

TEACHER'S GUIDE VIC'S MIX









TABLE OF CONTENTS

RUBBERBAND	03
VICTOR QUIJADA	05
RUBBERBAND METHOD	07
VIC'S MIX	08
HISTORY OF HIP-HOP	09
CONTEMPORARY DANCE	11
ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW	13
ACTIVITY 1	14
ACTIVITY 2	15
ACTIVITY 3	16
CREDITS	17
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	19

Photo © Alexie Restrepo

Photos (from left to right, top to bottom) © 1) David Wong (Victor Quijada) 2) Marie-Noële Pilon 3) Dajana Lothert







Founded in Montreal in 2002 by **Victor Quijada**, **RUBBERBAND** quickly captivated audiences and critics with three creations presented at Espace Tangente over two seasons. At the same time, the company participates in mixed programs and organizes events in various venues in Montreal that highlight more confidential pieces. *Tender Loving Care* and *Hasta la Próxima* share a place in Le Devoir's top five dance productions, while *Elastic Perspective* begins a series of over 100 performances in 2003 after winning the Prix RIDEAU at the Festival Vue sur la Relève. RUBBERBAND then obtained a residency at Usine C for the 2003-2004 season, where the piece *Slicing Static* was born. This creation was named Best Dance Production in 2004 by Hour (now Cult MTL).

In 2005, Anne Plamondon joined Victor Quijada as Artistic Director. A second residency at Usine C was granted to the company in 2006, followed by another four-year residency at Place des Arts. During this period, four new pieces were created with the support of multiple partners: *Punto Ciego* and *AV Input/Output* in 2008, *Loan Sharking* in 2009 and *Gravity of Center* in 2011.

In 2013, Quijada created *Empirical Quotient*, a show for six performers trained in the RUBBERBAND Method. In 2016, the company created *Vic's Mix*, a condensed version of the best moments of the choreographer's work. During the festivities for the 375th anniversary of Montreal (2017), the members of the company were joined by some thirty students from the École supérieure de ballet du Québec and the École de danse contemporaine de Montréal to take over the Esplanade of Place des Arts with the multidisciplinary performance *City Thread*.

In 2018, for the first time in RUBBERBAND, Victor Quijada called upon a large ensemble by directing ten dancers on the huge stage of Théâtre Maisonneuve with *Ever So Slightly*, presented by Danse Danse. In 2019, RUBBERBAND was a finalist for the Grand Prix du Conseil des arts de Montréal for its production *Ever So Slightly*.

The year 2020 marks Victor Quijada's return to the stage as a dancer in *Trenzado*, a piece that addresses the theme of being everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

Created in 2022, Reckless Underdog, takes the company's achievements of the last twenty years to new heights. Twelve dancers make up the cast of this larger-than-life three-act choreography with music by Jasper Gahunia, Kid Koala, Vlooper from Alaclair Ensemble and Chilly Gonzales.

RUBBERBAND' newest creation, Second Chances, invites Quijada and the audience to delve deep inside themselves, reflecting on origin, belonging and displacement, between universal questions and intimate, personal thoughts.

C O M P A N Y

Photos (from left to right) © 1) Bill Hebert (Victor Quijada) 2) Marie-Noële Pilon (Amara Barner)





RUBBERBAND has co-produced six films choreographed by Quijada, who also directed four of them: Ever So Slightly, Gravity of Center, Secret Service and Small Explosions That Are Yours to Keep. Gravity of Center won the 2012 Les Enfants and Air Canada/Spafax awards at the RVCQ / Festival Prends ça court!. It also won Best Experimental Short Film and Best Cinematography in a Canadian Short Film at the CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival. Hasta La Próxima, shot in 2003, was a finalist in the short film category at the American Choreography Awards. Victor Quijada participated in the creation of three music videos, for the songs Man I Used to Be by k-os, La Garde by Alexandre Désilets and Blue Wonderful by Elton John.

Now well established, the company is the embodiment of Canadian artistic innovation in the United States, Europe, Mexico and Japan. RUBBERBAND is at the forefront of Montreal's contemporary dance community and is internationally recognized for its unique vision.

VICTOR QUIJADA

Since 2002, Victor Quijada and RUBBERBAND have not only redefined the codes of breaking within an institutional context and enlivened the Quebec dance scene, but have opened the way for new creators fascinated by this dance form. Armed with a technique he conceived for dancers, the RUBBERBAND Method – an electrifying vocabulary combining the energy of hiphop, the refinement of classical ballet, and the angular quality of contemporary dance – and some 40 creations and collaborations in Canada and abroad behind him, Victor Quijada has always continued to evolve and innovate throughout his prolific career.

