

FLORIDA SWING DANCING CLUB

Community Research and Reflection

GRA3193C - Design: Visualization and Creativity

Taylor McGee



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PART 1: RESEARCH



CASE PROFILE



Florida Swing Dancing Club

The Swing Dancing community in Gainesville is a lot more prominent and diverse than I thought it would be before I began my research. I wasn't really sure what to expect going in, but I assumed that it would be a dozen people or so, at the most, dancing to old songs and learning how to dance. I also assumed that Swing Dancing would be very exclusive and advanced. I could not have been more wrong about the community. The group I observed is a group called Florida Swing Dancing Club. The Club has hundreds of members total, and all of their members are ranging in age and experience. The community is friendly and tight-knit, everyone knows each-other well, but they are also incredibly accepting of new-comers, and there is no shame or judgment for anyone who

does not know how to dance Swing. After talking to Ralph, the club President, I learned that Florida Swing Dance club also interacts with other Swing Dance scenes around the state of Florida and beyond.

The main problem that Florida Swing Dance Club faces is the graduation of their "veteran" members. UF Students join the club, come loyally for their time at UF, and then move away. The club is at a lack for teachers and DJ's because of this unavoidable abandonment by veteran student members.

CONCEPT MAP

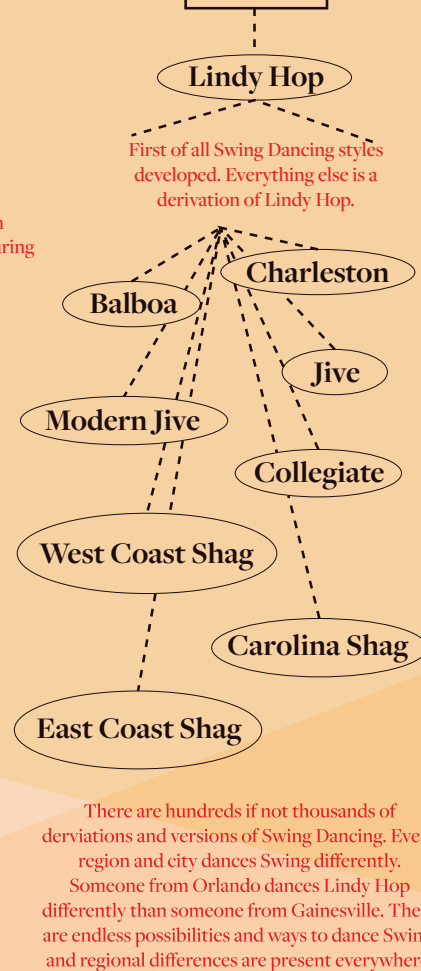


SWING DANCING

IN THE BEGINNING



STYLES



FLORIDA SWING DANCING CLUB



SECONDARY RESEARCH



History of Swing

Swing Dancing emerged from Harlem, New York City in the 1920's. Jazz music began to emerge in the 1920's. As it grew, alongside it swing dancing began to emerge and grow. Within Swing Jazz there were Hot Bands and Sweet Bands. Hot Bands had a hard-driving sound, and the Swing to this music was fast and free, with emphasis on improvisation. Sweet Bands put emphasis on feeling and emotion, and the dances to this followed step counts and rules more closely. On July 4, 1928, Snowden executed a spontaneous throw-out breakaway and flash footwork improv. This captured the media attention, and they asked Snowden what he was doing with his feet. "The Lindy Hop" Snowden replied. Lindbergh "Lindy" had recently "hopped" the Atlantic, and thus Lindy Hop was given its name. The Savoy Ballroom was opened on March 12, 1926. Thanks to legends like George Snowden and Frankie Manning, swing dance crazes and styles burst onto the dance floor of the Savoy and then out into the world. As Swing grew, dance contests became more and more attention-getting.

In the 1930's, Frankie Manning added the first aerial into Swing Dancing. Soon after this aerials became common, and Manning began adding increasingly more difficult moves, including

jumps, throws, and back flips.

As Swing spread around the United States, different styles of Swing developed everywhere. Shag, Balboa, East and West Coast Swing, and many other styles emerged, as well as regional differences within each of these styles. American G's spread Swing Dancing and Lindy Hop to Europe and across the globe during the second world war. Swing dancing became a worldwide cultural phenomenon. As it grew, more differences and variations of the dance emerged between countries, states, and continents.

The dawn of the cultural revolution in the 60's led to many new dance crazes and styles developing, and Swing dancing went out of style for the 60's and 70's. Swing re-emerged in French discos in the 1980's labeled as French jive, and it spread to the UK by the early 1990's. It was danced to contemporary chart music. There is still a strong presence of this "Modern Jive" alive in the UK today. Also in the 1980's, several groups of dancers across the world started to revive Lindy Hop, learning from the original legends like Manning and Snowden. This led to an increase in Lindy Hop worldwide. The most notable Swing revival was in America in the 1990's.

INTERVIEWS



Interview with Club President: Rafael Guerra

When did you first start swing dancing?

