

Applying Somatic Dance in Diverse Settings

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Defining the Word Somatic

- Thomas Hanna (philosopher, Feldenkrais trained, founder of Hanna Somatics)
- Studied GREEK and found:
 - Soma = the living body
 - Coined SOMATIC to mean the body and person experienced from within.

Defining Somatic Movement

- Martha Eddy implemented a cross-case analysis (1999 – 2015) of somatic movement systems using:
 - Live somatic experiences beginning 1974
 - Interviews (2000 – 2005 with current updates)
 - Literature research (Master writings as well as overview books)
 - Somatic conference participation (NDA, ADTA, AHP, International Somatic Congress, NDEO)
 - Service on the board of ISMETA from 1990 – 2005 (President 2002 – 2005) co-writing standards, ethics, scope of practice.

An Example of Eddy's Analysis: Somatic Movement Features:

- Slowing down in order to feel within
- Use of breath
- Use the floor/table/chair - decreasing the impact of gravity to release unneeded tension
- New Coordination: differentiation-integration/recognition & inhibition of habit/neuro-developmental-babies are natural movers/beginners mind/reversing action
- Three-dimensional embodiment/awareness

Defining Somatic Processes

- **Slowing down for anatomical/physical awareness**
- **Global/universal/biological/spiritual connections**
- **Using movement efficiency principles & practices**
- **Integrates developmental theories**
- **The living body unified with psyche**
- **Mostly inductive and some deductive processes**
- **Therapeutic AND educational**
- **Tools: Breath, Movement, Touch, Sound**

Eddy discovered these contributions of Somatic Education to Dance

- Somatic Education teaches one to listen to the body while dancing in order to:
 - Know oneself deeply, gain greater self-awareness
 - Increase expressive capacity (& range of emotions)
 - Move with efficiency and longevity
 - Use sophisticated knowledge of touch within dance (partnering, contact improvisation, choreography of relating to others)
 - Open to bodymind change, new paradigms

All Somatic Practitioners are Teachers by Definition: Conveying How to Find Self-Authority

This Somatics-based Dance Conference 2015 conference at Dean College has had brilliant & sophisticated presentations demonstrating the range of educational experiences aligned with somatic education modalities using movement, touch and vocalization.

- Thanks to all of you for this weave, your brilliant tesseract of:
 - Self-learning: key in experiential education
 - Guiding each other to tune into students needs: anatomical, physiological, social & emotional
 - Improving health and conditioning through classic lessons (ATM, BF, Alexander) or combined with Pilates, NIA and more.
 - Bringing self-attention to breath & the pelvis
 - Application to aerial dance, jazz, ballet, classic modern (Hawkins), contemporary, performance & choreography
 - Synthesis/Crystallization
 - Each of these sessions provides insight into some facet of the hologram, tensegrity, synergy, cybernetics of somatic movement
 - Highlighting
 - Body-mind-energy-psyche and their connections
 - Filled with the aesthetic that dancing brings.
 - In short: Somatic Dance integrates the somatic processes of:
 - Listening within
 - Embodied anatomy (as in BMC or Functional Awareness)
 - Slowing down to find energy, alignment and efficiency
 - A full range of expression
 - Mind-body-psyche holism
 - With the resurrection of Somatic Dance conferences

We Have a Field!

Somatic Movement Education & Therapy

Or TWO:

Somatic Dance

- Lets weave Past and Present
- What do we most value:
 - that we have been taught?
 - that lives within us?
 - that we want to pass on to others?
 - that we would like to shape future education?
 - and shape our world?
- Honor our Teachers
- Memories of the 1st International Conference Brockport, NY 2013 (I was unable to attend due to my father's death that day, the solstice.)
- Preserving the legacy includes naming our teachers, as they live in our body memory, and in writing/publishing. (Hand dance experience)
- Reading: chapter from *Attending to Movement: somatic perspectives on living in this world*. A book of proceedings from Coventry England's Dance and Somatic Practices International Conference in which I also cited the Brockport 2013 conference.
- What Else Makes a Field?
- Books, Curricula, Journals, Dance Pedagogy, Performance Styles, Research Methods
- I write about the development of the somatic movement field in: *Mindful Movement The Evolution of the Somatic Arts and Conscious Action* to be published summer 2016 by Intellect Books/University of Chicago Press.

