

SNDO



Academy of Theatre and Dance
Amsterdam University of the Arts

BA in Choreography

Course description

Course: Alignment

Teacher(s): Tiana Hemlock-Yensen

Year group: SNDO2

Study year: 2018-2019

Period: Oct 29th- Nov 30th

Weeks (block:) Week 44-48, Block 2

Time: 10.00 -12.30

Hours: 4.5 per week

Total amount of contact hours: 37.5

Total amount of self-study hours (reading, writing, homework tasks, etc.):

Starting date: Oct 29th 2018.

Date of completion: Nov 30th 2018.

Study points: Student acquires credits/study points based on minimum of 90% participation in the course (in case of excused absence the minimum required is 70% presence). The full course study points are awarded if student participated in the above mentioned amount *and* in relationship to the quality of participation and development expected for the course.

Content (concept and week to week outline):

Alignment. What does alignment mean in relation to being bodies in a chaotic world?

Alignment as being in a place that is not stable or fixed but that has tension and movement inside it. A place where equal movement in all directions allows us the illusion of stasis. It is in fact being on a knife's edge the micromovements that keep us ready.

It is a transfer of tension through the body in an efficient way.

I want to address Klein Technique, Alexander technique and some ideas from Bartenieff throughout the course giving different access points to alignment as I also use all of these in my practice and find them related and helpful. All of these teachers and people, whose work I draw from are white and have within their disparate works an idea of a possibly neutral or idealized body (though it is never addressed this way). This "neutral" body (especially in dance context) has generally been a white, cis and based on an idea that there is an essential and "natural" body. These practitioners have developed their techniques as a way to overcome an injury or ailment, they all also have a strong physical and scientific underpinning. I want to question how it could be possible to decolonize these practices and what that would mean.

Week 44

Note for teachers: your course description needs to be sent to SNDO admin esther.arribas@ahk.nl two weeks after the course is confirmed and no later than three (3) weeks prior to the course commencement. This form (must be) available to students in the weeks prior to the start of the course.

An introduction to the class, a brief intro to the people whose work I draw inspiration from and talking alignment as a more fluid idea together.

Klein Technique, three classes. Observing each other walking.

Alignment as described by Susan Klein. Looking at the skeleton and the way gravity passes through bone.

The finger demonstration. Energy equal to structure.

Imaging the structure from the bottom up.

Week 45

Alexander Technique

Where it came from and what it has been used for.

Semi supine directing of the body.

Imaging the body from the top down. Observing habits.

Imaginary dances. Taking the work with visualization directly to performance.

(In pairs with feedback).

Week 46

Bartenieff, patterns of body connectivity.

Making one's own warm up from these

Coming back to Alexander and Klein.

Week 47

Touch, kinds of touch.

Supportive structures with more than one body.

Identifying connections in the body within a phrase. Which ones are helpful and when?

In groups supporting each others bodies as we fall and move, connecting different connections from Klein, Alexander + Bartenieff.

Week 48

Weight, the floor, imagination as a way of filling in the blanks and not seizing up in phrasing or performance.

Going more in depth with the details of the techniques.

What has been happening in their bodies. Integration and uses for the techniques in movement.

Objectives and assessment criteria: (the student is able to..):

The student is able to observe their own body and habits, take in information and put it to use. Make observations of other bodies. Comes to their body and the bodies of others without judgement, with curiosity. Can engage in discussion and be critical about the

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practices and applications of the techniques. The student understands some base principles of the techniques so that they can apply them to their own practice.

Literature, websites, background: (as reference or actual course material):

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bartenieff_Fundamentals#Principles

I have a PDF of a PHD dissertation called “A Conceit of the Natural Body: The Universal-Individual in Somatic Dance Training” by Gilbert. G. Duncan. I will maybe give them sections of it to read if it comes up but I will print it for them or send it.

I will also bring in some diagrams and images. I may need to print them at school. Is that possible to do when I get there?

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Teaching format:

- ☐ technique class X
- ☐ task directed education
- ☐ learning through performance project
- ☐ seminar / group work
- ☐ stage / work placement
- ☐ individual advising X
- ☐ instruction, self-study, feedback
- ☐ peer to peer feedback X
- ☐ various X
- ☐ other: please describe

Form of students output:

- ☐ process X
- ☐ product
- ☐ presentation
- ☐ report
- ☐ essay
- ☐ (theory) exam
- ☐ other: please describe

Assessment by whom:

- ☐ teacher X
- ☐ group
 - ☐ The student: X. I would like that the students evaluate themselves either in conversation with me or written to me at the end.

Assessment:

dialogue / progress oriented.

Which competences the course contributes to (please refer to the end goals/competences in the SNDO study guide):

Competencies I, 2, 4. III, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18. IV, 19, 20, 21. VI, 32. VII, 34, 36.

Conditions:

Remarks:

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