

Lesson Title	TOUCHING AS AN ACT OF TRANSFORMATION
Number of the course from the choreographies' cycle	2
Group	Mixed group
Target group	people with and without physical disabilities
Number of participants	16
Duration	2 hours
Vocabulary	-
Materials	puzzle mats, headphones, pillows, mattresses, scratches, wheelchairs, chairs, smartphones, i-pods, tapes, ropes, stairs, corridors

Goal - Essential question:

This workshop is based choreographic research.

Through improvisation we investigate:

choreographic devices and composition skills, choices and decision making in dance, quality of movement, repetition, accumulation and spatial organization.

The aim is the exploration of solo work, however duo, trio, quartet and group work will take place and will lead to new creation/compositions and performance.

Objectives - Aims - Inquiry questions

A solo choreographic work will be investigated and developed within the group. Choreography as an art form can offer a sense of achievement and success. Since the workshops are attended by a group of people coming from different backgrounds in movement and dance, the main idea is to give the opportunity to each one of them to deepen their own work.

For beginners, that this is their first participation in an inclusive movement workshop, the research will be based on the creation of a movement phrase. In the case of more advanced students that have a stronger background (participating the last three years in the workshops, following a dance study curriculum etc.) the goal will be towards the realization of a complete idea leading to their own unique creation. The focus is on the study of movement and the presence of the performer.

A solo choreography can be a challenge for practice based research work beyond our regular weekly meetings. Moreover, through this approach we believe that the work can become more responsive, attentive and flexible to each individuals needs and as a result the workshops are effective and fully inclusive. Examples will be given of the way the workshops are planned. These are indicative of this kind of process where the focus is on a creative approach and not a technically based class.

To quote M. Tufnell and C. Crickmay 'any creative process is to this extent improvised and involves states of not knowing what comes next'.

Improvisation is used mostly during these workshops as a means to explore movement material, to train our perception and kinesthetic awareness in order to develop solo work but also to develop group relationships. 'Improvisation provides us with a means to excavating layers of experience, sensation, character, feeling that we normally rush through or suppress – to travel deeper and deeper into an ever enlarging and changing moment...As a strategy for discovering and developing images it both demands and creates a whole range of skills, the most important of which is an ability to be still and open one's attention to the present moment'. Moreover, choreographical concepts are being introduced and explored.

Through the course of our 12 encounters, our main interest is in how dance can provide the means, through which we can gain confidence through movement, can challenge ourselves and further develop our knowledge both individually and as a group.

PROCEDURE

Introduction | Warming up through different body parts (30 minutes)

This warming up exercise is introduced on quite a few workshops as it prepares the body to work and helps us become present in the moment. We can start either lying on the floor, on the mats, sitting, standing, moving or being static. We initiate the movement of different body parts, concentrating on the mobility of the joints, their isolation, the movement qualities, the speed. Starting from the top of our structure and travelling downwards to the head, mouth, nose, ears, tongue, nose, hair, neck, shoulders, elbows, hands, wrists, fingers, pelvis, spine, legs, knees, feet, toes, ankles, heels. We continue building a dialogue between two different parts of the body e.g the head and the little finger or the hand and the eyes.

Demonstration is needed, feedback is essential.

1st Activity | Touching as an act of transformation/ submerging yourself in the sense of touch/ duet work (60 minutes)

A common idea is used as an improvisation tool, that of touching each other and how this touch can awaken and eventually alter our bodily awareness. We start in pairs. Each pair chooses its working space and a starting point in relation to each other. One of the two (A) will initiate the movement by touching the other on a body part. The one who is touched (B) allows the time for their self to feel the sensations of a touch and tries to move slightly this point, thus showing their partner that they are aware of it. Each couple continues with their own rhythm, giving time and space to observe each other, understand the strong and weak points in their bodies, the patterns they hold. The idea is that through this conscious act of touching and by seeing closely the task, we bring attention to all areas of the body and we gain a deep understanding and awareness of each other's movement.

Questions

Questions that are resulting from this activity and discussed are: Could the touch be a catalyst for a different perspective of the body? How can we work using touch as the medium to trigger and challenge each other's attitude and initiate different quality of movement, another direction in space, or a change in the rhythm of the body? This task can be developed as a solo work by recalling the experience and apply it with an imaginary partner.

During the exercise, the educator may guide the "movers" by telling them, for example, to use other body parts of the lying student besides his/her arms, or to use certain body parts as levers. Moreover, it would be a good idea to take a pause every now and then; also, the "moving" students will be reminded to let their body weight under the control of their partners.

END OF PRODECURE

Bibliography

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