

Erinn Liebhard: Dance Artist

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Artist Statement

I make opportunities for people to experience the connective and reflective power of groove. Having grown up social dancing at my dad's rock band's gigs, I discovered at a young age the exhilaration of grooving alongside others. I've been fortunate to have amazing mentors who've helped me cultivate this outlook, inspiring me to contribute to others by creating performances, teaching and thinking about dance with groove as the base. Guided by this inspiration and a fondness for jazz and American social forms, my work helps people connect to themselves, one another and the moment while exploring history and imagining the future.

With 15+ years of professional experience, I contribute to others through my work in performance and education. My own education serves as a strong base for my work: I hold a BFA in Dance from the University of Minnesota and an MFA in Dance from the University of Colorado Boulder. I am always seeking out new learning opportunities both in and outside of structured educational environments, striving to remain a student myself as I continue developing my work.

I am deeply curious about music embodiment, particularly where groove, improvisation and social interaction are concerned, leading me to research the intersections of social and presentational dance ideas in teaching and creating dance that is historically rooted and contemporarily relevant. These interests have led me to train and perform in styles of jazz, tap, Appalachian clogging, house, breaking, jazz, tap, house, body percussion and Haitian, Ghanaian, Guinean and Brazilian traditional forms and many other kinds of dance. I see exploration of my interests as rich ways to process the world, encourage intra and interpersonal connection, specificity, thinking on one's feet, finding grooves and getting out of ruts, freedom to express while keeping an inner cool, and respect for the past while reaching for innovation.

As the capacity to embody metric rhythm and therein groove is a unique and shared human ability, I am interested in framing its potential through dance to create work that is accessible to all. This idea sets the tone for simultaneous expression of the self and the community, building an appreciation of similarities and differences alongside one another. Experiencing groove also enables people to pause their fast-paced worlds in favor of immediate sensory and kinesthetic experience, providing opportunities to experience the moment. Additionally, my work connects to history through its inspirations from American social dance ideas, positioning it as a conduit of cultural knowledge.

I find deep creative inspiration in themes including relating to others through movement, coaxing out unique, individual approaches, interrogation of habits and encouraging presence in the moment. My work in performance and education explores these interests in continued commitment to contributing to others through the creation of opportunities for people to experience groove.