

Under The Blacklight
Exploring Dance Technique Development

by

Nathalie Quiros Contreras

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Mary Fitzgerald, Chair
Keith Thompson
Anandha Ray

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ABSTRACT

This thesis project explores the intricacies of dance technique through the study of one's dance lineage, creative methodologies, and movement tendencies. This research reveals the layers that technique encompasses through the focused embodiment and analytical view of the choreographer's approach. The cast of six dancers offer their unique perspectives on technique through the embodiment process of this work. The cast has strong cultural and diverse dance backgrounds including Afro-Latin, ballet, Bharatanatyam, contemporary modern dance, hip-hop, and Irish dance. "Under The Blacklight" was the culmination of both a dance film and explorative event in which the audience had the opportunity to directly engage within various types of technique. This work stemmed from the desire to understand the notion behind dance technique development.

The purpose of this investigation is to understand how to formulate a structure that serves as a basis of dance technique design. Therefore, this research is primarily focused on the process of cultivating a technique. With this intention, the work is concentrated on elucidating the foundation on a contemporary modern dance technique. While this research is centered on this specific genre of dance, it is essential to note that many similar elements are present in the techniques of other dance disciplines.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Vivian De Los Angeles Quiros, who took me to my very first dance class and now sees me perform from above.

You have gifted me with the passion to pursue my dreams without an ounce of hesitation in my body, while giving me the necessary strength to finish this dance in your honor.

Thank you for your unconditional love, until we meet again. To infinity and beyond.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Dance has been a part of my life since the age of three. My movement today is a representation of the imprint that the lineage that my dance history has left on me. This lineage has fostered a movement signature that brings a unique form of expression to fruition. The training behind my movement encompasses various dance forms, including ballet, flamenco, folklorico, swing criollo, salsa, merengue, shuffling, aerial, and postmodern contemporary dance. Each of these forms is built on a different dance technique. For the purposes of this study, I define technique as a structure that is designed to aid in the mastery of a skill and contributes to new embodied knowledge. Within the framework of technique, instructional, structural, and creative methods are integrated, influencing the experience of embodiment for learners. The structure of technique is informed by methods of instruction and the creative process. While technique is the basis of the fundamentals of dance and over time different technical approaches have been crafted, it is challenging to find literature that speaks directly to the evolution of dance technique.

There has been a significant element present throughout my dance training. This element was an influence of culture, which is the result of being half Cuban, half Costa Rican and born in the United States. At the age of three, I trained in a studio in my city of birth, Miami, Florida, under the instruction of Paulina De La Vega and Mari Garcia. At the age of twelve, my family and I moved to a small town in Costa Rica named Parrita. Moving from the United States to Costa Rica shifted my perspective on life. It was a culture shock to go from training in ballet, flamenco, hip-hop, merengue, and tap in a studio five days a week to a place where dance was not emphasized. Faced with a lack of resources, I rehearsed previous teachings that I acquired while being in the United States. After several months of

relying on methods that were self-taught, I started to gain notoriety in the small town and was offered opportunities to perform for cultural events in schools and public town events.

While attending high school, I found out my math teacher, Miguel Esquivel, was a dance instructor as well. I learned salsa, merengue, and swing criollo, and I had the opportunity to perform in a small-scale competition at a high school. At this event, a dancer approached me and invited me to train in contemporary modern dance with her instructor, Carlos Ovares. Dance was gradually finding its way into my path again; it was never an option to give up. Ovares offered classes at no cost, and his studio was about an hour away from home. I traveled on a bus to Quepos and Parrita back and forth on a regular basis for dance classes. We performed across the country in various festivals as well as in school settings. I was making ends meet with a job as a waitress at a hotel making a dollar an hour while attending school and training in dance. Years later, I had the opportunity to come back to the United States; this time to Fresno, California. From my recollection of living in the States, I knew the opportunities that were readily available to me. I took an extensive amount of dance classes and obtained my associates degree in dance at Fresno City College. Then I pursued my bachelor's degree at California State University Fresno, followed by moving to Phoenix, Arizona to attend Arizona State University to obtain my master's degree.

This aspect of my life is crucial to understanding my lineage and the drive behind the desire to understand how to develop a dance technique. These experiences offered me choices within my movement practice that are still utilized to this day. For me, dance was learned in different languages, in different parts of the world, and through the pursuit of opportunities while simultaneously exploring my cultural identity. My understanding of

dance felt like a dictionary I was constructing within my movement language. As an individual of two cultures, the exposure I had to movement gave me curiosities about my unique voice as a dancer. Up to this point, there has not been a movement form that spoke to me at full capacity due to the complex movement history and identity informed by the places I've lived. I have a clear motivation to create a movement form that is authentic to my artistic voice in honor of my diverse dance lineage. My goal is to encourage dancers to see the possibilities that exist within their own artistry that can contribute to dance education. Learning dance techniques offers opportunities to inform the body and add to a dancer's movement language. Encouraging technique development reinforces the idea that there is not one set way to do so.

In the history of modern dance there has been a strong influence from the pioneers of the field whose movement discoveries have been taught for generations. For instance, today there are techniques from these individuals that are codified, such as Graham technique, Limon technique, Cunningham technique, and Dunham technique. These styles of movement live on today through instruction in studios and educational settings, in the work of professional dance companies, and in the influence of these techniques on other art forms. While studying in these ways has been an impactful form of learning technique, it is important to note that over time the parameters of technique creation have evolved and been refined. Codification has been a common result of technique development, but it is not a requirement. Codified techniques involve specificity within the training system and are often associated with a specific detailed vocabulary and a specific set of movements one learns to do. Some examples of techniques that are codified are Graham technique and Cunningham technique. In addition to these, there are techniques that are not specifically

codified such as Limon technique, Hawkins technique, and Gaga. Finally, there are techniques that are currently in the process of being developed. These have the potential to challenge the norms of codified and non-codified forms due to the nature of how technique continues to evolve. Regardless of the system technique is built upon, each technique offers its own individual eccentricities which allows the mover to express themselves and train accordingly.

Within each movement practice, a dance technique offers distinct and unique movement experiences to those who study the form. The study of technique offers a space to refine a skill, maintain consistency with training, and create a deeper understanding of movement awareness within the body. While there is specificity in movement instruction, techniques will be processed by each dancer differently, so the relationship one has with technique can vary. The pure essence of enjoying the embodiment process can be sufficient for some, while the mastery of a skill through repeated practice can reinforce the motive for others. In some cases, the creative components that bring a fresh sense of kinesthetic awareness can be a driving factor. Other motivating components can be the desire to cultivate a technique and explore ideas further. This study attempts to peel back the layers of dance technique in order to understand its origin.