So I officially started in Summer 2015. This is my fourth year right now. I was part of the club through a couple lessons over the summer because I was here for summer B and I went to every fall session and so it's kind of a weird thing, I actually stopped after the fall because I saw my grades and was like ugh gotta cut everything out. So I actually really came back this past Fall of 2017 and spent a whole year basically and like didn't have any board position or anything and ran for president. This is I guess my second year as part of the club.

What is your favorite form or style swing dancing?

Um, well the main one that we learn is the Lindy Hop 6 count and we've learned a lot of like eight count swing out stuff, like Charleston. And I would say that Charleston was pretty fun. It's an older style of dancing, but it's pretty fast and I took a progression of class, or actually, a series of classes last fall. So that was really cool.

Why should people join Florida Swing Dance Club?

Well, I think that our dances are on Friday nights, and it's a really positive healthy environment for students on campus to go and honestly like make friends and I know that sounds kind of cliché. But like everyone that are regulars here have come every single week for the past year or more and we feel like family and it's so fun just dancing with everyone. In the Fall we have a lot of beginners that come in and like some come in for a date night and others come in and really enjoy it and continue coming. So I think that's just de-stressing after the end of the week and good to have a healthy environment to have fun with friends and have some physical activity too.

What is the average skill ever level of your members?

Well, we have our beginners that it could be the first, second, or third time coming and they go to lessons. And then we have our regulars which are another class and regulars are intermediates and they take the intermediate lesson. And so those are more thematic lessons that build, let's say three classes on Charleston, followed by three classes on 8 count or something. And so, the skill level of those regulars is pretty consistent. And then we have some older like members that have been here for maybe three years or something. We call them like the veterans basically and they have like a ton of workshops and they're like the gods here basically.

Do you have a lot of regular weekly members?

Yeah, we do in the fall. In the spring actually we have trouble with retention and part of it might just be because like less people are trying to find a place and maybe we could do a better job at trying to, like, keep it interesting. I'm trying to put in a whole bunch of things this year and we've been doing successfully.

Do you have any member fees? If you do, how do you allocate the funds or the fees that you get and if you don't how do you raise money to host events or rent out spaces?

So I think that we're really fortunate club that we don't have to charge for membership fees. So we get all of or most of our funding from student government and we abide by all the rules like funding goes to an event where you don't pay. But if we have an event that is a paid special event, then we don't use student government funding for that particular event.

INTERVIEWS



Interview with Club President: Rafael Guerra (Continued)

How many community events do you typically host per year outside of the weekly dancing meetings?

Our biggest event is an annual weekend Workshop, right here in Gainesville at the University. There are several other Swing Dance scenes across Florida and it's centralized around Universities so FSU has one, UCF has one, there's one in Jacksonville. But those are the main ones, Orlando, Tallahassee, and Gainesville. And so we have special dances where we try to exchange, but for that particular event, which we host in the spring every year, everyone comes here and it's a big event. Then we have other holiday events like our Halloween dance. We have an end of the semester formals, Winter and Spring. We have a Valentine's Day dance. This particular year, we've been incorporating a lot of themed dances like we had our Disney dance, that was big hit. We also have some workshops that are over the weekend, maybe like two a semester, that will be like before our workshop and that'll be on a Saturday. Yeah, and that's all aside from our Friday weekly dances in our Monday weekly practice options.

And you just said that you guys dance with groups Beyond Gainesville?

Yeah. It's really fun. We actually went the other weekend, maybe two or three weeks ago, four of us went to Orlando and like two of us taught the lesson there which helps them because they want to keep it fresh. They actually had a lot of people that night and they said it had to do with us going and it was really nice.

Do you guys want more members or are you actively seeking new members?

Yeah, so we do want more members. Membership is kind of difficult, and I guess any other university organization can attest to this,

once like people in their third or fourth year graduate, then it does damage to the Clubs' membership. And so, that's particularly difficult for us because of the experience needed in dancers. You can't just dance for two months and become really really good. You know, really good dancers that are students that have become teachers and that really carry the club, have been here for years, several years at least. So it's really difficult for us to see some of them go. This particular year, we have an initiative to try to reach out to the local community, the adult community, because we've been doing so well with students, we think we can do better (with adults). That's part of the reason why we're trying to have more special events, but we think that if we reached out to the adult community here in Gainesville that would kind of put us over the top instead of like being caught every year basically with this issue. It would kind of put us up in a net growth place, because once people come and really enjoy it, they're here like forever. And I've seen that in all of our regulars, so I think that if we set out to adults, that we would find those people that would love to come here and it's something that adults would like to do especially. We have an event coming up two weeks from now on October Saturday, October 13th. It's another special event that actually didn't mention to you and that's going to be at the Hippodrome. It is a local outreach project.

When did Florida Swing Dance Club form, what was the first year?

That's a good question. I've heard of like Oldies Goldie's talking about like how in 2006 they were here. So I would think like before 2000. So it's been here for like almost 20 years now. I would say at least 15 years.

INTERVIEWS



Interview with Club Member: James Jordan

How many years have you been swing dancing?

