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Fall 9-1-2017

DANC 100A.01: Introduction to Contemporary Modern Dance

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University of Montana School of Theatre & Dance
Introduction to Contemporary Modern Dance DANC 100A-01
Fall 2017 T/R 11:30-12:50 PM PARTV 005

Instructor: Professor Nicole Bradley Browning
Contact Information: nicole.bradleybrowning@umontana.edu
Office Hours: Monday 9:45-11:15am, Wednesday 9-10:30am
Office: PARTV 185

“Dancing is just discovery, discovery, discovery” ~ Martha Graham

Course Description

A contemporary modern dance class designed to lead movers of all backgrounds and experiences through movement rooted in the contemporary modern dance vocabulary. While students learn and practice this vocabulary, they simultaneously make gains in body awareness, alignment, strength, flexibility and artistry. To further inspire students about dance, course participants are offered experiences to see university and community dance productions and engage in dance making experiences themselves!

“There are shortcuts to happiness and dance is one of them” ~ Vicki Baum

Course Objectives

1. To discover and celebrate the dancer in all participants;
2. To introduce contemporary dance techniques, philosophies, approaches and styles in a safe and inspiring environment;
3. To provide an outlet in which students are encouraged to develop a greater sense of body awareness and advance their technical, kinesthetic, intellectual and artistic capacities in movement;
4. To guide students to move in new, unfamiliar and unexpected ways. Consider this studio an experimental laboratory, in which you are encouraged to try something new, fail, fail again and determine your own success;
5. To develop individual and group performance and improvisational skills;
6. To exercise analytical skills in response to dance performance through discussion;
7. To promote an appreciation for dance as a vital form of art and education.

“Dance first. Think later. It’s the natural order.” ~ Samuel Beckett

Course Content

1. As an emerging dancer, the student will enhance her/his physical practice and artistry in contemporary modern dance by demonstrating and improving upon the following fundamentals: (to the best of her or his ability)
 - Line and Form
 - Dynamic Alignment
 - Effective Body Patterning
 - Spatial Awareness
 - Rhythm
 - Initiation and Follow-Through
 - Strength, Flexibility and Endurance
 - Professionalism, Etiquette and Performance Ability
2. **The student will develop her/his creative voice by:**
 - Using movement introduced and practiced in class to create original dances that reflect one’s artistry and inquiry;
 - Engage in collaborative dance making;
3. **The student will, through dance, engage in her/his community by:**
 - Exercising active inquiry in the classroom;

- Demonstrating a sense of investment, generosity, respect for the discovery of dance art as a vital part of the group;
- Encouraging further development in peers;
- Attend university and local dance events;
- Participate in post performance critique and in class discussion.

“I do not try to dance better than anyone else. I only try to dance better than myself.”

~ Mikhail Baryshnikov

Course Structure

Class begins promptly at 11:30AM. Students arriving late will not be permitted to take class (for safety purposes). Class will end at 12:50 PM. Students are required to remain in class until it finishes. Consistent tardiness and/or departure from class before its end will result in lowering of one's grade.

To avoid injury, please come to class prepared to move at the top of class (if you know you need extra time/space to stay safe, arrive early). Please notify the instructor of any injury (current or past) that may affect your full performance in class. Should a student observe class (due to injury – if you are sick – please stay home), it is expected that s/he watch class and take notes. These notes document the class in a written manner so that the student is learning the kinesthetic material through the scripted word or artistic rendering. Notes must be submitted to the instructor at the conclusion of class. While observing class, students are asked to sit by the mirror, and maintain quiet as to not detract from the teaching and performance efficacy of the teacher, classmates and accompanist. Two observations = 1 absence.

“Dance is like dreaming with your feet!” ~ Constanze

Dress Code

Students are asked to wear clothing suitable for full movement potential; though attire should not hide one's movement. NO JEANS. Take into account that there is potential for any part of your body to come into contact with the floor and therefore, your knees and shoulders are best covered. Bring layers; keep your body warm. Street shoes are not permitted in the dance studios. Movement will be experienced with bare feet. It is also recommended that dancers own and bring kneepads to class. These can be purchased in house with your instructor at the beginning or end of each class until supplies run out (\$20). The School of Theatre & Dance recommends that students do not leave personal belongings unattended in the dressing rooms, hallways, dance studios, or theatres as **thefts frequently occur**. Lockers may be rented for \$10/one semester or \$15/two semesters through Administrative Associate IV Sharon Collins (sharon1.collins@umontana.edu) PARTV 194, and are located in the women's and men's dressing rooms as well as the lower level hallway.

