

23.6 Paper Presentation VII “Education”

To touch or not to touch: Haptic communication in dance workshops for middle school children

By Urmimala Sarkar

Within the fields of psychology and neuroscience, haptics is the study of human touch, specifically via kinaesthetic (force/position) and cutaneous (tactile) receptors, associated with perception and manipulation (Hannaford and Okamura, 2016: 1063). Touch is a way of communicating with other human beings. It is culturally specific, and may be interpreted in very different ways by people from different parts of the world. In India, gender-specific rules of proxemic and haptic presences are woven into the fabric of social etiquettes, that flow into dances as well. While Indian classical dance vocabularies strictly restrict using haptic communication, in most of the community dances among the Adivasi (tribal) population in India, the most common format of group dancing is to hold hands and connect somatically through dance. This presentation would explore the possibilities of using haptic/ proxemic tools from community dances to facilitate psychosomatic bonding through collective moving among urban middle school children.

Creative Dance Teaching in Shanghai Public Kindergartens: A Mixed-Methods Study

By Jun Wu

For decades, Creative Dance has been regarded as an important method of sustaining wellness and creativity for young children over the world. In mainland China, this initiative, however, has not been thoroughly evaluated and may thus have underestimated the possible challenges and difficulties to be encountered by early childhood educators. Therefore, this mixed-methods study investigates the present situation of Creative Dance teaching in Shanghai Public Kindergartens. Altogether 175 teachers from 6 preschools in 6 districts of Shanghai were sampled and surveyed. The research results indicated that: (1) a majority of the preschool teachers (91.6%) believed in Creative Dance teaching but differed in their beliefs about the values of Creative Dance; (2) there was a gap between teachers' beliefs and practices in the classroom of Creative Dance teaching; (3) preschool teachers were not professionally trained so might have taught Creative Dance skills incorrectly. These findings contribute some preliminary evidence to educational policymaking in China and other countries eager to promote early Creative Dance teaching in kindergartens.

Applying Pilates to Improve the Stability of À La Seconde

By Chien-Yin Fang

The purpose of this research is to improve the stability in ballet dancing especially the Retiré, Relevé Lent À La Seconde and Developpé À La Seconde. As a teacher, I have designed a twelve-week Pilates lesson plan as the warm-up before ballet class for five participants for this research to improve their muscle strengthen, therefore given them the best support in stability. Action research is applied, and data was collected from the video clips, photos, observation records, and in-depth interviews. I hope to develop a teaching methodology for the warm-up lesson that could utilize Pilates and Ballet in training therefore be able to give the dancers the most efficient way of body usage.

Radical curriculum redesign for access and student wellbeing: the change process at London Contemporary Dance School (LCDS)

By Lise Uytterhoeven

LCDS is in the middle of implementing a new undergraduate curriculum, placing student wellbeing, professional outcomes and access and social justice at the centre. Working with a new degree-awarding body, University of the Arts London (UAL), the team worked in an outcomes-focused way to radically re-design the curriculum through constructive alignment. The coincidence of the Covid-19 pandemic with the Black Lives Matter movement was a catalyst for LCDS to accelerate change and embolden our pedagogic vision. A decolonising endeavour sees the introduction of dance practices from the Global South, with a dismantling of existing hierarchies in learning and teaching and a paradigm shift in assessment and admissions. Periodization research within dance science informs the design and implementation through physical and cognitive workload management. This paper shares our ongoing reflections on the change process, including challenges, risks and opportunities.