

TAPS 0320

Dance Composition: Composing for the Camera

Summer Session-Semester III of 2021

May 12- August 6th, 2021

T/TH 2:30-4:00 (remote but connected, synchronous)

ZOOM ADDRESS:

<https://brown.zoom.us/j/96757360489>

Primary Instructor: Michelle Bach-Coulibaly

michelle_bach-coulibaly@brown.edu

401-588-1688

Office Hours: By appointment

Google Drive Folder:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FDTnRxI6IbAsh_zZ2NaWharxhF6yZ5Ch?usp=sharing

Course Description:

This is an embodied art-making course that seeks to inspire, provoke, and awaken your individual and collective creativity. We will be working towards the development of new and original performance art-works, Site-Specific Rituals, and Dance Films. These will be researched in *somatic sensory work, personal narrative, intuitive writing and painting, contemplative movement, Butoh, Laban Movement Analysis, Authentic Movement*, and various *visual, inter-medial* and *musical art* forms. You will be viewing and reviewing films, and keeping artistic journals as a way of processing all that you are experiencing. We will use “the body” as our guide to creation; locating its form and function. Weekly assignments, **STUDIES**, will be given to train the body and mind. These will be filmed and are meant to serve as your research and content towards the creation of your own dance films. They are your accumulated vocabulary, but not where you end your inquiry. You will also be working with strategies and approaches to devising works that are focused on your writings, paintings, poems, and inspirations gained from our meditations and improvisations.

REQUIREMENTS AND CLASS EXPECTATIONS:

SPACE TO MOVE: This can be in your home, yard or at a specific outdoor site where you can concentrate and move without distraction.

CAMERA: This can be on your phone or laptop camera. (Please notify me if this presents an issue)

If you are on campus we can provide you with a digital camera and tripod.

ATTENDANCE: You are allowed only two unexcused absences before your grade is affected. Arrive on time ready for the day's meditation, various movement practices and experiences.

PARTICIPATION: In this course it is extremely important that we fully engage in the class content and experience. As a practicum, you must be present (synchronously online) to fully engage with the materials and experimentations.

COMMUNICATION: As this is a virtual course, communication is more important than ever. In the virtual platform it is harder to feel a classroom's energy, so we **MUST** communicate our needs, experiences, and use our collective voices to help each other.

A CREATIVE JOURNAL: This will be infused with your personal artistic rituals, reflections on the readings, concepts, experiences and materials covered in class. This also will include response writings from the articles, readings, poems, and films done independently outside class-times. *Bring your journal to every class and be prepared to share your reflections.*

STUDIES: This portion of our class time will consist of weekly assignments that will be split into two parts. On Tuesday's we will experiment and **practice** on the topics (flexion, extension, etc.) through improvisation and will develop those ideas into *phrases*. You will be asked to record these phrases weekly and will **present** them to each other in class on Thursday's. These short phrases (1-3mins) are meant to serve as your embodied research and content for further development. By the end of this course, you will use these studies to help guide you in the creation of your final dance composition.

PRESENTATION: Each Thursday you will be presenting your short phrases, short films, stories, paintings, or sound scores for the class and will be participating in a post-reflection inspired by a *See, Think, Wonder* critical response method.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

FREE PLAY: This is our main text for this course. Daily readings and discussions from this book should be written about and responded to in your journals. Each chapter has a wealth of inspiration and practical knowledge that can guide you through this process of contemplative creation.

Four Dance Films: *(Available via Brown Library/ Ocr/ Under media in canvas)*

1. **Maya Deren:** [*Meshes in the Afternoon*](#), [*At Land*](#), [*Ritual in Transfigured Time*](#), [*A Study in Choreography for the Camera*](#), [*Meditation on Violence*](#), [*The Divine Horseman*](#), [*The Very Eye of Night*](#), [*Witches Cradle*](#).
2. **Pina Bausch:** *Pina*
3. **David Byrne:** *American Utopia*.
4. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BC2dRkm8ATU> **The Chemical Brothers** recent film.

COMPOSITIONAL METHODS: Development of New Choreography.