A little over six years, September 22nd 2012.

And that was the same time that you joined Florida Swing Dancing Club, so you joined as a completely new swing dancer?

Yes. I've been in jazz band for four years prior, but other than that, that was my first time dancing.

Did you or do you go to UF?

I do not. And did not. I got my undergraduate at Santa Fe. So I did two years at Santa Fe.

How did you find Florida Swing Dancing Club?

They actually had a special event at a place called Gator Wesley Foundation. It was a Fun-Friday night event. They had Swing in the Fall and they had Salsa in the Spring.

Why did you decide to start teaching Swing for Florida Swing Dancing Club?

I've actually only started teaching this year, I have been wanting to do it for a while. And I feel that I can give back to the community, it's a good way to give back.

How long have you been teaching?

Yeah, roughly about this year, this Summer really. Yeah, three or four months, about that. I've been helping people here and there and stuff like that and doing private lessons and stuff like that, but other than that, no official teaching.

What is one thing you want or one goal you have for Florida Swing Dancing Club in the next year?

Equipment and inclusivity with the greater community in Gainesville. Look, I'm not a student anymore, and I'm about 28 and so I'd like to them to get more involved into the community rather than just being college-based students only. And we're working on that, community outreach.

Do you think you need or want more members for Florida Swing Dancing Club?

Yes. We always can. Especially I'm the DJ coordinator and never have enough DJ's to go around, especially scheduling wise, so it would help, yes.

How do you think that Florida Swing Dancing Club could reach more members?

Through Outreach and doing more events. Like we have our 50's/60's event coming up this Saturday at the Hippodrome. And so that's October 13th, and so doing stuff like that with the community and also reaching out to other Swing groups to the West Coast, East coast, and there's also live jazz in town and having people actually going out to dance. I just came back from Leo's and I dance there, there's a live jazz band on Monday night. So actually getting our presence out there and just showing that we have fun, and you can too, and it's free.

OBSERVATIONS



Friday Night Swing Dancing Practice - September 21st

First hour of swing dance club from 8:30-9:30 is lessons. One side of the room is 6 count Lindy hop. The other side is balboa. At the start of the meeting there were only about 15 people there. They split the room into beginners and intermediate. Beginners learn Lindy hop (east coast version) and intermediates learn balboa. The beginner side of the room has members that range from first lesson-members to some members who have been to 4 or 5 lessons before this meeting. Some of the people in the club came with a girlfriend or a boyfriend and a few of the members/pairs seemed to know each other. Everyone in the club was friendly.

When I walked in there was music playing, but the music shut off when the lessons started because the two groups were not synced up. As the lessons progressed more and more people began showing up, and almost everyone who came in late joined the beginner lesson. There were two instructors for the beginner lesson and two for the intermediate. The teachers for the beginner lesson were Jen And Ralph. They taught a lead and a follow. We learned the basic steps first, all individually. Once we got the basic 6 count step down, we paired up so that we could try it in partners. The lead puts their right hand on the follow's back and the follow takes their left arm and puts it over the lead's arm and rests it on their shoulder. The follow steps back on their right foot and shifts their weight (called a rock step) and then they triple step: right, left, right and then left, right, left, then rock step forward, and then repeat the triple steps but backwards.

Once we learned this basic six count with a partner then we progressed to learn a turn, and open pass, and a closed catch. We also learned how to move/turn around the room doing the basic step. Between moves and new steps we switched partners. Everyone was friendly, even if people (me) were extremely bad at the more complicated steps. I was, at first, very scared to come here,

but there's no pressure to be good. When you switch partners you casually shake hands and introduce yourself. I did not know what to expect coming in here. I also did not know what to wear. I came in athletic/casual clothes. A lot of people were actually dressed up to get more in the mood of swing dancing.

Once we finished the hour long lessons, music started playing again. The room was full by this point. There are people of all ages here. College students, recently graduated students, middle aged people, and seniors. Everyone dances together, and a lot of people switch partners, even during the casual dancing.

During the dance social some people dance very well and naturally, because they have been doing it for a long time and are good at it. Some people are to the side, practicing the steps to themselves trying to get the motions down. Some people are tentatively and stiffly trying to follow the dance and the music, messing up on some steps here and there, but continuing. For the most part girls dance with boys, but some girls are dancing together. Men seem more hesitant to dance with each other.

When I go to sit, I sit next to the DJ, James, who talks to me. He tells me he has been with the club for six years. They used to have a marketing person, he was in charge of marketing a couple years ago, but now they don't really have one. I also meet Amye, who is the secretary. They were the teachers of the Balboa group. James tells me they used to practice in the Unified Training Center, but it got demolished two years ago, and now they practice at the Thelma Boltin center. I think I remember reading on Google somewhere that they still held practices the UTC. James also tells me that Swing is different everywhere. He tells me that when they travel and dance with other groups, you can tell who trained with who and where they trained.

