

How I use surrealism in my dance pedagogy?

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What I teach

- contemporary – modern dance-technique mix, based on art jazz, Graham, Limón, and improvisation
- choreographies
- stage presence
- motivating dancers to make their own style of art when creating a choreography in my Dance Lab

Who I teach

Young adults, aged between 15-28

- in my workshop for amateurs (they choose me!)
- in a secondary art school for dance (they can't choose me!)

What are the special features of this age group

Strengths:

- curious, open minded, desire for recognition
- analytic thinking
- absorption skills
- conscious, deeply committed to dance, dynamic attitude to work
- self- discipline

Weaknesses:

- low power of conception & fantasy
- lack of empathy
- low skill of inner visualisation of movements & pictures
- weak sense of dramaturgy and emotional expression in movement
- they want fast success with the least energy input

So, I had to count with these things and I found out a way how to solve these weak points to achieve my pedagogical goals when working together in projects. I knew I had to develop these very important skills in dance art education. ... and then, I found SURREALISM, which was an **artistic movement** in the first half of the 20th century between the two world wars. It means three things:

1. a special style of expression in fine arts, film
2. an outlook of the world, and
3. a human behaviour

The main values of surrealism in teaching dance

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- personal discovery of the subjective world and intrapsychic content such as dreams, visions, hallucinations
- heavy reliance on the human senses and on fantasy
- eagerness to explore psychic realities

How I use it?

I use surrealism in my dance pedagogy process, **as**:

- an outlook to solve technical problems in teaching dance (self-development)
- as a creational & experimental working method
- a teaching behaviour

My aim are

- get to know my students deeper
- motivate them for self-recognition and to make them realize and process their individual problems and reach harmony
- develop the whole complex personality (dance professional, cognitive, personal, & social skills)
- show spontaneous ways of creation
- break out of their limits, typical technical shapes of dance movements
- motivate their own dance movement and performance style

I use pictures, films, texts, or objects (mainly surreal) to motivate my students to leave their habitual dance technique patterns. Through empathic identification with these inspirational elements, it is possible to make deeper self-exploration.

I use surrealism in my dance pedagogy on three levels:

I. Creative dance (piece) making process

- A) getting into the mood of the theme by meditation, brainstorming conceptions and collecting inspiring materials
- B) movement visualization
- C) movement creation, free improvisation

II. Developing stage presence, expressive movements

This means empathic identification in dance improvisation with an emotional instruction fixed in advance.

III. Teaching dance technique

- A) using dance imagery (strong, visually effective pictures) to motivate the dancer's body by feelings, energy and movement quality beyond correction through physical contact
- B) using parodies as teacher's instruction, when representing typical faults in a strongly deterring but humorous way. This should never be personal, and should always be followed by performing the correct movement accompanied by verbal instruction.