1. Motif (theme) as a clear idea for development
2. Repetition
3. Weight, time, space, energy flow changes*
4. Level or directional orientation change.
5. Gesture, posture. (near-medium, and far reach)
6. Use of props (chair, tree, costuming, furniture, design, etc.)
7. Rhythmic change
8. Stillness
9. Always improvise on any idea to see where it goes. Film each improvisation sessions.
10. Body Shaping/ Falling/Turning/Jumping/ Suspension
11. Scoring: use artwork, poems, literature, journals, dreams, music
12. In creating interesting film work, change where you exist in the frame: Center, four corners, front, back, right, left.
13. Group Work: **unison** (everybody at the same time), **canon** (beginning a same phrase in different but regular moments of the counting), **dialogs** (a dancer or a group of dancers moves while the other is in pause; they switch the situation several times), **counterpoint** (each dancer or group of dancers performs a different choreographic fragment at the same time)
14. Group Work: Duet, Trio, Quartet, etc.(difficult via zoom)
15. Call and response
16. Pedestrian Movements: Walk, Run, Skip, Hop, Jumps (two kinds), Turns, Crawling, Climbing, Falling,, Rolling, Balancing, Freezing, Suspending. Rocking, Etc.
17. Retrograde-inversion. (backwards)

Video Editing Resources

Basic Steps to Video Editing

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oC3gXr1s_aU

Premiere Pro Tutorial (free at Brown)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jTCxUXGM6tc>

Different Kinds of Video Editing Software

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtrlyHDgk-8>

LinkedIn Learning (formerly Lynda/free at Brown)

<http://brown.edu/linkedinlearning>

Art Supplies needed:

Acrylic Paints/Cray-Pas/Charcoal Pens/ Paint Brushes/Drawing Tablet

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (BY WEEK)

WEEK ONE (MAY 13): Introductions, Syllabus Overview & Class Expectations.

5/13: Introduction to course values/Educational Goals

- **Introduction** to Mindfulness, Meditations and Authenticity.
- **Readings due 5/18: *Free Play*** Prologue through page 31 and take note of anything that comes up for you.
- Also read article on ***Bones from Body and Earth.***

WEEK TWO (MAY 18 and 20): What the Body Does: Bone Structures and Functions

5/18: FLEXION (Day 1)

- **Meditation:** Body Awareness of Breath
- **Movement:** Shaking and Stretching, Yoga, Introduction to Flexion.
- **Studies (Practicum):** Improvisation & Record Flexion Phrases
- **Class Discussion:** *Free Play* prologue through page 31 plus article on **Bones**.

- **5/20: FLEXION (Day 2)**

- **Meditation:** Alternate Nostril Breathing
- **Movement:** Shaking, Stretching, Yoga.
- **Studies (Presentation):** Flexion phrases & Reflection
- **Reading Due for 5/25: Free Play** Pgs. 31-55 and write in your journal over the weekend.
- Over the Weekend: Watch Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon*

WEEK THREE (MAY 25 and 27): Bone Structures/Extension

5/25: Extension and Breath (Day 1)

- **Meditation:** Breath work
- **Yoga Practice:** Introduction to Authentic Movement, Breath & Extension.
- **Studies (Practicum):** Improvisation & Record Extension Phrases
- **Discussion/Reflection:** *Free Play* pgs. 31-55.

5/27: Extension and Breath (Day 2)

- **Meditation:** Breath work
- **Movement Practice:** Yoga, Authentic Movement, Breath and Extension review.
- **Studies (Presentation):** Extension Phrases & Reflection
- **Reading due 6/1: Free Play** pg. 59-87 and write, paint or draw in your journal whatever comes up for you.
- Over the Weekend: Watch Maya Deren's *Choreography for the Camera*

WEEK FOUR (JUNE 1 and 3): ROTATION

6/1: Rotation and Spiraling (Day 1)

- **Meditation:** Body Scan
- **Movement Practice:** Yoga, Rotation and Spiraling

- **Studies (Practicum):** Improvisation & Rotation/Spiraling Phrases.
- **Discussion/Reflection:** *Free Play* pgs. 59-87

6/3: Rotation and Spiraling (Day 2)

- **Meditation:** Body Scan
- **Movement Practice:** Yoga, Authentic Movement, Rotation and Spiraling
- **Studies (Presentation):** Rotation/Spiraling & Reflection
- **Assignments due 6/8:** Read *Free Play* pgs. 59-111 and Select and watch **THREE** more of *Maya Deren's* works. Watch and write responses in your journals. *Pay close attention to filmic framing, jump cut, aspects of light, shadow, symbols, gesture/posture, use of space off camera, repetition, reversing images, time sequencing

WEEK FIVE (JUNE 8 & 10): CIRCUMDUCTION

6/8: Circumduction and Changing Levels (Day 1)

- **Meditation:**
- **Movement Practice:** Circumduction, Stillness, Changing Levels
- **Painting of circumduction**
- **Studies (Practicum):** Circumduction. Guest filmmaker from LA to go over editing options.
- **Discussion/Reflections:** *Free Play* pgs. 59-111 and Maya Deren.

