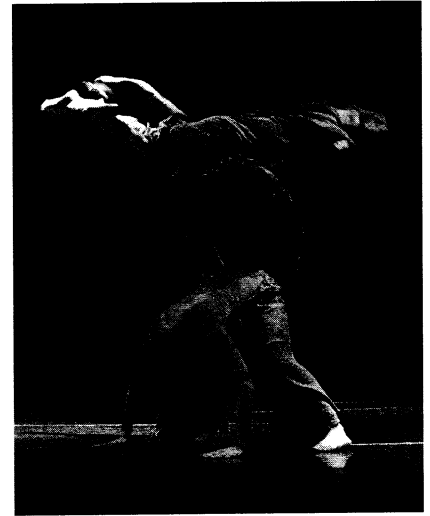


DANCE 312 - Special Topics: DYNAMIC PARTNERING

MW 10:30-11:45 Frederick Rehearsal Hall
Assistant Professor Matthew Thornton
Office Hours Friday 12-2 or by appointment
Booker 212, mthornto@richmond.edu

DESCRIPTION:

This class explores dynamic relationships between two or more individuals as they negotiate weight, balance, structure, creativity, leading and following through time and space. Focus will be placed on developing engaging physical conversations with a partner, as well as becoming an adaptable and contributing member of a larger group. Material covered would be applicable to dance choreography, movement invention for actors, social dance, sport and improvisational partner practices.



METHODS:

In this class we will investigate how to communicate in partner relationships through the body. In class sessions will be supplemented by out of class physical work examining class material, as well as attending classes and workshops that relate to partnering forms. In addition, we will watch video and read articles on partnering forms that students will be able to both discuss and provide written response to.

A notebook will be maintained detailing each student's individual journey through the material covered over the semester.

Required performances will play a crucial role in developing a class culture, and allow us to discuss the relationship between the objective and subjective point of views, as well as expose students to a variety of performance experiences.

Goals and Objectives:

To integrate the conceptual with the physical
To develop responsive creativity through improvisational relationships
To move with presence and consciousness in relationship to each other

Outcomes, students will:

Increase kinesthetic and spatial awareness,
gain comfort moving and coming in contact with each other in creative and non-threatening ways,
Learn to change between leading, following, and 'conversing.'

Excerpts from Texts/Journals/Video:

Novack, Cynthia J. *Sharing the Dance: Contact Improvisation and American Culture.*

Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1990

Pallant, Cheryl. *Contact Improvisation: An Introduction to a Vitalizing Dance Form*.
Jefferson, NC: McFarland Books, 2006.

Cohen, Bonnie Bainbridge. *Sensing, feeling, and action: the experiential anatomy of
body-mind centering*. Northampton, MA: Contact Editions, 1993.

Gelb, Michael J. *Body Learning: An Introduction to the Alexander Technique*.
NYC, NY: Henry Holt and Co., 1981

Contact Quarterly / CQ – (current issues available in Scripts Music Library, back issues
available online)

Video selections for viewing both in and out of class, TBA

Requirements

Participation 20%

mental focus, physical presence, verbal participation, personal improvement and growth,
attendance.

***This is a collaborative educational environment-your contribution matters and will
help define the space!***

- Be focused, attentive and ready to train when you walk in the studio.
- Be open-minded, willing to try on new or unfamiliar material.
- Actively contribute to the positive energy of the class and develop a strong studio ethic
- come with questions and ready to work and play.

Attendance

- Arrive to class on time
- Two absences are allowed over the semester, subsequent absences **will** affect your grade.
students are responsible for material covered when absent
- Injuries and absences are to be discussed prior to the start of class.
- Injured or under-the-weather students who are not contagious may watch and take
detailed notes. Notes will be typed and turned into the instructor the following class.

Injuries

Students should participate fully in all of the class activities unless prevented by injury.
Prior/chronic injuries or medical conditions are to be discussed at the beginning of the
semester. Long-time injury or absence may require you to drop the course.

Required Dress

Appropriate attire includes comfortable, easy-moving clothes, but nothing that may cause
injury or interfere in class process.

Knee pads will be required, appropriate under garments, long sweat pants or workout pants
(not synthetic) long or short sleeved t-shirt.

One source for kneepads is <http://www.contactquarterly.com/kp/kp.html>.
Another is <http://www.dancewearcorner.com/p-101-eurotard-994-knee-pads.aspx>

Journal 10%

All students will keep a journal with weekly entries on class content, material covered and individual student observations on the class or on personal development. This journal is a record of the student's process through the material, and will vary with each individual. Guidelines for the journal will be distributed in class. Journals should be brought to class everyday!

Final Notebook 15%

Final notebooks will contain the following:

- Syllabus
- journals detailing class content and observations
- guest artist and master-class responses
- record of out of class sessions
- performance responses
- reading and writing responses

Writing, Reading and Video Assignments

Articles or video will be assigned to students weekly. Students are expected to be familiar with the material for in class discussions. They may also be substituted with a weekly written assignment. Written work will count towards the final notebook grade.

Performances 15%

Mark your calendars! These performances are required. Any conflicts, or possible conflicts, must be discussed by January 20th. Two page responses must be turned in the class following the performance, with a ticket stub attached. Response guidelines will be provided before the performances.

Students are required to retrieve their tickets at the Modlin Center Box Office by presenting their student ID, one month before the performance date (unless the performance is in the first month of class).

Out of Class Movement and Record 20%

Once a week students will train physically outside of class. Students will attend contact improvisation jams, capoeira classes, movement workshops, and individual out of class sessions.

Out of class sessions: Four times over the semester students will be required to hold an out of class session with another student from class. Records of these sessions will be documented and turned in, guidelines will be provided.

Contact Jams: Students will participate in a minimum of two contact jams outside of class, either on or off campus. Specific dates and locations to be announced. This semester in

Richmond, contact jams will be held two times a month on Sunday afternoons, alternating locations between the UR movement research studio and VCU dance studios.

Capoeira Classes: Twice in the semester students will attend a capoeira class, either Thursdays 7-9 in the UR movement research studio or at another academy or class in the area.

Social Dance/Partnering classes: Twice in the semester, students will attend a social dance class or event, such as salsa or ballroom. Local events and classes will be announced, and you are free to find a class or event specific to your interests, but this needs to be discussed with the instructor prior to attending.

FINAL PROJECT 20%

The Final will consist of a presentation of material covered over the semester that is specific to the student's interest and abilities. Individual projects are to be discussed with the instructor, and may vary from performance, papers or interactive lecture or workshop.

GRADING SUMMARY

20%	Participation
10%	Journal
15%	Notebook
15%	Required performances and responses
20%	Out of Class Sessions
20%	Final Project

To be successful in this course, you should expect to devote an average of 10-14 hours each week preparing for class, participating in class sessions, studying course related materials, and completing course assignments.

This is a Special Topics Class, specific content will be identified weekly depending on students progression through material. The following calendar identifies required performances and major deadlines for the semester.

Week One

Mon. January 11

Wed. January 13

Week Two

Mon. January 18 - MLK Jr. Holiday Observance

Wed. January 20

Out of class session 1

REQUIRED PERFORMANCE 1:

Ricochet, A Circus of Two, Smoke and Mirrors

Friday, January 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, January 23 at 7:30 p.m.