Born and raised in **Los Angeles**, the child of Mexican parents, Victor first danced in the b-boying circles and hip-hop clubs of his native city. He performed with **Rudy Perez** from 1994 to 1996, then moved to New York City to join **THARP!.** After spending three years with that company and following a stint with **Ballets Tech**, in 2000 he came to Montreal to join **Les Grands Ballets Canadiens**.

In 2002, he founded RUBBERBAND, throwing himself into deconstructing the choreographic principles he had learned by blending them with the raw ideology of his street dance origins. His creations – numerous short works and 15 full-length productions – are distinguished by a powerful theatricality, the energy of improvisation, and certain codes of film language, the whole sculpted with an incomparable precision of movement.

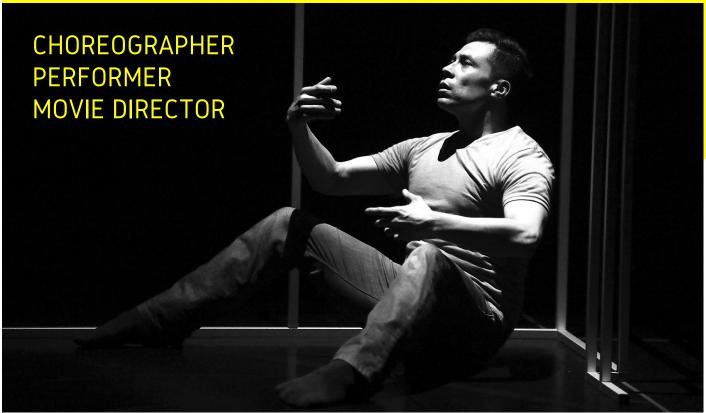
For several years now, Victor has **taught the RUBBERBAND** Method throughout the world in workshops and internships for many dance companies, dance schools, and universities, as well as on a yearly basis in RUBBERBAND's workshop for professional dancers, the **Summer and Winter Intensive** in Montreal. As guest choreographer, he has created new works for dance and circus companies; notably in return commissions for **Hubbard Street Dance Chicago**, **Pacific Northwest Ballet**, and **Scottish Dance Theatre**.



Besides his stage productions, Victor has been involved in almost a dozen dance films, as director, choreographer, or dramaturge. His short film, Hasta La Próxima, was a finalist at the American Choreography Awards in 2004. He also choreographed the music videos Man I Used to Be by k-os, La garde by Alexandre Désilets, and Elton John's Blue Wonderful. His Gravity of Center – The Movie won Best Experimental Short at the CFC Worldwide Short Film Festival of 2012, among other awards, and was shown at several exhibitions and national and international festivals.



Photo © Bill Hebert (Victor Quijada)



In the area of peer recognition, Victor Quijada was artist-in-residence at Usine C (2004 and 2006) and at Place des Arts (2007-2011), and has won many awards, including **Britain's National Dance Award for Outstanding Modern Repertory** (2003), the **Bonnie Bird North American Award** (2003, U.K.), the **Peter Darrell Choreography Award** (2003, U.K.), the **International Touring Award of the Canadian Dance Alliance** (2012), and **two awards from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA** (Choreography Fellowship, 2010; Work in Progress Residency, 2016).

In December 2017, Victor Quijada received the **award for Cultural Diversity** at the **Prix de la danse de Montréal** and was, in 2019, one of the **finalists for the 34th Grand Prix du Conseil des arts de Montréal** as well as among the four **finalists** for the 2019 **Charles-Biddle Prize**, instigated by Culture pour tous and the Ministère de l'Immigration, de la Francisation and Inclusion (MIFI). In 2024, Victor has been named **Fellow of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation** for his choreographic work, a prestigious recognition for all his achievements.







R U B B E R B A N D

The hallmark of the company, the **RUBBERBAND Method**, comprises a **unique choreographic vocabulary developed by Victor Quijada**. It is now taught throughout the world in university programs, workshops, and master classes.

Fascinated by the raw dynamic of **hip-hop/breakdancing** and the purity of **classical formalism**, Victor Quijada has been demolishing barriers between these contrasting dance styles for more than 20 years now.

The **RUBBERBAND Method** initiates participants to movements issuing from the blending of urban and contemporary dance, with a focus on **interpretation**, **decision-taking**, the use of **rhythmic variations**, and **partnering**.