A series of methods were implemented to investigate the concept of technique development within the scope of this project. Four modern dance techniques that evolved in different time periods were analyzed to see the similarities and differences of how they were created through time. Finding dancers to interview that have cultivated a modern dance technique was challenging, so the interviews in this study were not limited to individuals working with technique design solely in modern dance. I had the opportunity to interview

professionals that were currently developing or had already developed a technique of their own in the respective fields of belly dance, fusion dance, and shuffling.

Furthermore, I choreographed and filmed a piece showcasing interviews with the cast, dancers embodying my movement, and a solo performance that I created and performed. In this choreographic process, my approaches, methods, and movement tendencies were analyzed with my cast to develop ideas surrounding defining my personal technique. Instead of presenting this work on a stage, I produced an event in my home that showcased the film and I invited the audience to participate in activities that involved exploring technique in a multitude of ways, within and beyond the realm of dance. The culminating event was designed to invite the community to be a part of this project, engage in inquiry about technique, and experience performance from a different perspective.

By analyzing the emergence of movement that has been impactful enough to still exist today, interviewing professionals in the field, accessing one's lineage, and tracking methods within choreography and performance, I sought to find the elements that constitute the foundation of a contemporary modern dance technique. By examining these aspects of dance technique, the goal was to reveal a framework that can serve as a basis to encourage innovative approaches to technique development.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

There are various books that illustrate established techniques in modern dance yet there is a lack of material that is strictly about the development process. There are explanations about how techniques originated, details about the technique after it has been developed, and information about the influences the technique has had on modern dance. This project differs in that it is primarily focused on the process of cultivating a technique. Due to the wide range of dance techniques available in modern dance, this literature review focuses on the analysis of techniques through a timeline format to see the correlating factors of technical development through time. This research includes the study of two established techniques from the pioneers of modern dance from the 20th century, Graham technique and Dunham technique, and two more recent techniques that evolved in the 21st century, Countertechnique and Gaga Technique. In addition to the five books that serve as the major point of reference for this research, the written literature is supplemented with interviews conducted with Amy Sigil, Suhaila Salimpour, and Colin Gribble, each of whom are currently developing techniques of their own in their respective fields outside of modern dance.

First, I reviewed the book titled *Introduction to Modern Dance Techniques* written by Joshua Legg, who is a performer, choreographer, and director. His teaching credentials include Harvard University, Suffolk University, Northwestern State University of Louisiana, and Shenandoah Conservatory. In this book, Legg examines the great classical techniques and organizes them in chronological order to serve as a guide for comparison of the different philosophies. By organizing the book through a historical and cultural lens, he invites the reader to see the correlating qualities of technique through time.

The publication *Martha Graham, A Dancer's Life*, is a captivating biography that outlines Graham's life in great detail, ranging from her early childhood all the way through her professional career. This book illustrates a clear path to understanding the origins of her technique. The sequence of events that led to the culmination of how she revolutionized the world of modern dance offers perspective on the devotion to movement that fostered technique development.

Tonia Sutherland describes the significance of Katherine Dunham's African diasporic dance works and how Dunham's work has been preserved through her pedagogical framework, the Dunham Technique. The publication *Reading gesture: Katherine Dunham, the Dunham Technique, and the vocabulary of dance as decolonizing archival praxis* explores the impact that codification had on maintaining the cultural components that Dunham technique offers while still being accessible through archival means today.

Another publication, *How to do a plié and not get bored*, written by Carol Brown and Anouk Van Dijk, encompasses Countertechnique and the fundamental principles it was built upon. This work documents the beneficial contributions that Countertechnique has provided in a performing arts curriculum at the tertiary level. While this is focused on the impact Countertechnique has had on a focused group, it reveals the influence of Van Dijk's methodologies beyond the scope of technique itself. This work reveals how Van Dijk's practices were molded and shaped into the method she now teaches worldwide, and outlines her original motivation to create a system to train dancers to move with ease and fluency in any given direction.

The final publication that is relevant to this literature review is *Gaga: Moving Beyond Technique with Ohad Naharin in the Twenty-First Century*, written by Deborah Friedes Galili. This work examines the progression of Gaga technique and how the approach Naharin takes challenges conventional beliefs about technique. Through Naharin's approach, Gaga technique allows dancers to gain a deeper understanding of their artistic tactics with heightened sensory experiences and the physicality that the technique demands. The distinctive components of Gaga technique, developed in the 21st century, offer a clear contrast to the dance techniques that emerged in the 20th century. Gaga shifts from the conventional framework of technique class. An example of this is how Naharin has structured classes in a way that is designed to welcome all skill levels and dance backgrounds to be a part of this practice. Gaga technique is a versatile form of training because it is accessible to all individuals and addresses the specific needs of dancers.

In addition to the resources mentioned above, I conducted semi-structured interviews with Suhaila Salimpour, Amy Sigil and Colin Gribble. These artists have already developed or are in the process of creating their own technique in their respective fields outside of the modern dance context. It is imperative to look at technique development from artists that are actively involved in the application of these methods because it will reveal the measures that are currently taking place in the field of dance. In this case, the approach to technique design within belly dance and shuffling offer perspectives of technique design across other disciplines.

In the book *Introduction to Modern Dance Techniques*, Joshua Legg explains how the techniques discussed in this book were formed in two ways: generated or retrogenerated. He

explains that the generation of technique happens before the choreographic process takes place while retrogenerating is the extraction of ideas from existing choreographic work. This concept highlights the relationship that exists between technique and choreography. Both have the ability to inform one another at any stage of the creative process. Legg supports this idea with the example he provides of Eric Hawkins suffering an injury that led him to discover new ways of moving before setting choreography, thus his technique was generated, whereas Martha Graham's approach was the opposite. According to Legg, Graham created a whole system for training dancers and creating choreography based on components of her existing work, so her technique is retrogenerated. As Legg suggests, while both may have differing starting points in their technique development, it is evident that they followed their individual curiosity to understand movement within the human body (Legg, 2011). This elucidates the fact that one's choreographic tendencies, as well as movement curiosities, contain vital information that serve as a guideline that fosters the foundation to build a technique upon. Both processes involve a clear motive that is relevant to the artist. That motive is the essence the technique is conceived upon. Whether the process implemented is generated or retrogenerated, the specificity of interest is key to the cultivation of the respective technique.

