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Duke Prof Leads Live Processing and Ghost Dancing at Moogfest



by **Shannon Cuthrell** — May 20, 2016

There was a curious vibe in the room Thursday afternoon at the Durham Armory.

It seemed that no one really knew what to expect from a Moogfest session called "Live Processing and Ghost Dancing." One Armory employee said to me, "Do you know what this thing is? I heard it was the future of music and dance!"

Duke University Professor Thomas F. DeFrantz founded the performance research group SLIPPAGE: PERFORMANCE | CULTURE | TECHNOLOGY, in 2003 at MIT. Since then, the group has explored how theatrical storytelling can mesh with performance and technology.

And Thursday, Moogfest attendees got to experience that mesh.

Everyone sat on the outskirts of the dance floor while quiet music rumbled and the dancers stretched.

Then a static noise flooded the room, while a distorted voice on the microphone said, "Robert Moog ... ghost dancing ... self-regulation ... sound discoveries." The voice listed off the performers' names, then slowly fizzed out.

The rest of the performance was a sort of organized chaos, where each of the six performers had a story to tell. Some stories were individual and some were interconnected, but all of them were equally intricate. My eyes could hardly keep track.

In the last 20 minutes of the show, performers urged members of the audience to participate. Slowly, people rose from their seats on the floor and crawled up to join the performers.

At the end, the music came to a soft close and DeFrantz circled around the performers and repeated the word "friendship" several times with a smile on his face.

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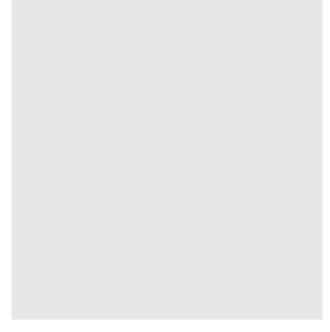
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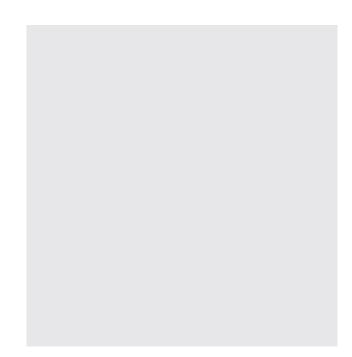


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