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## Dancing for the Actor: A Proposal for Actor Training

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***Dancing for the Actor***

A Proposal for Actor Training

**By, Ann Marie Gay-Baradic**

**March 28, 2002**

**THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATER**  
**OF**  
**LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY**

Upon the recommendation of the Department of Theatre, this thesis is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts.

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## Contents

<i>Prospectus</i>	i
<i>Chapter 1: Philosophy Statement and Goals</i>	1
<i>Chapter 2: Curriculum Overview</i>	5
<i>Chapter 3: Introduction to Dance</i>	9
Dance Appreciation	9
Musical Theater	13
<i>Chapter 4: Physical Training</i>	15
Dance Technique I	18
Yoga/Tumbling	20
Tap I	23
<i>Chapter 5: Introduction to Movement as Communication</i>	25
Movement Improvisation	26
Laban I	32
<i>Chapter 6: Performance Workshop</i>	39
<i>Chapter 7: Assessment</i>	41
<i>Chapter 8: Conclusion</i>	45
<i>Appendix A: Functions of Dance</i>	48
<i>Appendix B: Characteristics of Dance</i>	49
<i>Appendix C: Video Observation Worksheet</i>	50
<i>Appendix D: Example of Student Critique</i>	51
<i>Appendix E: Musical Theater Trade Books</i>	53
<i>Appendix F: Example Syllabus for Dance Technique I</i>	55

<i>Appendix G: Example Vocabulary Sheet</i>	57
<i>Appendix H: Example Syllabus for Tap I</i>	58
<i>Appendix I: Categories for Movement Observation</i>	60
<i>Appendix J: Dr. Bloch's Movement Observation Guidelines</i>	61
<i>Appendix K: Personal/Character Preference Worksheet</i>	62
<i>Appendix L: Example Rubrics</i>	63
<i>Appendix M: Students' Course/Instructor Evaluations</i>	64
<i>Appendix N: Related Web Sites</i>	68
<i>Appendix O: Annotated Bibliography</i>	70
<i>Works Cited</i>	72
<i>Works Consulted</i>	73

## Prospectus

Many college and universities across the United States offer programs in theater and dance. Training often exists to facilitate the actor or the dancer in becoming separate participants in a similar art. For the college actor, movement training typically incorporates traditional approaches as developed by Matthias Alexander, Tadashi Suzuki, or Sanford Meisener. Although these lessons in movement training hold merit, alternative strategies exist. The development of the *Dancing for the Actor* program utilizes the principles of dance as the primary tools in actor movement training. By experiencing the components, theories, and techniques of dance, the college actor will focus on physical development and the mental/emotional aspects of movement as they relate to personal awareness, improvisation and character development. The *Dancing for the Actor* program broadens students' awareness of diverse theatrical venues, thus expanding their creative potential.

This thesis should serve as a type of proposal to be submitted to college, or university, theater departments for their consideration. The *Dancing for the Actor* program can be thought of as a work-in-progress, as the program itself is flexible and can be altered to suit the needs of individual departments. This thesis describes *what* the program aims to accomplish, *why* the program could be successful, and *how* educators might implement recommended materials and strategies.

Chapter one includes a statement of philosophy and a list of program goals. In particular, the uniqueness of the *Dancing for the Actor* program is commented upon, with regards to approaching actor training from a movement perspective. Whether preparing a role or composing a movement piece, the *Dancing for the Actor* program emphasizes the understanding of movement in a multicultural context. The program aims to juxtapose the unification of mind and

body with the applicable techniques to characterization, production creativity, and overall artistic expression. Emphasis is divided between process and production. Special attention is paid to practical application, i.e. how the actor, director, and choreographer can use these techniques, thus expanding the possibilities of what is eventually brought to the stage.

Chapter two outlines the curriculum, which includes the following sections of study:

*Introduction to Dance, Physical Training, Movement as Communication and Performance Workshops.* Explanations are given to support the sequential order of courses. Course descriptions are included as general statements about subject contents.

Chapters three through six describe each area of study and the courses that facilitate each section. Each chapter begins with an introduction and explains how this segment of study relates to the overall goals of the program.

Chapter three: Introduction to Dance  
Dance Appreciation, Musical Theater

Chapter four: Physical Training  
Dance Technique I, Yoga/Tumbling, Tap I

Chapter five: Movement as Communication  
Movement Improvisation, Laban I

Chapter six: Performance Workshop

Within each section of study courses are described, highlighting the general units of concentration that are included in each subject.

Chapter seven addresses the issue of assessment. I have made recommendations as to which type of assessment style would be most appropriate for this program.

Finally, chapter eight provides conclusions regarding the many positive attributes of the *Dancing for the Actor* program. Previous student evaluations, which attest to the faculty and student interest in a trial program started at Carroll College, are given as evidence to this



program's potential. The program's versatility is stressed, as it would compliment many college theater programs, as well as provide the individual student with many opportunities for success.

Lastly, an extensive set of appendices is included. These additional materials support the curriculum by providing examples of syllabi, worksheets, and assessment tools. In addition, actual documentation of students' work, and course evaluations written in a trial setting contribute to the overall credibility, and successful potential that this program maintains.

## Chapter 1

### Philosophy Statement And Goals

As a member of the Theater Arts adjunct staff at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin, I was asked to assist as movement director for their production of *Dr. Faustus*. The director confirmed in an early production meeting that my primary function was “to get the seven deadly sins to MOVE.” This exemplifies the many theater experiences that led me to creating the program I have termed *Dancing for the Actor*.

At the *Dr. Faustus* auditions, these students emulated the majority of actors (and directors) I had worked with in both professional and academic settings. These students conformed to the Stanislavski approach to actor training, thus limiting their methods of characterization to cognitive processing. I have rarely seen actors (or directors) utilize the strategies of kinesthetics as primary tools in the rehearsal process, other than the occasional necessity to address mannerisms or physical peculiarities that a character may possess.

The Carroll students’ understanding of *movement* only served to manifest realistic portrayals of physical characteristics. It did not address the multiple ways in which movement exploration can assist characterization in enabling the actor to experience the character from the “outside-in,” meaning that the physical entity can inform a person of his psychological state of being. Also, Carroll students’ limited awareness inhibited their ability to understand the many different styles of movement in performance. In rehearsing *Dr. Faustus*, the actors portraying the Seven Deadly Sins had difficulty transforming their roles

(sins) and communicating the essence of their sin through movement. Had these students been exposed to other forms of kinesthetic expression, the concept would have been more easily learned and applied.

A compilation of experiences, similar to the rehearsal process of *Dr. Faustus*, inspired me to create a supplemental approach to actor training. With a strong background in dance, I have chosen to juxtapose dance and actor training. I have termed the program *Dancing for the Actor* because it addresses the process of actor training from the premise that dance can facilitate characterization as well as manifest a multicultural awareness of movement in performance.

This program is intended to compliment a college or university acting program and should not be considered as a substitute for other disciplines the college actor pursues, e.g., voice, script analysis, scene study. In tandem with other theater courses, the pre-professional actor becomes equipped with multiple means to role preparation and performance.

*Goals:* The overall goals of the *Dancing for the Actor* program are described below:

*Goal 1 – Students will manifest a multicultural awareness of diverse styles of movement in performance.* This program will take a cross-cultural look at movement as a theatrical tradition and innovation. Students will benefit from analyzing the role that movement plays in various cultures, and how these social ideologies are projected onto the stage. For instance, students may consider the inclusion of religion in Asian and Native American

Indian dance traditions, and how these philosophies are communicated in terms of aesthetics.

*Goal 2 – Actors will understand personal, physical tendencies while in motion and at rest with respect to time, space, and energy. We all move, but each of us moves differently.*

Actors will analyze these concepts as they discover and categorize movement traits, such as locomotor skills, gesturing and posture.

*Goal 3 – Actors will experience how movement can inform or result in emotional responses.*

Through improvisation and other exploratory strategies, actors assess psychological responses to movement. It is here that actors begin to connect the mind with the body. Many would suggest that spiritual components are included in discovering the “whole person,” i.e., the holistic theory. For the purposes of this program, mind and body will be discussed, and students’ personal interpretation of the spiritual connections can be contemplated independently.

*Goal 4 – Actors will develop technical movement skills, as they relate to strength, flexibility, endurance, coordination, and alignment.* Self-awareness is followed by actors’ diligent physical training program. These techniques are continual, in that, actors need to persistently protect and condition their bodies. I have often heard it said that an actor’s body is his instrument. Just as instruments need tuning, cleaning and maintenance, so the actor’s body needs constant care and attention.

*Goals 5 - Students acquire skills to compose movement-centered performances.* As a result of the multicultural survey of movement in production (in addition to the technical training that students' receive) students will create movement performances, other than typical character portrayals found within plays. For instance, students could work within the principles of modern dance, and create a piece that centers on a theme or narrative. Further stylistic suggestions will be discussed in succeeding chapters, which cover student movement productions.

*Goal 6 - Students will acquire skills for the observation and notation of movement.* Starting with self-analysis, students will learn a language, or terminology, specific to movement description. This will allow the student to analyze the qualities, and elements of movement that exist in the natural world and within the world of staged performances.

*Goal 8 – Students will demonstrate their ability to interpret and portray the physical properties of characters found in realistic plays.* With the compilation of technical, theoretical and creative fundamentals of movement training, actors will use skills to manipulate their physical bodies in order to portray a “whole” character. “Whole” in this instance, means the combining of body and mind, or the internal and the external. Although the curriculum does not directly address additional genre, such as absurdism, the functions of this program would certainly service the demands of all styles of plays.

## Chapter 2

### Curriculum Overview

The focus of this curriculum concentrates on four areas of study, which include the following: Introduction to Dance, Physical Training, Movement as Communication, and Performance Workshops. Optional courses are included, but should not be offered in lieu of required courses, as these courses only focus on very specific principles, whereas, required courses cover the wide spectrum of objectives within each segment of study. For example, Tap I emphasizes the elements of time, rhythm and coordination, but does not directly address alignment, flexibility, and strength which are also important components of physical training. Therefore, Tap I should not be offered instead of Dance Technique I or Yoga/Tumbling because Tap I does not offer the same potential for learning and training that these courses manifest. The chart below outlines the *Dancing for the Actor* program curriculum. The first column on the left lists the four areas of concentration: Introduction to Dance, Physical Training, Movement as Communication, and Performance Workshop(s). Within each area of study, courses are listed.

	<i>Course I</i>	<i>Course II</i>	<i>Course III</i>
<b><i>Introduction to Dance</i></b>	Dance Appreciation	Musical Theater Dance (optional)	
<b><i>Physical Training</i></b>	Dance Technique I	Yoga/Tumbling	Tap I (optional)
<b><i>Movement as Communication</i></b>	Movement Improvisation	Laban I	
<b><i>Performance Workshop(s)</i></b>	Workshop I*		
* This course can be repeated for credit.			

