directed for Noah Wylie's Young Playwright's Festival. Her short film, *Man with a Movie Camera*, premiered at Hollyshorts Film Festival in 2014. She directed an award-winning short, *The American Failure*, hosted by multiple film festivals. She has choreographed more than two dozen shows for stage and TV, including *Dancing with the Stars*. She originated the choreography for *The Royale* at the Kirk

MEET THE COLLABORATORS, continued



AMEENAH KAPLAN, continued

Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles and for *The Dancing Granny* by Ashley Bryan at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. Kaplan is the recipient of Gregory, Ovation, Sherwood, Queen of Angels, and multiple NAACP and *LA Weekly* awards for choreography, fight choreography, and directing.

Tell us three little known things about yourself:

- I'm a sneaker head.
- I read graphic novels.
- Moonlight is my favorite light.

What have been some of the hardest struggles on your journey with this show?

Adding a narrative to dance is always challenging. I think the idea is to keep it simple and honest, clear and entertaining. We were merging genres and that required us to take care. We couldn't accomplish everything we wanted to right out the gate. So we had to manage our expectations while making sure we killed the game as much as possible.

What do you want people to take away from the *Memphis Jookin'* show?

An education. Good vibes. Empathy.

Why is it important for people to share their personal stories?

There will only ever be one you. It would be an awful waste if you didn't let us know that you were here, too. That you experienced this wild, confusing, and amazing thing called life.



MALCOLM BARRETT, writer

Malcolm Barrett is a veteran stage and screen actor/playwright who most recently can be seen in the Emmy-nominated series *Genius: Aretha Franklin* opposite Tony-Award winner Cynthia Erivo. Known for television series like *The Boys*, *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*, and *The Sopranos*, and series regular roles on *Better Off Ted*, *Preacher*, and *Timeless*, he's also made numerous film appearances in movies like Tom Hanks' *Larry Crowne*, *Dear White People*, *Peeples*, the Academy-Award winning *The Hurt Locker*, and more. Additional recent credits include Disney Plus' *Just Beyond* and Shudder's Black horror anthology, *Horror Noire*. A former Nuyorican Poetry Cafe national team member, he also wrote, produced, and acted in the play *Brain Problems* (The

Pico), which was nominated for an Ovation writing award and produced by Ammo Theatre, of which he is a founding member and former artistic director. Short plays he's written include *Trial by Fury* (MCC Theatre) and *The Board Room* (Acme Theatre). He is an Ovation Award-winning actor for the play *The Recommendation*. He is thankful to the performers who gave their whole spirit to this production and to the creative team behind *Memphis Jookin': The Show* for this opportunity, including Lil Buck, Jai, Amy, the Mulherins, Helena, Terran, Dr. Rico, and decades-long friends and family, co-writer Ameenah Kaplan, producer Alex Barnes, and the Orpheum's Jen McGrath.





TERRAN NOIR GARY, *choreographer*

A native of Memphis, Tennessee, Terran Gary is currently the dance team manager for the Memphis Grizzlies NBA team, where she is responsible for the management, direction, choreography, and staging of Grizzlies Dance Entertainment Teams, including Grizz Girls, Blue Bunch, and Grannies & Grandpas. In addition to her work with the Grizzlies, Grey is owner and artistic director of Subculture Royalty Studios in Memphis, where she is responsible for the professional development of aspiring professional performers in the greater Memphis area. Subculture Royalty Studios offers a diverse dance curriculum, preparing dancers for the commercial market. As a dance collective, Subculture Royalty fosters the development of dynamic

choreographers and performers. Subculture Royalty provides calculated marketing and promotional strategies as well as athletic training for performances.

Tell us three little known things about yourself:

- I'm very bashful.
- I've been a dance teacher since age 13.
- I quit ballet classes at age seven because Saturday morning training cut into my cartoons.

What do you want people to take away from the *Memphis Jookin'* show?

Representation and acceptance. Every person's progression is valid. Lastly, ownership. These artists from this moment forward can gain from their story.

What has it been like to use *Jookin'* to tell a narrative story through dance?

Validating. I've always campaigned for Memphis to have solid dance infrastructure, as we are world renowned for music. Music needs dance! Jookin' is as organic to Memphis as the Blues.

What have been some of the hardest struggles on your journey?

Evolution. People move on even when you're not ready. So make the best of your time with them while you can.

Why is it important for people to share their personal stories?

For them to feel whole. For too long, African Americans have been etched into a part of someone else's story or crunched into a month of celebration.



