



SIMON'S **Swing Notes**

Welcome to Swing Notes where I will be musing about life in the swing world, commenting on what's going on and more often than not, the why & how you can get the most out of your dancing.

Diving into the annals of history & traditions that have been handed down to me, the aim is to be educational, thought-provoking & occasionally controversial, sharing my thoughts on the dance, music, history & today's swing dance scene.

Be warned - they will seriously improve your dancing!

Swing Notes Vol 329: Lindy Hop: More Than Just Steps By Simon Selmon

Lindy Hop: More Than Just Steps

It was 3:30 AM. I had just woken up, lying in bed, dreaming about giving a keynote speech on “**What or Who is Lindy Hop?**” And then, it hit me.

This dance isn't just about the steps. Yes, the steps are important. But Lindy Hop **starts** with the music.

It's about **finding the beat, hearing the pulse, and feeling it in your body.** It's about connecting with your partner—not just through movement but through rhythm and shapes.

What The Dance Is Not...

Lindy Hop **is not** a mechanical sequence of steps.

It **is not** a monologue where you dance despite the music or your partner.

Instead, **it's a conversation**. A way to find your voice. To express yourself. To let go.

Simon & Anna at Summertime Swing charity event with the Stellar Big Band



I remember when I first started dancing—I was shy. Off the dance floor, I struggled to express myself. But on the floor? I could **laugh, smile, be myself**.

That Magical Feeling

You know you're on the right track when you feel that **inner glow**. When you finish a dance and think, *Wow, that was something special*.

That's the magic of Lindy Hop. When, for three minutes, two individuals **become one**. When it feels effortless, like slipping into a pair of well-worn slippers. When you move in sync, following the same beat of the same drummer.

Have you ever felt that? That moment when, after saying “thank you,” you secretly wish for just one more dance with that same person but too afraid of asking in case

you lose it on the next dance or just too afraid to ask because you are worried you can't repeat the experience?

How Do You Get There?

It starts with the music. It starts with being able to hear and feel the music. Not just the notes, but what the musician was trying to convey. **It is most definitely not just about technical perfection and executing a few well practised steps.**

Most dancers today begin by learning classic shapes and patterns, and let's not devalue that, it's important too. But to reach that "sweet spot," being able to improvise with another human being, you need more than memorised steps. You need to be able to step outside your comfort zone into the uncharted waters of improvisation.

You need movement. You need rhythm. You need connection.

Here's how:

1. **Master the basics.** Drill footwork from lesson one—quick steps, slow steps, triple steps, kick steps in every direction. Whether you are a beginner, but even more so for a more experienced dancer, to be able to move more freely takes many, often tedious, hours of drilling those footwork basics – forwards, backwards, sideways, circular etc
2. **Use your whole body.** Learn to move from your core. Jazz steps loosen the joints, and help teach us have control over our own movements, something you need before you dance with another body – the more effortless you can make your own movements, the nicer the partnered experience.
3. **Learn to lead AND follow.** Even if you predominately dance and specialise in one role, which most of us do, understanding both roles builds better connection.



"Lindy Hop is not just a dance, it's a conversation."

The Key to Lindy Hop

It's not about dancing *at* your partner—it's about dancing *with* them.

It's about **feeling the music, expressing yourself, and connecting.**

Because at its heart, Lindy Hop is **not just a dance, it's a conversation.**

It allows us to use our steps and classic patterns to find that invisible link between you, your partner & the music.



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