The curriculum is strategically structured to allow for the gradual development of physical skill, creativity, theory and application. By beginning the program with an appreciation course, the student becomes aware of the vast potential this art holds. Dance Technique I and Yoga/Tumbling allow students to build muscular strength, flexibility, endurance and mental concentration. These are necessary skills that preclude the demands of dance improvisation. The final theoretical study (specifically, Laban's Movement Analysis) equips the college actor with a movement vocabulary, which facilitates movement composition.

Emphasis is divided between *process* and *production*. Because this is an educational setting, adequate time is allocated to ensure growth and learning, this being referred to as the *process*. Nevertheless, the purpose of actor training is to prepare students for a career on the stage, or *production*. Therefore, the first three sections of study focus on the *process* of movement cognition and experiences. Some attention is still placed upon performance within each course, in that final in-class performances are executed, thus allowing for concrete application of skills and concepts studied within the course. Finally, the performance workshop(s) allow for students to create studio *productions* (approximately fifty minutes in length) which are the culmination of their movement training. In this, students would develop and perform projects, which demonstrate a proficiency and comprehension of movement in performance. \* This course could be repeated for credit.

### *Introduction to Dance – Course Descriptions*

**Dance Appreciation** – An introductory course, awareness of movement and dance performances. Emphasis is placed on the analysis of movement, as it relates to theatrical

genre, historical (period) dance, and ceremonial traditions within a multicultural context. No prior dance training required.

**Musical Theater Dance (optional)** – A survey course which examines the Broadway musical theater tradition from its beginnings to present day. Special attention is placed upon choreographers' techniques, innovations and styles, and the dancers who performed these creations.

*Physical Training – Course Descriptions*

**Dance Technique I** - This course teaches the fundamentals of ballet and jazz dance technique as it relates to alignment, strength, flexibility, and endurance. Students learn these concepts through dance exercises, warm-ups, and combinations.

**Yoga/Tumbling** –This course teaches fundamentals of yoga and basic tumbling techniques, which stresses safety, concentration and flexibility. Students learn these concepts through extensive movement exercises.

**Tap I (optional)** – This course teaches the fundamentals of tap dance, with a concentration on Broadway or show stylization.



*Movement as Communication – Course Descriptions*

**Dance Improvisation** – Through dance improvisation and movement therapy, students analyze and develop their ability to create movement, as well as understand the psychological and emotional indications and implications of movement. Students begin to apply these concepts to their work on character preparation.

**Laban I** – This course examines Rudolf Von Laban’s Movement analysis, as it applies to the work of actors and dancers. Students build a comprehensive approach to the observation and transformation of movement.

*Performance Workshops – Course Descriptions*

**Workshop I** - Students collaborate to create a studio production of approximately fifty minutes in length to be performed at the end of the semester for a faculty and student based audience. In this production students demonstrate their ability to create and execute movement concepts learned throughout their training.

## Chapter 3

### Introduction to Dance

*Movement in performance* covers a wide range of theatrical possibilities. In this section of study students will take a look at the many styles and functions that dance serves. In particular, *Dance Appreciation* will look at dance in an historical and multicultural context. *Musical Theater* (optional) will analyze the Broadway Musical genre from the perspective of various choreographers and dancers that have influenced this popular American tradition.

The term *Introduction to Dance* has been accurately chosen, as this phase includes the initial courses students will take in the *Dancing for the Actor* program. In order to pursue movement training and composition, actors need to have an awareness of the multiple styles and practices that are included in movement performances. Therefore, students will focus on analysis and the ability to critique performances through a variety of measures. For instance, videos will be shown extensively in order to stimulate visual appreciation of movement. Also, the Internet, journal articles, and research could be included as a way to encourage students to investigate what movement performances are currently taking place on a global level. A few recommendations for textbooks are given. However, textbooks should compliment materials used in an existing theater program, and should be determined as the *Dancing for the Actor* program is being implemented.

#### Dance Appreciation

This course provides an overview of the many variations of movement in performance. Students will begin to understand the functions and characteristics of dance and acquire an historical appreciation of the evolution of dance. The extent of multicultural

inclusiveness is yet to be determined, although I am seriously considering Asian dance drama, African dance, Native American circle dances, Western European court dances, and American modern dance.

To begin, students must understand the various functions of dance. In this, I would incorporate Dr. Alice Bloch's (Lindenwood University, St. Louis, Missouri) outline of Laban's functions of dance. Dr. Bloch lists the following functions of dance: "Art Form, Popular Entertainment, Social/Political, Religious Worship, and Psychological (Personal Expression)" [appendix A]. In addition, the characteristics of dance would be included in this preliminary discussion. The characteristics of dance [appendix B] are as follows:

- Uses the Human Body as the Medium of Expression
- Extends Through Time
- Exists in Space
- Possesses Dynamics
- Is Accompanied By Rhythm
- Serves to Communicate
- Has Movement Style and Form

In recognizing these functions and characteristics students will be able to categorize dance in performance, thus enabling them to engage in critical analysis, and begin to answer the question, "What is dance?"

Because there is an extensive emphasis on observation, I would implement several video examples. I have created a video observation worksheet that I've used in previous classes that students have found helpful. This worksheet [appendix C] assists students in

critiquing movement by dividing the review into the following categories: Factual Information, Era, and Relationship of Music to Dance, Stylization, and Function.

Students have completed this assignment in both essay and outline format. In both instances, I found that students gained a greater understanding of how to analyze dance and how to connect dance with other theater courses they had been studying. For instance, students included the significance of props and scenery in their analysis of stylization [appendix D]. Therefore, students began to correlate all aspects of production into their understanding of dance performance.

In looking at early forms of movement in performance, I may include the Asian tradition. Asian theater has evolved from a rich mixture of religious ceremonies and artistic expression. One unique quality of the traditional Asian Dance Drama is the precision of movement, which requires years of disciplined work. For example, there is a set of intricate hand movements, described in the *Natyasastra* (Hindu writings), that have been perfected and continued throughout centuries. Asian theatrical dance contains scripted movements of the body that are studied and repeated in the exact same way, as these movements hold great significance in tradition as well as the development of plot. The *Natyasastra* also prescribes scenery, costumes, and stage dimensions that have remained (basically) unchanged. In this, I would most likely include an example from the Peking (Beijing) Opera. Students may find this style of movement radically different from Western traditions.

In looking at the Western European history of movement in performance, I would include the courtly dances of the 15<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Becoming familiar with these dances prepares students for period plays, such as Renaissance and Restoration plays. For example, important dances in the study of Shakespearean drama might include the pavone, minuet,

and the volte', which are believed to be some of Queen Elizabeth's favorite dances.

Therefore, students would view an example of this dance on video, and then learn how to physically do this dance. That would be one opportunity in which enabling exercises would seem most fitting.

In accordance with the chronological innovations of Western European dance, classical French Ballet would be introduced at this time. First, I would lecture about the historical evolution of ballet, as a manifestation of courtly dances. To support this, I may use the following text: *History of the Dance in Art and Education* by Richard Kraus. In addition, students would be asked to write video critiques on one or two examples of classical ballet performance. I would also introduce them to famous composers of ballet orchestration, such as Pyotr Tchaikovsky, and influential choreographers, such as George Balanchine.

Modern, jazz, and show dance would be included in this course. Each form of dance would be defined according to the qualitative comparisons of each style of dance. Students may consider the similarities between African and American Modern/Jazz dance. In doing so, they will begin to appreciate the many contributions African-Americans have made, such as Alvin Ailey in the development of American Jazz and Modern dance.

A course on dance appreciation would not be complete without recognizing the personal sense of freedom this form of expression gives to all. In fact, Margaret H'Doubler writes in her book *Dance: A Creative Art Experience* that dance can contribute to a healthy philosophy of life. She writes:

Every child has a right to know how to achieve control of his body in order that he may use it to the limit of his ability for the expression of his own reactions to life (xii).

Therefore, dance can be analyzed as a medium of theatrical performance or personal expression. It is this quality that students will begin to understand through the process of this course and the *Dancing for the Actor* program.

### **Musical Theater (optional)**

If I had to name a traditional form of American movement in performance, I would cite the American musical as an example. Both on Broadway and in the cinema, the American musical provokes a nostalgic sense among most Americans. Its popularity among American audiences has fueled its evolution and constant demand. Therefore, this introductory course surveys the American musical from its earlier days to contemporary productions. The purpose of this survey course is to build an awareness of movement styles in musical theater productions, and appreciate choreographic innovations in an historical context.

As in the Dance Appreciation course, I would rely heavily on video observations, textbook comprehension, and research to facilitate instruction. The use of videos allow students to view multiple productions and analyze their content. I would implement the video observation worksheet, as in the earlier Introduction to Dance course, as it assists students in organizing their observations. Appendix A provides suggested trade books, which could compliment discussions with interesting items, such as photographs of original productions. These can be found in the *Dancebooks* catalogue at [www.dancebooks.co.uk](http://www.dancebooks.co.uk).

In addition, I would require that students engage in independent research of choreographers and/or dancers, and compile such information in term papers. Through this

experience, students will have the opportunity to further investigate styles and approaches to musical theater movement that they may have an interest in.

The emphasis of this course will be on choreographers and dancers, specifically innovations that have changed how dance is used in musical theater productions. For instance, Agnes deMille is credited with being the first choreographer to begin using dance to further the plot structure of a musical. In the musical *Oklahoma!*, deMille incorporated this idea in her choreography of the “ballet sequence.” Jerome Robbins’ work in *West Side Story* is another example in which the plot is furthered by action taking place as dance, as in “the Rumble.” In both instances, the main character(s) make important decisions as the result of danced action, which dramatically alters the circumstances surrounding the main character, thus furthering the plot. The work of deMille and Robbins is in contrast to the earlier usage of dance in musical theater. Here, dance was simply used to entertain, otherwise referred to as “dance for dance sake,” as in “Shuffle Off to Buffalo” from *42nd Street*.

As many students may choose to pursue musical theater career options, this course is of great significance. However, the deprivation of this course is in its inherent limitation to American culture. Therefore, I have termed this course as optional; although, it focuses on the objective of broadening awareness as established in the Introduction to Dance overview, it does not incorporate the magnitude of genres and styles available in a multicultural analysis.

## Chapter 4

### Introduction to Physical Training

When actors are “stuck in their own bodies” they are unable to execute the many idiosyncratic movements, or physical traits, that bring a fictitious character to life. Without physical training, actors’ bodies are inflexible and uncontrolled, consequently limiting their creative potential. Rather, actors will continually execute the same physical representations, as the actors’ personal kinesthetics are the only movements brought to the stage. In her book *The Actors’ Image: Movement Training for Stage and Screen*, Jean Sabatine confirms this idea when she writes:

For an actor, such problems spell professional disaster; he drags his misshapen image into every characterization, and unless his bad habits happen to be extraordinarily captivating, leading into a career as a popular single-type character actor, his professional opportunities to drag himself into characterizations are likely to be severely limited (26).

Actors’ professional and artistic opportunities will be far more broad-based if the actor is able to move freely and creatively.