MARICO "DR. RICO" FLAKE, *Jookin' choreographer and movement creator*

Memphis native Marico "Dr. Rico" Flake is one of the most influential dancers and teachers in urban dance, especially known for helping develop and promote Memphis Jookin', a street style that carries the spirit of the Blues City. Dr. Rico has been featured on Fox's *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Dancing with the Stars* and was nominated for a Grammy for Best Choreography for his work with Janelle Monáe on the music video for *Tight Rope*. He choreographed the first Memphis Jookin' dance tour and is a founder and leading member of the

MEET THE COLLABORATORS, continued



MARICO “DR. RICO” FLAKE, continued

legendary Jookin’ crew G-Force, responsible for establishing the first known Jookin’ academy. He also helped form international dance crew The Assassins–Warriors of Light. Dr. Rico is the co-author of *The Jook*, the book that codified Jookin’ and ballet, and he authored an online Memphis Jookin’ certificate program with the International Urban Dance Academy. He’s particularly known for his focus on learning and exploring what dance teaches us about life, and what life teaches us about dance. Now, as a member of Urban Artistry based in the Washington, D.C. area, his goal is to further the Human Genome Project through the anthropology of dance. He has traveled to several countries around the world, sharing the various cultures of dance he represents in a quest to simultaneously keep traditions alive and innovation ever present.

Tell us three little known things about yourself:

- I had knock-knees until age 24.
- I’m shy.
- My first art form was culinary arts. I started cooking at age 10.

Why is it important to honor those that came before you in the Jookin’/Gangsta Walking tradition?

So many people came before me and put their work and their life experience into it. These stories are really important and powerful. In the traditional sense, these are adversity stories, people who chose to go against the grain, and that’s always a powerful [thing] for people to know that you don’t have to wait to have a community behind you to start something that’s meaningful for you. Be your own best friend. It’s so important to know the stories of those that came before me, [at the same time as] me, and even after me.

What have been some of the hardest struggles on your journey?

Herniated discs. Back injuries and the psychology behind an injury can be worse than the injury itself. But really, I would say self-worth. I grew up with some childhood traumas and those things had a way of affecting my self-worth. At some point, I had identified my self-worth in this style and what I could physically do, and that’s a scary place to be. There’s been anxiety and confusion related to criticism. I had to do the work. I had to do a lot of personal growth to get past it, to be looking to get responses back from people and be pleasing people in the art of dance with the intention of building my worth from my ability to please people. That was a rough place. It’s not a singular place for me. Lots of us go through this. And it’s something that’s so unspoken about. At the core of it, to not identify your worth in your ability or artistic expression...that can be a tough one.

Why is it important for people to share their personal stories?

It’s like researching our lives and reflecting on our own experiences and how they have changed and molded us. There are a lot of common themes as humans that we experience and at the core of being human is the need to be connected. So the sharing of our stories helps someone that can connect with that. Our courage gives other people courage to share their stories. It’s part of the art of living a wholesome life—an invitation for other people to do the same.

What do you want to see next for Memphis Jookin’ moving forward?

- I would like to see more practitioners of it, authentic people around the world. I would love to see where it goes while still holding tradition and innovation, especially with athleticism cultures around the world. I would love to see the educational side—see the style and culture in spaces where it’s using its talents to help reinforce curricula and education. Let’s use dance to explain history or math



and be cross-curricular. Also understanding bounce. Bounce is just vibration. I would love people to understand more of the inner workings of our own internal energies and grooves and how we must balance them. That's what we do when we dance. I'd like to see the external work become the internal work, more.



MARSHALL AND PARKER MULHERIN, *composers and music directors*

Marshall and Parker Mulherin are twin brothers from Memphis, where they grew up surrounded by music—their father is a professional musician and their mother a knowledgeable fan with wide-ranging musical tastes. While marinating in the rich musical environment at home, they grew up as percussionists in middle school and high school band. Early in their college years at Loyola New Orleans, they discovered their vocations as composers, songwriters, and singers, and began releasing original songs online as Mulherin and playing live in New Orleans clubs and college venues. Lil Buck entered the Mulherins' lives when they were commissioned to create music for his performances with Memphis' New Ballet Ensemble in 2014 and

again in 2016. They moved to Los Angeles the next year to pursue their musical career, but stayed creatively engaged with Buck, contributing music to *Love Heals All Wounds*, the first production from his Movement Art Is organization, and a composition for the Vail Dance Festival. They've toured nationally and were finishing up their next Mulherin EP and music video when Buck invited them to join the creative team for *Memphis Jookin': The Show*. They were delighted to dive back into his unique creative world, composing and producing a wide stylistic range of music for the show. Their career as Mulherin also continues full steam, with a new EP and plenty of other songs available on all the music streaming services and videos on YouTube, and more live performances on the horizon.

Tell us three little known things about yourselves:

- We went to Central High School in Memphis with Geno (the actor playing DJ Fly), and he graduated a year before us!
- We were drummers for most of our lives before we made music and were the captains of the drumline in middle and high school.
- Though we grew up in Memphis with a pretty musical upbringing, we didn't start actually making our own music until we went to college in New Orleans at Loyola University.

