

Towards the Theories and Practice of the Dance Art

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Abstract

The issues confronted by most choreographers, dance teachers and dance critics are the problems relating to the theories and practice of dance as an art, vis-à-vis conceptualizing it as an arts genre that permeates all facets of human life and culture without recourse to the fact that like any other art, dance is entirely within the domains of theories. Even most choreographers and dancers 'believe' that they are outside of theory, outside of discourse, in the pure domain of technique, effect, or communication. To this end, four theories are identified in this paper as fundamental models in the theory and practice of dance. These theories are philosophical aesthetic theory; choreologists aesthetic theory; sociological aesthetic theory; and medical/therapeutic dance theory. Thus, various functionalities of dance will be discussed in relation to specific theories that are afore mentioned. After a critical discourse, this paper positions dance as an art, ritual, or recreation that goes beyond the functional purposes of the movements used in work or athletics in order to express emotions, moods, or ideas; tell a story; serve religious, political, economic, or social needs; or simply be an experience that is pleasurable, exciting, or aesthetically valuable. Thus, the desire of this paper is to unravel the mystery behind the mastery and the mystery of human movement and to encourage wider participation in the art of dance as any artistic genre.

Introduction

Since time immemorial, societies have used dance for their spiritual, physical, socio-political and economic advancement. For this reason, dance means different thing to different societies with underlying different preoccupations. While to some it is a channel of expression of feelings of joy, hope, aspiration, anger, hatred, sadness, happiness, etc, others see it as the transformation of ordinary functional and expressive movement into extraordinary movement for extraordinary purposes. These explain why the physical and psychological effects of dance enable it to serve many functions. This paper therefore, is of the aim to project the inevitability of dance to the development of man in all sphere of life as anchored in various theoretical frameworks.

Dance is considered to be patterned and rhythmic bodily movements, usually performed to music, that serve as a form of communication or expression. Dancing is an essential aspect of the society. It is like traditional attires worn differently by people in various societies in all ramifications. From birth through death dance serves as navigator of man's way of life and the directional signs towards a better, peaceful and purposeful human existence. Dance is also presented as a controlled emotional outlet whose form reflects cosmology; as a creative experience that draws an extension of speech and gesture that add further levels of meaning to formal occasions; as a strategy for orchestrating the climax of a successful exchange; as a challenge to the power of authorities that generates an alternative reality; as a communal response to crisis that recreates order out of confusion; and as a sequence of transformations that periodically resolves an inherent social dilemma.

Dance often occurs at rites of passage, or ceremonies performed when an individual passes from one role to another. Thus, birth, initiation, graduation, marriage, succession to political office, and death may be marked by dancing. Dance may also be a part of courtship. In some societies dances may be the only events at which young people of different sexes can meet. In contemporary society, dances also provide important occasions for young people to socialize, and above all it physical benefits as other forms of exercise that enhances vitality and fitness.

Therefore, conceptualizing dance, Enem posits that Dance is hardly indulged in for its own sake, but is always consciously cultivated to serve social, religious and aesthetic functions, as with all other arts everywhere; But more than any other arts it reaches the basic rhythms of life, the alternations of day and night, growth and decay, procreation and reproduction, the seasonal changes affecting the period and harvest (P.68).

This follows that the relevance of dance in all cultures transcends mere recreation and entertainment. Thus, dance remains a relevant and potent tool of knowledge impartation in both traditional and modern set up. It is a vehicle capable of checkmating, conscientizing and sensitizing societies against incessant vices that result into social and moral decay. In line with this similar reasoning, Harris et al insists that “the young should be taught dance in order to learn poise, discipline and good manners” (p.3). This recommendation further authenticates the significance of dance to human development by unveiling that dance has been a functional and significant medium of educating the child from cradle in the history of mankind.