The second area of study concentrates on the actor’s physical body. Specifically, *alignment, flexibility, strength, endurance and coordination* are emphasized, as these skills are tantamount to actor training. For the remainder of this thesis, I will refer to these skills as the *five self-awareness fundamentals*. It is through the mastering of these fundamentals that actors can begin to rid themselves of physical handicaps, which inhibit their ability to move freely.



The Dance Technique I and Yoga/Tumbling courses are constructed to address the five self-awareness fundamentals in a movement context. Therefore, these classes are action-based; the students will be “learning by doing.” These courses introduce the basic premise for which the *Dancing for the Actor* program is conceived; that is, the *body to mind* theory. As a result of “doing,” cognitive awareness is generated. This type of practice is essential to actor training, as the pure nature of their art is that of doing, i.e., performance. However, the actors must first become aware of their bodies, and then learn how to train their bodies, so that they eventually have a command over their physical actions. It is to this purpose that the physical training courses have been established.

How do the five self-awareness fundamentals accomplish these goals? Let us look at *alignment*, for example. In defining this concept, I often use the image of one-inch square blocks. Each block represents a vertebra within the actor’s spine. In both Dance Technique I and Yoga/Tumbling exercises are implemented to assist students in practicing proper, or natural alignment. Through a process of lifting, angling and reshaping of the spine, students learn to assume a nearly horizontal or straight alignment. Actors refer to this as the “neutral state.” This posture is neutral because it is free from personal alignment tendencies, thus providing a clean slate in which other postures can be recreated. This is the essence of physical characterization.

When discussing the five self-awareness fundamentals, I contend that these skills contribute to the actor’s acquisition of unrestrained movement, but each skill affects different components of overall development. It is important, therefore, to define each element. *Flexibility* refers to the pliability of muscles and joints. Through a series of stretching exercises, the actor learns safe ways to gradually achieve flexibility. For this

purpose, Yoga has been included in the *Dancing for the Actor* program, as it introduces many ways to incorporate stretching.

*Strength*, as it relates to movement training, refers to muscular development. Muscular strength, however, is not always the primary focus of these classes, as in a weight lifting program. Instead, strength is the fortunate byproduct of many activities that concentrates on other objectives.

*Endurance* plays a vital role in an actor-training program. By endurance, I am speaking of cardiovascular strength, which is achieved by conditioning of the heart muscle. Why is this important? Well, not only is cardiovascular health an important issue for all human beings (at least it should be), it is of particular importance to the actor. The ability to make highly aerobic demands on the body is critical for the free moving actor. For instance, while performing in First Stage Milwaukee's production of *Bamboo: A Life in the Woods*, I had to run, leap, speak, jump, turn, and squat throughout a fifteen-minute scene. Because I had trained, I was able to execute dynamic leaps over scenery, run around the theater (literally) and convey the very essence of a deer by effectively executing movements of both sharpness and fluidity, as reflected in deer behavior. Without physical training, I may never have been hired to participate in this production and would have missed a wonderfully artistic experience

*Coordination* allows the actor to utilize the first four elements (alignment, flexibility, strength, and endurance) with respect to time. Dance Technique I and Tap I (optional) address coordination in similar ways. By incorporating music, time is a constant measurement in which all movement ideally takes place. In addition, Dance Technique I introduces the ideas of shape and form. Therefore, students are instructed in "how" to move

(shape), where to move (space) and when to move (time). It seems clear, therefore, that movement requires coordination.

Moreover, the physical training courses seek to establish body awareness for the actor. Through a series of movements that center on *alignment, flexibility, strength, endurance, and coordination*, the actor begins to understand how his body moves and begins to have control over his movements. This ability to move freely will benefit the actor greatly in his exploration of physical characterization and performance.

### **Dance Technique I**

I first developed this course in 1997 as a one-credit workshop for the acting students at Carroll College, Wisconsin. Its success led to the implementation of additional movement workshops at Carroll and serves as the basis for this proposed three-credit adaptation. A copy of the syllabus is included in appendix F. Because of the inherent time limitations that exist in a one-credit course, this syllabus includes some additional Laban and dance improvisation principles, as I wanted to introduce a variety of methods.

Dance Technique I is structured to meet the five self-awareness fundamentals as discussed in the physical training introduction: alignment, strength, flexibility, endurance, and coordination. In focusing on the fundamentals of classical ballet and jazz dance, the basic principles, terminology, and movements of these styles will serve as the catalyst to achieve the five self-awareness fundamentals.

Each session will begin with warm-up exercises that incorporate all five fundamentals. These movements are done in sequential, memorized order and are accompanied by music. Repetition of these moves is important for many reasons. In general,

learning movements in sequential order allows for muscular, as well as cognitive, memorization to take place.

After warm-ups, combinations or a series of movements will be given to the students. These combinations could be new every day, or be a continuation of combinations learned throughout the semester. In my experiences at Carroll College, I have utilized combination work to facilitate student assessment. For example, students had to execute memorized combinations of moves (in both ballet and jazz) at the mid-term examination. These were referred to as “combos – 1.” Throughout the second semester, students learned an additional set of combinations (combos –2) and had to perform both combos-1 and combos-2 at the final examination, for a total of four different combinations.

I found this approach to be successful because I created very different combinations, while remaining within the category of ballet and jazz dance. For instance, the first ballet combination was adagio (slow to moderate tempo) and the second was allegro (fast tempo). The jazz combinations varied according to era, and the incorporated movements represented pop culture, such as movements from the 1950s versus movements from the 1980s.

In remaining mindful of the practical application aspect of teaching dance technique to acting students, I focused on skills required to effectively learn choreography in an audition setting. In this, I promoted the understanding of dance terminology. Appendix G includes a vocabulary sheet that was handed to students on the first day of class. Students were required to write French-English translations of terms, and qualitative descriptions of movements. In the proposed *Dancing for the Actor* program, I would recommend Gail Grant's *Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet* to supplement vocabulary lessons.

In addition, I would take students through mock-auditions. Several times during the term, I would create a dance audition, similar to what would be found in a musical theater audition. The students were expected to “act” as though they were at an audition, learn, and perform the new combination within a thirty-minute period. Students’ reactions varied; however, the undisputed consensus was that they truly benefited from the experience. Furthermore, it became clear why terminology, technique, and the ability to efficiently learn choreography were necessary.

Moreover, the Dance Technique I course uses ballet and jazz dance to teach numerous skills. The five self-awareness fundamentals are implemented in all areas of this course. Students acquire the ability to comprehend and execute choreography by memorizing terminology and using muscular memory to physically manifest repeated movements. Practice of such skills is a lifelong commitment, but the application of these techniques can immediately affect the actor’s work. The overall physical conditioning that results from this type of course will give the actor a command over his body, so that he can manipulate his movements and meet the aesthetic requirements of the role he is portraying.

### **Yoga/Tumbling**

The second course in the physical training section of study addresses the five self-awareness fundamentals through the practice of Hatha yoga and tumbling. Through a series of poses, yoga develops individual flexibility while establishing relaxation techniques and breathing exercises. The tumbling component of this course takes a look at locomotor skills as a tool to assist the actor in observation and self-awareness. Basic tumbling skills are taught as a way to hone these fundamentals. This type of training is important in broadening

professional opportunities. Many forms of theater, such as theater for young audiences, are physically demanding and require basic tumbling proficiency.

Hatha yoga is historically associated with the Hindu religion, particularly those sects practiced in ancient India. Although the term “yoga” has many esoteric connotations, this approach focuses on physiological benefits. Concentration, as opposed to meditation, is emphasized as the precluding requirement to all strenuous movement.

As mentioned, a series of poses (or *asanas* to use the Hindu term) are used as the means to developing flexibility, strength, and alignment. Poses can be categorized according to the physical and emotional effects of each pose. For instance, within the category of forward-bending poses, the Uttanasana stretches the back and hamstrings, while having a very calming effect psychologically (Walden 21).

Also, I would incorporate variations of certain poses, with the help of props (such as towels and blocks), to allow for the gradual development of strength and flexibility; understanding an individual’s ability and limitations is critical. In this, the students learn to listen to their bodies, concentrate on their movements, and learn safe uses of the body. With this, breathing and relaxation techniques are incorporated in order to assist learning and physical growth. Lyn Oxenford writes in her book *Design for Movement: A Textbook on Stage Movement*, “Deep breathing is the classic remedy for stage fright, but many victims are so tied up in knots that they can only breathe in shuddering gasps with their hearts thudding in their throats...”(44). Therefore, the integration of breathing techniques enables the actor to become aware of the relationship between breath and movement in order to find a suitable balance between relaxation and tension.

Prior to the tumbling portion of this course I would introduce locomotor skills -- i.e. walking, running, jumping, sitting, standing. The primary factors inherent to yoga and tumbling certainly relate to the principles of locomotor movements. In discussing locomotor skills I may introduce students to the teaching of Japanese theorist Tadashi Suzuki, who made significant contributions to actor movement training. In particular, I might discuss the placement of weight and the use of the feet as surmised by Suzuki. In addition, I would provide enabling exercises that apply these discoveries in terms of observation, self-awareness, and characterization. For example, students may observe how other people shift weight and attempt to mimic that person's physical traits.

In the latter half of the semester, I would instruct students on the basics of tumbling. For instance, I might teach the following acrobatic movements: forward/backward roll, headstand, cartwheel, and leaps. The progress of this section would depend on the rate in which students attained these basic elements. At this point I may introduce students to an acrobatic performance genre, such as the Cirque de Solei. Observing a video performance of this company may stimulate interest and reinforce an appreciation for this type of movement production.

In order to assess students' progress, periodic performances would be done. This assessment is intended to serve as a mechanism in which students' progress is measured. Although an instructor should always be monitoring safety, intermittent assessment will ensure that students understand how to safely execute these movements.

In conclusion, the five self-awareness fundamentals are taught through the practice of Hatha yoga and tumbling. Poses enable students to work on their own flexibility, alignment, and strength. Tumbling requires, in addition to these skills, coordination, and

endurance. Locomotor skills and a brief introduction to the work of Tadashi Suzuki compliment the course curriculum. Assessment and practical application ideas should be incorporated into daily discussions and activities.

### **Tap I (optional)**

The physical training courses within the *Dancing for the Actor* program includes the optional course Tap I. This introduction to tap dance is included in this area of study because it addresses the elements of coordination and time. This course is proposed as an *optional* course because the required courses, Dance Technique I and Yoga/Tumbling, offer a full-body approach to teaching the five fundamentals, whereas tap dance concentrates primarily on the feet.

My approach to teaching tap dance has been modeled after Robert Audy's text *Tap Dancing: How to Teach Yourself to Tap*. In this book, tap dance is analyzed in reference to the amount of tones (or sounds) particular steps create. Because tap dance is based on the division of sounds placed within time, students begin with one-toned steps, two-toned steps, and so on until they reach five-toned steps. Once five-toned steps are mastered, students begin to combine these steps to create larger groups of sounds, many of which are termed, such as the *buffalo*, or *maxi-ford*. My implementation of Audy's strategy, in addition to my own approaches to teaching tap dance, is demonstrated in the syllabus from an introductory tap course I taught at Carroll College [appendix H].