OBSERVATIONS



Friday Night Swing Dancing Practice - September 21st (Continued)

People in Orlando dance differently than people in Gainesville, not even different dances/variations within the Lindy, just different styles and personalities regionally. He goes into a brief history of Swing, he knows a lot about Swing and he loves it. I asked him if I could formally interview him on Monday, he agreed, since I wasn't able to write down a lot of what he said.

During the dance social by about 9:45 a lot of people have cleared out of the room. There are still about four or five couples dancing. A lot of people stand off to the side and watch. People come and go as they please. The whole thing is very casual. Everyone has different skill levels, different clothes, different styles. Some people are just free-styling their dancing. People observe and wait for partners, sit out of certain songs. Everyone is smiling and laughing, even if they aren't very good. Nothing about the atmosphere is very serious or judgmental at all. The room when I first walked in seemed very menacing, but now seems fun and friendly.

I think the group could benefit from more visibility, and more marketing towards students. When I was asking around for people to come with me, I asked everyone, and no one wanted to come. I don't know if this is from a disinterest in dance, for Swing Dancing particularly, or because they think it is going to be awkward and uncomfortable. But coming from somebody with anxiety, once the class starts it's not frightening at all. There are about an equal mix of men and women at the class. Everyone continues to switch partners, teachers/leaders dance with people in the class. Only one couple, the eldest couple, has not switch partners.

I would say there are the most white people here, but not a majority. There are a fair number of Asian people and Hispanic people, but I don't think there are any black people, which is curious because swing started as a black tradition.

The elderly couple did switch partners - the woman is dancing with James and the man is watching from the side. A lot of people are switching swing styles during the social dancing, very few people are still dancing Lindy hop or balboa - or at least from what I can observe.

It's 10:05 now and there are more people back in the room dancing again. While they are dancing some people maintain eye contact, while others are more focused on their steps. At the end of a song everyone stops dancing, high fives their partner, and switches. Some people hug. Some people are very actively swing dancing, using lots of energy, and are tired after a song, while some others are dancing more casually and not as intensely. Some people watch their steps in the mirror. Some people sit and chat on the sides, some stand. Some songs are very upbeat and some songs are slower. People are spinning and kicking and making their own steps, laughing when they misstep. Everyone is trying to dance with/to the music even if they do not know the songs. The song might slow or quicken and the dancers try to adapt to the count of the song.

James told me that most people hear of them through facebook or word of mouth/through friends. I talked to two members of the club about how they heard about it. Montana and her boyfriend heard about it from his friend in their church youth group. They started coming. Montana had also heard about it from an Irish dancing club she was part of. I started talking to them about my project and what they thought of the club. They said that they think the reason more people don't do it is because it's kind of confusing to get down to the dance studio, and also it's not well advertised on campus. They also told me that the club updates their facebook page regularly, to keep everyone updated and in contact with each other for people who are already in the club.

OBSERVATIONS



Friday Night Swing Dancing Practice - September 21st (Continued)

They told me that the club gets their funding based on how many signatures they get, so they're trying to get more members.

I went back inside the dance studio and sat down to talk to Amye again. She told me that they've had the same budget for about 5 years. Their budget has been 5700 annually. She said they use most of their money to pay for their annual event Sweet Swingouts, where they bring in professionals from all over to teach lessons and dance. This year they are trying to get someone from France. They don't pay teachers unless they are special guests/professionals who aren't normally with the club and come in to teach. DJ's they reimburse for gas, but don't pay other than that.

At 10:30 they paused to do announcements about upcoming events and venue changes. The rest of the budget also covers their venue costs. They pay to dance at the Thelma Boltin

but not at the Reitz. UF gives them their funding but they also do fundraising through dance lessons over Summer at depot park. Depot park charges them \$10 a month and they charge \$5 a person. They also do workshops at the Reitz that they charge \$5 a person for also. Then they have special events around the community with other activities that they charge \$5 for. They also do a winter formal every year and this year they have a live band. They're going to charge \$10 for this. They have an event coming up at depot park where it's \$5 for lessons, \$5 for the dance, or 15 all together if you come with a partner. They have sold shirts in the past, but they're not doing it currently. Amye told me they usually don't sell that many. She also told me that sometimes the workshops are heavily attended and sometimes not. She also told me that much more people come to the dances at the Thelma Center because it's a lot bigger; it's much smaller and crowded at the Reitz.

PERSONA



JACOB

Age: 23

Club: Florida Swing Dancing Club

Major: Philosophy

Location: Gainesville, FL

BIOGRAPHY

Jacob is a fifth year Senior philosophy major at the University of Florida. He is also actively involved in Florida Swing Dancing Club, which is run through UF. He has classes Monday through Friday, and spends his evenings writing his thesis for philosophy. In his free time he plays guitar.

Jacob is a regular member of the Florida Swing Dancing Club, and he loves to dance the Balboa. He's enjoying learning different styles of Swing and improving his technique and skill in each respective style. If Jacob goes to grad school at UF or stays in Gainesville after graduation he wants to run for a board position and help teach some lessons next semester. His goal is to attend at least four out of state conferences before he graduates.