6/10: Circumduction and Changing Levels (Day 2)

- **Meditation:** Hero's Journey Visualization Theme
- **Reflection:** Movement Reflection on Hero's Journey.
- **Studies (Presentation):** Circumduction Phrases & Reflection
- **Reading due 6/15:** *Free Play* pgs. 115-139.

* **Write a Narrative of you as the hero.**

WEEK SIX (JUNE 15 & 17) : ALL BIOMECHANICAL ACTIONS

(Pronation/Supination/Inversion/Eversion/Flexion/Extension/Rotation/Circumduction/Sliding).

6/15: All Bone Biomechanical Actions

- **Meditation:** Loving-Kindness Introduced. Hero's Journey as Theme and Underscore.
- **Movement Practice:** Yoga, Pedestrian Movements with All Actions.

- **Studies (Practicum):** Improvisation All learned Bone Actions & Combination Phrases. Three pedestrian movements in combination: (example; Turning, Suspending, Falling, Rolling or Walking, Running, Freezing, Falling)
- **Reading Discussion/Reflections:** *Free Play* pgs. 115-139

6/17: All Bone Biomechanical Actions

- **Meditation:** Loving Kindness
- **Movement Practice:** Yoga, Actions-Sense-Speak in the moment.
- **Studies (Presentation):** Combination Phrases, Narrative of Hero's Journey & Reflection.
- **Reading due 6/22:** *Free Play* pgs. 140-160.

WEEK SEVEN (JUNE 22 & 24) : LABAN MOVEMENT ANALYSIS: WEIGHT

6/22: Laban Movement Analysis: WEIGHT- STRENGTH and LIGHTNESS

LMA (Laban Movement Analysis) is a method for observing, describing, qualifying, quantifying, discerning, notating, and interpreting human movement potential. Looking at what the Body is actually doing, the Effort used, the Shape of how it is moving and the dimensions/diagonals utilized out in Space, we heighten our ability to "see" what, why, how, and where our body's mobilizing relative to Time, Weight, Space, and Energy Flow.

- **Meditation:** Sounding Chanting
- **Movement Practice:** Introduction to Laban Movement Analysis
- **Studies (Practicum):** Improvisation on Strength and Lightness in sound, body and voice.
- **Discussion/Reflections:** *Free Play* pgs. 140-160.
-
- **6/24: Guest Artist: Wall Mathews in Music Composition**
- **Bring found objects to make soundings with.**
- **Assignments due 6/29:** Read *Free Play* pgs. 163-197 and watch the film, *Pina*, by Wim Wenders. Watch and write responses in your journals.

WEEK EIGHT (JUNE 29 & JULY 1):

6/29: Guest Artist: Wall Matthews in Musical Composition

- **Studies (Practicum):** Work with Wall on Musical Compositions

7/1: Laban Movement Analysis- TIME: Augmentation & Diminution

- A FILM IS DUE (No longer than THREE minutes)

What is required/ Included:

1. Three different locations (no bedroom, living rooms, porches, etc.)
2. Both your original scores and variations on the rhythmic/vocal score themes.
3. Stillness/Silences
4. Choreography already explored in class and development of your themes (refer back to syllabus developmental devises plus whatever you're playing with)
5. Pay attention to light sources (shadow, candlelight, full sun waning light, PLAY WITH LIGHT)
6. Use all that we have been working with as far as editing, double-exposure, filters, etc.
7. Be deliberate about the choices you make.
8. PLAY

- **Movement Practices:** Butoh Exercises (augmentation/RASA)
- Show films with your rhythmic scores
- **Discussion/Reflection:** *Critical response with films*

WEEK NINE (JULY 8): Laban Movement Analysis: Weight/Time

7/8: Laban Movement Analysis: Weight/Time Combination

- **Meditation:** Loving Kindness
- **Movement Practice:** Yoga, Review Laban combinations to date (Weight/Time)
- **Studies (Practicum):** Improvisation & Record Weight/Time Combination Improvisations. Light-Sustained, Light-Quick, Strong-Sustained, Strong-Quick.
- **Reflection:** Re-watch your Combination Phrase and note in your journal what you Saw, Thought, and Wondered.
- For Tuesday 7/13: Write in detail one of your dreams. Record it as your primary soundscape.

WEEK TEN (JULY 13 & 15): Laban Movement Analysis-Space

7/13 Laban Movement Analysis-Space: Indirect versus Direct. Combinations of Weight/Space/Time

Guest Artist: Aminata Coulibaly, Film Editing, Sound Score

(Presentations) Soundscapes played from your dreamscapes.