Students find this method beneficial because they start from the bottom-up, increasing step complexity as their proficiency increases, which results in *rhythm*. Similar to



percussion instruments that use objects to strike a surface, taps hit the floor at varying time intervals, thus creating rhythmic sounds.

Vocabulary plays an important role; tap steps have a specific language, which refers to combinations of sounds, or steps. When steps are combined, choreography takes place. In Tap I students will learn entire routines, or three-minute dances.

Students will undergo the same type of mock-audition format that is practiced in Dance Technique I. The ability to learn choreography, utilize terminology, and perform skills is demonstrated in this activity. This emphasizes the practical application of tap dance in performance, as the pieces chosen for the audition are selections from musical theater.

Moreover, Tap I is offered as a complement to the physical training courses. Students may find that this course also provides them with an aerobic workout, thus developing cardiovascular stamina, or endurance. Students will benefit from the frequent application to the Broadway theater venue, as tap dance plays a vital role in this American genre.

## Chapter 5

### Introduction to Movement as Communication

Up to this point, the *Dancing for the Actor* program has focused on manifesting students' awareness of multicultural performances and individual physical training. It is in the third year that movement and acting are bridged together and become interdisciplinary forms of artistic expression. But just how is movement used as communication? And how does this knowledge facilitate the acting student? It is the answers to these questions that this area of study seeks to discover.

In understanding how the body is used as a communication mechanism, these classes will analyze two different aspects of Movement as Communication. First, students will make self-discoveries. In this, they will learn how movement inherently affects their psychological, mental, and emotional state. Secondly, students will learn how to observe their world with respect to the movement of other humans, animals, and nature. Through this, they will begin to note movement that is different from their own and compile a rich file of movement characteristics in which students can draw from in their work as performers. Students will begin to formulate conclusions regarding such movement, such as the significance of repeated gestures -i.e. habitual gestures.

In the Movement as Communication courses, students have opportunities to directly apply their revelations about movement to performance. In Dance Improvisation, students will create mini-performances (thirty seconds to one-minute) to demonstrate how abstract movement can be used to communicate thoughts. In Laban I, students will apply their work

to characterization; specifically, the class will portray idiosyncratic movements of realistic characters that exist in published plays.

As this program is a work in progress, I am considering the potential for implementing modern dance to some degree. It may be that modern dance could best serve this area of study because of its strong use of improvisation as a creative mechanism. The dance Improvisation course utilizes basic methods of dance composition and dance therapy techniques, which address the unbridled nature of movement. Therefore, modern dance would provide a strong compliment to the Movement as Communication courses.

In this third year students begin to unify the body and mind. Through such exploration they will reveal how movement can trigger emotional responses, thus allowing them to understand their own psychology. Students will also be given a language in which to observe and discuss the movement that occupies the space around them. This dichotomous approach to understanding the link between mind and body will greatly facilitate students' work both in plays and movement performances of an abstract nature.

### **Movement Improvisation**

A college student of mine, Jessie, once came to me and expressed the frustration and anxiety she felt as a result of migraine headaches. Overall, Jessie remained positive and believed that she could be successful despite her headaches. I encouraged Jessie to use movement exploration and improvisational methods we had learned in class. I guided her through additional relaxation techniques and suggested that she keep a journal of her emotional responses to such movement experiences. Jessie and I were pleased to discover that these practices made small improvements in easing her physical pain, but greatly

decreased her anxiety level. For Jessie, movement improvisation resulted in her type of pain management.

This experience reinforced my belief that movement can assist actors in releasing their own tension, build kinesthetic awareness, and allow them to observe the world of motion around them. The emphasis of this phase in the *Dancing for the Actor* program is to look at the relationship between emotions and psyche as constituents of physical movement. Emotions can be released as the byproduct of movement; or, emotions can develop out of movement. Now this sounds identical, but let me explain: In the first instance, unconscious thoughts and “stuffed” emotions exist within every person. Stuffed or hidden emotions can be revealed in individual movement characteristics or idiosyncratic tendencies, such as hidden gestures. Movement can bring these “hidden” emotions to the surface.

In addition, movement can create new emotions by altering the conscious state. This theory is easily proven. I often ask students if they ever experienced a time in which they were sad, went into their bedroom, shut the door, cranked the stereo, danced, and began to feel a little better. This intuitive form of dance therapy demonstrates the body’s natural healing process and the role that movement plays in emotional health. This is the manifestation of movement improvisation which will be explored throughout this course.

Each class would begin with warm-up exercises. Basically, I would use the same format as learned in Dance Technique I, as to allow muscles to remain flexible and spinal alignment to be neutralized.

The first portion of the course will utilize the qualities of dance as the focus of movement improvisation. The qualities of dance (sustained, percussive, vibratory, swing, suspend and collapse) will be explained and followed by in-class experimentation. Each

experience would be improvisational. Improvisation refers to movement that is purely spontaneous; thus, allowing the body to dictate over the mind and allowing the students to move in any direction they desire. I encourage students to “not think about it, just move.” Certain principles are taught and provide the student with elements upon which to improvise, just as the jazz musician has chord progression that outlines the format in which improvisation takes place. Therefore, students have an initial idea of form (quality), and free the body to react within those guidelines.

Teachers may go on to incorporate props, partners, music, percussion instruments, etc. These additional elements allow the students to use improvisational techniques to extend beyond their own bodies. In this, young actors are beginning to understand how to creatively manipulate their props and environment. In addition, Jean Sabatine writes about the concept of essence work:

First among these principles is the concept of organic movement. This simply means movement that flows naturally from the organic unity of the mind and body...The Essence Study is both a teaching aid and tool for the actor...Once conquered, the Essence Study becomes a valuable psychophysical tool to unlock the secrets of the character's inner reality....what we are ultimately doing is aiding the actor to convince an audience they are observing the organic reality of the character...(116).

Some of Sabatine's examples deal with the movement of animals. This is an important place to begin in teaching the Essence Study because it discourages realistic human movement and concentrates on abstract movement that symbolically represents the idea of animal behavior. Initially, students often attempt literal portrayals of animal movement, as in the Lion Essence Study. It is impossible for humans to behave as a lion. However, students can

understand a lion's movement characteristics in terms of the qualities of movement, as learned in the first phase of this course. When analyzing how a lion paces, for instance, students may explore repetition of movement. This, of course, teaches them about timing and allows them to draw their own conclusions regarding how this movement makes them feel. From this point, actors can connect this lesson to characterization. They may consider a character which suits a particular animal image and utilize the animal Essence Study in developing the qualities of the character's movement. In giving an example of this, I might ask students if they would be able to utilize this approach in preparing for the role of Lee from Sam Shepard's *True West* or Donny Dubrow in David Mamet's *American Buffalo*. Each of these characters are "quick-paced", driven, and can be aggressive. These qualities can be portrayed physically through the movement characteristics of a lion, as described above.

The second phase of this course borrows the methodology of dance-movement therapy (DMT) and psychodramatic movement therapy (PDMT). The premise of dance therapy is best described in the introduction of *Dance Movement Therapy: A Healing Art*, edited by Fran J. Levy. Levy writes,

Dance therapy, the use of dance/movement as a psychotherapeutic or healing tool, is rooted in the idea that the body and the mind are inseparable. Its basic premise is that body movement reflects inner emotional states and that changes in movement behavior can lead to changes in the psyche, thus promoting health and growth. ... (1).

The methods of movement therapists assist students in becoming aware of their movement potential and in making the connection between body and mind. Movement as a therapeutic

tool may be a positive result of such exploration, but the main purpose in this course is to understand movement and apply it to the work of the theater.

The basis for the improvisational movement conducted in this section of the course can be summarized by the teaching of Mary Whitehouse. Whitehouse's approach stems from a Jungian perspective, stressing the belief that there are equal and opposite forces which counter-balance all action. Some may term this the ying and yang theory, but Whitehouse uses the term "polarity." Whitehouse also uses the term "authentic movement," the ability to express emotions through muscular release. The polar concept of "authentic movement," then, refers to "invisible" movements. "Invisible movements are movements which lack emotional charge" (Levy 66). This theory supports the explorations done in this class, and serves as the foundation for strategies utilized in this phase of the *Dancing for the Actor* program.

In addition, psychodramatic movement therapy techniques may be incorporated. As defined by founder Dr. J.L. Moreno, psychodrama is "a form of psychotherapy in which the participants enact, or re-enact, situations that are of emotional significance to them" (Kahn 1). The elements typically used in this type of enactment/re-enactment are tools such as verbalization, gestures, and story telling. The elements, which characterize dance therapy, include imagery, visualization, and kinesthetic awareness. Some additional dance-movement therapists whose work I may consider are as follows: Trudi Schoop (use of mime) (Levy, Chapter 5), Marian North (personality assessment) (Levy, Chapter 12), Blanch Evan (creative movement) (Chapter 2). Moreover, the combination of these approaches (DMT and PDT) broaden the methodology which can assist students in understanding "authentic movement," personality and, ultimately, character portrayal.

I strongly encourage students to use journals to note the emotional responses they have to in-class movement experiences. The act of organizing emotions, to the degree in which the student can transcend emotion into language, may assist them in releasing bridled emotions. When emotions have surfaced, the student must have the means in which to deal with such recognition. Students are often asked if they would like to share their findings. In order for this to take place, a safe environment, free from criticism, has to be established to allow students to feel comfortable in sharing.

This phase of the improvisation lesson is important when preparing for practical performance application. Through verbal discussions, I may ask students to brainstorm about potential performance possibilities and ask questions such as the following:

- How could this type of abstract movement be used in a production?
- If you felt an emotion doing the movement, do you think an audience would have a similar interpretation? If so/not, why?
- Would the same emotional response be conveyed if performers were to “set” or choreograph a piece based upon this improvisation?
- Can abstract movement communicate? What does it (abstract movement) say?
- Could you apply these findings to characters in realistic plays? If so, how?

These types of questions are critical for the student actor to understand how improvisation can be used in the creative process.

In conclusion, the role of improvisation in movement study is crucial to an actor’s unification of mind and body. Kinesthetic awareness allows the actor to become aware of what his body is doing. Through the process of personal investigation the actor recognizes that movement is emotionally charged, or authentic. This eventually equips the student with



the kinesthetic and emotional knowledge to compose real, alive, and heart-felt performances on stage.

### **Laban I**

In pursuing the cognizance of the body-mind connection, the *Dancing for the Actor* program implements the tremendous contributions of Rudolf Von Laban, pioneer of movement analysis. Laban's work provides us with a language in which to describe, comprehend, and express movement. Laban's Movement Analysis (LMA) has influenced industrial labor, psycho-movement therapy, and artistic movement performances. The focus of this course is to integrate Laban's teachings into a format that provides acting students with the mechanisms to self-analyze movement, observe the movement of others, and determine motivational forces behind such movement. Laban's notation system will be touched upon; in that, actors sometimes use this method in noting blocking. The additional contributions of Irmgard Bartenieff will be included in this course.