Journals We Now Have

- *Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices*, Coventry UK
- *Journal of Dance, Movement & Spiritualities Research*, Coventry, UK
- *Journal of Dance Education* NDEO, USA
- *Writings on Dance*, Victoria University of Tech
- *Cuadernos de Musica, Artes Visuales y Artes Escenicas*
Javeriana Universidad – Bogota, Colombia.
- *Brazilian Journal on Presence Studies*, Rio Grande de Sul, Brazil – may submit in English.
- Additional Journals that encourage somatic writing
- *International Journal of Body Psychotherapy* (primarily on somatic psychology)
- *Journal of Authentic Movement and Somatic Inquiry* (with the somatic movement practice of Authentic Movement at its heart)
- *Currents* – the Journal of the Body-Mind Centering Association (publishes photos, poetry essays on diverse somatic systems inclusive of dance)
- *Contact Quarterly and the ISMETA* newsletter

Books since 2014

- *Body and Mind in Motion: Dance and Neuroscience in Conversation*, Glenna Batson & Margaret Watson. (2014), Bristol, UK: Intellect.
- *Embodied Lives Reflections on the Influence of Suprpto Suyodarmo and Amerta Movement*, Katya Bloom CMA Margit Galanter, & Sandra Reeve, (2014), Devon, UK: Triarchy.
- *Moving Consciously: Somatic Transformations through Dance, Yoga, and Touch*, Sondra H. Fraleigh, (2015). University of Illinois
- *Dance, Somatics and Spiritualities: Contemporary Sacred Narratives*, Amanda Williamson, Glenna Batson, Sarah Whatley, & Rebecca Weber (eds.) 2015 Bristol, UK: Intellect.

Becoming more Comprehensive: The Somatic Pioneers (Eddy, 2009)

- FM Alexander - Alexander Technique
- Gerda Alexander - Eutonie (GAE)
- Irmgard Bartenieff - both LMA & BF
- Moshe Feldenkrais - ATM & Functional Integration
- Ida Rolf - Rolf Movement & Structural Integration
- Charlotte Selver - Sensory Awareness
- Mabel Todd- Ideokinesis (Sweigard, Clark, Dowd)
- Milton Trager - Trager Mentastics
- Precursors that Set the Stage
Ancient Movement Practices:
Yoga, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Afro-Caribbean dance
Francois Delsarte/Genevieve Stebbins/ Rudolf Steiner/Rudolf Laban/Isadora

Duncan/Rene Dalcroze

Wilhelm Reich/Sigmund Freud/Carl Jung

Everyone has additional influences. In the case of Laban: Trained in Art and Architecture/Masonic Philosophy

Mysticism/Crystallography/Poet/Community Dances - Eastern European Folk Dance & Military Rituals

Writer of theory, poetry and dance notation.

- Somatic Dance Legacy IS Continued at this Conference
- Dancing Embodied History/Keeping History Present - Hawkins and beyond
- Presence in all facets of dancing from how start to train to performance to feedback and more
- Curricular Advances - creating logical programs that are developmentally, culturally and capacity-sensitive (awareness of age, race, ethnicity, disabilities & socially constructed dance).
- Names for Soma & Dance
- SOMATIC DANCE
- DANCE SOMATICS
- Somatic Movement Dance Education

- Somatics-based Dance Education

Dancing with Wisdom & Self-Authority (Eddy 2009, 2014, 2015)

How and why must we Communicate with Words:

- To define and convey values
- To determine needed concepts
- To remember and develop somatic principles
- But what words work best?

Frameworks for observing dance

There are many informal verbal frameworks for dance observation, assessment and movement sourcing.