7/15: Laban Movement Analysis-Space Indirect versus Direct

No film is due today, Work on Sound and Script, and Dreamscape for Tuesday.

Movement Practice: Yoga, Authentic Movement/Sound and Movement, Introduction to Indirect vs Direct Space, Space Harmony. The Planes/A Scale: RSH-BL- FLD, RSL-BH-FRD, LSL-FH-BRD, LSH-FL-BLD/Volutes

Studies (Practicum): Improvisation & Direct/Indirect Space Phrases. Combinations of Weight/Time/Space. 8 Actions: Punch, Float, Slash, Glide, Flick, Press, Dab, Wring.

Assignment due 7/20: Watch the film *American Utopia* by David Byrne, Annie-B Parsons (Choreographer), Spike Lee (Director-Producer). Watch and write, paint, and draw responses in your journals. FILMS DUE: Dreamscapes, with Sound Effects, Sound Score.

WEEK ELEVEN (July 20 & 22) : Laban Movement Analysis: FLOW

7/20: Laban Movement Analysis: FLOW- Free Flow and Bound Flow

Meditation: Water; Visualize Mist, Rushing Stream, Ocean Waves, Calm waters, Ice

(Presentations) Films due today with dreamscape, and sound score should include new information on editing with Ami. Costumed, Scenery, 3 Different Locations (NO bedrooms) B Rolls utilized as juxtaposition. Close-ups (look at the screen), Be aware of light sources.

- **Discussion/ Reflections:** *American Utopia*
- *Work with a Story from your childhood that addressed some aspect of ourselves; forming our mythopoeic storylines. GESTICULATE your story as you tell it, and film it so you capture what those gestures are. Study those gestures as the beginning of a dance sequence. Take those gestures and move them out in space into posturalizations. Near-Medium-Far reaching kinesphere. Soundscapes both forward and reverse your story; record it. This is research for your next film.*

7/22: Laban Movement Analysis: FLOW- Free Flow and Bound Flow/ Review

- **Meditation:** Water body
- **Studies (Presentation):** Gesture/Posture. Tell a story from childhood, and with the telling make sure you gesticulate the story (NO PANTOMIME), reverse your telling of the story, filmically reverse the gesture story. Take the gestures out in space; near, medium and far reaching. Use turns, leaps, crawling, take it to the floor, slow them down, speed them up, use all aspects of Laban Movement Analysis actions, space harmony, use filters, color change, THREE LOCATIONS, different editing with jump cut, framing, black-outs, rotate camera, pay attention to light sources....

WEEK TWELVE (July 27 & 29): Rasa/Gesture/Posture

7/27: PRESENTATION: Gesture/Posture, Mythopoeic Stories.

Movement work: Free-Bound Flow as warm-up. Work with body-part leading, simultaneous, sequential, arch-like, shaping.

7/29: PRACTICUM of Gesture/Posture Mythopoeic Stories Continued.

ADD The Rasa: Explore nine different emotions as conceptual frameworks. These emotions act as visceral expressions from the ancient text, *The Natrashyastra*. Thought to have been written by the gods, and considered a sacred text.

- **Studies (Practicum):** Rasa phrases. Athletics of the Emotions: **Shrighara:** Mother Love, Romantic Love, Erotica; **Vira:** Courage, Galantry, Victory; **Raudra:** Annoyance, Anger, Rage, **Adbhuta:** Wonderment, Curiosity, Awe; **Hasya:** Mirth, Merriment, Mockery; **Karuna:** Empathy, Sorrow, Grief; **Bibhatsa:** Aversion, Disgust, Loathing; **Bhayanaka:** Nervousness, Fear, Terror; **Nirvana:** Pure Peace
- Combine Rasa with Gesture/Posture.

WEEK THIRTEEN (Aug 3 & 5): Dance Film Composition

8/3 & 8/5: Dance Film Composition

Using ALL of the studies, embodied and literary research that we have explored over the last 12 weeks, you will create your own body of work. In this body of work you will be using a combination of Journal writings, paintings/drawings, phrase segments and as many compositional devices that explores a **BEGINNING**, **MIDDLE**, and **END**. At least three completely different LOCATIONS, use of a variety of Editing Techniques, Costume

Ideas, B-Roll, Sound-Scapes, THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT, FORMS (A-B-A, A-B-C, etc.) Suggestions: Set-up your shots, Experiment with camera position and movement of camera. **Camera Work:** Panorama, Bird's eye view, below looking up (small child's view) slowly close in from behind until right up to subject, walking shot where camera moves with you, 360 degree around subject, down to up motion, continuous take, play with dimensions, close ups etc. Find a poem to explore as partial script, write a storyboard (sequence of events in time), Film should be no more than **five minutes**.