Graham Technique

According to the website of the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance, one of the most well-known artistic forces of modern dance in the 20th century was Martha Graham. She created a new movement language that has been codified and is still taught to this day by *The Martha Graham School* and in many other institutions around the world. This is the oldest professional dance school in the United States. Classes are taught by

faculty who are current or former members of the *Martha Graham Dance Company*, and who trained with Martha Graham herself or with her first-generation acolytes (Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance, Inc.).

Graham's technique was built upon specific interests she had when exploring with movement that she was trying to articulate further. "Working with her own body, and with the bodies of her dancers, she was seeking to convey, through dance, unspoken needs, desires, and dreams, and universal emotions such as joy or jealousy or grief" (Freedman, 1998). It was the intensity of movement expression that intrigued her throughout movement exploration and training her dancers. She shifted the focus on revealing what she referred to as the "inner world" of emotions and dreams by starting from a fundamental fact of life, which is the act of breathing (Freedman, 56). Through careful study of the breath, which is the core of where humans experience emotion, she began formulating her ideas around contraction and release. This led to a whole system designed around these ideologies.

The technique development process stemmed from Graham's interest in aspects of dance that intrigued her movement curiosities. By analyzing her existing work and refining her ideas further, her methods were created due to the specificity of her artistic intent. Her technique came from a retrogenerated process. It was born backwards, created out of the revolutionary dances Graham was making for the stage. (Eilber, as cited in Legg, 2011).

Dunham Technique

Katherine Dunham was another impactful figure that contributed significantly to the field of modern dance. According to *The Institute for Dunham Technique Certification (2022)*,

Dunham was born in 1909 in the small town of Glen Ellyn, Illinois. Dunham became one of the first dance anthropologists. She created a codified dance technique used in works performed by her company, the first predominantly black internationally-touring dance company. Dunham became one of Hollywood's first African-American choreographers, and authored various scholarly books and journalistic articles on dance and dance in the Caribbean. Dunham had the opportunity to study abroad, an experience which ignited the start of her dance technique trajectory. During Dunham's first field exploration, she was able to analyze the dance forms of Jamaica, Martinique, Trinidad, and Haiti within her cultural studies (Legg, 2011). Her examinations of these dance forms were fundamental to the origins of her technique development.

Dunham's technique stemmed from observing contrasting aspects of Afro-Caribbean movement to the more European American ideas about concert dance (Legg, 2011). Elements such as the use of the pelvis, isolations, and undulations of the torso were key components in Afro-Caribbean dance, and these observations were where Dunham began to form her technique. Legg emphasizes how these observations of Dunham's provided insight for her into the idea of what modern dance had the potential to be, both in movement and in regard to the impact it could have on racial and cultural understanding across the globe.

Alongside her career in concert dance, Dunham's observations from cultural studies abroad expanded her understanding of movement. Her awareness of the distinct aspects that characterized movement within each cultural form was the start of a new movement language. By integrating movement from the observations in her cultural studies, and

incorporating elements from ballet and modern dance, she created a distinguished dance technique. In addition to the technique structure created, it was imperative to the goals within Dunham technique to take ownership in developing an understanding of one's own culture and as well as the culture of others (Legg, 2011). The integration of understanding the cultural components alongside the embodied practice were essential to the values that were implemented in the study of Dunham technique. Dunham's approach to accessing lineage and studying her own heritage led to the innovative ideas that fostered technique development.

Gaga Technique

Israeli choreographer Ohad Naharin developed a unique movement language that grew from a gradual emerging process in his career. Situated at the forefront of the international dance scene, Naharin has performed with Batsheva Dance Company and the troupes of Martha Graham and Maurice Bejart (Gaga, 2018, para 1), but he is most known as choreographer and former artistic director of Batsheva. In addition to his role as a choreographer and artistic director, the movement language Naharin developed welcomes dancers of all skill levels and backgrounds. Naharin identifies the beginning of this journey initiating before his first structured dance training, informed by his own observations and physical experience of the world (Naharin, 2009, as cited in Galili, 2015). Naharin's approach to movement was also influenced by what he refers to as "stations" throughout his dance career. Some of these include his formal training as detailed above; a severe injury that nearly paralyzed his left leg and his subsequent back surgery; a rehabilitation process that included working with a physiotherapist; studying t'ai chi and Pilates; and viewing of numerous

performances (Ibid, 2009, as cited in Galili, 2015, p.364). Naharin's approach to developing Gaga was a result of listening to his body intently, observing artistic choices made along the way, and maintaining a creative approach when facing injuries to further understand movement beyond any physical limitations.

This movement structure grew out of the need to facilitate the communication with dancers that performed his repertory, yet new discoveries came about after teaching non dancers. Naharin expresses the impact of this experience as it becomes clear to him that there is an innate necessity to develop movement with non dancers because it connects to the core elements of Gaga instruction (Naharin, 2014, as cited in Galili, 2015). Gaga is a continuous journey of movement exploration, encouraging participants to listen to their bodies while the instructor simultaneously provides challenging tasks. The tasks are designed in a multilayered format that brings awareness to the sensorial experience that guides movers to use specific body parts, speed, level, intensity, direction, texture, and action (Galili, 2015). This structure allows dancers to relate to the material through kinesthetic awareness rather than a specified form of moving. This allows dancers to tap in intuitively in a way that they relate to movement experimentation individually.

Naharin's curiosity is evident throughout his process. The relationship between experimentation and discoveries is a learning cycle that is constantly in motion, informing Gaga as it continues to evolve. Naharin's openness to ongoing inquiry is what shapes the very essence of Gaga. It is a movement form that offers versatility and tools that are applicable to each individual without the conventional technique requirements of mastering a specified form. While conventional technique can be intrinsic to dance training, Gaga

provides a training model that is layered, diverse, and encourages artistic growth that is unique to each participant.

Countertechnique

The article *How to do a plié and not get bored* explains Countertechnique as a movement methodology that was created for training performing artists to move in any direction in space with fluidity and ease. Dancers experience strenuous training on a consistent basis. By implementing methods to move the body with ease, dancers can alleviate the demands on their bodies within their daily practice. This technique was developed by Anouk Van Dijk, a Dutch choreographer and former Artistic Director of Chunky Move based in Melbourne, Australia (Brown & Dijk, 2021).

In an interview with Edith Boxberger, Van Dijk shares how this method was developed in the late 1990s from a realization she had during her choreographic process (Dance Techniques, 2010). When choreographing on her dancers, it came to Van Dijk's attention that she desired a specific movement quality within her work. In order to communicate this quality thoroughly to her dancers, she started to research her movement tendencies and look at them through an analytical lens. This is when it became evident to her that her movement contrasted that of her peers.