Jacob is smart and a hardworker. He often finds himself getting lost in his thoughts and in his complex thesis work. He uses Florida Swing Dancing Club as a way to clear his head, meet new people, and get some physical activity into his busy schedule. He encourages everyone to try it, even if you're not good at dancing, it's a great outlet for stress!

HABITS

- Jacob rides the 20 to Campus from his apartment complex every morning.
- He likes to start every morning with a cup of iced coffee he brewed the night before.
- Every night after he's finished working on his thesis he likes to watch one episode of The Office.

MOTIVATORS

- Teaching a lesson before graduation.
- Running for a Board position next semester.
- Helping other members with their Balboa style.
- Being a part of one of the group demonstrations in Turlington Plaza to help get new members.

GOALS

- To bring Swing Dance to wherever he ends up after college.
- To compete in a Swing Dance competition and place in the leader board.
- Swing with someone from another Country.

PERSONALITY

INTROVERT

EXTROVERT



SENSING

INTUITION



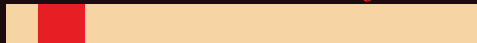
THINKING

FEELING



PERCEIVING

JUDGING



LIFESTYLE



MUSIC



READING



NETFLIX

RESEARCH REFLECTION



Pros and Cons of my Research Experience

Starting this project, I really struggled with the concept of research and gathering information and observing without thinking about design. I wanted to jump straight into the design solution portion of the project, before really knowing anything about Swing Dancing or Florida Swing Dancing Club. For my secondary research I focused on the History of Swing Dancing, which I found did not have many specific dates and details, but instead overarching themes and movements. I wish that I had been able to find more specific facts for my secondary research, but I'm not sure that specific events and facts about Swing Dancing are even out there.

For the observational part of my research findings, I actually think that I immersed myself very well into the club. I attended a meeting and participated in the Swing Dancing lessons, which is way out of my normal comfort zone, and really helped

me to understand the Club and its dynamic better. I also took very detailed notes of what was happening during the meetings, being sure to note everything: behavior, actions, mood, quantitative data, demographics, and so on. Since the Club meets so often, I was able to go back multiple times to observe, take notes, take pictures, conduct interviews, and talk to Club leaders like Ralph, James, and Amye.

One thing that I wish I had been able to do better is my information graphic. I represented a brief history of Swing Dancing as well as some facts about Florida Swing Dancing Club on the poster. I wish that I had more time to explore ways to visually represent these concepts. I went back and reworked my initial design completely, and made the new version match the brand that I made for my design solution.

INFORMATION GRAPHIC



SWING DANCING

THE HISTORY OF SWING

1920's The Dawn of Swing

LINDY HOP

On July 4, 1928, Snowden executed a spontaneous throw-out breakdown and flash, footwork impress. This captured the media's attention and they asked Snowden what he was doing with his feet. "The Lindy Hop" Snowden replied. Lindyhop "Lindy" had recently "bopped" the Atlantic, and then Lindy Hop was given its name.

SAVOY BALLROOM

The Savoy Ballroom was opened on March 12, 1928. Thanks to legends like George Snowden and Frankie Manning, swing dance creases and styles burst onto the dance floor of the Savoy and then out into the world.

JAZZ

Just music began to emerge in the 1920's. As it grew, alongside it swing dancing began to emerge and grow.



1930's In Full Swing

AERIALS

As Swing grew, dance contests became more and more attention getting. In the 1930's, Frankie Manning added the first aerial move, Swing Dancing. Soon after this aerials became more common, and Manning began adding increasingly more difficult moves, including jumps, throws, and back flips.

HOT AND SWEET

When Swing Jazz there were Hot Bands and Sweet Bands. Hot Bands had a hard-driving sound, and the Swing to the music was fast and free, with emphasis on improvisation. Sweet bands put emphasis on feeling and emotion, and the dancers in the ballroom step count and rules more closely.



1940's Swing Around the World

AFRICAN QIG

American G.I.'s spread Swing Dancing and Lindy Hop to Europe and across the globe during the second world war. Swing dancing became a worldwide cultural phenomenon. As it grew, more differences and variations of the dance emerged between countries, states, and continents.

REGIONAL STYLES

As Swing spread around the United States, different styles of Swing developed everywhere. Ship, Ballroom, East and West Coast Swing, and many other styles emerged, as well as regional differences within each of these styles.



1960's Swing No More

DANCE CRAZES

The dawn of the cultural revolution in the 60's led to many new dance crazes and styles developing, and Swing dancing went out of style for the 60's and 70's.



1980's Global Swing Revival

LINDY HOP, AGAIN

Also in the 1980's, several groups of dancers across the world started to revive the Lindy Hop, starting from the original Snowden. This led to an increase in Lindy Hop worldwide. The most notable Swing revival was in America in the 1990's.

ACROSS THE POND

Swing re-emerged in French dance in the 1980's labeled as French Jazz and it spread to the UK by the early 1990's. It was danced to contemporary chart music. There is still a strong presence of this "Modern Jazz" dance in the UK today.