This movement technique emphasizes **transitioning from vertical to horizontal** and prepares dancers with classical or contemporary training for **floor work**.

Workshops in the RUBBERBAND Method are offered to **established professional dancers** who want to diversify their expressive language, as well as to **advanced dance students**. RUBBERBAND offers two Intensive workshops every year: the Winter and the Summer Intensives.

VIC'S MIX

With both humorous and serious moments, *Vic's Mix* is a kind of "best of" spanning the immense creative territory explored by Quijada, extracting jewels from the choreographer's repertoire.

In a **remix of his own work between 2002 and 2017**, orchestrating the clash between **urban pop** and **classical composition**, Quijada goes further in his experiments defying notions of theatricality and audience expectations, while making sure that each body gravitating onstage in the highly athletic segments exemplifies the **RUBBERBAND Method**. A reflection of the freedom and openness of the ebullient Montreal dance scene, Vic's Mix is sure to astonish by its stylistic breadth.

The premiere of *Vic's Mix* took place in June 2016 as part of the Festival International DansEncore in the Salle Anaïs-Allard-Rousseau of the Maison de la Culture in Trois-Rivières. In 2025, *Vic's Mix* celebrate its ninth year of touring!



HIP-HOP BACKGROUND

Victor Quijada, the artistic director of RUBBERBAND began dancing in hip-hop troupes in Los Angeles, and his current dance style incorporates hip-hop elements in conjunction with modern dance and ballet principles.

Hip-hop is a cultural and artistic movement that began in the **1970s in the South Bronx, New York City** among African American and Latino youths.

The four foundations of hip-hop are: MCing, DJing, graffiti, and breaking.

DJs in the South Bronx pioneered what we know of today as hip-hop music, by sampling (taking the percussion beat from one song and using it in another) and physically moving records on turntables to create unique sounds.

DJ Kool Herc invented the "breakbeat" by repeatedly turning the record back to the best point of the song, or the "break." **Grand Wizzard Theodore** created "scratching." or turning records back and forth while they are playing. **Grandmaster Flash** came up with "cutting." or going back and forth between two records to repeat certain phrases and songs. Other legendary DJs like **DJ Afrika Bambaattaa** developed these techniques and combined them with other genres of music (West Indian and salsa, for example) to createva new and exciting sound.

While DJs created new styles of music, MCs (masters of ceremony) hosted block parties and introduced new tracks. Eventually, MCs began experimenting with speaking on top of these tracks in a lyrical, rhythmic style. MCs used poetic devices and emphasized rhyming words to create a beat within the lyrics themselves. Eventually, MCing became synonymous with rap. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, rap developed and grew into a huge musical influence, with rap groups like Run DMC and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five releasing albums through rap label Def Jam records. LL Cool J, the Beastie Boys, NWA, DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince, Tupac Shakur, and Jay-Z are only a few of the major recording artists to directly come out of the MCing movement in the 1970s.



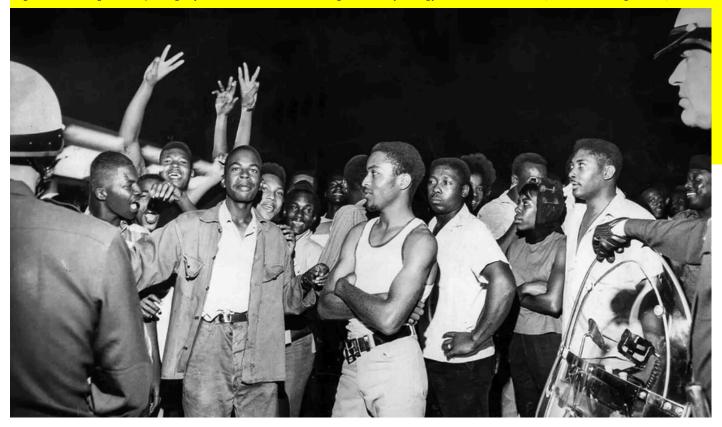
Another important art form to come out of the hip-hop movement was **breaking**. The name directly refers to **b-boys** and **b-girls** (*break boys* and *break girls*) that would dance during the "**break**" and "**breakbeat**" in songs by **DJ Kool Herc** and **Grandmaster Flash**. Dancers would compete with each other to see who could do the most complicated and impressive moves.