Intuitively, Van Dijk was inclined to explore the information that was already established within her unique movement approach. Identifying the nature of her interests and extracting the details in her own movement revealed the layer underneath the surface that contained the start of her technique development. It was in the process of identifying

the aspects that were beneficial for the body that helped her arrive at the basic understanding of Counter technique. The notion that regardless of where the thought initiated in the body, one thing was certain, two things were always moving away from each other. This is the principle that became the foundation of Counter technique. Dancers that train with this method are actively thinking in terms of negotiating alignment and balance within the body by giving counter-directions to each movement, or to a specific part of the body (Brown & Van Dijk, 2021). Due to the dynamic range and unlimited options that Counter technique offers, it provides dancers with the awareness to conserve energy while moving in a more fluid manner. The methodology is based on the effective application of this simple idea through embodied practice to allow the technique to support the dancing body. The technique serves as a structure, so that with time, dancers can embody the movement practice and master the particular skill of counter-direction.

Interview with Suhaila Salimpour

Suhaila Salimpour is a second-generation Persian-American belly dancer. She is best known for creating the first certification program in belly dance in the world and for developing her own format of belly dance instruction. In our interview via zoom, I asked her to describe how she developed her teaching framework.

In her response, Salimpour explained how her format was developed from the desire for personal growth. Her mother, Jamila Salimpour, established the Salimpour School in 1949. This school created standard names and terminology for belly dance, and Suhaila continued the family legacy. Suhaila was training in various Western and European dance forms where she started to differentiate the way movement was being broken down

compared to belly dance, where she felt that structure was lacking. She always had a clear vision of the dancer she wanted to be but there was no clear path to get there. That is when she determined she had to create her own path.

She realized that her challenge was due to the fact that belly dance was limited to movements that were restricted because of the absence of technical levels to train in. The actual art form needed a structure. She started to take apart movement and form to figure out what muscles she was using to execute the movements she was looking for in order to match the vision of the dancer she wanted to be in her head. Years later, after breaking down movement she improved, and her dancing was noticeably different. Dancers began to ask questions about her approach to be able to embody what she was doing because the way she executed movements was unique. This is when she decided she had to figure out a way to pass this information on, which led to her development of the Suhaila Format.

The Salimpour School now has an emphasis in strong technical training and cultural contexts. In the Middle East they do not separate dance, music, storytelling, and love, they are all together. She wants her students to be educated on the cultural aspects of the form so they can deepen their understanding of Middle Eastern music and culture. The school offers certifications online from levels 100-500 which include fundamentals, foundations, and teacher training. The curriculum in the school includes technique, choreography, music studies, history and culture, core dimension, performance arts training, personal expression, and folkloric fusion. (S. Salimpour, personal interview, June 4, 2022)

Interview with Amy Sigil

Amy Sigil is an international instructor of dance and owner of Sigil School. She created Amy Sigil Technique and the Sigil Method. This is a specific style of improvisation technique that fuses inspirations from belly dance, The Salimpour Format, hula, and hip-hop. I recently asked her to explain how she arrived at technique development.

She grew up in a small town and shares how she did not have any exposure to dance until her mid-twenties. She was into high school sports, horses, pickup trucks, and considered herself a country girl at heart. Shortly after graduating high school, she was battling a drug addiction. After seeing an article in a Parks and Recreation magazine, she took a pottery class, cooking class, and a belly dance class with the goal of pursuing sobriety. She did not enjoy belly dance at the time, but she kept attending classes simply because she attended class with a friend. As time went on, she started viewing belly dance as a joyful hobby but thought she missed her opportunity since she began dance at a later phase in her life. It was not until a few years later that she grew a love for dance. She began to understand her relationship with this art form and became clear about what her life was like before dance and what it was like after. She realized dance gave her a sense of community and made her a better human and leader.

Along her journey she studied belly dance, hula, and hip hop, but after teaching the work of others she realized that she wanted to teach something that was authentic to herself and began to develop her own technique. The technique structure implemented is inspired by her mentor, Suhaila Salimpour, who started certification and format processes in the field of belly dance. Sigil created an improvisational format that is heavily scored. She emphasized that being detail-oriented is key because once the details are clear, the technique begins to reveal itself. The technique involves a series of levels and certifications, but she did this in a

gradual process. At first, she was not certain she was going to have levels or certifications and simply started with one level and started building it from there. This format took her decades to develop. She continues to build it to this day and just recently finished level five. She stressed the importance of having conviction when designing your own technique, alongside the confidence and willingness to teach it afterwards. (A. Sigil, personal interview, May 13, 2022)

Interview with Colin Gribble

Colin Gribble, (Gribbz) is a professional shuffler who is investigating ideas on technique within the shuffling dance form. Shuffling is a style of dance that began in the 1980s in which an individual dancer shuffles their feet inwards and then outwards. The footwork includes variations of the running man and T-step along with arm movements in different directions that are simultaneously going to the beat. This dance form also incorporates spins, glides, and often is associated with cutting shapes. Shuffling is improvisational by nature.

Colin started training professionally in dance at the age of twenty-five once he discovered Electronic Dance Music and the rave scene. He approached his training through methods that were self-taught, starting with YouTube as a resource and then taking lessons from other shufflers and paving his own path. He met a group of girls that were shufflers while attending his first EDM festival in Arizona and learned from them one-on-one. He became aware of shuffle meetups in the community and became passionate about leading them himself. Shortly after he started leading meetups, he started a crew named Kinetic Amity to make an impact in the Arizona shuffling community. He is currently working with

Relentless Beats, an entertainment group hired for events, performing on stage at music festivals. I recently asked him to tell me about his ideas on technique, stylization, and the methodologies in his approach to teaching.

Colin defines technique as training or moving the body in a certain fashion or method. Stylization, he explains, is one's own unique style that no one can ever replicate. He shared how he has found ways to blend various styles including House step, Miami step, Melbourne shuffle, Cali shuffle, and Malaysian shuffle which directly inform his technique. He incorporates freestyle movement in his practice because it is free of limitations. Since shuffling is a relatively new art form, he has noticed that the notions of technique and style are still developing. There are different types of shuffling which include Melbourne shuffle, Malaysian shuffle, Cali shuffle, Russ shuffle. All of these are named after the location they originated in. There's also an ongoing discussion between the terms 'shuffling' and 'cutting shapes' because different countries have different meanings associated with the terms. Gribble explains that the technique he has observed that is most solidified within shuffling is from a shuffle crew based in Los Angeles called Forever Together Strong. They are one of the biggest, long running crews to date and have created their own style and technique.