Also expressing the educational value of dance is Primus, who says “dancing is education, primarily physical it tends towards exceeding the limitations of body as they are experienced in everyday use” (p.3). This brilliant position by Primus is not obtainable in the contemporary society because of the fading out of most folk dances in most societies, especially Nigerian cultures due to Western education, modern religion and other indices of modernization, consequently bringing about constant youth restiveness and other vices capable of negating moral and ethical values. The functions of dance within a given social environment are innumerable. Dance is used for many occasions and reasons in regards to the context within a given social milieu. This means that each dance exists within its own ritual origins, social milieu, and its performative functions and objectives within a given location.

In agreement with the above, several scholars have written about dances, and each of them in their own way said one or several things about the relationship between the people and dance. For example, many choreographers of recent configurations have been exploring the derivatives of dance with the express purpose of facilitating the healing diseased conditions using dance as pure therapy (Ediri 200). This means that dance, a creative arts therapy, is rooted in the expressive nature of itself. Thus, dance is the most fundamental of the arts, involving a direct expression and experience of oneself through the body language. It is a basic form of authentic communication, and as such it is an especially effective medium for therapy, based in the belief that the body, the mind and the spirit are interconnected.

Bakare, writing about dance affirms that, “every culture world over had its own traditional dance form out of which the modern dance evolved...” (P.1-2). This means, dance is natural in whatever society, and that any society without dance is dangerous to human habitation. This also explains a familiar joke that ‘when you get to a place and a modicum of dance and music is not displayed you should take to your heels’. In the mean time, it is better to have that dance as an art is identified as an integral part of people’s life and culture. In short, a vital medium of cultural expression and transmission of traditions, beliefs, norms, histories, folklores, ethical values, ethos, and etiquette.

For example, many African cultures and countries have national and ceremonial dances; few of them carry the social and historical significance of their Dancing. These elaborate dances not only help communities celebrate their festivals and special events, they also help them tell their stories and record their history. For example, the *kuza* dance of the Tiv people of central Nigeria reflects the agony during the mining in Jos. Because writing and reading came late to some parts of Africa, music and dance were used as a form of unique oral storytelling that was utilized by people from many different cultural backgrounds.

These dances were not only celebratory they were also instructive and were used to teach the younger generation about morals and values. They were also used to praise and pray to the gods and give thanks for a bountiful harvest or a successful hunt.

Theoretical Discourse

A theoretical discourse of dance encompasses the origin, styles, genre, aesthetics, artistic expressions, etc, of dance. This means that the theory deals with anatomical movements (such as foot-work, etc.), as well as dance group interactions, and their associations to each other and to music as art. It explores the communicative, physical, mental, emotional, and artistic aspects of dance as a medium of human expression and interaction.

In doing so the various nuances between the dance genres and styles are analyzed with respect to their social settings and culture. As dance is a ubiquitous element of culture, dance theory attempts to determine the instinctual nature of dance, and what makes various movements appear natural or forced.

One may derive two characteristic, directing but confronting claims about the relationship between dance and theory: Dance precedes theory, and theory precedes dance. The first claim, says that beyond the verbal, dance is determined by a significantly, characteristically, and predominantly bodily movement while the second claim means that dance is always-already within a discursive grasp of bodily movement, that it is a part of the most complex possibilities of the apparatus. Dance is born in the midst of a 'language' or an 'atmosphere of language', as well as of a language that pledges the unverbalisability and unsayability of the dancing body regarding verbal language.

In this context of thinking, intuition labels the 'tacit knowledge' that practitioners, theorists, and spectators of dance adopt, share, and accept as self-explanatory. In such an understanding of dance, theory proceeds, or is at least synchronous with, the conceptualization of technique and in that case it is a matter of a discursive and then also a theoretical framework for a poetics and practice of dance. The critical theory of dance as description, explication, interpretation, analysis, deconstruction, or discussion of a dance work and its historic and geographic identifications is a nexus of discourses that surround the dance work and its affective interactions with other theories of the world of art and culture. The theory and practice of dance are a jagged knot that is hard to untangle because apparatuses are not just the 'esoteric of discourses' or 'intensity of discourses', but also an array, mixture, multitude that fundamentally alter the real relationship of the one to the other regarding dance. To be more critical, it is pertinent to discuss these theoretical frameworks one after another.

