Dance Lab: From Exploring to Performing

Seminar Leader: Eva Burghardt
Times:   Wednesday 17:00 – 18:30  
         Friday 13:30 – 15:00  
Email:   produktion@evaburghardt.com

Course Description
This is a practical-orientated course, designed as an introduction to contemporary dance and improvisation technique as well as providing space to explore body-based performance work in a broader sense. In the first half of the semester we will focus on movement and dance-based training, drawing from contemporary dance techniques and bodyworks, such as Release Technique and BodyMind Centering. The practice of presence and body awareness will be the core focus, forming the basis for any performative work. Adding to this foundation work, students will be introduced to dance improvisation technique, developing and expanding their movement vocabulary. Rather than prescribing a specific aesthetic, the aim is to give a framework for individual exploration and expression. Solo and group improvisations will lead to Instant Compositions, and create short pieces of dance that are created in the moment. The second half of the semester will shift the focus to composing and choreography. Different layers of composition such as use of space, timing, rhythm, atmosphere, dramaturgy and story will be explored. Students will be encouraged to bring in their own ideas, texts, music etc. and find different performative formats. Students can choose whether they like to choreograph or perform or both. A final presentation of the pieces created by the students will be shown at the end of the semester. All throughout will be the valuable experience of watching and being watched, learning to see, analyse and talk about various aspects of dance/performance. Excursions to Dance Performances in Berlin, including discussions and a written reflection/essay afterwards, will be an integral part of the course.

Requirements
Students will be evaluated based on class participation, discussions, one mid-term reflection/essay (ca. 1000 words) and a final project presentation. Attendance at all classes is essential. Absences can only be excused if a medical note is submitted to the registrar’s office. Please note: While the mid-term essay will be written individually, the final project can be done collaboratively.
Grade Breakdown
Class Participation  60%
Midterm Essay        15%
Final Project        15%

Schedule
Week 1
Wednesday, Jan 29: Course introduction/Training
Friday, Jan 3: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique

Week 2
Wednesday, Feb 5: Training, Dance Improvisation Technique
Friday, Feb 7: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique

Week 3
Wednesday, Feb 12: Training, Dance Improvisation Technique
Friday, Feb 14: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique

Week 4
Wednesday, Feb 19: Training, Dance Improvisation Technique
Friday, Feb 21: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique

Week 5
Wednesday, Feb 26: Training, Dance Improvisation Technique
Friday, Feb 28: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique

Week 6
Wednesday, Mar 5: Training, Dance Improvisation Technique
Friday, Mar 7: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique

Week 7
Wednesday, Mar 12: Training, Dance Improvisation Technique
Friday, Mar 14: Training, Contemporary Dance Technique; Mid-term Essay

Spring Break

Week 8
Wednesday, Mar 26: NO CLASS, note: off-site visit instead (to be announced)
Friday, Mar 28: NO CLASS, note: additional session in Week 15 instead
Week 9
Wednesday, Apr 2: Training, Compositional Tools
Friday, Apr 4: Training, Compositional Tools

Week 10
Wednesday, Apr 9: Training, Compositional Tools
Friday, Apr 11: Training, Compositional Tools

Week 11
Wednesday, Apr 16: Training, Compositional Tools
Friday, Apr 18: NO CLASS, Federal Holiday

Week 12
Wednesday, Apr 23: preparation, research and development of Final Presentation
Friday, Apr 25: preparation, research and development of Final Presentation

Week 13
Wednesday, Apr 30: Solo and/or Group Rehearsals for Final Presentation
Friday, May 2: NO CLASS, note: off-site visit instead (to be announced)

Week 14
Wednesday, May 7: Solo and/or Group Rehearsals for Final Presentation
Friday, May 9: Solo and/or Group Rehearsals for Final Presentation

Week 15
Wednesday, May 14: Final Presentations
Friday, May 16: Evaluation and Critique