Shuffling differs in its use of technique compared to other dance forms. Shuffling encourages dancers to cultivate their own style. When technique is learned, it is utilized as a foundation to execute movements as well as generate new material to add to technique and style simultaneously. While building choreography is an element used in shuffling, freestyle is the approach that is utilized the most within this realm. It is implemented as a method of choreographing to compose in real time. This is where dancers solidify their practice and refine their self-expression (C. Gribble, personal Interview, May 14, 2022).

After reviewing the literature, I believe that providing a guide to technique development for the dance community will encourage dancers to share their lineage and explore the possibilities within their movement signature. It will help clarify one's aesthetic and movement preferences in relationship to the mind-body-soul which will bring awareness to somatic approaches. It will enable the ability to support the idea of technique creation in genres of dance beyond the scope of this work. As Legg explains, "it is in the technique class that we gain the skills and craft our artistic direction--and where the body-mind-spirit connection is established (Legg, 2011). Dancers that desire to become familiar with their intrinsic movement curiosities have the potential to satisfy an artistic interest or contribute to innovative movement approaches within dance. These ideas are central to cultivating distinct technical foundations in dance education.

CHAPTER III: CREATIVE PROCESS

To investigate technique, a series of activities were implemented to explore the parameters of technique development. First, I gathered a group of six dancers who committed to participating in the project. Each of the dancers had a unique movement background, including Afro-Latin, ballet, Bharatanatyam, contemporary modern, Irish dance, and hip hop. It was imperative to begin with identifying each dancer's relationship to and understanding of technique. This was followed by the acknowledgement and tracing of lineage in order to understand the movement that has already been embodied through our individual dance practice. Next, we proceeded to experiment with the choreographic process. Continuing, we analyzed our understanding of technique in relation to our movement history and collectively began to trace the teaching methods implemented within the choreography I was teaching.

As the choreographer, my movement lineage was being transferred to the dancers' bodies, which led us to exploring my movement language as a way to engage in experimentation of technique development. The cast informed this process by analyzing elements they determined were representative of my personal technique. Afterwards, we documented the work through a filmmaking process. The film consisted of a group piece, interviews with the cast, and a solo performance. The culminating experience was a participatory event where the audience was invited to be a part of this process of inquiry into technique.

Technique

Analyzing the emergence of techniques through time provided a basis to compare and contrast the aspects that have been effective to the contribution of technique development in modern dance. In addition to the comparative analysis, it was crucial to initiate the creative exploration of this project within our own rehearsal space. The choreographic process was utilized to track the methods discovered from this comparative study that directly informed our ideas around technique. This was an opportunity to explore the specific movement language I was sharing with the cast. Together we begin to build a conceptual framework utilizing my movement as a structure to discover ideas on what we think comprises my personal technique.

At the very start of this project, it was important for me to ensure I notated the cast members' definitions of technique before immersing ourselves in this study. Before the embodiment process, rehearsal exploration, or any context took place, the dancers in this project were prompted to define their initial concept of technique. Without any additional context, they proceeded to share their thoughts and write them down. This activity was designed to document the comparison of their definition of technique at the beginning and end of this project. My personal definition of technique, at this time, was the following: Technique is a movement structure that serves as a guide, ultimately leading to the mastery of a skill or embodiment of a specific movement aesthetic or form.

As a dancer, different layers of technique are ingrained in muscle memory due to years of dance training. This embodied knowledge is carried from within. Movement curiosities encourage exploration, ultimately leading to new discoveries. Working with the cast of six dancers offered the opportunity to learn about my embodied self. They were a living breathing guide, informing me about the movement approaches instilled in my dancing body throughout the entirety of this project. At the same time, my observations were tracking the way in which the dancers embodied my movement language, and how their dance lineage was evolving as a result. It was a movement exchange that was constantly influencing one another. Together, we were enveloped in the nuances of technique that were being uncovered throughout the timeline of this project.

Conceptualizing ideas of technique design and ongoing inquiry was a focus that was central to our rehearsal process. The dancers were prompted to analyze my movement and track the methods of instruction they observed throughout the choreographic process. They were encouraged to shape their personal concept, interpretation, and ideas surrounding the elements that constitute technique within modern dance. To further understand our preconceived notions of technique, we wanted to first familiarize ourselves with each other's dance history.

We proceeded to share our dance backgrounds as a group. We learned about the diverse dance influences within the cast. Our dance training experience also came up in our discussion. There were dancers that had never trained in modern dance, and there were others who had trained professionally in modern dance across the globe. Extensive dance experience was never a concern or requirement for dancers to participate in this project, in

fact it was the willingness of the dancers to be a part of technique exploration that was necessary. These discussions about technique as an embodied learning experience led to our next step, a movement lineage exploration.

Movement Lineage



Movement Lineage Artistic Renderings [Photograph], by L. Contreras, 2022.

Acknowledging dance lineage is essential within my practice. Tracing back the movement knowledge that lives in my body today is a reflective process. Movement being passed down for generations brings a true sense of appreciation for ancestral knowledge. For me the process of tracing back lineage is through memories. In my personal time, engaging in improvisational movement experiences helps me access core memories central to my

lineage that help me feel grounded in my dance practice. As an individual that has experienced dance in different parts of the world, I crave groundedness. It is important for me to engage in reflection and establish a clear relationship with the mind, body, and soul before instilling movement on another dancing body.

Sensing lineage intuitively through movement leaves traces of one's past in space. When diving into the realm of improvisation, I can feel the roots of my dance knowledge bubble up as I move. Muscle memory is deeply ingrained in my body due to dance training from a young age. I thought about the way in which my very first dance teachers shared their expertise, directly influencing my perception of dance. My memory begins to trace back the corrections given to me that have carefully shaped my proprioception. I acknowledge the kinesthetic understanding that deepens in my body continues through repeated practice. I remember the adaptation to numerous teaching styles and cultural influences learned within each genre of dance. My awareness becomes heightened by sensory information that is constantly communicating through the juxtaposition of conscious and unconscious measures. This experience allows a constant stream of memories that are unlocked through the open-ended exploration of my movement.

The desire to create a visual representation of lineage became a priority at this phase. The dancers were instructed to take a moment to access their lineage and write it down on a piece of paper. During this activity, the dancers asked me questions about lineage. For instance, one dancer asked if my name could be included in their lineage. It was an honor to be considered part of someone else's lineage. At the same time, I reflected on the fact that

my movement is indeed being passed down through my choreographic process. To investigate our lineage in our bodies, we began to explore through movement.

Choreographic Process



Under The Blacklight Cast [Photograph], by R. Lindegren, 2022.