FLORIDA SWING DANCING CLUB

Events

WEEKLY MEETINGS

Mondays

8:30-11:00
Special 18th Lesson

Fridays

8:30 - 12:00
Lessons for the first hour and then social dancing

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Events within the community outside of the Thomas Butler Center and Rona Union House Studios. Events are both paid and free and are offered on average of about once a month. They usually happen on Saturdays in the evening and at night and are often themed and feature guest dance teachers and DJs.

SEMIESTER FORMALS

Winter

Spring

SWEET SWINGOUTS

Annual event hosted by the Club in April of every year. Swing scenes from all around the state of Florida, as well as all around the country come to participate in the many activities and workshops. The event is a weekend long and features teachers and DJs from all over. This coming year in 2019 the Club will be hosting a dance teacher from France.

About

FOUNDED

Early 2000's

15+ Years

Run through the University of Florida and funded by Student Government. Maintain some members outside of exclusively UF students.

ALL SKILL LEVELS

From beginner to expert to everything in between. Florida Swing Dancing Club welcomes all members and has free lessons for all.

Goals

LONG TERM

More outreach and membership in the greater Gainesville Community outside of college students (specifically UF)

SHORT TERM

More DJ's

More members

More teachers

Keeping weekly meetings and community events fresh and entertaining

Community

SWING SCENES IN FLORIDA

Orlando

Orlando Swing Knights

Jacksonville

Hold City Swing

Tallahassee

FSU Swing Dancers

Tampa

Carl's Move

AGE RANGE

17 - 74



My infographic details a brief history of Swing Dancing as well as some main points and categories of Florida Swing Dancing Club.

PART 2:

DESIGN RESPONSE



DESIGN CHALLENGE DESCRIPTION



Appealing to Greater Gainesville

After observing Florida Swing Dance Club throughout the last couple of weeks and interviewing Ralph, the president of the club, as one of the dance teachers, James, and talking to members of the club I have come to the conclusion that the problem they face is not only membership, but permanent long time membership. This leads to another problem they face which is a lack of dance teachers and DJ's. Their current membership base is rooted mainly in UF students. UF students will join the club, become hooked after a couple meetings, and then be members for the rest of their time here at UF. They become "veterans" and become skilled at Swing. But every year they lose many of these "veteran" members because they graduate and move away from Gainesville. They want to start appealing to the greater Gainesville community for

members, specifically middle aged men and women. They want these new members to be long time members who would be willing to give back to the club and teach and DJ. Without membership by the greater Gainesville community, they will continue to face the same problem year after year: losing the most vital and essential veteran members and teachers of their club due to those members graduating and moving out of Gainesville. Without involving the greater Gainesville community, they will continue to have to rebuild their roots and their base, year after year. My design challenge is to appeal to the greater Gainesville community, specifically middle aged men and women, as well as to foster loyalty to the club so that these prospective new members will want to stay long term, and possibly become teachers and DJ's.

DESIGN RESPONSE



Promotional Materials and Welcome Package

My design solution is a series of promotional materials to help spread the word about Gainesville Swing Dancing Club and get people excited about membership. I am doing a mix of print materials and digital materials. I am creating a newspaper ad, facebook ad, and a poster to hang around popular spots in Gainesville that are frequented by an older crowd that would be interested in Swing Dancing. I chose to do a newspaper and facebook ad because these are two platforms that are highly used by middle aged men and women. Facebook is the most popular social media cite among this demographic by a large margin, and almost every adult I know reads the daily newspaper. The places the posters will be hung include the downtown area around the Hippodrome, Gainesville Health and Fitness Center, and Celebration Pointe. The Hippodrome and Bo Diddly Plaza area draws an older crowd that is interested in the arts, theatre, and dance. Gainesville Health and Fitness Center draws a middle-aged crowd that is interested in physical health and exercise. Celebration Pointe draws a crowd of middle-aged people with free time.

To foster loyalty to the club, I am creating a Welcome Package for new members. The welcome package would be handed out at one of the bi-annual New Member Dance Socials. New

members would be announced and given their Welcome Package. The welcome package includes a branded shoe box that holds all of the other materials, a nice button down Florida Swing Dancing Club shirt, a branded drawstring bag, and a collector's poster. The shirt is nice quality material and a more classic, elevated style than that of a normal club t-shirt. This way, members will actually want to wear the shirt to meetings and dances, and represent the club proudly. The bag is meant to serve as a shoe bag for members' dance shoes. They can carry their shoes in the bag to and from meetings and dances, while repping Florida Swing Dancing Club everywhere they carry their shoes. If members want another layer of protection for their shoes, they can put the bag inside the box, which also strongly reps the Club. The poster is meant to be hung on a wall, either in a picture frame, or directly onto the wall. It serves as a sign of pride in the club and something members can show in their own homes. The series of ads emphasize the club's accessibility, openness, as well as being eye catching and exciting. They have large scale dynamic pictures of the club in action, showing the club's fun, excitement, and physical benefits while also packaging Swing Dancing and the Club as appealing, attractive, and worth trying.