Informal systems include:

- 1. One's own dance training and its taxonomy provides a basis for viewing (e.g., fall and recovery).
- 2. Personal preferences and biases
- 3. Creative language and imagery
- 4. Language from other art forms: music, visual arts

Deepen Your Ability to Communicate Somatic Dance

- Use Ballet, Jazz, Modern, Ballroom Dance, Dance Composition (e.g., D'Houbler, Dunn) terms integrated with Taxonomies from:
- Laban Movement Analysis/Language of Dance
- Anatomical & Kinesiological (& Dance Science)
- Somatic Principles including Perceptual-Motor Development Theory
- Biomechanical/Motion capture: vectors & forces
- Systems of Notation (e.g., Benesh, Eshkol-Wachmann LabanNotation,)
- How does LMA enhance the teaching of somatic dance?
- LMA provides language for ANY movement including any SOMATIC Movement
 - Body (How we organize our bodies to move)
 - Effort (Qualities or Dynamics of Movement)
 - Space (Directions, Pathways, Scales etc)
 - Shape process (HOW we form our bodies in space)

Basic movement practices to enliven the body

- Finding teaching style, recognizing moods, shaping new choreography & teaching methods.
- Language Frames Experience
- A method for viewing movement
- A research tool
- An approach to creative movement exploration
- An in-road for technique, choreography & performance

- LMA in particular adds: An approach to therapy, cultural studies, education, health & arts including a set of movement practices analogous to musical scales, & a philosophy of integrated mind-body-psyche.

Somatic Dance Applications

- Education
- Health
- Social Activism
- Ecological Concern
- Community Building
- These can easily Overlap

And as we GET OLDER...

What KEEPS us GOING?

- Think of Irmgard Bartenieff –Teaching “flying and falling” at 80
- Charlotte Selver – teaching SA til 102
- Elaine Summers doing outdoor Intermedia work up until the last months before her death
- As we age...More of us may want to do hands-on sessions, private lessons
- And keep dancing with respect for our bodies
-

Find our Passions

What gifts come from being a somatic dancer?

The option to become a professional in or explore engaging with:

- **Somatic Movement Therapy**
- **Social Somatics**
- **Eco-Somatics**
- **Somatic Fitness**
- **Dance Somatics & Spirituality**
- Somatics as a Healing Force
- **There are almost always therapeutic aspects of Somatic Dance**

Verifiable through Neuroscience, Wellness Studies Dance Medicine, & Somatic Research

- **One example: Moving For Life**
 - www.MovingForLife.org: began as a Dynamic Embodiment (LMA/BF & BMC®) approach to DanceExercise/Aerobics for women with Breast Cancer – Expanded to help men & women with cancer, diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

Sneaky Somatics

- [Bringing Somatic Movement into Schools –www.WellnessCKE.net](http://www.WellnessCKE.net)
- www.EyesOpenMinds.com
- Understanding the Perceptual-Motor cycle

- Teaching Kinesthetic awareness through the “accepted” senses- in this case through vision to kinesthetics to bodily self-regulation

Somatic Movement & Dance in K–12 Education

- History: Kate Morgan application of Ruth Doing’s Rhythm’s work
- Language of Dance Education in USA & Globally
- NDEO researching Frameworks: BEST (Body, Energy, Space, Time) BESS models (Body, Effort, Shape, Space) BESSR – add relationship

Just do it: Bring any somatic system into schools!

- Teaching and Activism
- Moving On Center – bridging somatics and performing arts for social change since 1994 including:
 - Friere-based Dance Explorations (Theatre of the Oppressed)
 - The Socially Conscious Body – Carol Swann
- The discourses of Jill Green and Sylvie Fortin
- www.GlobalWaterDances.org - eco-somatics sponsored by the Laban/Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies (www.LimsOnline.org)

BUILD RESOURCES

- If we grow together we strengthen.
- THEREFORE: BUILD OUR COMMUNITY
- With Somatic Dance colleagues AND with:
 - CONSIDER joining WWW.ISMETA.ORG - as an individual, certified somatic movement professional, associate organization, or somatic movement training organization.
- Somatic dancers make great RSMT/Es
- Review
- Why Continue to engage with somatic theory and practices throughout the lifespan?
 - For self-growth
 - For community building
 - For building a peaceable world
 - For pleasure and creative expression.