Constructing a choreographic work with the focus centered solely on technique felt like a limitation. In the process of choreographing, my inspirations often stem from telling a story or building upon abstract concepts. In this case, I started choreographing in a way that was trying to explain technique at its core, which limited the expression I wanted to convey. My ideas of technique at this phase in the project were focused on the basic structure of technique, the skill being mastered, and the goal of said technique when I was still not clear of my relationship with these aspects in my own practice. Therefore, I shifted my choreographic process, and took a step back because I realized that the purpose was to deconstruct it, not simply explain technique through movement. I wanted to break down my established flow as a choreographer, understand my methods of construction, and learn from observing my dancers embodying my movement. It was within the instruction of choreography that my methods were being revealed, gradually informing my own understanding of my technique. Tracking these methods informed my technique directly.

Working with my dancers always started by a repetitive mirroring process. The movement was visually demonstrated with no specific cues. The dancers were naturally inclined to follow. Once a movement phrase was fully embodied, I moved on to the next set of movements. The warmups were integrated within the demonstration of choreography. Due to the nature of this structure, the warmups consisted of short choreographic sections that were taken directly from the choreographic material I would be teaching that day. By having all the dancers warm up in this manner, it made my composition process of choreography easier because they were already familiar with the material.

Another reason for integrating warmups with choreography is because I enjoy when the rehearsal space feels like a performance from the very start of practice. This goes in hand with my constant focus on stage presence. Commitment to movement was an idea that I was focused on communicating effectively to my dancers. This is something I value because for me, commitment to movement means to challenge the awareness of movement execution during performance. In my own practice, it is important for developing technique because it is an aspect that dancers can learn to encourage further exploration of their movement awareness during performance. As dancers we train extensively either to enhance our movement practice or to present our work. The idea of facilitating a tool for dancers to encourage growth within performance is an element I would want my technique to be known for. To articulate this idea, energy control and working within dynamic ranges in tempo was at the forefront of this concept. Focusing on these qualities from the very start of rehearsal helped the dancers understand my vision for the stage.

The dancers shared their challenges in embodying my movement. They described movement as unfamiliar at times. My tendency is to purposefully explore movement that feels uncomfortable. This is a choreographic interest and I think it helps people to understand movement from a different perspective. This method is used specifically to explore my aesthetic choices with asymmetry. Another challenge identified was resulting from my extensive use of contralateral movement with opposition. In my work, the tendency is to execute jumps, turns, and balances while reaching in opposite directions. The dancers related that these challenges were exciting as movers, even though the movements felt foreign to the body. The dancers were curious about the ease with which I could execute these types of movements. They were consistently focused on achieving the movement

qualities that the choreography demanded. Their concerns were mostly surrounding two specific elements: the adequate timing of each movement and ensuring that the choreography looked identical to what I was demonstrating. These concerns were naturally what the dancers focused on as a group, however, my direction may have implied that these aspects were a priority as a result of my teaching approach.

The group piece started to develop as the phrases taught were embodied by the dancers. It was constructed in a way that considered the camera perspective for filming purposes. In previous performance experiences I have found that improvisation is a tool that is used often as part of building choreography but my preference for the project was to have my dancers express their understanding of my movement through this journey of technique exploration.

When creating my solo, I took notes from the interviews with the dancers from their description of my movement. I experimented with ideas of contralateral movement, the element of surprise, sharp movement, off-balance movement, shapes, and opposition. I worked on highlighting those key elements that the dancers observed in my movement while also considering aspects from my lineage in dance training from Florida, Costa Rica, California, and Arizona. This solo was centered around creating a piece that was authentic to me as a mover.

Film



Film Screening Room [Photograph], by L. Contreras, 2022.

The choreography was filmed at Industry PHX in Phoenix, Arizona. The film consisted of three sections: a group piece, interviews with the cast, and my solo. The interviews were filmed in a documentary format at my house in Phoenix, Arizona. The group piece depicts the cast's true embodiment of my movement. By exemplifying contralateral lines, dynamic changes in tempo, and clear commitment to movement, the dancers cater to my core interests as a mover. It is also a representation of the dancers at another stage in their dance lineage, molding to the nuances of my choreographic intentions. They bring forth a visual outline of the movement patterns that uncover my sensibilities as a mover and creator. These sensibilities are a mere reflection of my dance lineage being

transferred energetically through bodies in space. The filming was not a documentation of the dance from a fixed viewpoint. Instead, it was done using different camera angles and perspectives to capture the three dimensionality and sense of life in the dance. The film was captured and edited by Ri Lindegren.

The interview portion of the film addressed the dancers' experience decoding traces of technique. They shared their individual interpretation of technique, stylization, and embodiment practice. They share the methods discovered through their observation of technique analysis in this work. The articulation of the movement experienced by the dancers reveals the language that is embedded in this framework. The language was centered around ideas on looking at the internal side of technique, the sense of community within the work, the descriptive details of movement, methodologies discovered, and challenging ideas on movement dynamics.

The final section of the film consisted of my solo, which was choreographed to the song titled 'Orbit' by Rezz. The music has a mysterious mood and incorporates sharp transitions with dynamic tempos, which is also a characteristic of my movement. This allowed me to express my movement to its core. I focused on pushing the boundaries of concepts that my cast revealed in the interviews in regard to my movement. I explored contralateral lines further, shifted my implementation of shapes, challenged my dynamics with time, played with ideas of opposition, and worked with contrasts of sharpness and fluidity. I accessed lineage to express the transparency of my innate movement tendencies, sensed the impulses that drive my creative motive, and took a moment to acknowledge those who influenced my understanding of dance. To access my lineage, I went through a list I

created and started to revisit movements that I learned from each individual. These movements were then incorporated into the solo where I felt they fit best with the movement qualities I was working with to create a consistent flow. Showcasing the essence of how my lineage has transformed within the body and how the movement instilled in the dancing body brings insight to characteristics of my artistry.

Participatory Event



Under The Blacklight Event, [Photograph], by R. Lindegren, 2022.

The culminating event took place in the intimacy of my own home. It opened up a space for the audience to explore technique without restrictions. This was originally inspired by the thought of shifting the dynamics of performance beyond the proscenium stage.

Guests had the freedom to explore the space freely as there were no specific guidelines that were set. This event was designed for technique to be explored in relationship to any context beyond dance, making it accessible to all audiences.