Philosophical Aesthetic Theory

The work of philosophers concerning arts is usually called aesthetics. In the case of dance, they produce written descriptions of dance, reviews and philosophical deliberations about the components and values of dance as an art. Sometimes they do elaborate interpretations of particular dance pieces, considering the symbolic dimension of its elements. This practice is called semiotics or hermeneutics. They also care about the dance history or dance's relation to other aesthetic languages like music, visual arts and others.

This theory could be likened to the philosophy of dance reformation of Michel Fokine, a Russian dancer and choreographer, whose work revitalized traditional classical ballet and inaugurated a brilliant new era in ballet history. As he became dissatisfied with ballet in which music had become merely an accompaniment, costumes and scenery only faintly related to the subject, and dance a virtuoso technical exercise, so he developed a philosophy of reform. He believed that ballet, rather than confining itself to traditional steps and movements should draw on movements reflecting the subject, era, and music. To him, dance and mime had meaning only when they were dramatically expressive. Fokine also felt that movements of the entire body should replace traditional hand gestures unless the style of the ballet required otherwise. Dramatic expressiveness, he believed, should not be confined to the solo dancers, but should be reflected in the ensemble.

In Fokine's view, dance, music, scenic decor, and costuming should contribute equally to create a unified whole and meaning ("Michel Fokine." Microsoft® Encarta® 2009 [DVD]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft Corporation, 2008). To this strand of reasoning, like any other art form, there is a symbiotic relationship between society and dance. That is to say one leads to another. This theory holds that dance is the diagram of the societal occurrences. This idea is closely related to Isadora Duncan's beliefs about dance; her belief that gave rise to a new type of dance known as "interpretive dancing" that is society oriented. Duncan developed a dance technique influenced by the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche and a belief that dances of the ancient Greeks (natural and free) was the dance of the future. Thus, Duncan developed a philosophy of dance based on natural and spiritual concepts and advocated for that acceptance of pure dance as a high art (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_dance -). To this end, dance is considered to be an extract from life as we live it. It has to portray it at least a small scale of the socio-political, economic, religious and cultural aspect of our lives as we live in the society.

Philosophically, on a strong note, Matthew Farme posts that:

Like any art form, dance is a representation of human emotion, conflict, representation itself, and overall life. And like the rest of the art world, it should be accessible to all humanity. For me, art in general is a gift from which the artist shares his/her talents for the betterment of humanity.

It is not to be locked up in some far, dark closet for only the super intellectual and technically trained to enjoy. But rather, it is something that is to be shared, loved, and argued about by all. For if art were meant to be viewed and enjoyed by only a select few, then it would no longer be art. Rather, it would take its place amongst the many lost documents of time that served no greater purpose than the selfish desires and greedy ambitions of its authors; and thus slowly decay into the wasteland of forgotten past (http://www.adta.org/resources/chace_bio.cfm).

With this stated, dance is art, and therefore shares the same burdens and obligations as its sisters and brothers in related fields. Dance is not defined by any one technique, it can neither be harnessed nor claimed by any singular individual, group of individuals, technique based movement, or any one particular facility. Rather, dance is any movement, created by man, beast, or otherwise, that shares the inner most thoughts, feelings, emotions, characters, and ideals created by its choreographer. Dance shares no boundaries with regards to culture, race, sex, or social status, and is neither better than any other art form nor better than itself.

The Implication

The implication of this theory to dance teachers, choreographers, dancers, and the students is that, they will learn something about writing, critical thinking, the importance of historical and cultural knowledge in understanding our world, the methods for finding such knowledge, and the nature of evaluation and how it can be justified through dance. These are skills which should be central in a dance education. In an era when the National Endowments are in extremis and when the arts and humanities are under siege even within the university, we can and should continue to insist that what we teach is essential to the education of every citizen including dance.

Many years as a dance teachers, it is tasking teaching the practical aspect of dance as many students are not able to understand their history vis-à-vis the philosophical background of their folk dances. Most of these students get to know nothing about folk dance within or around their cultural environments. While the best form and method of dance teaching for students is to draw the dance raw materials from their various backgrounds.

