

A CHECK LIST FOR RELEVANCE OF DANCE IN OUR TIME

QUESTIONS FOR CHOREOGRAPHERS

--Within our rehearsals, do we describe, teach and evaluate the holistic body/being?...meaning the complete and individual person suited to unique purposes for each and every task, and in line with the image of body/mind as being individually human, psychological/spiritual and animal?

--Do we understand and apply principles of economy of action and economy of thought?

--Do we supply background information to allow the performer of our choreographies to be fully in charge of the interface between our ideas and her/his own essential being?

--Are we able to construct a complete and coherent selection of information for every rehearsal from the vast resources available? This involves referral to background, sources and references that allow the dancer to take full responsibility for the learning, and become her/his own master.

--Is our information and use of language fully articulate regarding space-time-energy as a continuum rather than as separate entities?

--Does multiple and/or simultaneous referencing in our choreographies increase the effect of any one particular source? Or does it lessen the effect?

--Does the choreographer support and create bridges between performances, techniques and references generated by and relevant to each specific work—thereby insuring her/his own development and the development of company members?

--Are the principles of ACCESS, COMMUNICATION, and ARTISTIC INTEGRITY fully present within the work?

PRACTICAL ANALYSIS OF WORKS

Regarding the choreographer's urge to form, how is form created within a space/time energy continuum, and how does it communicate?

All dance occurs within a space-time-energy continuum, as this is where perception exists.

But there are many levels today that we might consider as models for existence and therefore as models for perception:

--from the total and holistic perception of all-being-one,

--to the invisible, systematic and chaotic fundament not yet seen or named, that scientists imagine is between all that exists in our time frame. (this fundament I liken to plasma in the body that bathes the cells but is not the cells...)

A few of many questions that may arise for the choreographer from a consideration of the space/time/energy continuum:

How does density and scarcity of events contribute to intensity of experience in the viewer?

How do timing, simultaneity, speed, change and constancy of the space/time/energy perceptual frame change and affect the experience of the viewer?

Re: density and scarcity of events:

1. Consider: the creation of one-time-only events, and simultaneity of audience perception...
 - what role do these play in the construction of work?
 - in what ways may simultaneity of audience perception occur?
 - how is a work affected if the members of an audience are invited to see the work individually rather than universally? What implications does this have for the choreographer's desire for transference of meaning to an audience?

Re: constancy of form:

2. Consider: differentiation...
 - what role does this play in the construction of work?
 - and how does this occur within a choreography?
 - and how does this contribute to audience experience?
 - how will contrast be present or absent in the work?
3. Consider: --the urge to strongly direct or allow free-form (process as performance) for momentary events, sections and even large, formal structures...
 - what role do these two options play in the construction of work?
 - how do these options occur within a choreography?
 - and how does they contribute to audience experience?
4. Is it possible that meaningfulness may arise from the audience individually selecting what to watch on a personal basis rather than being all led to a similar understanding and perception of a work?

Regarding the projective capacity of performance for an audience—

1. Consider: --Emotional impact: occurrence and contribution to audience experience
 - Intellectual stimulation: occurrence and contribution to audience experience
 - Direct communication through nervous system response: how does this occur and contribute to audience experience?
 - Interpretive capacity

2. Consider (to know, not necessarily to adapt):
 - The meeting of choreographer's concerns with Audience tendencies (what is fashionable)?

Regarding the performer's experience:

1. Consider: Psycho-physical states entered into, and fulfilled
2. Consider: Capacity for fluidity between reality and imagination
3. Consider: Observation, of "self in relation to other," regarding:
 - groups in their relationships; in actual, close spaces and closely related spaces of movement and perception
 - groups in actual, far-away spaces from each other, and less related spaces of movement and perception
 - all performers in overall, spatial-temporal concerns and overall spaces of perception
 - each performer's inner spaces of perception, and how these relate to the other performers' spaces of perception
 - personality development, regarding particularly the ability to refer, reflect, and construct relationships with meaningfulness in real time during performance
 - intention of the choreographer as it meets with performer's abilities—including physical, emotional, and perceptual realms of experience
 - ability of the choreographer and performer to understand and share all physical and metaphysical concerns of the creative process

Regarding the development of process, making communication coherent or purposely less coherent (example: chance processes), to arrive at communicative results when creating relationships for performance:

