

CYNTHIA DUFAULT ERNESTI

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Shinrin-Yoku Photo by Jason Hunter, SUNY Potsdam

Statement on Artistic Research

As a choreographer and artist, I continually challenge myself to push for a deeper understanding of even the most basic movement. I have learned that this choreographic focus builds into a captivating presence on stage, exuding internal strength and commitment. I strive for honesty over perfection in movement, because I feel technique is merely a support for the execution of artistry. The body is one component of the voice, and with technique, the performer gains control and articulation of the movement. When the performer also understands their full commitment to intention, they have gained a sense of cohesion through mind, body, and heart. I believe this method allows for an honest exchange and clear communication with the viewer, and I am constantly investigative and curious about the awareness of how to execute this.

I am also interested in interdisciplinary practices, expanding current views of art-making and developing a significant research plan to embrace such creative work. This includes investigating new terrain toward interactive and performance media, sound art, collaborative strategies, and ultimately, fostering a progressive interchange between dance and media arts.

I hope that encouraging others to ask this question, “What does dance mean?” highlights the potential of dance as a medium for connection between all communities. Through the years, I have explored how my experiences as a dancer could better inform my own artistry through this question. I have focused on defining this, resulting in specific qualities that I wish to impart on other dancers in choreography and in my teaching. More importantly, I am interested in how this approach challenges the perspective others may have of what dance means.

So yes, I believe dance is a powerful method of communication. It’s an opportunity to express and connect beyond words. Dance can certainly be gratifying, but my true joy comes when I know I have successfully impacted the life of another as a dancer, choreographer, or educator. My focus is on artistry that creates authenticity, and I aspire to continuously refine my artistic voice so that I may always be impactful in creating that connection with others.

My artistic work resonates with what I see and my experiences. I am inspired by the intersection between who I am, my involvement with the world, and how it shapes my creativity. I push myself to continuously grow as a complete artist, instilling a physical, mental, and spiritual understanding of dance. I am inspired by full-bodied movement, of course, and see it in counterpoint to exploring the inner world; particularly, movement produced from internal intention and transcended to external expression to speak what is on my mind.

View excerpts of 4 works from State University of New York, Potsdam - a non-auditioned dance program:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBoM_-QkGkU