“On with the dance! Let the joy be unconfined.” Lord Byron

Attendance

Attendance is important in any field, but vital in the field of dance. Learning to dance requires that your body do it. You won't gain in flexibility, and strength, or in your ability to pick up movement or generate your own movement by hearing about what happened from a classmate, or reading a book. In other words, there is no way to make up the material you miss. **STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE IN EVERY CLASS.** However, knowing that unpredictable circumstances can arise, students are granted one excusable absence. Students are also granted one opportunity to make up one absence

by watching, and writing a one-page observation of another dance class that is approximately the approximate level that one is taking. After a student has used her/his single absence and one makeup, the student will be docked one-third of a letter grade for every subsequent absence. (for more details see Moodle: UM Dance Program – Injury Policy).

***“Dance isn’t something that can be explained in words. It has to be danced.”
~ Paige Arden***

Grading

Dance is different from many other fields in that a student’s work is not as quantifiable as it is in some other subjects, such as history or math. For this reason grading is not assigned a point breakdown. To earn an “A” a student must be developing in all areas listed in the course content area of the syllabus. The student must demonstrate effort in each area at least 55% of the time in class. Additionally, the student must fulfill all participation, concert attendance and writing requirements. Grade of “I” (incomplete) is not available for this course.

Physical touch and contact are used as part of teaching methods to correct alignment and suggest new movement patterns. The teacher and fellow students facilitate this. If you have any concerns with this style of teaching/learning, please inform the instructor and she will find alternative methods.

“The dance is over, the applause subsided, but the joy and feeling will stay with you forever.” ~ W.M. Tory

Writing Assignments

Performance Attendance & Written Critique

Students are required to see **three dance concerts** during the fall term and respond to **one concert** through written/creative response. Students may choose from the following options:

- ❖ **Dancers on Location: A Site Specific Dance Concert:**
 - Friday September 15th @ 5 PM, Sunday September 17th @ 12 Noon. Meet at the UM Mansfield Mall, Free!
- ❖ **Dance Up Close:**
 - November 10 @ 7:30PM, November 11th @ 2PM and 7:30 PM, Masquer Theatre Tickets available at the UM Arts Box Office in the PARTV
- ❖ **Studio Works:**
 - December 8th (Fri) program I at 6:30pm; program II at 8:30pm; Open Space, Tickets \$5 **at the door**

Your instructor MAY require attendance at additional concerts (see below), or choose to offer students a chance to use attendance as make ups for absences. This is at the discretion of each instructor.

- ❖ **Lovesong by Abi Morgan, directed by Bernadette Sweeney and produced by Bare Bait Dance.**
 - OCT 20-22 @ 8pm, OCT 25-29 @ 8pm. BOUTIQUE HOUSE SHOW (location disclosed upon ticket purchase)
- ❖ **A Celebration Service choreographed by Meredith Monk and performed by the School of Theatre & Dance and School of Music:**

- November 3-4 @ 7:30 and 9:30 PM, UCC Missoula, 405 University Avenue. Ticket Prices \$12 Student, \$15 General Admission

****Note:** When buying tix at the UMARTS Box Office, please be sure to tell the ticket agent that you are buying a required student ticket to ensure your discount. Bring your student ID.

****Note:** Assignments for concert responses will be available on Moodle prior to the concert.

“To dance is to be out of yourself. Larger, more beautiful, more powerful.”
~Agnes De Mille

Last but not least:

- Additional assignments may be scheduled throughout the semester at the discretion of the instructor.
- If at any point you feel further discussion would aid your development, please schedule a meeting with the instructor.
- No street shoes, food or drinks in the studio, with the exception of water. No gum in class.
- Cell phone must be turned off for class.
- If you are sick or injured please talk to the instructor as soon possible before class. This includes any preexisting conditions/injuries that should be shared.
- If you get injured during class get my attention immediately!
- Restrooms / locker rooms are located just across the hall.
- Backpacks and personal belongings are not allowed in dance studios with the exception of water bottles.
- All students enrolled in classes who are not Theatre & Dance majors receive the option to sign up for the grading option C/NC. PLEASE NOTE, HOWEVER, in order to receive Expressive Arts credit, a student must enroll for a traditional grade and the grade received must be a C- or higher.
- **Academic Misconduct and the Student Conduct Code**
All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umt.edu/vpesa/Dean%20of%20Students/default.php>.
- All Theatre & Dance students must have an in-depth knowledge of the practices and procedures outlined in the School of Theatre & Dance *Student Handbook*. The *Handbook* is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/umarts/theatredance/About/handbook.php>.
- There is inherent risk involved in many Theatre & Dance classes as they are very physical in nature. Please proceed through class, shop time, or rehearsal with caution. Always be mindful of your personal safety and the safety of others. Students participating in class/shop/rehearsal/performance do so at their own risk.
- Due to safety considerations, at **no** point during a student’s time spent in class or serving on a production (in any capacity) should non-enrolled persons be guests of that student **without my consent**. Presence of such unauthorized persons in a class, shop, or any backstage/off-stage area will negatively affect a student’s grade.
- **From the EO/AA Office:**
Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability

Services for Students (DSS). “Reasonable” means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. For more information, please consult <http://life.umt.edu/dss/>.