

THE
PARKING
SPACES

005

A SERIES OF SITE-SPECIFIC
LISTENING EXPERIENCES TO
INVITE REST, ACTIVATION,
AND IMAGINATION AROUND
DOWNTOWN IOWA CITY

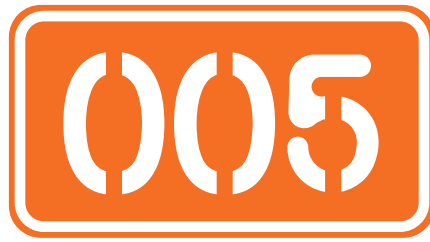
AUDIO TRANSCRIPT



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CHUY
RENTERIA

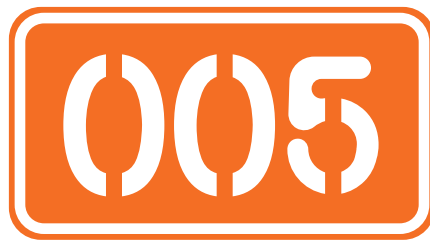


BLACK HAWK
MINI PARK

SPACE FIVE. Take a seat, there is a lot of action to watch here...depending on when you're listening to this there could be a grip of dancers pouring themselves out onto the concrete before you. Expressing themselves through dialogues of movement on slabs of rolled out linoleum. If the time aligns and we're sharing space together then you may be engaging with me in multiple ways. By listening to my voice, yes, but also through watching me move in sync with the rhythms emanating from the speaker we have illegally plugged in to the city's electricity. Grand gestures angled onto unforgiving pavement. Footwork and freezes done whether or not there are spectators watching. Or whether or not they get what we're doing. Or if they understand the stories behind the action. That's the beauty of this. The conversations are happening whether you are privy to them or not....But of course, like I always do. I'm getting ahead of myself. Hi. My name is Chuy Renteria. I've lived in Iowa all my life and in most of that life I've identified as a dancer. As a BBOY to be specific. A lot of people know it as breakdancing but we prefer Breaking. Bboy stands for

Break Boy. But compared to these other folks I'm dancing with, I'm no boy. At the time of this recording I'm 36 years old. I've been dancing longer in my life than not dancing. I started when I was 13 going on 14. Which means I've been dancing for 22 years. In Breaking contexts I'm ancient. I'm a dinosaur. It only takes a bit of watching us on these ped mall bricks to see that this dance is unforgiving. Most dance forms are. I'm about 16 years older than most of the other dancers with me, the majority of them undergrads. Their life's path's are only beginning. This is all to say that I'm in a unique position to talk about this space and the action going on here. It's officially called the Black Hawk Mini Park but we never call it that. It's been so long that I don't even remember the first time I've danced here. It was back in high school when we got to dance with the cool older college kids. Even back then we simply called it the ped mall. As in, "yo its Friday night we gonna street dance at the pedmall?" Its funny. The actual name of the spot was almost irrelevant. Many times it felt like the question should have been "Yo we street dancing?" cause that's all that mattered.

DAWSON
DAVENPORT

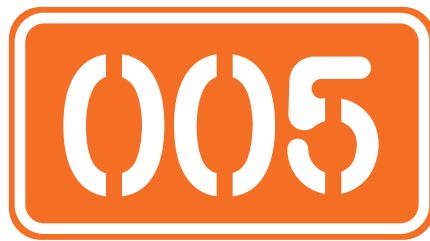


BLACK HAWK
MINI PARK

The physical act of it. Really this space was picked because of its central location and that there is enough of a flat expanse that we can properly move about the floor. But like stories, locations and spaces are affected by the human beings in them. It's all containers and conduits influencing one another. The space becomes something different to those of us that experienced it in this special way. I have stories tied to so many summers where we danced at this spot. Stories of heated battles between rivals. Or confluences of people that met through the action. One time there was a circus group traveling across the country in a van fueled by the thrown out grease traps of our nation's fast food restaurants. When we got to this spot to dance they were already here gathering a crowd. We ended up sharing the stage with them for a night I will never forget. I've never seen any of those people again and that's okay. There's this ephemeralness with dance that is quintessential human experience. In that it's a little sad. It happens and if you weren't there to observe the action it didn't happen. Like right now, if you're listening in the middle of winter, or something, I'm imagining that you're imagining us

contorting on the ground. Scuff the ground with your foot. Now picture our feet punctuating that same brick. An articulation of polyrhythms through our Nikes and Adidas. But imagining it is not the same right? Hearing about it or shoot even watching video of it pales in comparison to experiencing it then and there. Dance is fragile like that. But that also gives it a weird type of power. Like how I talked about stories. Stories shift and morph. Become something bigger as they are told and retold. It's like that for me when I remember the feeling of street dancing. Whether that was twenty years ago or in 2022 when the temperatures finally get warm enough for us to converge onto the spot where you stand right now. This next part is hard for me to say. Because there is this thing in our dance. We are supposed to be bombastic and larger than life. And I'm a performer at heart. So when we are dancing and there is a crowd I'll make sure to dance with the confidence and swagger that a crowd expects from a Bboy about to kill it on the floor. We describe it as going hard. As in, "Shoot you see Mojo's set? Bro went hard for that one." But here is what is actually hard for me. I don't know how much longer

DAWSON
DAVENPORT



BLACK HAWK
MINI PARK

I have with this. I tell people I'll dance until the wheels come off. Until I can't dance no more. Which used to be this fun distant thing to be pithy about. But each time I dance it feels a little harder to recover. My body is just a little more sore the next day. I'm doing physical therapy for possible achilles tendonitis. Or maybe it's plantar fasciitis. The pain is dull and hard to pinpoint. The moves are harder. I'm more winded after each set. Which is all to say that I feel mortal when I dance when before I didn't. Breaking is funny. We package ourselves as superheroes. Here are these tough kids doing these incredible moves on this hard unforgiving concrete and they don't even care. And that is still true. Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to have anyone feel sorry for me. And I find such immense joy out of this dance form. And I am the most stubborn person. So stubborn that I think of my dance journey as having decades left on it. But I've found myself leaning into that fragile nature of myself. I used to try to tape every session we had. To document it for the future. There is part of that process that I still agree with...but there are also times

when I intentionally leave the phone and the cameras and anything else at home. Because right now. Right now what matters is that we're moving in front of each other. And there is deep action and conversation happening between the dancers before you. One of those conversations being how an aging man connects to his younger contemporaries through the form. You might not be there to see it. Or even notice it if you are there- but it's happening. And when it's done and gone- when I'm done and gone it won't be able to be repeated in a way that gets at the immediacy of our lives. But that could be the point. Finding it when we can and moving on when it's over. But for now. Right now. I'll dance while I can. Watch me speak. Listen to the words spoken in a language manifested through movement. There is a story in the action, if you are there to receive it. Thank you.

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