Technique manifested into a magical array of activities for guests to explore. The backyard was covered in colorful lights, with bubbles in the air, signs to read, music in the background, games to play, and spaces for relaxation like a fireplace. Walking through the event, the audience encountered artistic renderings of each dancer's lineage which were created by the dancers themselves and displayed through giant colorful frames hanging from a tree, floating in space. Guests were able to grab a blacklight to see details within the frames up close. A mysterious white door served as a canvas for guests to write or draw their own definition of technique in neon colors. A pour painting station was designed for the participant to engage with the technique of pour painting while being able to take their artistic piece home. There was a pothos station for guests to learn and engage with the technique of propagating a plant. Neon body painting was available, allowing guests to be a part of the intricate details of the technique within this art. There was a colorful selfie station to snap a quick memory followed by a colorful cloud installation illuminating a hallway path, along with a message box where guests can share their thoughts and feedback on the event.



Pour Painting Station, [Photograph], by L. Contreras, 2022.



Pothos Propagation Station, [Photograph], by L. Contreras, 2022.

The screening of the dance film, which was 20 minutes long, took place inside the home. The space was cinematic, inviting the guests to relax when they decided to go enjoy the film. The film was playing on a constant loop so that the audience could catch a viewing whenever they pleased. Walking through the home, guests could view choreographic works I created during my time as a graduate student at Arizona State University which were being displayed on a television screen and a projected screen in the room adjacent to the cinematic space. These were displayed for the audience to see different elements of my previous work.

CHAPTER IV: DISCOVERIES

Through the analysis of techniques from the 20th and 21st century, my findings revealed that they were each developed due to the specific interest or curiosity of the artist associated with the form. To be completely invested in following that curiosity is where the framework of technique begins to unfold. It cannot be forced; it is a result of ongoing inquiry. This is why there is no set structure established. The evolving nature of technique is a result of the discipline in committing to an ongoing process, and to cultivate it requires extreme effort, dedication, and passion.

Graham technique and Dunham technique were specific in terms of teaching an embodied form central to the artist who developed it. They both offer a structure that allows dancers to master these specified movement forms. Graham technique is heavy on contraction and release, while Dunham technique is focused on isolations, undulations of the spine, and dynamic rhythm. Each of these techniques has a particular aesthetic sensibility and a specific intention regarding the purpose of the movement. In Graham technique, these intentions include making dancers more expressive and dramatic, and in Dunham technique, they include giving dancers the ability to embody rhythm and grace.

On the other hand, Gaga technique and Countertechnique do not have a specific form to embody, yet the techniques are built around connecting ideas that are central to the needs of dancers. Gaga implements the strong use of imagery to activate the body and physical sensations. This movement language creates a multisensory experience for dancers, stimulating the imagination and encouraging a deeper connection within the self. Countertechnique offers tools that help dancers face the challenging demands of dance by teaching the information with the intention of having dancers apply it in their own practice

and putting it into action. Countertechnique teaches specific principles so that the dancer can access these and prepare the body for their daily practice of training, dancing, and performing. Gaga and Countertechnique both bring awareness to the body by providing experiences that are accessible to each dancer, aiding their individual practice.

Naturally, each technique gradually forms its own aesthetic. It is important to note that Graham and Dunham technique provides dancers a distinct movement vocabulary which is learned through the body to be represented externally. Alternatively, Gaga and Countertechnique provide a framework that allows the dancer to explore ideas by accessing the tools learned from these techniques to facilitate their own movement practice, making these internal forms of applying technique. Gaga and Countertechnique encourage learning through ideas that inform the body which influence the external result. Inevitably, each technique influences movement but the more recent techniques in this study allow dancers to access tools in their practice while the previous techniques are aimed at teaching a specific movement vocabulary.

During the creative process, I found the necessary information about how a technique develops within the approach to teaching my choreography. Initially, my focus was on the very basic structure of technical design, which included the mastery of a skill and a specified structure to ultimately achieve a specific goal. However, that focus did not provide substantial information in my research because the content of the piece that the technique is built upon was overlooked. As the process continued, my focus shifted towards understanding what was taking shape. That is when I realized my interests and saw how they were emerging. I identified the ideas of commitment to movement as oppositional balance, contralateral lines, dynamic tempos, and working with the element of surprise as a

few of the components in my practice. The continual process of documenting these details will be necessary for ongoing exploration.

Style and technique continued to surface throughout this work. Inevitably, one cannot exist without the other. Technique is the process that needs to take place in order to master a skill. Style is personalized, as it is unique to the mover. In my choreographic process, style and technique inevitably informed each other through an ongoing exchange, influencing my technique choices. The characteristics of my technique were uncovered due to ideas surrounding aesthetics and intentionality of movement.

In the interviews with artists in the field, I learned that the level of dance experience at a particular age does not determine one's ability to create a technique in the future. Crafting a dance technique is accessible to anyone who wants to pursue it. The desire and reason to create a technique must be present if this becomes of interest. Through that desire, dance experience begins to take shape. Experience enables one to define a particular technique, but it cannot happen without the initial spark that ignites the learning process, which in turn informs the development of technique. Again, it is through the commitment to continue learning and trusting that exploring one's curiosities will gradually form that foundation. Throughout the interviews there was also a clear emphasis on the fact that technique creation requires discipline and dedication. As professionals in the field working with technique development, each interviewee highlighted the demands of building a framework.

The interviews with my dancers informed me about the technical elements within my movement. For the dancers, there was a language that evolved throughout this project. In fact, the dancers eventually started naming this process as "The Contreras Technique."

Words that the dancers used to describe my movement included: rapid fire, repetition, sharp lines, angles, contralateral, release, tempo changes, levels, surprise, grounded, and earth. The common theme surrounding my movement that resonated the most with the dancers was the concept of contralateral movement and working with the element of surprise. Due to the nature of this research, the dancers expressed how embodying the movement was really challenging because they wanted to ensure that it was being replicated exactly as I was demonstrating it.

While I appreciated this notion, I was mostly concerned with the energy manipulation and the timing implemented into the embodiment or the choreography, not the exact replication of my movement. I was aware each dancer was going to embody it in a unique manner and I was interested in seeing that individuality even though they were executing my movement specifically. They felt challenged because they realized they were focusing on embodying my style rather than my technique. This is due to the fact that I am still investigating and defining what technique means to me. When they came to that realization, they began to embrace the connection between their individuality and my technique. Embracing their individuality is one of my artistic values. Understanding how to do that is central to this technique. My focus was also geared towards the commitment to movement during performance.