Rudolf Von Laban devised a vocabulary in which to describe movement. He went on to theorize that "Man moves in order to satisfy a need" (Laban 55). This approach to understanding the motivation behind movement is the main reason to dedicate an entire semester studying Laban's principles. In Jean Newlove's guidebook, *Laban for Actors and Dancer: Putting Laban's Movement Theory into Practice*, he writes,

Laban looked upon movement as a two way language process through which the human body could communicate by giving and receiving messages. He believed an understanding of this neglected language would lead to a better means of understanding people...By observing and analyzing movements (which can be

conscious or unconscious), it is possible to recognize the need of the mover and to become aware of his inner attitude which precedes the action (11).

This inherent ability of non-disabled humans to choose their movements is critical to the training of an actor. Once student actors have obtained a command of their physical bodies (physical training) and understood the emotional connections to such movement (improvisation), this phase of the *Dancing for the Actor* program teaches them *why* certain movements are chosen by an individual.

Students begin this process by first learning how to observe movement, thus analyzing *how* people move. This initial portion will focus on the explanation and comprehension of Laban's Movement Analysis. Specifically, *Effort, Shape, Time, Weight and Space* will be analyzed in terms of theory, observation and practice. I will use Newlove's guidebook, as I have found this book to be most applicable. This book gears its explanation of theory to a practical means. Therefore, each element of Laban's work is supplemented with exercises to be used in the classroom. For instance, one of the eight basic effort actions established by Laban is *thrusting*. Newlove recommends the following activity to facilitate the lesson on *thrusting*:

Thrusting or Punching: Direct, Sudden, Strong

Thrusting can be performed with bound or free flow.

1. Try making a fist of the hands and punch forcibly at some imaginary object. The main zone for this exercise is punching with one arm and fist across the body attacking a target deep (low) backward.
2. Thrusting (punching) with the legs becomes stamping.
3. Try with other parts of the body, head-butting, elbows, shoulders, knees and hips.

4. Explore your kinesphere in all directions and zones, using the parts of your body simultaneously or alternately. One doesn't need to remain standing. It is possible to punch in a kneeling, lying, or sitting position. In a lying position, the feet can punch into the air (83-84).

Newlove further explains muscular relationships to *Weight, Space* and *Time*, and the conclusions this establishes for human execution of this type of *Effort*:

With a real target, one encounters a natural resistance; the most obvious examples are a punch-bag used by boxers or two fighters in the ring. Where there is no concrete object to resist our punch, we need the counter-tension of the antagonistic muscles, which should be felt throughout the body, no matter what part of it is leading the action. The essential characteristics in punching involve fighting against *Weight, Space* and *Time*. Therefore, there is no indulgence in this action, no yielding either to lightness of flexibility and no yielding to sustainment of the movement. An abrupt or sudden muscular reaction prevails in quick movements, including such actions as flicking, slashing, dabbing, and, of course, thrusting (84).

As this example demonstrates, this text compliments the exploratory nature of the *Dancing for the Actor* program, in which students learn by doing, or physically experiencing movement.

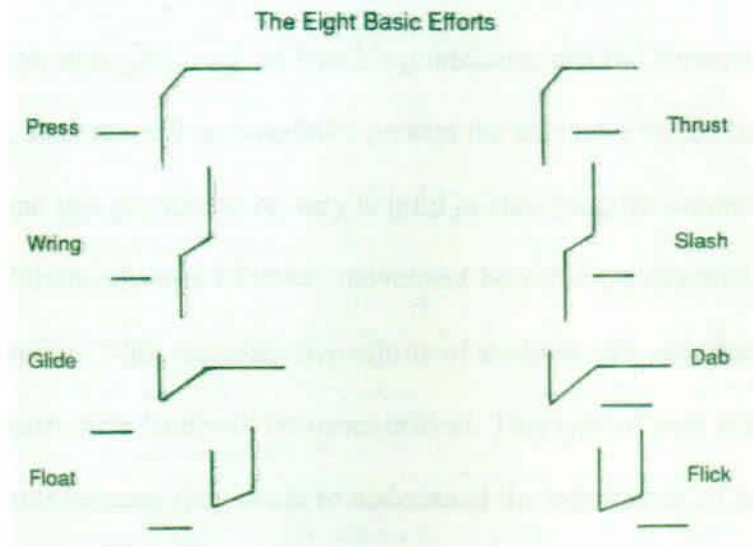
In addition, I would develop assignments based upon Laban's "Categories for Movement Observation" [appendix I] and Dr. Bloch's "Movement Observation Guidelines"[appendix H]. This guide for analysis organizes student movement observations into respective Laban categories and then assists the students in writing a paper to respond to

these findings. This technique is a good exercise to reveal students' proficiency in using Laban's terminology, as well as their inferences as to why certain movement takes place. Furthermore, having students generate papers is an additional instructional strategy, which addresses the multiple styles of learning that coexist within the classroom.

In discovering *why* people move in certain ways, the teachings of Irmgard Bartenieff will be implemented. Bartenieff addresses the idea of motivation in her book, *Body Movement: Coping with the Environment*. In this book she discusses the "Bartenieff Fundamentals," which are six specific body exercises that she has "designed to enable individuals to unify their perceptions of three simultaneous activities: breathing, muscular fluctuation and feeling" (Levy 142). These exercises will be taught to students because they provide a bridge that connects Laban's analysis and personal motivation. Fran Levy writes, "The Fundamentals grew out of Bartenieff's early-held belief that contacting the motivational aspect of the individual's movement is the key to integrating physical expression with emotional expression, that is, unifying body and mind" (Levy 144). It is no surprise to note that Irmgard Bartenieff was a pupil of Laban's and is attributed with bringing Laban's principles to the United States. These studies are still practiced at the Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies in New York City.

Laban's notation system, "Labanotation" or "kinetography" is important to learn to the extent in which students may be able to use this type of shorthand in writing blocking in the narrow margins of a script. This notation was tantamount to the recording of many movement performances before video recording became so accessible. The purpose of this course is not to teach the entire notation method; rather it is intended to give basic

techniques that are simplified from its original version. The following diagram illustrates Newlove's version of the *Eight Basic Effort Actions* as discussed:



(Newlove 75).

It is easily recognized how this notation could be quickly written, yet represents a complex set of movement principles.

The final phase of this course deals with the practical application of these techniques in students' work on characterization. Using LMA to create characters will allow students to approach a character from the "outside – in," or external - internal, or physical-psychological. In essence, students will simultaneously discover the *how* and *why* characters move. One excellent worksheet that assists students in making these connections is the "Personal/Character Preferences" worksheet [appendix E]. In this chart, students are able to term movements and list personal tendencies along side character preferences. Therefore, they are able to compare their own movement qualities to the desirable movement qualities of the character they are creating. Listing a character's movement preferences organizes student actors' choices.

In addition, students will have an opportunity to prepare characters in the classroom for in-class performances. In this, students choose characters from plays and prepare movement profiles on these characters. At this point students have a variety of tools to assist in their observation strategies, such as Bloch's guidelines, and the Personal/Character worksheet. First, students will non-verbally present the character within the context of a scene. I have found this practice to be very helpful in clarifying the communicative function of movement. With the absence of voice, movement becomes the dominating factor in expressing motivation. With the collective efforts of students who are observing the non-verbal scene, constructive feedback becomes critical. This type of peer reinforcement encourages students because they begin to understand the importance of movement communication from the perspective of the audience as well as the performer. After successfully completing this phase of application, students are asked to prepare the same scene with the inclusion of dialogue. This way, students can question whether or not the use of dialogue alters their movements. I do not have the answer to this, as this can only be determined by the individual. In fact, each character may present unique challenges, and this process may be different for various characters as well as the individual actor portraying them.

Moreover, Laban's contributions to the study of movement can not be underestimated. Having a vocabulary in which to discuss and record movement is a valuable asset to actors. This knowledge allows them to expand their potential for self-analysis, personal character preparation, and can greatly enhance the rehearsal process. Ideally, directors and actors would be able to communicate to each other using these terms, thus improving actor-director communication. The language developed by Laban allows

performance artists to observe, interpret, and present movement, all of which are crucial to effective movement communication.

## Chapter 6

### Performance Workshop \*

Some of the most fascinating work I viewed as a college student were the student productions, directed and performed by my peers. In a studio setting, students were able to choose and direct shows of their choice. Proposals were submitted the semester prior to production and given to the professor who taught the directing class. Students then began the process of creating their show. As a viewer and participant in these studio productions, I witnessed the important educational function this process served and the final sense of personal accomplishment felt by those who participated.

The final phase of the *Dancing for the Actor* program is the performance workshop. The asterisk indicates that this course could be repeated for credit. Therefore, students may direct or participate in more than one production. In this, students are choosing, composing, directing, and performing in one-act productions, which are heavily movement oriented.

These forty-five to sixty minute productions can be taken from existing works, or be original creations, developed by the student. For instance, the Kurt Weil and Bertolt Brecht piece, *Seven Deadly Sins of the Petty Bourgeoisie* is a short operetta performed with a group of dancers. In this piece, two sisters are on a journey to obtain money and buy a house. In their travels they encounter the seven deadly sins. In this operetta the chorus of dancers play multiple parts throughout the story, representing the various "sins." The balance between music and dance provide wonderful potential for exploration and creativity, and lend itself to a highly collaborative effort.



Students are also encouraged to create their own movement pieces. I might suggest that students choose a theme around which to base their choreography. For instance, students might choose to use Shakespearean plays as their medium. In this, students could choose a section of Shakespearean dialogue and devise a movement piece, which represents the theme (or idea) within that portion of the script. For example, a student could use the “to be or not to be” speech from *Hamlet*, and compose a movement piece, symbolic of the internal struggle experienced by the main character. Another possibility is that students might choose several sections from Shakespearean plays and link them together to develop a forty-five to sixty minute performance. In addition, students may want to try implementing Shakespeare’s language and allow the dancers to intermittently speak the dialogue. This could allow for an exercise in rhythm, as the poetic quality of Shakespeare’s language lends itself to this type of exploration.

Whether choosing to perform an existing work, or creating an original piece, there are infinite possibilities. This performance workshop is the compilation of all that students have learned in the *Dancing for the Actor* program and should be a positive, progressive step in the training process. These student-centered productions can encourage and foster artistic expression. More importantly, these productions teach students that they can “take charge” of their own artistic futures. When students have the support of faculty and peers, they may be willing to “take risks” or challenge their creative potential. When students’ are given a safe environment in which to “test their own strengths,” personal growth and development can take place which, ultimately leads to an increase in self-esteem and sense of worthiness. With such healthy self-perceptions, the likelihood of continued discovery and artistic success seems even greater.