What do you want people to take away from the *Memphis Jookin'* show?

I want people to understand how talented all these kids are. I want people to see the positivity that permeates the Memphis Jookin' scene and all the dancers involved. I want people to recognize each of these dancers as individual human beings that have endured incredibly difficult things and still shine despite them. I want people to see past the title of "street dance" and view these kids as what they are—artists.

Why is it important for people to share their personal stories?

It gives the cast and the show so much more depth. The audience needs to know that these kids are more than just dancers. As the show travels the country and people from all different walks of life see this show, I think it's important for the dancers to be humanized as much as possible.

MEET THE COLLABORATORS, continued



MARSHALL AND PARKER MULHERIN, continued

What was your collaboration process like with Lil Buck and the team to generate music that supported the show and the story?

It started with making pieces for people to dance to at auditions. They had specific musical references and styles they wanted each of the three pieces to resemble. A crucial part of the show was showing the evolution of the music alongside the evolution of the dance. We put a lot of work in to really distinguish between the '80s, '90s, and more modern music in the show. We had a lot of conversations with Buck and sent a lot of songs back and forth to make sure we were capturing the exact sound that he and director Amy Campion envisioned.

How does the music evolve over the course of the piece in service to the story? How do we use music to tell a narrative story?

There are a few crucial scenes in the show that directly show the evolution of the music. The very first scene goes chronologically through the music that has shaped Memphis Jookin', starting in the 1980s. The first music in the show is a beat that closely resembles the sound of Gangsta Walking music during the '80s, the predecessor of Jookin'. This '80s sound centers on synthesizers, talk box, and the 808 drum machine. It then shifts into the sound of the '90s, when the birth of more modern Jookin' really began. We tried to replicate iconic Memphis rap in this scene, a la Three 6 Mafia and DJ Zirk, shifting into a dirtier, more distorted sound that centered around piano and vocal samples—all of which we ran through a four-track tape machine to emulate the tools used by the producers and DJs of that decade. Then, there is a major shift away from the hard drums and bass-heavy beats into fully orchestral instrumentation to accompany Buck's first onstage appearance—a nod to his viral, career-launching duet with Yo-Yo Ma to *The Swan*, but also a declaration of the versatility of Jookin' not just as street dance, but as fine art.



CRATEN "JAI PRO" ARMMER, *producer, tour manager, and music*

Craten "Jai Pro" Armmmer is a Memphian first before everything. He has an extreme love for his city and all it has contributed to the world. His love for Memphis and protection of its assets was the biggest factor that led him to his involvement in helping establish Memphis Jookin' to the world. Jai Pro began his career in television and music. By the age of 20, he had worked in the television industry for over six years and created his own music as early as 15 years old. By 2008, after seeing a lot of fly-by-night dances become popular, Jai scoured the city for anyone Jookin'. "I couldn't find anything on the web about Jookin', Gangsta Walking, anything," he said. In 2006 he released *Memphis Jookin' Vol 1*, featuring the premiere Jookers of the city.

Thanks to the DVD, in addition to promotion on Youtube, Memphis Jookin' hit the city and the entire world instantly. By 2010 Jookin' had spread to all continents and was beginning to get recognized in the dance industry. Since 2010 Jai has continued to push this dance style for his city and it has taken him across the world. Since then he has booked Memphis Jookers on commercials, music videos, and movies and managed the most influential Jooker, Lil Buck. Months before the pandemic shut down the world, Jai and Lil Buck were introduced to CAMI Music in Paris. Look out for the non-profit Memphis Jookin, Arts Academy, which will be opening later in 2022, and more big things involving Memphis Jookin' globally. Find Jai Pro on all social channels at @MemphisJookin.



Tell us three little known things about yourself:

- I've been playing golf since 1993 and was captain of the golf team in high school for four years.
- I'm a middle child with two sisters.
- I am a lover of all types of music.

What do you want people to take away from the *Memphis Jookin'* show?

I want to make the city proud and show the viewers that something so beautiful can come out of the roughest situation. Keep grinding and believe in yourself.

What do you want next for *Memphis Jookin'* moving forward?

