

CURRICULUM FOR EMERGENT IMPROVISATION

Solo Practice

Embodiment (working with the breath, sensation, body scan, body mapping),
Development of original movement vocabulary,
Awareness of spatial environment,
Focus on the particular.

Geography of the Body- mapping on the floor across the space, describing the dimensional space of the body, working with negative space with a partner in stillness, working with positive and negative space with a partner in motion.

Construction of an Original Movement Vocabulary:

- a) Sourcing movement material through an external place building an accumulation phrase, the deconstruction of an accumulation phrase by varying the phrase by repetition, change of focus, change of body parts, levels, space, and time.
- b) Sourcing movement from an interior place through focus on sensation to create an image that is investigated.
- c) Sourcing movement material through the fluids systems, based on Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen's work in body-mind centering, adapted for emergent improvisation; synovial, lymph, arterial, venal, interstitial, cerebro-spinal, cellular.
- d) Sourcing movement material through energy states based on Simon McBurney's work for Theatre de Complicite adapted for emergent improvisation.
- e) Sourcing movement from focus and attention, walking and stillness, utilizing balance, utilizing phrasing that begins to develop an arc or trajectory.
- f) Sourcing movement material from architecture, working with spatial pattern, carving through space, space shifting the body, internal geometries
- g) Sourcing movement material from developmental arcs, rhythms that transform.

Ensemble Practice

Understanding patterns and how they combine to make a **form**.

Patterns:

paths, waves, charges, washes, unison, repetition, canon, retrograde, spill, main event/chorus

Forms:

The Complex Unison Form: Flocking, Simple Unison, Complex Unison

The Memory Form: Event, Remembered Present, Reconstructed Memory

The Trio Form (M. Ellenhorn): Initiator, Responder, Framer

Composing Structures:

There is a beginning and an end to a composing structure. A form can turn into a composing structure by utilizing selection and constraints about time, space, energy, and the development of movement material.

Complex Unison

Reconstructed Memory

Worlds – The beginning is central. All subsequent choices are a result of developing material from the initial statement.

Landscapes – The creation of images in the space that define an idea. An example is the “glacial erratic” (P. Schmitz) that creates a spatial pattern within an environment which leaves a remnant at the end

Fields – An encompassing visual area of similarity and integration with small, distinct, differentiating characteristics as in fields of grain, forests, dunes, etc.

Work in the Performance of Improvisation

Dancing Practice

developing solo movement vocabulary

sensory work

Peter's four sensory layers:

interoceptors in the organs, exteroceptors in the skin

proprioceptors in our awareness of our bodies in space,

special senses (touch, smell, hearing, taste, vision) to explore the environment

moving from the breath

Energies/Intensities

initiating from body parts

rhythm and musicality

phrasing and timing

deconstruction of phrasing

focus

spatial orientation and listening

fluid systems - textural shifts

levels of intensity - energy shifts

partnering and contact work

Peter's mapping and landscape work

Penny's visceral duets

Penny's light touch ensemble

center

Terry's merging of weight

Lisa's work with the senses

Ellen's tectonics-geographical mapping

Katie's internal geometries

1)barely alive

2)casual, relaxed

3>alert, attentive

4)intense, passionate

5)ecstatic, extremes

Fluids/Textures

1)synovial: rag doll

2)lymph: exact articulation & focus

3)arterial: expanding high energy

4)venal: swinging and rebound

5)interstitial: sensual and flowing

6)cerebro-spinal: moving from

7)cellular: approaching stillness

Emergent Forms

accumulation

shadowing

unison

repetition

waves and eddies

washes

paths

stillness

freeze and replace

solo / chorus

framing

charges

parallelism

the catalyst

interruptions

referencing

spatial landscape

narratives

diagrams

sudden changes: contrasts, counterpoints
retrograde
beginnings
endings
entrances and exits
Maureen's initiator, responder, framer
Katherine's middle child
Katherine's A to B form
Estelle's permission to start over

Composing Structures

Lisa Nelson's Tuning Score
Beginning, Development, Ending
Theme and Variation : AB, ABA, ABCBA, etc.
Structural settings: Anti-climax, stream of consciousness, etc. structures that support and do not impose
Penny's organic structuring: structures that emerge from inside
Peter's glacial erratic: an ensemble that leaves a remnant
Susan's World : solo initiated landscape into which people enter a frame
Sue Rees' landscapes: creating a specific environment into which dancers enter and make a piece
J.K.'s Fields: visual imagery which sets a landscape for certain structures
Collaborations with musicians, theater artists, visual artists and poets where structure emerges from the dialogue

Rules of Improvisation

Show up
Pay attention
Tell the truth
Don't get attached to the result

Katherine Ferrier from an old Buddhist text

SOLO PRACTICE

Embodiment - **Breathing**
 Internal Geometries
 Touch / Gravity / Texture
 Eyes / Focus
 Sound / Silences / Rhythms (internal and external)

Physical Vocabulary - **Balance**
 Extension
 Detail
 Turns
 Falls
 Jumps
 Phrasing (simple and complex)

Spatial Environment - **Levels**
 Traveling
 Speed
 Frames
 Images
 Sound / Music
 Cognition (awareness of ensemble)

Focus on the Particular - **Repetition**
 Theme and Development
 Sequence
 Specificity / Selection
 Direction

EMERGENT SOLO

BEGINNING - The Particular (the vocabulary)
 The Definition (the phrasing)
 The Containment (the spatial frame)

DEVELOPMENT - Sequence
 Unfolding
 Exposure of Elements
 Life Span
 Direction - Search for Pattern
 Forms / Selection / Constraints

ENDING - Coherence
 Conclusion
 Resolution
 Emergence of Metatopology (new pattern or form)

ENSEMBLE FORMS

Flocking
Simple Unison
Complex Union

Event
Remembered Present
Reconstructed Memory

Main event / Chorus

Initiator / Responder / Frames

Paths - Waves, Charges, Washes

Spills

Retrogrades

Repetitions / Canons

New Forms to be Practiced:

Simulated Annealing (freeze and thaw, stillness and motion)
Border Crossings
Binaries
Distributed Nets
Wading Pools
Building Sets