## Chapter 7

### Assessment

Defining art is nearly impossible, other than the token phrase “Art is ambiguous.” Assessing artistic endeavors is equally challenging. How does a teacher grade individual compositions, for example? The inherent nature of originality leads one to believe that “evaluation of creation” is impossible. The proposed assessment strategies in this section take into account the difficulty of quantifying art, yet strive to meet the reality of grades. Because this curriculum exists in a college or university setting, there are no standards for evaluation. Consequently, teachers and departments must devise criteria, materials, and procedures for assessing students’ work. These are general suggestions; in that, these theories can be applied to many areas of the *Dancing for the Actor* program which require evaluation.

I would have to use the term “performance assessment” to summarize the type of evaluation system I would use throughout the *Dancing for the Actor* program. In the text *Content Reading and Literacy: Succeeding in Today’s Diverse Classroom*, Donna Alvermann and Stephen Phelps define performance assessment by first introducing the idea of “authentic assessment.” They write, “Teacher observations, teacher-student conferences, student journals, portfolios, inquiry projects, exhibitions, hands-on activity, open-ended problem solving, essay questions, and performances are some means of authentic assessment” (142). Therefore, authentic assessment looks at students’ behavior and progress throughout the course. Such activities lend themselves to evaluating students’ abilities as they relate to “real world” applications. By contrast, the multiple choice questions, such as those found in standardized testing, would not be a practical measurement of student

achievement. Rather, the method of evaluating must match the approach used in teaching and learning. As stated throughout this thesis, the emphasis of the *Dancing for the Actor* program is **learning by doing**. Ideally, an appropriate format of assessment would measure the degree in which students have progressed in terms of individual growth.

Yet, there must be some way in which individual growth can be quantified. I have utilized (and recommend) performance assessment. According to Alvermann and Phelps, ...many performance tasks would look identical to what we have described as authentic assessment. The difference is that *performance assessments* are graded according to externally established criteria and students usually achieve some benchmark score as an index of competency in the area being tested (144).

As a result, the activities generated in authentic assessment are graded, according to criteria established by the teacher. This system benefits both teachers and students as the guidelines for achievement are clearly stated.

One type of mechanism which I have used in my classes at Carroll College, is the implementation of *rubrics*. This is simply an outline or chart used to set benchmarks for judging student performances. An example is included in appendix D, and a portion of this is below:

Skill	Possible Points	Points Earned
Student clearly demonstrated understanding of <i>Space</i> in at least five examples	5	5

As this section of a rubric illustrates, students' work will be categorized according to the objectives established in the assignment. Specifically, each section of the rubric analyzes

three areas of student achievement: technical, creative, and individual growth. Regarding technical aspects, students will need to demonstrate a clear understanding or competency of subject matter. Secondly, students will be graded on the creativity evident in their work. Because of the ambiguity inherent in the term “creative,” there are specific criteria for each assignment, which the instructor determines as evidence of creative efforts. Thirdly, students are graded on their individual growth and progress. Did the student show concentrated effort, and marked improvements? I would like to point out that I consider this area be of equally value, and is weighted as heavily as the other categories of assessment. It is most important for teachers to add a section for instructor comments at the end of the page. This type of written communication between students and teachers is a wonderful way to reinforce progressive efforts, as well as make suggestions for improvement.

In addition, I would recommend the use of portfolios, particularly in the performance workshops. In this, students who are working towards credit (directors, actors, dancers, etc.) should submit a comprehensive portfolio, which represents their participation in a given performance. Students should focus on writing narratives about their experiences, contributions, and what they have learned throughout the process of this student-centered production. Included in this portfolio (but not limited to) should be newspaper clippings, daily rehearsal logs, photographs, and any other materials students feel may be important. This example of performance assessment would allow teachers to understand the process students went through and then accurately measure what students have learned. In addition, I would submit rubrics or a list of criteria in the beginning of the semester, so students are well aware of the objectives of the course and expectations of the instructor.

Assigning numerical or alphabetical grades is the traditional and accepted form of recording students' achievements. The methodology described thus far lends itself to the application of a point system, averaged in accordance with a weighted scale. For example, the Dance Technique course I taught at Carroll College lists the percentiles appointed to categories of evaluation.

#### GRADING

CLASS PARTICIPATION, ATTITUDE, AND CREATIVITY are the primary determinants of your grade in this course. Your grade will be based on class participation/attendance (40%), spontaneous auditions 2 (15%), mid-term (20 %), final project (25%).

I would suggest that the majority of classes in the *Dancing for the Actor* program place a great percentage of students' grades on class participation. As stated previously, this program is set up to manifest learning through the process of doing. Therefore, students need to attend and participate in class activities, explorations, and observations. This is a performance program, and students need to physically experience content in order to be successful in this program. The additional areas of evaluation are important and support the multiple styles in which students learn. However, quizzes and papers do not match up to undisputed significance of doing.

Moreover, assessing artistic performances seems to be something that only critics enjoy. Nevertheless, grades are a reality for all educators and students. The process of grading can be less bothersome if the system supports learning, co-existing as a compliment to classroom activities, not an invasive agent that halts and inhibits the learning process. Grading can be perceived as an opportunity to initiate teacher-student communication. Graded experiences can be viewed as periodic checks or indicators of students' progress, thus, enabling them to become independent learners and responsible for their own educational success.

## Chapter 8

### Conclusion

The *Dancing for the Actor* program is and should always remain a work-in-progress. As the demands of theater departments and the needs of a diverse student population vary from school to school, this thesis can serve as an outline of principles and theories which existing theater programs can implement. Success and interest have been demonstrated in classroom experiences where these concepts have been introduced.

As periodically discussed throughout this thesis, I have integrated these concepts in one-credit workshops at Carroll College in Waukesha, Wisconsin. At Carroll, the Dance Technique course included ballet and jazz fundamentals, as well as basic Laban and Movement Improvisation. Needless to say, a one-credit course only allowed for a rudimentary introduction to such complex concepts, but faculty and students expressed great interest in the continuation of such course work. Included in appendix E are examples of students' final evaluations, which clearly state their opinions and approval of this approach to actor training. When asked to comment upon what students learned in this course, students frequently wrote such things as,

- “This course helps us as actors become more aware of our bodies, and the way we use movement to emotionally impact an audience...”
- “...we learned how to think more creatively...”
- “This course challenged my body and my mind...”
- “...learned a new way of expression through dance”

I was pleased to see that students (even within the limitations of a one-credit course) had begun to embrace the principles and useful applications this course offered to theater students.

Similarly, when writing about the weakness of this course students often expressed their desire to continue and expand this program by implementing more courses. Student evaluations include comments such as,

- “No continuation of this course...”
- “More classes like this should be offered and it should weigh more than one-credit.
- “Since course in only one-credit we are unable to expand on certain elements of interest ...”

It would appear that students gravitate towards this approach to actor training. For these Carroll students, this course provided a fresh approach to learning that benefited students’ creative potential.

Likewise, staff often expressed interest and acknowledged the impact these courses were having on students. On one occasion, the chair of the department observed a course in order to simulate the Dance Technique I vocabulary and pedagogical techniques in his rehearsal process. Consequently, the chair of the department communicated an interest in expanding the program, but funding was not available to support such inclusion.

As stated previously, this thesis should serve as a guideline to the principles and theories that make up the *Dancing for the Actor* program. This thesis indicates and suggests a sequential order of courses as they pertain to students’ awareness, cognizance, and physical development. The inherent flexibility of the work-in-progress status allows for

programs to tailor individual courses to meet specific departmental and student needs. Instructor interpretation and ingenuity is imperative to the overall success of these courses. This presentation of the *Dancing for the Actor* program is intentionally open-ended, as to allow for instructor freedom, as teachers' styles vary as greatly as the multiple learning styles of their students.

The inspiration for the development of this program has occurred over years of working with the hypothetical and realistic situations that present themselves in the theater. Over time, my hypothesis that mind and body unification could greatly assist the actor became invariably more clear. As I began to observe the work of others, I saw an overwhelming majority of actors mentally strain to intellectualize what would eventually have to be physicalized. I gradually began to transcend all that I had experienced in the study of dance training with all that I had learned in the study of acting. It occurred to me that a marriage between the two art forms could exist, and that is how the *Dancing for the Actor* program was created.



## **Appendix A**

*Functions of Dance, derived from Rudolf Von Laban*

*Compiled by Dr. Alice Bloch*

### **Functions of Dance**

1. **ART FORM:** an outlet for personal creativity and/or cultural expression, focusing on pure movement, personal expression, or both.
2. **POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT:** appealing to a broad audience. Note: popularity and art are not mutually exclusive!
3. **SOCIAL/POLITICAL:** illustrates and reinforces social structure and relationships in the society -- i.e., kings and commoners, men and women.
4. **RELIGIOUS WORSHIP:** as ritual and a direct means of communicating with the gods.
5. **PSYCHOLOGICAL (PERSONAL EXPRESSION):** expresses the feelings of the choreographer and/or the characters in the dance about their life experience.

## **Appendix B**

### *Characteristics of Dance, derived from Rudolf Von Laban*

*Compiled by Dr. Alice Bloch*

1. **USES THE HUMAN BODY AS THE MEDIUM OF EXPRESSION**
2. **EXTENDS THROUGH TIME:** Dance is not a frozen tableau or picture of movement. It is a continuing sequence of activity that may take only a few moments, or may last for hours or days.
3. **EXISTS IN SPACE:** Dance is three-dimensional; it exists in the general space of a ballroom floor, stage, or village square and the personal space of the dancer.
4. **POSSESSES DYNAMICS:** Dance is the result of energy expenditure. The amount of energy and the quality with which it is released by the dancers creates the dynamic flow of dance.
5. **ACCOMPANIED BY RHYTHM:** Dance is rhythmically patterned, performed most often to music, chanting, hand-clapping, or percussion. Even when it is performed in silence or to words, it still has rhythmic structure.
6. **SERVES TO COMMUNICATE:** It may tell stories, as does ballet, or express personal emotion and physical exuberance. Even abstract dances convey a kind of meaning to audience members as they respond to the movement in personal terms.
7. **HAS MOVEMENT STYLE AND FORM:** the styles of dance ritual, modern dance, ballet, and jazz have characteristic methods of movement, as do individual dances within those styles.