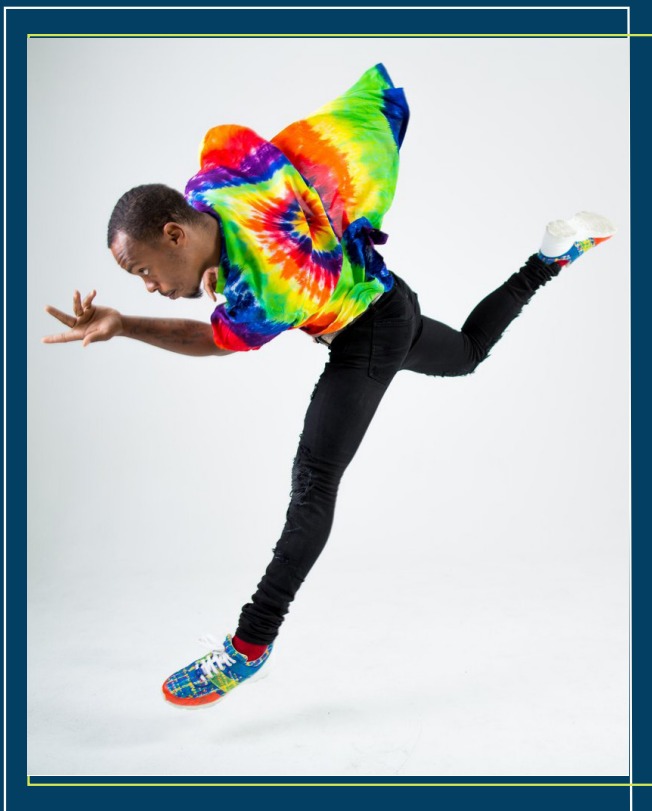
I want this show to continue to tour across the globe. I want *Memphis Jookin'* schools across the globe. Movies. Everything. I want *Memphis Jookin'* to have the same value and respect as ballet.

What has producing this show and preparing for a tour taught you?

Even through my worst, I have to keep grinding. Don't stop. I might have to take a break and regroup but I must remain focused.

Who is someone that you have collaborated with in life? What is a bigger project you may want to collaborate together on in the future? Brainstorm your dream collaboration team and project. Share with your classmates and see if there might be opportunities for partnership to bring these ideas to life.

GET BUCK! AN INTERVIEW WITH LIL BUCK



Tell us a few things about yourself that not a lot of people know.

A lot of people don't know that art in general is a passion of mine, [...] in any field. I'm known as a dancer but before I even started dancing, I was a visual artist. I drew really well and did a little painting, but I was a good drawer. I used to draw anime pictures growing up in middle school and high school. I was good at it and could have made a career out of it, but once I got into dance, it totally took over. Another thing is, I'm hyper flexible. I can fold myself into a ball. I'm a bit of a contortionist. Everyone knows I moved to Los Angeles to try to make a career out of Memphis Jookin' and show the world what we got here in Memphis, and in that journey, there were a lot of hard times. I moved to L.A. when I was 19 years old, going on 20. I had to learn on my own the hard way at that young age—being in a whole new world and new place I've never been or lived in and didn't know anybody. I had to struggle a lot. I had to sleep outside. I had to go through a lot for five or six years before I finally got the hang of being in that whole industry out there and knowing the business. It [was] a long journey. A lot of people saw me

do one commercial and thought that I was made, but that wasn't the case.

Why do you want to bring Memphis Jookin' to the world?

I want to bring Memphis Jookin' to the world because it's a super special dance style. I grew up around this, and it was just one of the most amazing dance styles I've ever seen. A lot of dancers in general around the world are inspired by Michael Jackson, and he was one of my inspirations. But to see someone in Memphis do Memphis Jookin' and glide across the floor like that—a lot of these dancers out here surpass what Michael Jackson could do physically with his body, and I think that's amazing that it's attainable. When I was younger and had those aspirations of getting on that level of a Michael Jackson, I never knew it was attainable, especially being from where I'm from. But when I saw guys moving like that, it inspired me more than Michael Jackson, to be honest. I think that if you get people moving in that way, of course it's going to be inspiring to people around the world, not just people in the communities that it comes from. I thought it was something special. I thought it was a diamond in the rough. I wanted the world to see what we got going on here in Memphis. Another reason is because social media has allowed people to hit the ground running on their own artistry in a good way, as far as being entrepreneurs and getting the hang of that at a young age, but at the same time, there's a lot of people out there that live in places with opportunities to book jobs or gigs and a lot are benefitting off seeing Memphis Jookin' on social media and trying it themselves and they are racking up views. But then a lot of people who start the trends here in Memphis don't get the same amount of love. So, I think just the world knowing that Memphis Jookin' is something coming out of Memphis and is native to the city and seeing the people out here and being able to appreciate them out here doing it on the ground floor, it could spark the world to want to come and see what we all about. I want the world to know about what we are doing out here. Just because it deserves that global credibility.

How have the arts allowed you to express yourself, and why is that a powerful, valuable, or important thing?