AUDIENCE DESCRIPTION



Prospective New Members

My design solution is targeted at reaching prospective new members of Florida Swing Dancing Club, specifically middle aged men and women in the Gainesville community who would be interested in becoming members of the club. This demographic includes middle aged men and women who have excess free time, enjoy arts, theatre, dance, physical exercise, or meeting new people, or any combination of these aspects. My solution will benefit these people, as well as already existing members of Florida Swing Dancing Club. My design solution will be seen by anyone who frequents the areas I am focusing on (downtown, Gainesville health and fitness, Celebration Pointe) but will be directly marketed and targeted towards middle aged men and women, as this is my main audience. It will employ minimal body copy that is mature, yet vibrant to appeal to older men and women. The design will also be bold and sophisticated, while still being dynamic and exciting to draw people's attention. The style of the design will touch back to vintage aesthetics and post-modern and Bauhaus design. This aesthetic touches back to the 40's-50's in Europe, which is when Swing Dancing was becoming prominent there, and will also draw

in an older audience with its dated, vintage style. My audience of middle aged men and women will benefit from my Design Solution by joining Florida Swing Dance Club and enjoying its physical and social benefits. Florida Swing Dance Club will benefit from the increase in membership due to my design solution. More specifically they will benefit from the increase in the likelihood of permanent or lifetime members who may want to become teachers or DJ's. The welcome package will benefit Florida Swing Dancing Club by promoting loyalty and also excitement towards the club from new members. Because my target audience is that of middle aged men and women in the Gainesville community, this loyalty and surge in membership will benefit Florida Swing Dance Club by giving them more viable options for teachers and DJ's who will not inadvertently abandon the club after college graduation. The items will also benefit members by giving them a way to represent their club in a proud way, and will foster loyalty towards Florida Swing Dance Club by giving members a tangible object they are proud to own, wear, and show off.

DESIGN SKETCHES AND PROCESS

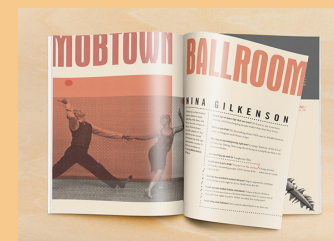
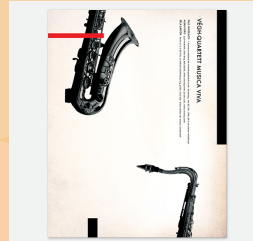
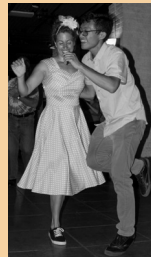
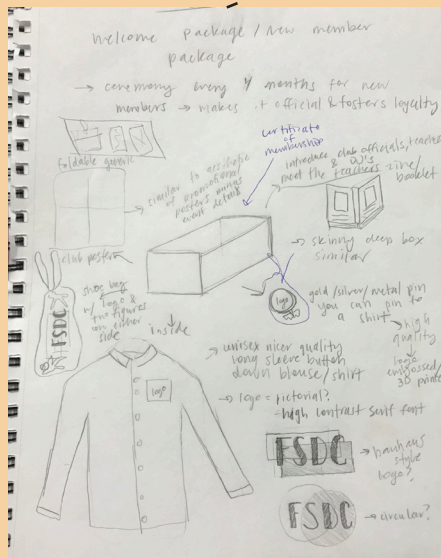


Sketches, Photography, and Inspiration

initial sketches and ideation

-photography

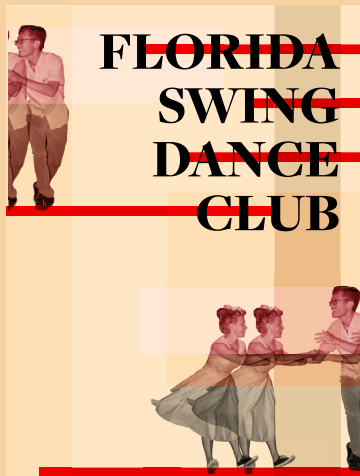
inspiration-



ANNOTATED PROCESS AND SKETCHES



Exploring Aesthetics and Deciding on a Brand



First poster iteration, playing around with photo manipulation, opacity, color blocks, and typography interacting with composition/moving composition



Second iteration, experimenting more with integrating typography into the design. Experimenting with bold shapes and angles of color blocks/opacities



Third iteration, experimenting with careful pops of color/color placement and incorporation of color into type. Reducing background activity for legibility.



Fourth iteration, experimenting with angles and dramatic/playful yet minimal composition. Touching back heavily on Bauhaus design influence.



First Facebook Ad iteration, unsure of brand/direction to go. Based off of a combination of poster aesthetics. Crowded composition and somewhat static.



First newspaper ad iteration, also unsure of aesthetic. Composition is somewhat simple/centered and utilizes asymmetry but type gets lots/is somewhat ineffective

ANNOTATED PROCESS AND SKETCHES



Emblem Iterations



Emblem iterations experimenting with color, style, shape, composition, and type. Initial emblems were designed with the idea of a logo in mind, trying to keep forms as simple as possible. Original color explorations were those of bold and vibrant colors, and then later iterations used more muted colors, coming directly from common colors of the original Swing Dance era.