An important visual art form, **graffiti**, also came out of the **South Bronx** in the **1970s**. Graffiti began when people would tag their names in public outdoor spaces with spray paint. The form eventually developed to include elaborate shading, scripts, and color effects. While tagging in public spaces was often illegal, some of this graffiti now hangs in major art museums.

Hip-hop has long been politically active. Many young people in the South Bronx in the 1970s faced gang violence and poverty. Hip-hop incorporated their life experiences in music and allowed them to be heard. Many hip-hop songs include political messages about race and class, and the widespread popularity of the genre has gotten certain political issues into the mainstream public dialogue. **Hip-hop continues to be an important musical and cultural influence**.



Aug. 12, 1965: A crowd gathers at Imperial Highway and Avalon Boulevard in South Los Angeles in the early morning just before violence broke out. (Don Cormier / Los Angeles Times)



WEST COAST HIP-HOP

While it is generally acknowledged that hip-hop began in New York City, similar movements popped up around the country in the 1970s and 1980s, including **Los Angeles**, where Quijada grew up. West Coast hip-hop began around the same time as hip-hop in New York, and also included the four main elements of hip-hop: **breaking**, **graffiti**, **MCing**, and **DJing**. East Coast artists like **Grandmaster Flash** and **DJ Afrika Bambattaa** influenced West Coast artists, who began creating their own unique work.

West Coast hip-hop similarly started in response to chaotic and sometimes violent situations in South Central Los Angeles, including the Watts Riots in August of 1965, which lasted five days in response to allegations of police brutality against a black man arrested for drunk driving. A small fight soon spread across the Watts neighborhood as community members protested against racial and social discrimination. The riots resulted in 34 deaths, 1,032 injuries, 3,438 arrests, and over \$40 million in property damage. Los Angeles in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s was very racially segregated, and black and Latino youth grew up surrounded by discrimination and violence. Like in New York, Los Angeles youth responded by expressing their creativity in DJing, MCing, graffiti, and breaking.

The first West Coast hip-hop label **Rappers Rapp Records** was founded in **1981**, inspired by **Sugarhill Records**, the legendary New York hip-hop label. **N.W.A.** released their album *Straight Outta Compton*, about the adversities of living in Compton, California - an area with a reputation for gang violence - in 1988. There were also huge hip-hop scenes in **Oakland**, **Sacramento** and **San Francisco**. Some of the most influential and legendary rappers in the world have come out of California, including **Tupac Shakur**, **Ice-T**, **Dr. Dre** and **Snoop Dogg**.

It is not completely clear when **b-boying** came to the West Coast, or whether it began of its own accord. The documentary *Style Wars* came out in 1983 and profiled the graffiti scene in New York, while also giving air time to the **Rock Steady Crew, one of the most popular and influential b-boying crews of all time**. This film spread b-boying across the country. As in New York, crews on the West Coast battled with each other and innovated new power moves. B-boying spread far and wide, so much so that at the **1984 Olympic Games** in Los Angeles, **Lionel Richie's closing ceremony performance included breaking**.

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

RUBBERBAND's work also takes inspiration from the **modern** dance style, a form that originated in the early 20th century as a reaction to the rigid forms of classical ballet. In general, the form emphasizes freedom of movement and expression. Biographies of some of the pioneers of modern dance are outlined below.

Loïe Fuller

Fuller started out as a child actress in Chicago before beginning her experiments in dance. She played with colorful lights and drapery, eventually evolving her **Serpentine Dance**, which involved swirling her long skirts (worn without a corset) around while projecting lights on top of them. She also made huge strides forward in theatrical technology, including "doing away with scenic elements and plunging the theater into total darkness; harnessing a revolving disc of colored gels to shine ever shifting multi-hued patterns on her swirling skirts; projecting images (such as photographs of the moon's surface) onto her garments; lighting the stage from below, as in her famous **Fire Dance** to create the illusion of being ringed by flames; and choreographing shadows and silhouettes" (danceheritage.com). Her Paris debut in 1892 catapulted her to fame, and she became a huge influence in the Art Nouveau Movement.



Martha Graham Archive images

Isadora Duncan

Isadora Duncan is generally considered to be the **mother of modern dance**. Dance, in her terms, should express ideas and emotions, and not be limited by the strict rules of ballet. She let her hair down and took off her corset, using artists and philosophers as her guides. She used the **wind** and **sea** as inspiration and danced to the music of classical composers. Duncan's **long, free flowing togas** scandalized upper class men and women. However, her dance was so that it attracted theatergoers in huge numbers. Although born in San Francisco, Duncan worked mostly in Europe, and set up her own dance school outside of Berlin. Her company traveled all over the continent, and Duncan's fame and influence continued to grow. Although she died suddenly in 1927, her work and influence continued to contribute to the growing form of modern dance.