The arts have allowed me to express myself in so many amazing ways. Through movement I use the arts to express myself. We can use art as a channel to a lot of our emotions and pain and joy and grief and everything. We can use this to channel bad and good things we experience in life and make something beautiful out of it. There's a lot of hardship here in Memphis where I'm from, the streets of Memphis. I'm from Westwood, and you know South Memphis and all over Memphis it's hard out here and we need something like art, like Memphis Jookin' to be able to channel a lot of the pain we go through out here. Without these mediums to channel these emotions and experiences through, it could be channeled in a whole different way and most of the time that other way is not positive. The arts are vital to us knowing who we are and getting to express ourselves and be comfortable with who we are when we are people trying to find our way in life—like I was trying to do when I was younger. Art literally saves lives because without art, there are a lot of people who could channel that energy in a whole different way that probably wouldn't be as positive.

What have been some of the hardest struggles on your journey as an artist?

Getting people to understand that street dance is really an art. I really consider it that. A lot of people tend to put street dancing in a certain box—and hip-hop as well—but I think it's vaster than people know and has the potential to reach the hearts and minds on a global scale and on a social and political scale as well. I think street dance is a super powerful tool that, if channeled right and put out there in a strong way, has the power to change the world. It can really shift a lot of people's perspectives on life and on different social issues happening in the world and beyond. For me personally, I have a company with my partner, Jon Boogz, called Movement Art Is, and we use it to show people the true art of street dance and how we can speak on a lot of things, whether it's political or social issues that really hit home for us and are important for people's awareness. And we use our platform to express ourselves and reach the hearts and minds of people who sometimes talking won't [reach]. When you talk to certain people, it can get argumentative ... but experiencing arts through movement—which is one of the most innate forms of communication—it doesn't just hit your mind, it reaches your heart and soul. Sometimes that can be a very challenging thing to get people to understand, but once they do, their lives are changed forever, just like mine was when I first experienced Memphis Jookin'.

Talk about your role in the evolution of Memphis Jookin' and how it's similar to the story in the show.

I believe my role in Memphis Jookin' is a simple role. I see myself as an ambassador for the style—as a leading ambassador for the culture. I see myself as a student, still, and a fan. I'm just doing as much as I can for the art, the dance, the movement, and the culture. I'm not the only one doing things. There are lots of people here on the ground floor in Memphis that are playing a big role in Memphis Jookin' and it being what it is. I'll never give myself too high of a position, because I'm not the only person doing things. There's been people taking and running point on that back in the day, back before I even knew about Memphis Jookin'. I'm just one person in a whole lineage of the culture that is playing my part and trying to show the world what we got going on here in Memphis. I think when I was a kid—it was weird. I was that dancer that could move good but wasn't really considered a Jooker or authentic Jooker yet. I just fell in love with the dance style and tried to learn as much as I possibly could. I lived in Westwood on the other side of town and there wasn't a lot of people Jookin' in Westwood, only a few well known. That's what pushed me to try to be as great as I can be. I wanted to get the attention of the people I look up to, that I used to watch on DVDs and VHS growing up. That's what kinda made me go so hard when I was growing up. And to reach this level now where I'm respected in this way—I don't know how to feel about it. I'm still a fan of a lot of these guys. A lot of this happened fast for me—not so



GET BUCK! AN INTERVIEW WITH LIL BUCK, continued

fast, but actually really fast, if that makes sense. Personal success happened through the movement fast and I still get wide-eyed when I see a lot of the people that I was dancing with back when I was growing up doing this dance style. I'm still such a fan of a lot of people in the movement and Memphis Jookin' in general. I say it's a great feeling because I know how bad I wanted it, how bad I wanted to be recognized in the culture—especially being born in Chicago and raised in Memphis. My family moved here when I was seven years old, and I always wanted to be a part of a group, to be accepted. The fact that this community accepted me and this culture accepted me with open arms was an amazing thing and helps drive me to keep this lineage going as best as I can.

What do you want people to take away from the *Memphis Jookin'* show?

I just want people to be inspired. Inspiration. To see that this is not just a street dance style. We can take this as far as being a show and beyond. I want the show to inspire the youth that will come out and see it so they aspire to be a part of something like this or to go as far as we're going and we're taking it. There's still a lot of people who see me as this anomaly in a way of people that's made it as far as I made it, but I don't see it like that at all because there was people like G-force—a group that I was a part of—that was taking it to new heights. Before that it was G-style back in the day, who signed with P. Diddy, and they took it above and beyond with music and dance. I just want people to understand that this is something that's attainable, as far as taking it as far as you want to take it and making a career out of doing something that you love like dance. And I want people to know what we are about out here. I want to give people a glimpse of the culture and the authenticity of the dance style and of the culture of Memphis Jookin'. Some have their own perception, especially with new social dances that are out there and social media—all these quick Instagram and TikTok dancers. People embed a few Memphis Jookin' moves within it and people are confused about what Memphis Jookin' really is. People think *that's* Memphis Jookin', and it's so much more to the culture. I think people deserve to know that, and Memphis deserves people to be able to see it in that light. I want people to leave the show having much more information and knowledge and education about Memphis Jookin'. There is an educational component to the show. You will learn about the dance and the music it came from, the different DJs that made the music for us to move like this. You'll learn so much from the show and have fun while you're doing it. I want people to get a knowledge of Memphis culture and how we turned this dance into a global phenomenon and the authenticity of what we do here in Memphis. I want them to take great inspiration as well.