I narrowed in on a circular design, and then reintroduced type, using the Club's full name as opposed to their initials. I ditched the idea of color blocks completely, and introduced photography, as it the strongest element in the brand I have been creating. I experimented with size and prominence of the photos, playing with cropping as well as color to move the eye around the emblem.

ANNOTATED PROCESS AND SKETCHES



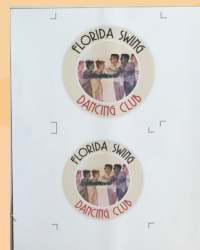
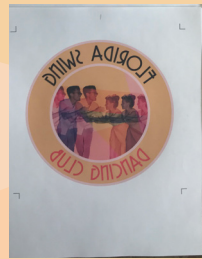
Bag Iterations and Printing



Progression of bag design. Started off working with flat emblem, complex and crowded design, and red accent shape. Simplified design, keeping flat appearance in emblem, and eventually replaced the flat version with a newer emblem that included photography. Final bag design simplified even further.



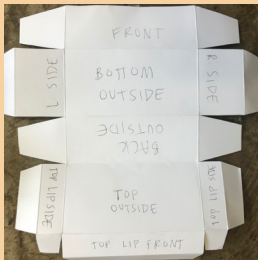
Printer tests, trying to replicate colors of the emblem and also trying to achieve clarity using the plotter and iron on transfer paper. Series of trial and error changing paper types and saturations and DPI settings.



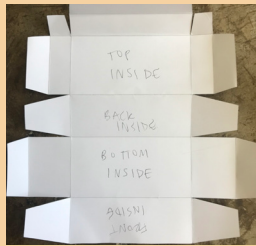
DESIGN PROTOTYPES



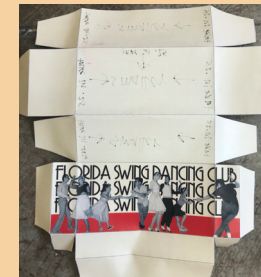
Box Iterations and Prototypes



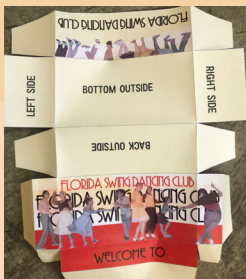
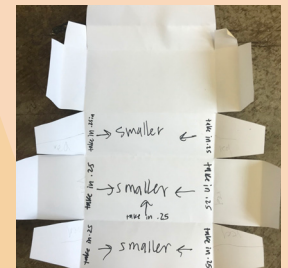
Laying out box prototype design. Figuring out dynamics and structure of actual physical constructed box and how to fold/how each face of the box is oriented.



Digitally constructed the layout of the box using art-boards, shapes, lines, and text. Trying to see if my digitally fabricated box would work correct as a box.



First experimenting with how printed design will look when folded on the box. Annotations and notes detailing that the bottom of the box needs to be taken in, in order for the lid to close without warping



Further design exploration, now using the same brand I created my ad items with. Still figuring out mechanics and orientation of box faces.



First double sided, inside and outside complete box design prototype. Made by gluing the two cut out box layouts together, back to back. Design is nearing completion but still needs some tweaks and edits.



Extended the red of the inside design to reach up to the level of that on the back, where the dancers are, to all sides of the inside of the box. I was working with shrinking and kerning type and giving the design space to breathe



Final design prototype. Printed the design on sticker paper to test color and quality of print. Stuck on a piece of paper and folded to test ink cracks.

FINAL DESIGN OUTCOMES



Promotional Materials/Ad Campaign



FINAL DESIGN OUTCOMES



Welcome Package for New Members



FINAL DESIGN REFLECTIONS



Mixed Emotions

After completing the entire project I have a lot of mixed emotions. I am actually really pleased and happy with the design solution that I came up with and how all of my materials turned out. Physically making all of the materials was definitely a challenge to say the least. The object for me that was by far the hardest to make and craft was my Box Design. Working with a double sided box design that is specific to certain faces of the box and not others is very complex. This along with cutting and precision posed a real challenge.

The biggest struggle for me was probably deciding and settling on an aesthetic and a “brand” for the new materials. I knew the general idea I had from the very start, but it took many iterations and many hours to finally flesh out what I was going for. I was also working in a style that is unfamiliar to me, I don’t usually

work with really strong reds/harsh shapes in my designs, and I also gravitate towards vectors rather than photos. I think this design project as a whole really pushed me out of my comfort zone and made me grow as a designer. Once I settled on my aesthetic, I was able to produce the other materials relatively quickly in comparison.

Another aspect of the design challenge that gave me trouble was coming up with an emblem that matched the style of the brand that I had created. At first I was trying to make a completely flat and vector based emblem because I was intending to screen print onto my shirt and bag. After I decided to switch from screen printing to iron-on transfer for my materials, I was able to switch my emblem to photo based to match the rest of my brand.

Overall, I enjoyed the design portion of this project a great deal and I think I pushed myself as a designer.