Dance teaching is only easy when the dance teacher is able to situate a particular dance to a philosophical interpretation. Since dance is a way of communication through nonverbal means, it beholds on both the dance teacher and the students to be able to philosophically interpret any dance in question. With the cultural mutation, it is a task to students to understand their roots thereby making dance presentations to become a quasi art. Dance like any performative genre that is poised to communication should be well interpreted so as to communicate its thematic preoccupation.

Sociological Aesthetic Theory

Another branch in dance theory is the one produced by anthropologists and sociologists or call it social science theory. Closer related to philosophers, they explore dance ethnic features, considering aspects of dance as a medium of cultural and social interaction. Features of different dance genres and styles are analyzed according to their social settings and cultures. The cultural studies trend could be classified among these dance theory lines. Researchers concentrate on how dance features relate to matters of ideology, social class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality, gender and others. One example of this is the work accomplished by the anthropologist Andrée Grau. Coming from a research line founded by John Blacking (1928 -1990) (ethnomusicologist and anthropologist himself), she started her dance theory production with an encounter with the Tiwi community in Australia. One of her discoveries was that dancer's space distribution was determined by kinship relations.

Just as the case in Africa where traditional dance occurs collectively, expressing the life of the community more than that of individuals or couples. Dances are often segregated by gender, reinforcing gender roles in children. Community structures such as kinship, age, and status are also often reinforced (Henry Louis Gates & Anthony Appiah p.556).

For example, in most of Africa, history has been passed orally from generation to generation. This is one of the reasons that singing and dancing has been so important to communicate culture and background. Dances are used at nearly every social, cultural or religious event. Sometimes they tell the story of a people and other dances give moral "instructions" on how to live a good and harmonic life. This is to say that sociologically, though, similar themes may be found throughout dances across the many countries and landscapes, each has its own history, language, song, background, and purpose and cannot be translated to another dance of the same culture much less another dance from somewhere else on the continent.

Thus, considering sociological approach, dance movements are direct features of an ethnic history and mannerisms. For example, what makes Africans danced to the ground as opposed to western style of dance? The reason to this remains that the fundamental presence of the gods is not to be over emphasized. Thus, the African danced towards the ground so as to appease or beatify their ancestors who are lying low. In addition, sociologically, one may say, African dance utilizes the concepts of polyrhythm and total body articulation. Shoulders, chest, pelvis, arms, legs etc., may move with different rhythms in the music. They may also add rhythmic components independent of those in the music... (Jacqui Malone pp. 10-11). African dances are largely participatory, with spectators being part of the performance. With the exceptions of spiritual, religious, or initiation dances, there are traditionally no barriers between dancers and onlookers. Even ritual dances often have a time when spectators participate.

Thus, with the sociological approach on dance, one is able to distinguish body movements, and associate particular dance movements to individual ethnic background. With this at the back of the mind, it obvious and clear any time a Yoruba dance movement is made. The antics of the Yoruba dance vocabulary are quite different from that of Tiv dance nuances. Jacqui again maintains that:

Rather than emphasizing individual talent, Yoruba dancers and drummers express communal desires, values, and collective creativity. The drumming represents an underlying linguistic text that guides the dancing performance. However, the majority of meaning comes from the nonverbal cues and meta-language of the performers. The spontaneity of these performances creates the impression of an extemporaneous speech. This characteristic should not, however, be confused with improvisation, which emphasizes the individual and bolsters her or his ego. The drummer's primary duty is to preserve the community. S/he mediates the audience and the performer interaction (p.17).

Sociologically, under the above context, cultural groups are made to debunk a dance whose aesthetic sensibilities differed remarkably from the familiar traditional yardstick known to them. For example, to the Tiv, "*mar ka ahin iwenge*" or dance is in the waist. This is just a saying that emphasizes the importance of the waist in the dancing process. The Tiv have their standard for judging a good dance. Adjectives like *shav*, *tiligh*, *kume*, *dzomon*, *chagh*, *teleg ngulun* are used in describing a good dancer....A good dancer, on the other hand, is said to *fa amar a tiligh* – good at moving the trunk of his body while dancing. A good dancer is never said to have *fa amar a nuur* or good at dancing sexily. A good dancer either dances *lugh lugh* or smoothly and *kule kule* or gently (Gbilekaa p 45).