Unpacking technique before the making of the dance revealed how it stems from dance training that influenced my movement from different parts of the world. For example, my interest with movement in the body comes from my dance experience in competitive dancing, which involved heavy emphasis on audience perspective and opinion. I participated in competitions in Florida and Costa Rica and had to audition to be admitted into schools in

California to pursue my dance education at the college level. While competing and auditioning was an understandable process throughout my life in dance, it was also uncomfortable. Since a young age, I was put in a position where dancing in these showcases meant that my dancing knowledge had to be compared, analyzed, and hopefully, remembered by those observing me dance. This was the case no matter what part of the world I trained in. That is why it has been imperative for me to articulate my artistic voice and authentic self now.

From my research, regarding the “Contreras Technique,” I can now identify that the approach to technique design stems from three major characteristics. These are the ones I value artistically and want to continue researching through embodied practice. First, the technique must be accessible to all movers. Next, it needs to challenge dynamics of movement expression and execution while working with the element of surprise. Finally, it should push the boundaries of performance to create an impactful experience for the audience.

The methods I discovered to embody these ideas were through what I refer to as strict visual cueing, where the dancers observed me and followed along without the necessity of me providing an explanation. This made the movement less restricted and more accessible without having to go over specific details until after the movement was embodied. When I wanted the dancers to challenge their dynamic range, I would give them examples through movement and then have them identify and discuss the differences they observed. These ideas were always surrounding the energy implemented, as well as the utilization of space, time, and a clear sense of direction.

When the movement became familiar to the dancers, I encouraged them to think about how they are constantly challenging their movement execution. To work with the element of surprise, I had the dancers think about the audience's perspective. The piece was being filmed and it was not set for a stage. Because of this I reminded them to think about the audience observing from all angles and how they can shift from one movement to another in a way that the audience would not predict. Oftentimes it all came back to the idea of how energy, time, and space offered a backbone to exploring elements of surprise within movement and performance. While these are prominent characteristics of my technique, it is necessary to keep investigating these ideas further because there is a sense of wanting to uncover more information. I have also been considering the way the term technique has been conceptualized in this work. Throughout this project I have seen how other artists refer to technique using two different terms, either as a 'format' or as a 'movement language.' While I am not certain which terminology resonates with me the most, I think it is important to consider if the term technique is what I want to utilize for this framework moving forward.

CHAPTER V: REFLECTION

This project was a multilayered experience that completely changed my outlook on technique. The thought of technique development before this project seemed unattainable, but the results have proven otherwise. Now that the path to technique development has become clear, I have come to the realization that my personal pursuit of technique development is going to be an extensive process. This will continue to be a part of my ongoing research. My dancers provided critical insight about my movement throughout this project, but more time needs to be devoted to defining my particular technique in its entirety. As movement discoveries are uncovered, I am barely scratching the surface, and my technique is still a framework that is developing. This project has allowed me to understand that technique development is indeed accessible to anyone who wishes to pursue it, yet it is a gradual process. Throughout this experience, I have also made progress in understanding my artistic values and movement tendencies. This is key to understanding why I want to emphasize particular movement principles within my developing technique.

Working with my dancers made me realize that my choreographic choices for this project were influenced by thinking in terms of audience response and designing an experience. Central to my approach was creating a space that was unique to me as an artist where I can share my work and allow my audience to be a part of it. This expanded my ideas on performance. This was the first time in my life implementing all of my artistic interests into one project with the purpose of involving my audience on a deeper level. The perspective of the audience is something I always thought about but never realized to be a key component in my work. My lineage revealed the influence of competition in previous dance training which contributed to the idea of audience perspective. The relationship

between my audience and artistic choices is now a factor I will continue to investigate further as well as researching ways to help performers attend to and cultivate that relationship.

Technique has the ability to inform the dancing body and it has been useful to observe the way in which it contributes to dance. The novelty of technique is reflected by the curiosities of the artist that manifested it to fruition. One detail that has been profound for me is how there are no identical techniques. There are similarities, but the essence of what the technique is offering demonstrates the possibilities of evolving ideas within the dance community. The lack of specificity available to approach technique development indicates how there is not a defined way to do so. Even though that aspect inspired this research, I appreciate having the freedom to create a framework that aligns with one's artistic interests and technical needs.

The creative process communicated the relationship between my personal technique and strategies for performance mechanics. It provided an opportunity to understand the idiosyncratic characteristics of my interests while defining what I would want my technique to fulfill if it was developed entirely. My interest in performance has been the driving factor that motivates my technique development. While my technique is a work in progress, there is certainty in the desire to cultivate a movement language that challenges the parameters of movement within performance while contributing to dance education.

The interviews with professionals in the field gave me insight into the way technique is structured. Creating formats, certifications, and courses were a few methods they utilized to organize and teach their technique. While these are effective methods in approaching this framework, it is a complex process that differs for each individual. It took a considerable

amount of exploration, analysis, and documentation to simply understand the depths of myself as an artist with curiosities about technique. Seeking components of technique development within established modern dance techniques and other dance genres in the field, along with analyzing my own concept of technique design continues to expand beyond the timeline of this project.

CHAPTER VI: CONCLUSION

The existing modern dance training systems have provided distinct ways for dancers to create and execute movement. Technique development in modern dance has evolved out of the exploration of curiosities unique to the artist. This research articulates that it is necessary for dancers to learn from their embodied knowledge, in order to encourage their own technical development. By identifying the movement systems they've studied that resonate with one's artistic sensibilities, one begins their own explorations building on this lineage that formulate the trajectory to a defined technique of their own. It is essential to access and honor lineage, and to engage in analytical observations embedded within one's movement practice. Our history has shaped our movement today, which aids in the process of embodying other techniques. There is a wide variety of techniques to learn from, yet some techniques demand incredible specificity that can take precedence over the dancer's voice. While learning other techniques adds to our movement language, it is essential to maintain awareness of what differentiates learned techniques from one's unique movement expression.

In addition, tracing methods within choreographic approaches identifies the underlying details central to the interests of the mover. The challenge with technique development is readily identifying the core principles that constitute the training system being created; it is indeed a long-term process. By analyzing the approach to technique development, this research has shown it is informed by corporeal knowledge. Exercising continuous inquiry contributes to the gradual evolution of technique as a result of research and experimentation.

Moving forward, I want to dedicate myself to this research by implementing practices of lineage acknowledgement, continue to document and analyze my movement, and fostering technique inquiry through my pedagogical framework. Through ongoing exploration, engaging in critical scholarship is necessary as techniques continue to evolve. Encouraging the development of technique aids in the contribution of innovative thinking from dancing bodies. Cultivating approaches to technique development challenges existing parameters, furthering movement research. Recognizing that one's movement signature is capable of influencing movement ideologies highlights the essence of embodied knowledge.

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