

Lori C. Teague

Department of Theater and Dance/ Dance and Movement Studies Program

DANC 150 R Movement Improvisation; DANC 223R and 323 R

Piedmont Project Introduction

In our most natural state, there is a lively interplay of our internal connections with the natural world. However, as we evolve on this planet, and as it evolves, there are skills in the body we have lost. I am equally concerned with climate changes and the loss of the earth's resources. I know we will be remembered by how we decide to treat our bodies, each other, and the living world that embraces every side of us.

I teach movement somatically, facilitating sensations that live in the mind and body. This establishes a body consciousness that can create change. In 2011, I began creating dances for film that demonstrate empathy and also present an opportunity for audiences and participants to become more engaged with, and aware of, water issues. In these movement performances, singular and unrecoverable, the senses connected us to archetypal patterns that reciprocally related to who we were in the immediacy of movement. The Piedmont Project broadened the scope of possibility for movement experiences. This fall, I will intentionally and strategically facilitate a movement studies unit that can be used in diverse movement classes entitled, ***Inner and Outer Landscapes: understanding our nature and the landscapes we inhabit***. My hope is that the somatic connections students will make will also connect them to the greater body in which we live...the earth. Below is an example of it in DANC 150 Movement Improvisation. I will also be teaching level II and level III Contemporary Modern technique. I will align environmental issues with movement concepts and creative experiences. I see this pedagogical experiment as an opportunity to give the body tools for engagement that directly relate to sustainability. I am excited to introduce poetry about trees. Rosemary Cox, an English professor who participated in the Piedmont project suggested many wonderful ones that will help us develop a relationship to trees. I will testing a broad scope of ideas in this unit, but we will be delving into them, finding the connections between them, with great detail.

Unit Plan for Movement Studies: The movement improvisation class has become a very popular course in the college, attracting our dance majors and minors as well as the general student population with no dance background. The intention and tone of this class is creatively fertile; an environment to plant seeds of leadership and awareness about environmental concerns. I teach students to develop new ways of listening, connecting, responding, and expressing respectfully and fully. The course content invites students to reflect; to observe their own nature-- attitude/relationships they have created with their bodies, and the tendencies and habits of society.

Dance 150R Movement Improvisation

Department of Theatre and Dance

Emory University spring 2015

Office Hours: 115 Rich Bldg. Please make an appointment

M/W 4-5:15 Schwartz

Associate Professor Lori Teague

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"The symbols of the self arise in the depths of the body." - C.G. Jung

We are all improvisers in some form or fashion.

Expanding movement is an investment in our own curiosity and creativity. In order to embellish, abstract, explore and develop authentic movement choices, you must play with the elements (Body, Energy, Space, and Time), sharpen your movement sensibilities, and develop kinesthetic listening. Movement partners with your imagination and your senses. Authentic movement is a vocabulary that emerges from the conscious and the unconscious.

"To find new things, take the path you took yesterday."

- John Burroughs

OUR CREATIVE PROCESS

We will explore ideas and develop movement vocabularies through a variety of improvisational structures, creative games, assignments, discussions, and sensory experiences.

Each class will introduce you to at least one theme **to play** with. ***How can we become more bodily, environmentally, and socially conscious?*** We will improvise primarily in small and large groups. I will facilitate, directing you through the creative process.

"We are not separate from the earth; we are as much a part of the planet as each cell in our bodies is a part of us." – Mike Samuels

Goals:

1. To be absolutely present, keeping your focus in the moment, with the movement itself.
2. To activate movement choices unique to your body that will extend your range
3. To move away from your inhibitions in order to create authentic vocabulary from within
4. To discover new connections within yourself and with the outside world
5. To acquire and develop improvisational skills by staying open to possibilities
6. To become more bodily, environmentally, and socially conscious

Objectives:

1. **Arrive** in the studio and bring forth your energy/state of mind while warming up.
2. **Play, trust impulses, be courageous,** and **explore** in order to free your body from habitual patterns and investigate your body's potential to move without preconception.
3. **Let** your impulses survive and develop; listen to the nuances of movement details

4. **Practice** recording your reflections from movement ideas that emerge from each class, recognizing the impulses as well as the manner in which the idea developed or resolved.
5. **Collaborate and exchange** with others while moving.

You can relate movement's meaning to every area of your life.

Evaluation and Grading

I will objectively observe your choices each class, journaling myself, so that I can assess your discoveries and development.

Focus, initiative, curiosity, attendance (2 absences allowed) 30%

I will be asking you to self-assess.

Comprehension of improvisational processes expressed physically and intellectually 20%

Expansion of movement and development of authentic vocabulary 20%

Final Process Paper 10%

The Final Process Paper (2 pg. single-spaced) is an essay that describes your awareness of movement in various environments. Readings, discussions, and your personal kinesthetic experience will merge.