What advice do you have for young people who might be misunderstood by older generations?

I would say that history is important, but evolution is important as well, so try to find balance. Find balance in your life. Respect what came before and what helped pave the way but be open-minded enough not to be afraid to change the game and evolve. Life is about growth, right? It's not just about staying the same forever. I try to practice that as much as possible in my life. Continuous growth but with also respecting the people that came before me. Find that balance.

What advice do you have for young people who want to pursue the arts?

Stay consistent with what you want out of life, and believe in yourself more than anybody else, because nobody else will do that. Only you can get yourself there. Believe in yourself at the highest level. Have that drive and ambition that no one can stop. If you really love and want to do what you love to do, take your passion to the next level. Go for it, no matter what, no matter what anybody says. Even if anybody calls you crazy. If they say you can't do that, or it's never been done—go for it, and go for it hard with all your heart. Fully invest yourself to the end and stay consistent. Consistency and drive and that ambition will get you so far in life. There's a

lot of people who don't think so, but I personally am a living testimony to that. If it wasn't for the drive and persistence and passion and love that I have for this dance form, I probably would have come home a long time ago, when I was dealing with my hardships when I moved from Memphis, and if so, I never would have reached the heights I reached. Love what you're doing hard—hard enough to where nobody can—nothing will waiver that passion or drive that you have to succeed.



ACTIVITIES

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REFLECTION, EXPLORATION, CREATIVE EXPRESSION, AND CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

EVOLUTION TABLEAU

A tableau is a frozen shape or picture with your body.

Choose from one of the following themes: movies, science, sports, or visual arts.

Identify three different time periods and create a tableau or frozen picture with your body to represent your chosen theme in each time period. Aim to be clear and specific, highlighting the differences from time period to time period.

Share each of your three tableaus with your classmates and see if they can correctly identify your theme and analyze how your selected subject evolved over time.

JOOKIN' JOURNAL

In your journal, identify and document three challenges that you are currently dealing with in your life.

Read one challenge out loud, physicalize the challenge with your body, and then physicalize how you plan to navigate it.

Share with a partner and commit to actively working to address the challenges in the coming days.

MOVE TO THE MUSIC

How do you relate to music in your life? How does music make you move? Listen closely to each of the following tracks and allow your body to move freely based on the mood, style, and dynamic of the music you are hearing:

- **Track 1:** [Camille Saint-Saëns—*The Swan/Le Cygne*](#)
- **Track 2:** [BlocBoy JB—*Look Alive* \(Clean + Lyrics\) \(ft. Drake\)](#)
- **Track 3:** [Dave Brubeck—*Take Five*](#)
- **Track 4:** [Instrumental Techno Music One-Hour Version](#)

Describe the way your body moved to each piece of music. Was your movement fast? Slow? Rigid? Fluid? Was it easy to connect to the rhythm of the music or was it complicated?

Bonus Activity

Select a piece of music on your own and create a dance or series of movements that tell a narrative story in relation to the music. Share your dance or movement with your classmates and see how they interpret your story.

MOVE TO THE MUSIC, continued

How did you feel when dancing to each piece of music and why?

If you had to choose one piece of music from these samples to use as a metaphor for your life, which would you choose and why?

POST-SHOW REFLECTION

Complete the following statements:

- At *Memphis Jookin': The Show* I saw...
- At *Memphis Jookin': The Show* I felt or I thought...
- At *Memphis Jookin': The Show* I wondered...
- My favorite part of *Memphis Jookin': The Show* was...
- One thing I will take away from *Memphis Jookin': The Show* is...

CREATIVE EXPRESSION: TURN AND TALK

Turn to a partner and pair up to discuss the types of creative expression you saw in *Memphis Jookin': The Show*.

- How many forms of creative expression did you see in the *Memphis Jookin'* show and what were they?
- Which expressions stood out to you and why?
- How do you prefer to express yourself creatively and why?

THEME WRITING

Choose one of the following prompts based on one of the themes explored in the show and write an essay based on the questions provided. Share your essays with fellow classmates.

Legacy

Reflect on the legacies that are a part of your life. What have you inherited from the past? What do you intend to leave or pass on to the future? Are all legacies positive? What happens if you try to break a legacy? How can you change the legacy that you leave going forward? What is a legacy you have received that means the most to you?