## Appendix C

### *Video Observation Worksheet*

- I. Factual Information
  - A. Name of Performance
  - B. Name of Dancers
  - C. Name of Choreographer
- II. Era
  - A. Time (Year) as it relates to Style of dance
  - B. Influential Medium
- III. Relationship of Music to Dance
  - A. Composer's Name
  - B. Type of Orchestration
  - C. Time (tempo, dynamics and accents, integration with dance)
- IV. Stylization
  - A. Number of Dancer(s)
  - B. Use of Space (stage area, personal, levels)
  - C. Quality of Dance (Energy)
  - D. Use of Props and Costuming
  - E. Scenic Contributions
  - F. Function

**Appendix D**  
 Example of Student Critique  
 Using Video Observation Worksheet



Video Observation

THE 200

- I. Factual Information
  - A. Tap Dogs
  - B. Dancers
    1. Dein Perry
    2. Ben Read
    3. Nathan Sheens
    4. Gerry Symonds
    5. Drew Kaluski
    6. Darren Disney
  - C. Choreographer – Dein Perry
- II. Era
  - A. Modern
  - B. Influential Medium
    1. New scenic design elements
    2. Greater interest in “fancy footwork” i.e. Riverdance, Stomp
- III. Relationship of Music to Dance
  - A. Music Composed by Andrew Wilke
  - B. Instrumental Orchestration to allow for the Taps to be the solos
  - C. Time
    1. The tempo of the taps was extremely fast the entire time, while many times the music was rather slow and melodious.
    2. Most of the time the music was non-existent, but when it was, the tapping did not correspond to what the music was doing. It sounded like they were doing two completely separate performances.
    3. The dynamics and accents were placed where the performers wanted them, not in correlation to the music. Usually an accent signified the end of a piece.
- IV. Stylization
  - A. The first piece used five dancers, but the total numbers of dancers was six.
  - B. Use of space
    1. For most of the performance, the apron of the stage was used.
    2. The space between dancers varied from being spread apart to extremely close, both side to side and front to back.
  - C. Quality of dance- percussive
  - D. Placement of weight was low for the most part.
  - E. Many props were used to add to the overall effect
    1. A basketball was bounced while the performer also tapped, adding to the rhythm and percussion.
    2. 6 little red boxes were placed in a line which, when stepped on, made different percussive sounds. These were used in two routines

*Appendix D continued*

3. Water was poured into a little trough, in which the dancers tapped, splashing water over the audience.
- F. The staging was altered to change the visual effect and the difficulty of the dancing.
1. Multiple types of flooring
    - a. wood
    - b. steel
    - c. ladders
  2. First the apron was used and a small platform.
  3. Then the platform split into two pieces with a jagged crack down the middle.
  4. Scaffolding was built, and a dancer hung himself upside-down while he tapped on the ceiling.
  5. Planks of the stage were hoisted up at an angle by ropes, on which the dancers tapped.
  6. The planks were fully raised to vertical, with a ladder on the underside, which the dancers used.
- G. The purpose of the dance was form, there was no forward action. There was a slight plot when the dancer tapped on the ceiling in a competition with a dancer directly below him.

## Appendix E

### *Musical Theater Trade Books*

[www.dancebooks.co.uk](http://www.dancebooks.co.uk) - Catalogue

Beddow, Margery. *Bob Fosse's Broadway*. Hampshire: Dance Books Ltd., 1996. A brief show-by-show analysis of Fosse's work on Broadway.

Conrad, Christine. *Jerome Robbins: That Broadway Man*. Hampshire: Dance Books Ltd., 2000. An impressionistic and innovative mix of photographs and graphics with Robbins' own words and writings builds a detailed portrait of a complex personality.

Henderson, Amy & Dwight Blocker Bowers. *Red, Hot & Blue: A Smithsonian Salute to the American Musical*. Hampshire: Dance Books Ltd., 1996. Chronicling the "fine romance" between audience and performers, this beautifully printed book follows the histories of the Broadway and Hollywood musicals from their origins to the present day. Nearly three hundred illustrations, many in color.

## Appendix F

### *Example Syllabus for Dance Technique I*

#### **Used at Carroll College, 1999-2000**

Syllabus for THE 200  
Theatre Workshop in Dance Technique I  
Instructor: Ann Marie Gay-Baradic  
Monday and Wednesday 1:00-2:20

Course Objectives: Students will –

1. Manifest their understanding of the basic principles of ballet and jazz dance through teacher directed movements.
2. Increase their dance terminology through oral, physical, and written execution of the basic ballet/jazz fundamentals.
3. Develop skills to efficiently learn and perform extended movement sequences (choreography) of increasing complexity as it relates to their personal learning methods.
4. Understand safe uses of the body through the elements of alignment, stretching and basic locomotive movements.
5. Develop the ability to create movement using dance elements discussed in class.
6. Cultivate and manifest group awareness and responsibility through non-judgmental witnessing and critiquing of classmate's experiments and performances.
7. Attain a basic comprehension of various styles of ballet/jazz dance.

#### CALENDAR

NOTE: Once a movement has been learned it will be incorporated in combinations throughout the semester. Topics are listed on the calendar as they are introduced.

#### UNITS

1. Section overview, warm-up, stretching, alignment  
Ballet: body awareness (outward rotation), plie', tendu, releve'  
Classical Positions of Ballet
2. Lecture: The Origins of Classical Ballet  
Ballet: degage', glissade,  
Enabling Combination (Combo 1)
3. Lecture: Origins of Jazz/Ballet Dance  
Enabling Exercise: 6 Characteristics of Jazz Dance  
Jazz: Isolations, Opposition  
Review Combo 1 –

*Appendix F continued*

4. Lecture: Time (syncopation, rhythm, metered phrases), Relationship of Dance to Music  
 Ballet: chasse', balance', suture turn  
 Jazz: Lindy, "spotting", chaine' turns  
 Enabling Combination (Combo 2)
5. Terminology Assignment Given  
 Review of 5 French Classical Ballet Positions  
 Review Combo 1,2  
 Jazz: jazz square, triplet
6. Review for Midterm
7. Mid-term Exam: 3 parts: (1) Execution of Combo 1, 2, (2) terminology quiz, (3) mock auditions
8. Lecture: Qualities of Dance, Rudolf Laban  
 Enabling Improvisational Exercises  
 In-class Studies on Composition  
 Review of Technique
9. Lecture: shape  
 Enabling Improvisational Exercises  
 In class Studies on Composition  
 Review of Technique
10. Lecture: space  
 Enabling Improvisational Exercises  
 In class Studies on Composition  
 Review of Technique
11. Composition Assignment given  
 In class work on Compositions ( No music)
12. Viewing of Compositions
13. Review for Final Exam
14. Final Exam: 3 Parts (1) Combo 1 or 2 , (2) terminology quiz, (3) choice of compositions or audition sequence  
 Final Exam will be given on last week of classes



## Appendix G

### *Example Vocabulary Sheet – Dance Technique I*

#### **DANCE VOCABULARY**

##### **I. Dance Elements**

###### **A. Quality**

1. Sustained:
2. Percussive:
3. Vibratory:
4. Suspension:
5. Collapse:
6. Swing:

###### **B. Space**

1. Levels
2. Paths

###### **C. Shape**

1. Circular
2. Angular
3. Linear

##### **II. French Ballet Terms**

Plie':

Releve':

Tendu:

Degage:

Chasse:

Chaine':

Glissade:

## Appendix H

### *Example Syllabus for Tap I*

#### **Used at Carroll College, 1999-2000**

Syllabus for THE 200  
Theatre Workshop in Tap I  
Instructor: Ann Marie Gay-Baradic  
Class Times: Mon. and Wed., 2:30-3:50

Course Objective: Students will-

1. Manifest their understanding of the basic principles of tap dance through teacher-directed movements.
2. Increase their dance terminology through oral, physical, and written execution of the basic tap fundamentals.
3. Develop skills to efficiently learn and perform extended movement sequences (choreography) of increasing complexity as it relates to their personal learning methods.
4. Understand safe uses of the body through the elements of alignment, stretching, and basic locomotive movement.
5. Develop the ability to create movement using tap elements discussed in class.
6. Understand the elements of time and rhythm as they relate to tap dance.
7. Cultivate and manifest group awareness and responsibility through non-judgmental witnessing and critiquing of classmates' experiments and performances.
8. Attain a basic comprehension of various styles of tap dance.

#### CALENDAR

NOTE: Once a movement has been learned it will be incorporated in combinations throughout the semester. Topics are listed on the calendar as they are introduced.

#### UNITS

1. Section overview, shoe purchasing, warm-up, stretch  
Discussion of time: tempo, rhythm, and metronome (In class enabling activity)  
Definitions of numerical "tones" as termed in tap dance  
Steps (one-toned): tap, step, brush, heel, toe, stomp, hop
2. Discussion of music and how it relates to tap dance.  
Review of one-toned steps  
Steps (two-toned): flap, shuffle, toe-heel, heel slap, ball change (traveling across the floor)  
Introduction to combinations/sequences of steps (Combo 1)  
**SHOE MONEY MUST BE PAID BY SECOND DAY OF CLASS!!!**  
Continued combinations for technical exercises

*Appendix H continued*

- Steps (three-toned): shuffle hop, step shuffle, shuffle step, flap heel, hop shuffle  
 Enabling combination (Combo 2)  
 Continued work on reversing steps  
 Discussion on "clarity of sound"
3. Step (four-toned): shuffle ball change, shuffle hop step, flap ball change, toe-heel ball change, Enabling Combination (Combo 3)  
 Review of all combinations  
 Discussion on audition techniques
  4. Steps (more than four tones): consecutive shuffle steps, shuffle ball change shuffle step, shuffle ball change shuffle hop step,  
 Continued work on across the floor: consecutive flaps, flap ball change, flap heel  
 Review all combinations
  5. Review: terminology, combinations, in class study
  6. Review for Mid-term
  7. Mid-term: 3 parts- (1) execution of all 3 combinations, (2) terminology (3) in class choreography/ audition style
  8. Introduction to tap dance "Master Blaster"  
 (Steps typically in 3 to 4 sets of 8)  
 1 Steps 1,2
  9. "Master Blaster" steps: 3,4  
 Review
  10. "Master Blaster" steps: 5,6
  11. "Master Blaster" steps: 7,8
  12. "Master Blaster" Review
  13. Review for final exam: 3 combinations, Master Blaster Dance, audition choreography
  14. Final Exam

## Appendix I

### *Categories for Movement Observation, derived from Rudolf Von Laban*

*Compiled by Dr. Alice Bloch*

1. BODY CARRIAGE: erect, slumped, stiff, leaning, compressed, etc.
2. USE OF THE BODY: One-sided or equal. One part used more than rest, right or left handed, repetitious gestures, etc. WHERE IS THE CENTER?
3. USE OF SPACE: Weight and body part shifts in same or different directions, directed more inward or outward, gestures expansive or compressed, in straight or curved paths, complete or incomplete, etc.
4. USE OF TIME: Fast or slow, repeated or varied rhythm, many different movement combinations or few, seems to have enough time or seems rushed.
5. USE OF HARMONY OR DISHARMONY: Flowing or disjointed movements, harmonious relation of body parts or some parts fighting movement flow, easy graceful movements, or tight and restricted.
6. USE OF DYNAMICS: Percussive, vibratory, pushing and pulling, slashing movements, hesitations, and/or smooth, swinging or swaying movements.
7. ADAPTION TO OTHERS: Leaning towards others or holding back, responsive or unresponsive movements, movements and rhythms same or different from others, movements appropriate to situation, agitated or relaxed, involved or separate from group, gets close or maintains distance.
8. USE OF BASIC MOVEMENTS: Basic locomotor movements, standing, sitting, walking, running, jumping.
9. CHARACTERISTIC GESTURES: Functional (brushing teeth, combing hair), social (waves, handshakes), habitual (tapping foot, fooling with hair), emotional (clenched fists, smiles), shadow gestures (happy smiles but fists are clenched).
10. USE OF BODY PARTS: Shoulders pulled back or slumped, legs wide apart or close, arms moving freely or tight, etc.