The description of the dance here applies differently to other ethnic groups. What is considered bad dance in the Tiv setting might be good for the Ibo dance vocabulary, just like what is rejected from the Yoruba dance formation will be accepted as good within the Igala people. For example, socially, the Yoruba dance emphasizes shoulders and hips while the Tiv dance projects the waist and the trunk. Therefore, the sociological theory has helped dance scholars to understand and interpret dance considering the ethnic and cultural environment of particular dances. Different parts of the body are emphasized by people of different cultural background. For instance, the Binis do not dance in exaggerated animated steps like the Yoruba's. They always keep their feet on the ground and stand erect while dancing. To be precise, a dance in Benin the *Alatko* has steady movements and balanced steps. The character of dancing observed depended on context, the people, and the gender of the dancers. In general men used large body movements, including jumping and leaping. Women danced smaller movements with much use of "shuffle steps", the body in a bent position with "crooked knees"(Eileen p.22).

Now, here's where we enter the realm of the politics of dance and culture: Europeanist body languages and Africanist body languages have been speaking with each other ever since they first met and clashed over four centuries ago. But they are different languages. Brenda Dixon Gottschild in his book, *Digging the Africanist Presence in American Performance – Dance and Other Contexts* asserts that:

In traditional European dance aesthetics, the torso must be held upright for correct, classic form; the erect spine is the center—the hierarchical ruler—from which all movement is generated. It functions as a single unit. The straight, uninflected torso indicates elegance or royalty and acts as the absolute monarch, dominating the dancing body. This vertically aligned spine is the first principle of Europeanist dance, with arm and leg movements emanating from it and returning to it. The ballet canon is organized around this center. In fact, this structural principle is a microcosm of the post-Renaissance, colonialist world view. Like the straight, centered spine of its dancing body, Europe posited itself as the center of the world, with everything else controlled and defined by it.

Africanist dance idioms show a democratic equality of body parts. The spine is just one of many possible movement centers; it rarely remains static. The Africanist dancing body is polycentric: One part of the body is played against another, and movements may simultaneously originate from more than one focal point (the head and the pelvis, for example). It is also polyrhythmic (different body parts moving to two or more rhythms simultaneously), and privileges flexible, bent-legged postures that reaffirm contact with the earth (sometimes called a “get-down” stance). The component and auxiliary parts of the torso—shoulders, chest, rib cage, waist, pelvis—can be independently moved or articulated in different directions (forward, backward, sideward, or in circles) and in different rhythms. . . . As assessed by Africanist aesthetic criteria, the Europeanist dancing body is rigid, aloof, cold, and one dimensional. By Europeanist standards, the Africanist dancing body is vulgar, comic, uncontrolled, undisciplined, and, most of all, promiscuous (pp. 8-9).

Clearly, there is a “translation” problem going on here! Nevertheless, and despite different lexicons, the reason for dancing is like the reason for dreaming. Through dance or dreams we access thoughts, ideas, and metaphors that cannot be perceived in any other way. In fact, dance is a literature that is illegible in literal translation. Dance is dance, and words are words. Dancers know this to be true.

Implication

There should be an understanding of the sociology dance as far as dance art/education is concerned. The sociology under this theoretical context entails ethnography, ethnomusicology and other dance features within a culture that a dance material is drawn. This means that the important things here are the paralinguistic features that govern the sociology of a dance; costumes, musical instruments, props, make-up and performative conventions. Dance teachers/choreographers and students should consider the above while sketching a dance piece.

Therapeutic/Medical Theory

Therapeutic dance theory uses dance therapy or dance movement therapy (DMT) which is the psychotherapeutic use of movement and dance for emotional, cognitive, social, behavioral and physical conditions (<http://www.adta.org/about/who.cfm>). As a form of expressive therapy, DMT is founded on the basis that movement and emotion are directly related. The ultimate purpose of DMT is to find a healthy balance and sense of wholeness.