Tradition and Evolution

Reflect on the theme of generational difference—traditions and the freedom to change. Have you ever disagreed with someone of a different generation on something important to you? If so, what and how? How did you feel when you were questioned by your elders? By the next generation? And how did you navigate these generational differences?

ACTIVITIES, continued

THEME WRITING, continued

Joy

Take a moment to reflect on the joy(s) in your life. What brings you joy? How do you express it? How do you share it? How do you maintain a sense of joy when the world presents challenges or brings you down? Why is it important to have joy in our lives?

CLASSROOM STORY CYPHER

1. Come together in a circle with your fellow classmates.
2. Select a theme that you witnessed in the Memphis Jookin' show to use for your classroom story cypher.
3. Each person who wishes to will take a turn in the cypher.
4. Step into the center of the cypher and tell a personal story from your own life based on the selected theme. Be lean and be specific.
5. When you have finished telling your story with words, invite three classmates to step into the cypher to physicalize your story without words by using only their bodies and physical movements. Think about the shape and speed of the movements. How do you keep it specific and effectively communicate the narrative that was shared in this new form of creative expression?
6. Reflect on your experience.
 - What did you see through the movements that were shared?
 - How was what you verbalized similar or different to what happened physically?
 - Did you prefer to share your story through words or movement and why?
 - How might the physical telling of your story be interpreted differently, both for the performers and the audience?
7. Create space for someone else to step into the cypher and repeat.



LEARN THE STEPS

Do you want to learn Jookin'? Read the following instructions while [watching this video](#) from "Dr. Rico" of Memphis Jookin' fame.

GANGSTA WALK

Step 1: The G-W-A-L-K rhythm. Clap 1, 2, 3, and 4. Now feel this rhythm in the whole body.

Step 2: From the hips, we step forward in a diagonal angle. Left foot, right foot, left, right, left. The steps are done to the previous G-W-A-L-K rhythm.

Step 3: Now we add the throwing of the arms from the collar. We call this a collar throw. We throw the right collar when we step with the left foot and the left collar when we step with the right foot.

Dr. Rico says, "The Gangsta walk is about stepping forward in life while throwing our stressors off from our shoulders where we all tend to hold tension."

CLASSIC BUCK JUMP

Step 1: The Quarter bounce rhythm. We clap 1, 2, 3, 4.

Step 2: We crunch our abdominal muscles, and we begin to lean forward.

Step 3: We focus on lifting the right leg up through the knee on the count of 1 and bring it down so we can repeat lifting it up on 2.

Step 4: We do the same thing now with the left leg.

Dr. Rico says, "Life has a way of weighing us down, especially when you come from a heavy area, but no matter how heavy it gets, you gotta keep lifting your legs up and keep going."

KICK STAND

Step 1: The Octo bounce rhythm. We clap 1 AND 2 in a sharp short manner.

Step 2: We hop back on one leg of our choice. As we hop back, we kick the other leg from the knee, about a foot off the ground in front of us

Step 3: We hop back into our original starting position with the kicked leg landing first. This movement is done in the 1 AND 2.

Dr. Rico says, "You might have to take a step back, maybe in school or at work. Sometimes you gotta take a quick step back but you gotta get right back to it."

HEEL THROW

Step 1: Starting position—both feet facing forward.

Step 2: Press the ball of your foot into the ground with the idea of it being nailed down.

Step 3: Using your hips, throw your right heel inward while keeping the ball pressed into the ground. Then return it to its original position

LEARN THE STEPS, continued

HEEL THROW, continued

Step 4: Repeat step 3 on the left foot.

Dr. Rico says, "Stay grounded in all your movements in life."

TOE STAND

Step 1: Squeeze and hold the core muscle along with leg muscles.

Step 2: Think of pulling yourself up.

Step 3: Push your body up in the air until you raise onto your toe or toes. Bend the knees as necessary.

Step 4: Pull your body down.

Dr. Rico says, "Holding our head up taught us how to lift ourselves up."



RESOURCES

memphisjookin.com
tour.memphisjookin.com
luda.dance/p/jookin

Articles

Vogue: ["Versace and Lil Buck's Sneaker Collaboration Takes Flight Today"](#)

Knight Foundation: [Lil' Buck and the art of jookin'](#)

Memphis: ["Bucking Gravity"](#)

The New York Times: ["Lil Buck Feels the Dancing Spirit All Over Again"](#)

The Wall Street Journal: [Lil Buck Elevates Jookin' to an Art](#)

Videos

["Memphis Jookin': A Ballet for the Streets"](#)

TED: ["A Dance to Honor Mother Earth"](#)

The Kennedy Center: [Lil Buck Performs Memphis Jookin'](#)

BLAZE LIKES: [Dancer Lil Buck and Cellist Yo-Yo Ma](#)

VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING ALIGNMENT GUIDE

To assist your alignment of *Memphis Jookin': The Show* with your learning goals for students, we provide the following list of Virginia Standards of Learning that are relevant to the performance.

