## 58th World Congress of Dance Research

**Lecture/ Demonstration**

**Duration- 30 mins**

Embodied Ethnographies[[1]](#footnote-1) as Diasporic Methodological Practices: *Tracing Africanist rituals from Sacred Space to the Commercial* Stage

This project seeks to challenge the dichotomy between commercial and ritual dance through the contemporary black and brown body by questioning how legacy and ancestral knowledge is transmitted.[[2]](#footnote-2) This project also questions patriarchal capitalist colonial involvement in the displacement of sacred rituals for monetary gain. How can the black and brown dancing bodies mark the arrivals and the departures of traditional African diasporic dance aesthetics as they function as containers/foils for embodied knowledge disseminated on commercial stage through sacred displacement. I posit that rather than imagining ritual dance and commercial dance as being polarized or diametrically opposed, I seek through the use of embodied ethnographic practices to illustrate how The Limbo Dance can be enacted in both ritual and commercial dance stages and function as parts of the same continuum of performance[[3]](#footnote-3). Performances that can trace back to sacred dance for efficacy and now entertainment. This lecture will demonstrate how Limbo Dance functions as a genealogical archive. Firstly, The Limbo dance makes visible an "embodied knowing" which in part is knowing one's traditional dances and or legacy, its values, its origins, its histories and how that knowledge can be mobilized through body-to-body transmission. Secondly, the contemporary displaced enactment of The Limbo Dance recreates and preserves the link with the ancestors or those who have created the dances with those who dance in their footsteps, creating living legacies made in the present. Thirdly, The Limbo Dance, in practice locates an aesthetic reference, a frame for reading and interpreting not only the form but its ritualistic representation, their meanings and their symbols. In summation, this project seeks to locate itself both along the continuum of traditional African practices as they are utilized in the contemporary world by examining the "The Limbo Dance", as practiced in Trinidad & Tobago and as it migrated to other spaces and practices.

**Presenter**

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**Lecture Invitation**

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1. Process of investigating and preserving culture within the African and African Caribbean Diaspora

   from a variety of sources primarily mediated through the body. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This investigation focuses geographically on bodies form Trinidad & Tobago [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Wake Complex’ to mark the rite of passage of liberation of the spirit of deceased persons of African descent

   = [↑](#footnote-ref-3)