Martha Graham

Martha Graham studied at the Denishawn School, but quickly created her own style that was not borrowed or stolen from other cultures. Her style began around the concept of contraction and release, and she used the body's natural rhythms to physicalize emotion. Her movements were sharp and direct, a dramatic departure away from the flowing movements of the time. She did not shy away from political, social, and sexual issues, which made her style unique, important, and emotionally raw. Her influence over the dance community has been massive. The company and school that she founded continue to carry on her work even after her death. Many important choreographers, such as Merce Cunningham and Mikhael Baryshnikov, took inspiration and technique from Graham.

Merce Cunningham

Merce Cunningham explored the avant-garde side of dance. He began his career as a soloist in the Martha Graham Dance Company, but soon branched out on his own. Cunningham, together with his partner John Cage, played with the relationship between dance and music, at times completely eliminating the common narrative tropes like cause and effect that had been so essential to dance for so long. When he choreographed, Cunningham always viewed dance as the subject for his pieces. He did not choreograph to bring across specific points or to ground the audience in specific times or places, but to explore the nuances and boundaries of movement. He also used film and technology to impact how the audience would see and interact with dance. In his piece BIPED (1999), he used motion capture technology to decorate the set. He continued to teach until his death at age 90, and his foundation continues to educate dancers today.

Paul Taylor

Paul Taylor started dancing relatively late in life, but soon joined the Martha Graham Dance Company as a soloist. He also spent time as a soloist in the New York City Ballet. He is best known for provoking dance critics with daring, physical works that challenged traditional dance norms. One of his first pieces, Duet (1957), was completely motionless, which in turn caused a critic to print a blank newspaper page. Most of his dances are choreographed to make a point about something, whether it is sexuality, life, death, or love. Taylor continues to nurture modern dance. In 2015, he began the initiative Paul Taylor American Dance, which seeks to present works by modern dance legends as well as to commission new works. Paul Taylor died on August 29th 2018 in New York City.





Twyla Tharp

Twyla Tharp graduated from Barnard College in 1963 and shortly after founded her dance company in 1965. While in school, she studied with Merce Cunningham and Martha Graham. She choreographs to various types of music, including jazz, classical, and pop. Over her career, she has choreographed for film and television as well as stage. Tharp choreographed the films Hair, Amadeus, and Ragtime, as well as the Broadway shows Singin' in the Rain, Movin' Out, and Come Fly Away, for which she was nominated for a Tony. Apart from her work in film, television, and stage, Tharp has choreographed multiple dances for the American Ballet Theater, and her own company has toured all over the world. Quijada has worked in Twyla's second company - THARP! - from 1996 to 1999.

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

ACTIVITIES OVERVIEW

	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4
Moment of the activity				
Before the show	х	х		
After the show			x	Х
Transversal skills				
Applying creative thinking			х	
Exercising critical judgement		х	х	Х
Structuring identity			х	Х
Cooperate in a group	х	х		
Skills in one discipline - English				
Reading and appreciating literary works		х	x	х
Communicating orally	Х	х		Х
Writing varied type of texts			х	
Skills in one discipline - Dance				
Appreciating a choreographic work			Х	х

ACTIVITY 1 Defining Dance

Before the performance

Activity outline

- 1. Ask the students to research the six criteria that can serve to define dance, namely: style, setting, aesthetics, movement, rhythm and emotion.
- 2. Make an exhaustive list of their findings in table format.
- 3.At the end of the activity, students must select the elements that most resemble what RUBBERBAND presents. This table serves as a preliminary evaluation grid. The goal is to show that dance is made up of codes.

Here is a sample table:

STYLE	SETTING	AESTHETIC	MOVEMENT	ТЕМРО	THEMES
Contemporary	Dance school	Music	Rythmical	Rapid	Urgency
Classic	Concert hall	Lighting	Robot-like	Slow	Revolt
Urban dance	Television	Costumes	Rapid	Repetitive	Opression
Salsa	Street	Colours	Supple	Acceleration	Curiosity
Tango	Club	Ruptures	Muscular	Deceleration	Resiliency
Capoeira	Festival	Solo	Virtuosic	Dynamic	Rejection
Jazz	Park	Group	Acrobatic	Propelled	Acceptance

ACTIVITY 2 RUBBERBAND's Roots

Before the performance

As shown earlier, RUBBERBAND draws inspiration from different sources. To really understand the company's roots, we ask students to reflect on the different dance forms that are foundational to Victor Quijada's work.