1. Consider creating options and personal choice for dancers--this is "real time" dance
 - through practical choices that may occur live, during performance
 - through discovery and encouragement of personal qualities of dancers evoked through improvisational or fixed forms, and continuing into performance
 - through suggested codes, themes, and references made in real time or chosen before performances by dancers themselves, these intended to bring life to the performance through intelligent and intuitive discovery, each performance and rehearsal being an opportunity to discover something relevant, surprising and new
 - through dancers' cultural or individual attributes providing sources for individual presence in performance
 - through process based work with music, costume, fashion, dress, light design, set design, sculpture or site specific elements—these all bringing very new and exciting levels to a work, and often being just layered over a piece at the end rather than integrated fully into performer's experience
 - through metaphysical concerns that can affect the performance of set movement

2. Consider: Qualitative analysis of events for performers:
 - detail/complexity of communication on a moment-to-moment basis
 - subtlety of communication
 - treatment of dancers as mature human beings, as this affects actual communication in rehearsals and final audience communication
 - sharing of responsibility for live decision making through careful examination of modes of performance, the nature of directions that identify the dancer's function and subtlety of expression within their parts, roles

3. Consider ethical concerns:
 - in selection of dancers
 - in the giving of freedoms and limitations through instructions to performers

Consider compositional strategies, informing choreographic intention

1. Communicating WHAT???

 - concerning forms that connect and hold the piece
 - concerning references: aesthetic, intellectual, historical, psychological, social, cultural, political

2. Consider the roots of the work:
 - understand the major statement, subject
 - understand content as inseparable from subject
 - understand context, as indicating the world surround of actual events for the work's existence
 - understand subtext, as indicating un-stated social and psychological implications and references within the performance
 - understand intertext, as indicating the sphere of ideas and philosophical thoughts that surrounds the work

3. Consider levels on which the choreographer functions:
 - moment-to-moment
 - within groups of moments
 - within sub-sections
 - within sections
 - and within the creation of whole forms

It may be possible that these occur with different or even contrasting definitions within group work. This would give a life-like character to the work, not directly communicative or stating a point, but descriptive of personalities and individual experiences.

Consider collaborations:

- musicians
- designers
- set designers
- actors/directors
- writers
- dramaturges for dance

And focus in collaboration on the unique rights of each area of work to be present according to the integrity of it's field, not according to service for the dance.

Check List:

1. **Is the work complete?**
2. **What are the sources of the work?**
 - Ideokinetic?**
 - Personal experience?**
 - Research?**
 - Scientific investigation?**
 - Conclusions drawn from the experience of the choreographer?**

How is the work original or productively derivative?

- does the work rely on sources generated outside the choreographer, and are these sources credited adequately?
- Is the work selective from individual experience of the author?
- Does the work bring dance developments to an area of consciousness where these developments are not already known?
- Does the work enhance or enlarge the sphere of consciousness within a people who already have a background consistent with this subject area?

Describing worthy physical work:

--are the principles of economy of action and communication clear within the work as relevant and different for each piece?—entering territory of highly complex to very simple as each individual work demands?

Does the movement vocabulary proceed from the background of its preparation forward to constructs of:

- Holistic body study from an experiential base—not physically destructive for dancers
- Specific studies of alignment—each movement done with economy and richness
- Movement choices and processes clear, positive and definitive
- Design/energy based physical work, knowledgeable of psychological effects the work may have on dancers,
- credit given to sources and inspirations
- A mental construct of images that resonates and adds up to the desired communication

Does the work seem to proceed through fully aligned movement, however dangerous, with indications of awareness at each moment?

Is the research “scientific” in the way of being contained, phenomena-based events meeting all of the following criteria:

- accurate?
- matching to intentions?
- genuine?
- heart felt?
- communicative?
- real and actual? or fantastic and imaginary? Or both, real/actual and fantastic/imaginary?
- methodical?
- purposeful?
- continuous?
- the revelation of the choreographer’s commitment?

--the revelation of the dancers' commitment?

Regarding the finished work:

Is the eventual result supplemented by and does it fulfil the objects of realities, allusions and purposes fundamental to the research within the process of making?

Does the finished work communicate the essence of the choreographer's desire?

Are the thoughts of the choreographer commensurate with influential thoughts of this time?

Are the choreographic principles of the choreographer implemented directly into the work?

Are the dancers aware of their roles in a way that makes them able to show their roles (not necessarily themselves) at their very best?

Is the research that motivates the work aware of its context: political, social, scientific, historical, aesthetic, and personal?