DANCE ARTS

7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.7, 7.16, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, DI.3, DI.4, DI.5, DI.6, DI.10, DII.3, DII.4, DII.6, DII.7, DII.11, DIII.3, DIII.4, DIII.6, DIV.3

MUSIC

7.4, 7.5, 7.11, 8.4, 8.5, 8.11, MIB.3, MIB.4, MIB.6, MIB.7, MIB.10, MIB.11, MII.3, MII.4, MII.6, MII.11, MIAD.3, MIAD.4, MIAD.6, MIAD.11, MCB.4, MCB.6, MCB.7, MCI.3, MCI.4, MCI.6, MCAD.4, MCAD.6, MCAD.10, HM.3, HM.4, HM.5, HM.6, HM.10, HM.11, HMT.3, HMT.4, HMT.5, HMT.6, HMT.11, HIB.3, HIB.4, HIB.6, HIB.10, HIB.11, HII.3, HII.4, HII.6, HIAD.4, HIAD.6, HIAD.10, HIAR.3, HIAR.4, HIAR.6, HIAR.10, HIAR.11, HCB.4, HCB.6, HCB.10, HCB.11, HCI.3, HCI.4, HCI.6, HCAD.3, HCAD.4, HCAD.6, HCAD.11, HCAR.4, HCAR.6, HCAR.10, HCAR.11

THEATRE ARTS

7.11, 8.3, TI.4, TI.10, TI.11, TIII.11, TIV.11, TT.10, TT.11

WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

CHANGING YOUR RESERVATION

If you cannot attend or your party turns out to be smaller than the number of tickets you have reserved, please inform the Moss Arts Center as soon as possible by contacting Jon Catherwood-Ginn at joncg@vt.edu so that Moss staff can release your tickets to those on the waiting list.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Moss Arts Center is committed to being accessible to all of our patrons. Patrons with disabilities and their companions are accommodated through wheelchair seating, parking, and other special requests throughout the center at all levels. Assisted listening devices are available. Service animals are permitted. Sign interpretations and large-print programs are available with advance notification. If you or your students have questions regarding accessibility or would like assistance, please contact Jamie Wiggert at wiggertj@vt.edu.

DROP OFF

The bus drop-off location is on the Alumni Mall side of the Moss Arts Center, located at 190 Alumni Mall on the campus of Virginia Tech. Drivers may pull their buses into the driveway loop directly in front of the center. Staff will be on-site to assist. Recommended arrival time is 15-30 minutes before the start-time of the performance.

PARKING FOR CARS AND VANS

Those driving cars and vans may park in the North End Center Garage (300 Turner Street NW), which is one block from the Moss Arts Center's Turner Street entrance. A valid university parking permit, a validation from one of the retail tenants, or payment of the daily fee is required to park in the North End Center Garage.

PARKING FOR BUSES

Bus staging is located in the upper section of the Chicken Hill lot (Football Lot 5) on the campus of Virginia Tech. The lot entrance is on Southgate Drive, opposite Sterrett Drive. Parking passes will not be required for buses. For more information about parking at Virginia Tech, please visit parking.vt.edu. Please note that buses are not permitted to park adjacent to the Moss Arts Center's Turner Street entrance, except in special circumstances when permission can be granted.

CHECKING IN

When you arrive at the center, please check-in with Moss Arts Center staff to confirm that your party has arrived. Staff will be on-site to assist seating your group, directing you to restrooms, and answering any questions you may have.

COVID-19 POLICIES

[For current COVID-19 policies visit our COVID Safety page here.](#)

PICK UP

It is recommended that buses arrive back at the Moss Arts Center 15 minutes before the end of the performance. Following the performance, please remain in your seats; school groups will be dismissed by Moss Arts Center staff to ensure a smooth and speedy departure for all. Staff and volunteers will assist school groups in meeting their buses in the center's Alumni Mall driveway.

FEEDBACK

Following the performance, you may receive an email requesting feedback on your group's experience. Please make time to respond, as doing so could significantly improve the Moss Arts Center's pre-K to grade 12 programs for you and future visitors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT MOSS ARTS CENTER PROGRAMS

Please subscribe to the [Moss Arts Center's email list](#) and/or [join the email list](#) for K-12 programs.



MOSS ARTS CENTER

PERFORMANCES | EXHIBITIONS | EXPERIENCES

190 Alumni Mall, Blacksburg, VA 24061

artscenter.vt.edu