Activity outline

- 1. Separate the students into three groups and give each group one of the following topics: Contemporary dance / Urban dance / Classical ballet.
- 2. Ask students to search the Internet to better understand the style they have been assigned.
- 3.At the end of the exercise, the student groups present a summary of their findings to their classmates.

ACTIVITY 3 The Report

After the performance

This activity is both descriptive and argumentative and helps the class identify the essential components of the show they will see. To foster active observation during the show, bring the students' attention to several points that they should look out for.

Activity outline

1. Prior to the performance, discuss possible points of reflection to your students. Here are some ideas to get you started:

> THE SHOW

Discuss the creative collaborations and their specific contributions. Describe the costumes, lighting, set design, music, etc.

> THE DANCE

Is there a lot of movement or very little? Are there dance elements that they are already familiar with (group choreography, type of movement)? Is it a modern language? Point out two or three characteristic moves.

> THE PERFORMANCE

Are there any spoken words? Do all the moves seem planned or is there some improvisation involved? Do some moves mimic daily gestures?

- 2. After the performance, divide the students into small groups and have them share their impressions.
- 3. Ask students to individually write a short report on the show, intended for someone who hasn't seen it. The report can be written in letter form.

CREDITS

Duration: 75 minutes

Production date: 2016

Choreography: Victor Quijada

Casting 2024 - 2025: Rion Taylor, Jovick Pavajeau-Orostegui, Wyeth Walker, Dareon Blowe, Jessica Muszynski, Cindy Mateus, Mackenzie Corrales

Original casting: Jean Bui, Amara Barner, Lavinia Vago, Sydney McManus, Sovann Rochon Prom-Tep, Paco Ziel, Zack Tang

Artistic Coordinator: Rion Taylor

Lighting design: Yan Lee Chan

Music composition: Jasper Gahunia

Costume design: Camille Thibault-Bédard

Executive direction: Fannie Bellefeuille

Production and tour management: Diana Catalina Cárdenas

Communications direction: Salomé Boniface

Repertoire music: various composers

ACT 1

Secret Service - Sergei Prokofiev

Meditations on the Gift - Jasper Gahunia
sHip sHop Shape Shifting - J.S Bach
Mi Verano - Antonio Vivaldi
Before Back Then - Marin Marais
The Traviattle - Guiseppe Verdi

ACT 2

Dr Ib Erif – Igor Stravinsky

Soft Watching the First Explosion – Antonio Vivaldi

Second Coming (extrait) – Jasper Gahunia (avec Beethoven, Paganini, Bach)

Punto Ciego (extrait) – Jasper Gahunia

Vic's Mix is a RUBBERBAND production supported by Festival international DansEncore, the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Conseil des arts de Montréal, and the Ontario Arts Council.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES Vic's Mix

CONTEMPORARY DANCE

- Loie Fuller, Serpentine Dance: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=flrnFrDXjlk
- Biography of Isadora Duncan on the website of the Isadora Duncan Dance Company: http://www.isadoraduncan.org/the-foundation/about-isadora-duncan
- Interview with Twyla Tharp on NPR:http://www.npr.org/2015/11/14/455898346/if-twyla tharp-is-dracula-dance-is-her-lifeblood
- American Masters: Martha Graham, PBS: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/ martha-graham-about-the-dancer/497/
- Promethean Fire, Paul Taylor Dance Company: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N KFRwETojc
- Interview with Merce Cunningham and John Cage: https://www.youtube.com/watch? v=ZNGpjXZovgk

HIP-HOP

- Hip-Hop in America: A Regional Guide by Mickey Hess, Los Angeles: https://books.google.com/books/about/Hip_Hop_in_America.html?id=XkCncJ7j744C
- NPR series on the history of hip-hop: http://www.npr.org/series/4823817/the-history-of hip- hop
- Explore hip-hop (includes interviews, timelines and clips): http://www.pbs.org/black culture/explore/hip-hop/#.WBDS1C0rKUk
- B-boys: A History of Breking: http://www.resistancefilms.com/portfolios/bboys-a history-of- breaking/
- Style Wars: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EW22LzSaJA



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