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Embodied Research on the Physical and Emotional Challenges Wildebeests Face While Migrating

Lille Nightingale

School of Performing Arts, College of Fine Arts

Wildebeests are known for their annual migration across the African savanna, called the “Great Migration.” Wildebeests are the primary driving force behind this movement of millions of animals across the Serengeti plains, making them a keystone species. This research investigates the behavior and emotions of wildebeests and translates their movements into a choreographed dance. The goal is to capture the essence of wildebeest migrations and create an engaging and educational dance performance. The study involved a combination of video analysis and literature review to gather comprehensive data on wildebeest behavior, emotions, and patterns during their migration. This information was then used to create the choreography for the dance. Research indicates that wildebeests exhibit a variety of unique movements, such as leaping and trotting, and they form complex group formations, shapes, and lines during migration. Wildebeests also experience emotions such as fear, anxiety, and calmness. The dance performance born from the research captured these behaviors and emotions, creating an engaging and educational performance. This research and subsequent dance is relevant to Kansas in that it exemplifies the importance of the arts and dance to Kansans.

Faculty Mentors: *Denise Celestin, Cheyla Clawson Chandler, Mina Estrada, Sabrina Vasquez*