FINAL PRESENTATION: AUGUST 10th (2:30-4PM)

Required Readings: (Found in Canvas)

Free Play: Improvisation in Life and Art. Stephen Nachmanovitch. 1990. Penguin Putnam. New York.

Critical Response Process. By Liz Lerman

TERMS and SKILL SETS/ Movement considerations

Laban Movement Analysis terminology looks at the moving body with regard to:

1. **TIME:** temporal considerations being in the spectrum of **Augmenting** (indulgent/slowing down) and **Diminishing** (quickenning, urgency) time.
2. **SPACE:** Our attention to space being the consideration of directional focus in space. The parameters are either with a **direct** uni-focus or **indirect** multi-focus in space. Other considerations we could work with are the tensions of spatial relations between one object and another. The psychology of spatial orientation and facings are explored as a compositional element.
3. **FLOW: Binding** the flow of energy in the body (ice) or **Free** flow (water), moving into mist-fog-cloud-Running stream, ocean waves, river currents, still waters, and ice-like qualities.
4. **WEIGHT CENTERS: Strength**, strong and grounded center of weight emanating from pelvic center or quality of **Lightness**, center of levity. Organizing principles as well as qualitative choice.

Combinations of elements into 8 actions: Punch/slash/dab/glide/float/press/wring/float

5. Movement considerations:

- Bio-mechanics, Laban qualitative choice, shape, shaping, carving, body-part leading, arching, simultaneous, sequential, spoke-like, near-medium-far reach kinesphere, gesture-posture, weight shifts, mobilizations, contact improvisation, Butoh (inner shadows), and movement vocabularies taught by Guest teachers.
- 6. Choreographic devices for development: variations: time changes (double, triple, quadruple), tone changes, vocal work, reversal, rhythmic variation, harmonic change.
- STRUCTURES, Form and DESIGN, architecture, Phrasings with deviations: A/B/A, etc.
- Movement mapping, symmetry, asymmetry, inevitability, narrative, abstraction, **chance operations**, negative spaces, potter and clay, obstacles, surfaces, body part transfer, mixing genre, Musical/movement developments: theme and variation, motif structure: emotional anatomy, image and the mytho-poetic, solving movement equations/problems, literary translation/inspiration (haiku)...Stage pictures: tableaux, clustering, webbing, swarm theory, Site-specific, Object identification and texting, rhythm and breath.
- RASA: These eight categories of emotional investigations, originally considered as sacred text of the gods, appeared in the *Natyashastra* as a roadmap of performed emotions. They should be looked as "sauces, flavors, as spices" and fill the air as if their emotional aroma has entered our experience. The nine rasa are: **Shrighara**: Romantic attraction, Love, **Vira**: Gallantry, Courage, **Raudra**: Annoyance, Anger, Rage, **Adbhuta**: **Curiosity**, Awe. **Hasya**: Mockery, **Mirth**, **Merriment**; **Karuna**: Empathy, Sorrow, Grief; **Bibhatsa**: Adversion, Disgust, Loathing; **Bhayanaka**: Nervousness, Fear, Terror, **Nirvana**: Peace.
-
- **Accommodations:**

Brown University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Please inform us early in the term if you have a disability or other conditions that might require accommodations or modification of any of these course procedures. You may speak with us after class or during office hours. For more information, please contact: [Student and Employee Accessibility Services](#) at 401-863-9588 or SEAS@brown.edu.

Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the deans in the Dean of the College office

FOR THE ARTIST AT THE START OF THE DAY

“ May your imagination know the grace of perfect danger. To reach beyond imitation and the wheel of repetition, deep into the call of all the unfinished and unsolved, until the veil of the unknown yields and something original begins to stir towards your senses and grow stronger in your heart in order to come to birth in a clean line of form that claims from time a rhythm not yet heard, that calls space to a different shape.” John O'Donohue

"I am a body writer. I am a bodily writer." Roland Barthes

"Walker, it is your footsteps that are the road, no more; Walker, there is no road. The road is made by walking." Antonio Machado

"The beloved is already in our being, as thirst and "otherness". Being is eroticism. Inspiration is that strange voice that takes man out of himself to be everything that he is, everything that he desires: another body, another being. Beyond, outside of me, in the green and gold thicket, among the tremulous branches, sings the unknown. It calls to me."

Octavio Paz