Assignments and Readings 10%

I will distribute several articles over the course of the semester that we will discuss and integrate into class. You will also experience imagery through photography and film that will serve as a jumping off point for us. You will work in small groups to collaboratively design a structured improvisation that is intended to bring us into an environmental concert for the class to experience. Details TBA

Reflection journal 10%

You will describe your **process** through reflection and muscle memory. **The journal can be used inside and outside of class.** The journal will be taken up several times in the semester. **Journal after every class.**

1. Write about how you uniquely express ideas, feelings or images in your body
2. Describe your relationship to the world around you as you move in it and with it.
3. Describe the physical attributes of your movement
4. Notice what the intent of the improvisational structure unveils to you

OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES:

- NO EATING OR DRINKING, OTHER THAN WATER, in the studio. Bring a water bottle to class.
- Be mindful of your clothing choices. Wear clothing that doesn't restrict or inhibit your movement.
- In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Department of Theater and Dance is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students in need of accommodations must present authorized medical documentation to the Office of Disability services (ODS), 110 Admin Bldg. Once registered with ODS, it is the student's responsibility to make an appointment with the instructor at the beginning of the semester to receive accommodations.

Integrated Sustainability Syllabus

- Listening outside, listening inside—becoming sensitive to the smallest environmental changes and aware of our human interruptions
- Understanding the Dynamics of FLOW in the body: communicate through simple walking the non-verbal ways in which we listen, connect, lead, follow, understand, and negotiate. Explore damming, collecting, intersecting, adapting, etc...
- Fluid Systems in our body and on the planet
Body fluid systems--cellular, blood, lymph, synovial, and cerebrospinal, characteristics of each fluid relate to a different quality of movement, to variations in touch, voice, and in our state of mind. The fluids in our own body underlie presence and transformation; they set the ground for basic communication, and mediate the dynamics of flow between rest and activity, tension and relaxation. They affect the phrasing of movement, its volume and continuity.
- Exploring Evolutionary Movement
- Questions to Ask a river, or a creek, or an ocean? Our questions will serve as an entry point into movement
- Sustainable water systems: working in small groups to understand the movement of these systems
- Weather: Global systems interacting with local systems/ big space interacting with small space
- Developing a relationship to a landscape: site-specific studies in creeks, with trees
- States of Water: global warming, drought, pollution
- Exploring Dynamic States in the body
- Sustainable rituals: a practice in the body, conserving resources
- Re-tracing your steps: mindful movement
- What is waste? What happens to waste? Movement efficiency, embellishments, transposition
- Recycling Movement: transformation, evolution
- How do resources relate? Moving from our own body resources: breath, fluids, heartbeat, bones, muscles
- Exploring diverse landscapes as impetus for movement: rainforests, glaciers, mountains, deserts, oceans
- Moving the air, moving the earth: The impact we have on these elements
- Eco-systems: developing transition and relationships from one movement to another
- Underlying Patterns of the Earth's rhythm, shifts, yielding and standing
- Sustainability: Giving and Receiving

Additional material developed from *Body and Earth: and experiential guide* by Andrea Olsen

Field Trips: Visit to Emory' Water treatment plant

A selection of film viewings:

Bend, dance for film created by Lori and Mark Teague

Watermark, directed by Edward Burtynskyt- diverse stories from around the globe that explores our relationship with water and how it shapes humanity

Play Again -explores the changing balance between the virtual and natural worlds. Is our connection to nature disappearing down the digital rabbit hole?

Garbage Warrior a portrait of an artist, a determined visionary in the 21st century

Flow: For love of water-providing practical solutions to the water crisis

Within Reach- two bicyclists are on a year-long journey around the United States to share what they've learned about sustainable communities.

Readings:

Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art by Stephen Nachmanovitch

Flow by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's investigates what makes an experience genuinely satisfying.

Sensitive Chaos: the creation of flowing forms in water and air by Theodor Schwenk

Taken by Surprise: a dance improvisation reader by Anne Cooper Albright

Poetry:

Keeping things whole: reasons for moving by Mark Strand

Loveliest of Trees by A.E. Housman

Birches by Robert Frost

I Saw in Louisiana a Live Oak Growing by Walt Whitman

The Marshes of Glynn by Sydney Lanier (this talks about the marshes in Brunswick, GA, but the beginning of the poem starts off with the live oaks)

Under the Greenwood Tree by William Shakespeare

Two prose works that take the transcendental approach are Ralph Waldo Emerson's "*Nature*" and Henry David Thoreau's "*Walden*."

A couple of modern works are Janisse Ray's "*Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*" and Tim Gautreaux's "*The Clearing*."