

Choreography and Dance Theory 2019 – 2020 Season

Purpose: to train and teach the next generation of choreographers.

This class is not about re-creating choreography and steps learned in other classes. It's not about how to choreograph for a specific genre, although, you will learn those things. This class is designed to give you, the young choreographer, a framework for creating new movement, new steps, and, maybe even a new style of dance! Where did the current styles we teach come from? They came from the creativity of dance theorists and choreographers just like you.

The fall semester will be spent building your creative framework. None of these theories or suggestions are the golden rule, you may find a better way that works for you! Additionally, we will be studying three modern choreographers who challenged and revolutionized the dance world as we know it.

The spring semester will be spent working with your dancers and your pieces for your showcase in May.

Expectations:

Reading and research each week will be required. There is no walking into the classroom and "winging it". Your dance instructors don't do that in your classes. Lack of preparation outside of class may result in missing class exercises so you can catch up in reading and research, as that is crucial in this course.

Required Books:

The Creative Habit – Learn It and Use It For Life by Twyla Tharp

YouTube/Google

Microsoft Word or some kind of writing program

A trusty notebook and pen

Fall 2019 Schedule

- Week 1 – Chapter One, *I Walk into a White Room*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises. YouTube watching Twyla Tharp's choreography.
- Week 2 – Chapter Two, *Rituals of Preparation*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises. Homework assignment – research Martha Graham "Mother of Modern Dance."
- Week 3 – Chapter Three, *Your Creative DNA*. Discuss Martha Graham, watch videos of her work, apply her theory to your own choreography.
- Week 4 – Chapter Four, *Harness Your Memory*. More exploration of Martha Graham's theories

- Week 5 – Chapter Five, *Before You Think Out of the Box, You Have to Start With a Box*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises.
- Week 6 – Chapter Six, *Scratching*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises. Homework assignment – research Doris Humphrey.
- Week 7 – Chapter Seven, *Accidents Will Happen*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises. . Discuss Doris Humphrey, watch videos of her work, apply her theory to your own choreography.
- Week 8 – Chapter Eight, *Spine*. More exploration of Doris Humphrey's theories
- Week 9 – Chapter Nine, *Skill*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises.
- Week 10 – Chapter Ten, *Ruts and Grooves*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises.
- Week 11 – Chapter Eleven, *An "A" in Failure*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises. Homework assignment – research Merce Cunningham.
- Week 12 – Chapter Twelve, *The Long Run*. Discussion of chapter and application of its exercises. Discuss Merce Cunningham, watch videos of his work, apply his theory to your own choreography.
- Week 13 - More exploration of Merce Cunningham's theories. Homework assignment – Research in depth one of these three choreographers: Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, or Merce Cunningham. Their personal lives, choreographic contributions, and theories. 2 – 5 page paper.
- Week 14 – Using one of the theories we have learned, choreograph a piece 1 minute long.
- Week 15 – Wrapping up fall semester with Parent Observation week

Spring 2020 Schedule:

As we prepare for our Spring Showcase, we will begin to really focus on our pieces. Criteria for Showcase:

- Dance should be no longer than 2 minutes
- Dance must be instrumental
- Dance must feature original movement and choreography, not movement for movement's sake
- Student will work with Mr. Matt or other instructor to edit their music
- Student will work with Mr. Christian or other instructor to set the lights for their number
- Student will work with their instructor to assign costume
- Student cannot be in the choreography. It must be taught and put on another student(s)

If the student has enough time, they may choreograph and perform an additional piece that does not adhere to the above requirements.

Each week will be dedicated to working on these pieces. Here are the following deadlines:

January 20th, 2020 – Theme and idea decided on. Student should present one page written document explaining the purpose and theme.

March 2nd, 2020 – All choreography should be taught and blocked

April 6th, 2020 – Music edited and costume chosen

May 4th, 2020 – Lights set

May 15th, 2020 – 4:00 Call for Rehearsal. CDT Showcase at 7:00 PM.