## Appendix J

### *Dr. Bloch's Movement Observation Guidelines*

#### *Adaptation by Gay-Baradic*

1. Do three observations. Use a minimum of three categories for each observation.
2. Choose different people for each observation, for a variety of age, gender, race, class activity, and situation.
3. **Observe. Do not interpret. Be aware of your prejudices and avoid them in your analysis.** If you become aware of a judgment, ("women are more delicate than men," "the elderly are always stiff,") include them in your written analysis and describe the difference between your preconceptions and what was actually there.
4. Try to be aware of any emotional responses you may have to what you are seeing, and journal.
5. Use people you don't know, and try not to let them notice you are observing them.
6. Begin by describing the situation you are observing. Refer to demographics. Indicate your choice of movement observation categories for each subject, and then discuss you subject's tendencies fully in terms of the categories. Be as clear as possible in differentiating movements.
7. If you had the opportunity to expand their range of motion and movement vocabulary, what would you encourage them to do?
8. Be prepared to demonstrate to the class the basic postural, and locomotor observations of each person. Feel free to include gestural habits (even if you haven't written on these). Be able to describe how you might utilize this observation in character preparation.
9. Note in your journal what you have learned.

**Appendix K**

*Personal/Character Preference Worksheet*  
 Derived from Rudolf Von Laban, compiled by Jimmyle Listenbee

**Personal / Character Preferences**

	<b>Personal Preferences</b>	<b>Character Preferences</b>
<b>Body level</b>		
Connections	_____	_____
head-tail	_____	_____
heel-sit	_____	_____
scapula-hand	_____	_____
Weight shift	_____	_____
Bi lateral	_____	_____
x-lateral	_____	_____
Breath support	_____	_____
Core/distal	_____	_____
Body attitude	_____	_____
Sequencing	_____	_____
other	_____	_____
<b>Modes of Shape</b>		
Shape flow	_____	_____
Spoking	_____	_____
Arching	_____	_____
Carving	_____	_____
<b>Space</b>		
Points	_____	_____
Dimensions	_____	_____
Diagonals	_____	_____
Planes	_____	_____
Scales	_____	_____
Spatial intent	_____	_____
Kinesphere	_____	_____
near/mid/farreach	_____	_____
<b>Effort</b>		
Flow	_____	_____
Free	_____	_____
Bound	_____	_____
Space	_____	_____
Indirect	_____	_____
Direct	_____	_____
Weight	_____	_____
Light	_____	_____
Strong	_____	_____
Time	_____	_____
Sustained	_____	_____
Quick	_____	_____
States	_____	_____
Dream	_____	_____
Awake	_____	_____
Remote	_____	_____
Near	_____	_____
Mobile	_____	_____
Stable	_____	_____
Drives	_____	_____
Action	_____	_____
Vision	_____	_____
Passion	_____	_____
Spell	_____	_____

## Appendix L

## Example Rubrics

	Skill	Possible Points	Points Earned
<b>Technical Aspects</b>	Duration: at least 45 seconds	5	
	Space: clearly demonstrated understanding in at least five variations	5	
	Shape: clearly demonstrated understanding in at least five variations	5	
<b>Creative Aspects</b>	Use of dynamics and accents	5	
	Movements varied	5	
	Idea/Theme: implemented and effectively communicated (optional)	5 (optional)	
<b>Individual growth</b>	Expanded personal movement potential	5	
	Demonstrated improvement/effort	5	
<b>Total Points Earned:</b>			

Comments:

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment: Mini-performance of Shape, Space

## Appendix M

### *Students' Course/Instructor Evaluations*

#### **From Carroll College, Dance Technique I and Tap I courses 1999-2000**

##### **PART II**

Responses to this evaluation will be reviewed by your instructor after grades have been filed. Authorized individuals and committees will review and make personnel decisions on contract renewals, tenure and promotion, as appropriate, based on your responses. Your responses will be taken very seriously.

Instructions: In the spaces provided, please respond to these four questions.

4 What were the strengths of this course?

Dance - it's vital to theatre instruction and there needs to be many more courses like this in the future. It would be best to start implementing an even more structured dance curriculum into Carroll's theatre environment as it applies directly and inherently to the major and the professional world.

5 What were the weaknesses of this course?

It should meet every day and be more than one credit. Plus, we need more classes like this.

6 What were the strengths of this instructor?

She's very realistic and professional. She has A LOT to offer the Carroll Theatre Dept. and I hope that she is one of the key people who decide where the dance program is going since she is so knowledgeable.

7 What were the weaknesses of this instructor?

None - she's fantastic!



## Appendix M continued

## PART II

Responses to this evaluation will be reviewed by your instructor after grades have been filed. Authorized individuals and committees will review and make personnel decisions on contract renewals, tenure and promotion, as appropriate, based on your responses. Your responses will be taken very seriously.

Instructions: In the spaces provided, please respond to these four questions.

4 What were the strengths of this course?

My favorite class by far!  
 I learned how to tap dance.  
 Very good approach for beginners, as in breaking down the steps and starting slow, yet as improvements were made, progress sped up and allowed for maximum learning.

5 What were the weaknesses of this course?

Need more classes like this.

6 What were the strengths of this instructor?

Very knowledgeable.  
 Excellent teacher. Understands the different abilities of the students, but doesn't hold the more experienced back while working with the beginners.

7 What were the weaknesses of this instructor?

None

## Appendix M continued

## PART II

Responses to this evaluation will be reviewed by your instructor after grades have been filed. Authorized individuals and committees will review and make personnel decisions on contract renewals, tenure and promotion, as appropriate, based on your responses. Your responses will be taken very seriously.

Instructions: In the spaces provided, please respond to these four questions.

4 What were the strengths of this course?

- Learned a new way of expression - through dance
- became familiar w/ the basics of ballet + jazz
- learned the history of dance + now have a greater appreciation for it
- Also learned ~~to~~ about movements as an actor,  
↓ ~~to~~ how to make it useful

5 What were the weaknesses of this course?

- Only one credit
- No continuation of the course

6 What were the strengths of this instructor?

- Has a great appreciation for dance as art + influenced our own growing appreciation
- Reviewed movements + terms regularly to help us in learning our combinations
- introduced different people who are important to the history of dance - making the class a little more international

7 What were the weaknesses of this instructor?

## Appendix M continued

Responses to this evaluation will be reviewed by your instructor after grades have been filed. Authorized individuals and committees will review and make personnel decisions on contract renewals, tenure and promotion, as appropriate, based on your responses. Your responses will be taken very seriously.

Instructions: In the spaces provided, please respond to these four questions.

4 What were the strengths of this course?

- ▷ This course helps us as actors become more aware of our bodies, and the way we use movement to emotionally impact an audience.
- ▷ learning how our bodies move is essential in the process of learning about acting, and this course has not only taught us about movement but we have learned how to think more creatively.

5 What were the weaknesses of this course?

Since the course is only a one credit course we are unable to expand on certain elements of interest that we would in a 2 or 4 credit course.

6 What were the strengths of this instructor?

Our instructor is both talented in acting and dance, therefore she is able to explain the usefulness of dance technique, when applying it toward acting.

7 What were the weaknesses of this instructor?

## Appendix N

### Related Web Sites

[www.movingjournal.org](http://www.movingjournal.org)

A Moving Journal: Ongoing Expressions of Authentic Movement  
ISSN: 1088-8195

[www.tcg.org](http://www.tcg.org)

Theater Communications Group (New York)

[www.theatre-dance.edu.edu](http://www.theatre-dance.edu.edu)

Theater curriculum example from the department at East Carolina University

[www.authenticmovement.usa.com](http://www.authenticmovement.usa.com)

Authentic Movement Institute

<http://ipl.sils.umich.edu/>

Internet Public Library

[www.theatre-dance.ecu.edu](http://www.theatre-dance.ecu.edu)

A complete curriculum from East Carolina University

[www.dancebooks.co.uk](http://www.dancebooks.co.uk)

Dance textbook catalogue

[www.dpi.state.wi-us/standards/pdf/dance.pdf](http://www.dpi.state.wi-us/standards/pdf/dance.pdf)

Department of public instruction (Wisconsin) standards for teaching dance at the elementary and secondary levels

[www.discoveryschool.com](http://www.discoveryschool.com)

Link from Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators

[www.artswire.org/Artswire/www/dance/type.html](http://www.artswire.org/Artswire/www/dance/type.html)

List of web references for teaching in the arts

## Appendix O

### *Annotated Bibliography*

Barlow, Wilfred. *The Alexander Technique*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1979. This book outlines the history, theory, and methodology of the Alexander Technique. Hypothetical conclusions to psychological ramifications of the use and mis-use of the Alexander Principle are of particular interest. Photographs and illustrations are provided. The second half of the book puts theory into practice with teaching tools and exercises.

Crisp, Tony. *Mind and Movement, The Practice of Coex*. England: C. W Daniel, 1987. Tony Crisp theorizes and developed a practical approach to understanding the teachings of Carl Jung's Transcendent Function. With similar Western and Eastern movement techniques, Crisp demonstrates approaches to understanding oneself through physical activity and relaxation that unifies mind, body and spirit. Chapter 9 gives a brief history of several multicultural approaches in an historical content to practices that have influenced the author. Unfortunately, no bibliography or list of references is given.

Gibaldi, Joseph. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1999. The MLA style is the accepted form of notating reference sources, quotations, and Internet sites when writing a research paper. This text provides both instructions and examples as to the mechanics of this style.

Grant, Gail. *Technical Manual and Dictionary of Classical Ballet*. New York: Dover, 1982. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. Gail Grant's reference guide provides over 110 ballet poses, movements, and steps that encompass French, Russian, and Cecchetti styles. English pronunciations are given, a literal translation of the word(s) and then a description of the specific pose, movement or step. This book provides great illustrations. The compact size allows the teacher to easily store the book in any folder, or briefcase.

H'Doubler, Margaret N. *Dance – A Creative Art Experience*. Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966. Margaret H'Doubler writes a book of ideas rather than making reference to specific individuals or schools of thought. H'Doubler emphasis the self-expressive nature of dance in attempts to answer the question "why we do this." Special relevance rests in Chapter 3, "Education Through Dance," and chapter 4 "Technique and Expression."

Kraus, Richard. *History of the Dance in Art and Education*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1969. This book is an excellent educational resource as it outlines the history of dance as it relates to current American theater dance. The last third of the text discusses dance education at the elementary, secondary, and college level. This book is a text because it deals with specific individuals, and groups that have greatly influenced dance as an art form and educational practice.