

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Shade

Sarah Elgart · Wednesday, May 25th, 2016

While perusing the program for Frame, the upcoming, international London Dance Film Festival (June 9 – 12), a fest entirely devoted to the genre I like to call Screen Dance, I came upon this week's selection, **Shade**. Performed by the UK based BirdGang Dance Company, a hip-hop group I had never heretofore heard of whose "goals are not just to entertain but also to explore social issues through dance", **Shade** packs its total running time of just under a minute and a half (minus credits) with a wallop. Directed and edited by Simeon Qsyea and danced by Lamar Johnson, the choreography in tandem with the music seems to direct the film, with the movement at times literally commanding the framing in a graphic way.



Lamar Johnson kicks it in "Shade"

With the camera moving almost constantly in conjunction with Johnson's extremely proficient mix of hip hop and more contemporary street based movement – full of Dutch tilts and jumping angles as it introduces his never fully revealed face and figure only incrementally at first – there is a little bit of a dizzying, vertigo effect. The film is dark, seemingly lit entirely by the lamppost the dance takes place under. But the drive of the (un-credited) score and the sheer moxie of the film's editing with the movement struck this viewer as kind of crazily delightful. Qsyea, a Director, Choreographer and Visual Artist who has worked with the likes of Pink, 50 cent, and *So You Think You Can Dance*, clearly knows enough what he's doing enough to risk experimentation.

Enjoy.

<https://youtu.be/cOXpNqDQrqI>

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