Since its birth in the 1940s, DMT has gained much popularity and has been taken to more serious and beneficial levels. Over the years, the practices of DMT have progressed; however, the main principles that founded this form of therapy have remained the same. Influenced by the “main principles” of this therapy, most DMT sessions are configured around four main stages: preparation, incubation, illumination, and evaluation. Organizations such as the American Dance Therapy Association and the Association for Dance Movement Therapy, United Kingdom maintain the high standards of profession and education throughout the field. DMT is practiced in places such as mental health rehabilitation centers, medical and educational settings, nursing homes, day care facilities, and other health promotion programs (http://www.adta.org/resources/chace_bio.cfm). This form of therapy which is taught in a wide array of locations goes farther than just centering the body. Specialized treatments of DMT can help cure and aid many types of diseases and disabilities. Other common names for DMT include: movement psychotherapy and dance therapy.

Marian Chace, “The Grand Dame” of dance therapy, is the woman responsible for introducing this theory and the idea of DMT to the United States and therefore inspiring the first wave of DMT. She is considered the principal founder of what is now dance therapy in the United States. (http://www.adta.org/resources/chace_bio.cfm). In 1942, through her work, dance was first introduced to western medicine. Chace was originally a dancer, choreographer, and performer. After opening her own dance school in Washington, D.C., Chace began to realize the effects dance and movement had on her students. She was soon asked to work at St. Elizabeth’s Hospital in Washington, D.C. once psychiatrists too realized the benefits their patients were receiving from attending Chace’s dance classes (http://cancer.org/doctoor/MIT/content/MIT_2_3X_Dance_Therapy.asp). In 1966 Chace became the first president of the American Dance Therapy Association, an organization which she and several other DMT pioneers founded.

It wasn’t until the 1970s and 80s that the second wave of DMT came around and sparked much interest from American therapists.

During this time, therapists began to experiment with the psychotherapeutic applications of dance and movement. As a result of the therapists' experiments, DMT was then categorized as a form of psychotherapy. It was from this second wave that today's DMT evolved.

Adherents of therapeutic dance theory is of the belief that dance can be used to heal serious disorders and diseases. Although dance is promoted to reduce stress and center the body, this therapy is very effective in helping to heal other disabilities and diseases.

(http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Dance_therapy&oldid=472678654).

The above explains that this theory is based upon the idea that "the body and mind are inseparable" and thus, rests on certain theoretical principles. These are: Body and mind interact, so that a change in movement will affect total functioning; Movement reflects personality; The therapeutic relationship is mediated at least to some extent non-verbally, for example through the therapist mirroring the client's movement; Movement contains a symbolic function and as such can be evidence of unconscious process; Movement improvisation allows the client to experiment with new ways of being; DMT allows for the recapitulation of early object relationships by virtue of the largely non-verbal mediation of the latter. Through the unity of the body, mind, and spirit, therapeutic dance theory provides a sense of wholeness to all individuals.

The creative process in this theory has four stages, which occur during DMT. Each stage contains a smaller set of goals which correlate to the larger purpose of DMT. The stages and goals of DMT vary with each individual. Although the stages are progressive, the stages are usually revisited several times throughout the entire DMT process. The four stages are: Preparation: the warm-up stage, safety is established; Incubation: relaxed, let go of conscious control, movements become symbolic; Illumination: meanings become apparent, can have positive and negative effects; Evaluation: discuss significance of the process, prepare to end therapy.

Thus, dancing is a great way for people of all ages to get and stay in shape. Besides being fun, dancing, according to the therapeutic theory has many positive health benefits. Following are the top four health benefits of dance; Flexibility, Strength, endurance, and sense of well being. This is obvious because, in dance exercise, movement – especially the sensual, rhythmic response aroused by dance and music – is used as a way of bypassing the conscious mind and making contact with the inner emotional world. Through dance, hidden emotions can be expressed in a nonverbal way and accepted by the conscious self.

The Implication

Therefore, this theory may conclude that the acquisition and the development of dance cultures will not only exert a protective influence in the degenerative sicknesses, but also plays a key role in facilitating rehabilitation. Dance/movement therapists work with individuals of all ages, groups and families in a wide variety of settings. They focus on helping their clients improve self-esteem and body image, develop effective communication skills and relationships, expand their movement vocabulary, gain insight into patterns of behavior, as well as create new options for coping with problems. Movement is the primary medium dance/movement therapists use for observation, assessment, research, therapeutic interaction, and interventions. Dance/movement therapists work in settings that include psychiatric and rehabilitation facilities, schools, nursing homes, drug treatment centers, counseling centers, medical facilities, crisis centers, and wellness and alternative health care centers.

Therefore, dance as a performative genre can be a powerful tool for stress management and the prevention of physical and mental health problems. Dance/movement therapists integrate the dancer's special knowledge of the body, movement, and expression with the skills of psychotherapy, counseling, and rehabilitation to help individuals with a wide array of treatment needs. Social, emotional, cognitive, and/or physical problems can be addressed through DMT via group and individual sessions in many different types of settings from hospitals and clinics to schools. The fact that dance/movement therapists are immersed in the language of the body, rather than focusing solely on the verbal, lends characteristics to their work that set it apart from other types of therapy.

Choreologists Aesthetic Theory

This theory, based on the principles of choreography is the art of designing sequences of movements in which motion, form, or both are specified. Choreography per se refers to the design itself, which is sometimes expressed by means of dance notation. The word *choreography* literally means "dance-writing" from the Greek words "χορεία" and "γραφή" (writing).

The absolute rules in choreography are that it should impose order upon dance beyond the level of pure improvisation and that it should shape dance in the three dimensions of space and the fourth dimension of time, as well as according to the potential of the human body.

The word choreology is commonly used to talk about two different (but complementary) disciplines: movement analysis and dance notation. Movement analysts study movement itself, frequently considering its shape, dynamics, or functionality. One of the most spread tendencies (but not the only one) is the one that uses Rudolph Laban's movement theory as theoretical framework.

Laban Movement Analysis provides a comprehensive vocabulary and analytic framework for the description of human movement. Using LMA, one can systematically look at a unit or phrase of movement in terms of the four major movement components of Body, Effort, Shape and Space. These basic components can be identified and examined alone and in relationship to each other. For the benefit of students' choreographers and students, it will right to run a brief explanation of Rudolf Laban's Movement theory which the Choreologists Aesthetic dance theory rely upon. Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) theory is an outgrowth of Laban's theories that comprises four main categories: body, effort, shape, and space.

Implication

The choreologists belief that any good dance should be well choreographed. They ultimately give attention to directions of movement which are lines in which dance can be created. This theory combines aesthetics and the pattern in which the body of dancers and his movement on the floor can be designed. The assumption here is that, when a danced is well choreographed, it will be able to communicate action, mode and emotion.

Conclusion

This paper however, does not hold one theory higher than another. The paper is therefore eclectic in approach; a theoretical framework that does not hold rigidly to a single paradigm or set of assumptions, but instead draws upon multiple theories, styles, or ideas to gain complementary insights into a subject, or applies different theories in particular cases. It is a kind of mixed style in the dance art. Dance teachers and choreographers are by this paper encouraged to integrate certain theories so as to create variety and contrast. Since variety in performance is applauded as the best form of presentation, being too faithful to a singular theory will amount to no communication. This is because, as a performance art, dance may be identified as live art whenever it is set, presented, or performed by living, behavioral, mobile bodies in the contexts of art, culture, and society. As a media performance, dance signifies a living art mediated through mechanical, electronic, or digital media, as well as a 'live' intervening on the articulation, that is, on the choreography of moving within the media practice and system of communication and mediation (film, television, digital systems, communication networks). As a post-media practice, dance signifies an important change that leads from choreography and dance as the creating of "sensuous aesthetic value" to the conceptual field of reconsidering and researching the status of dance as an art or a material for cultural practice.

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