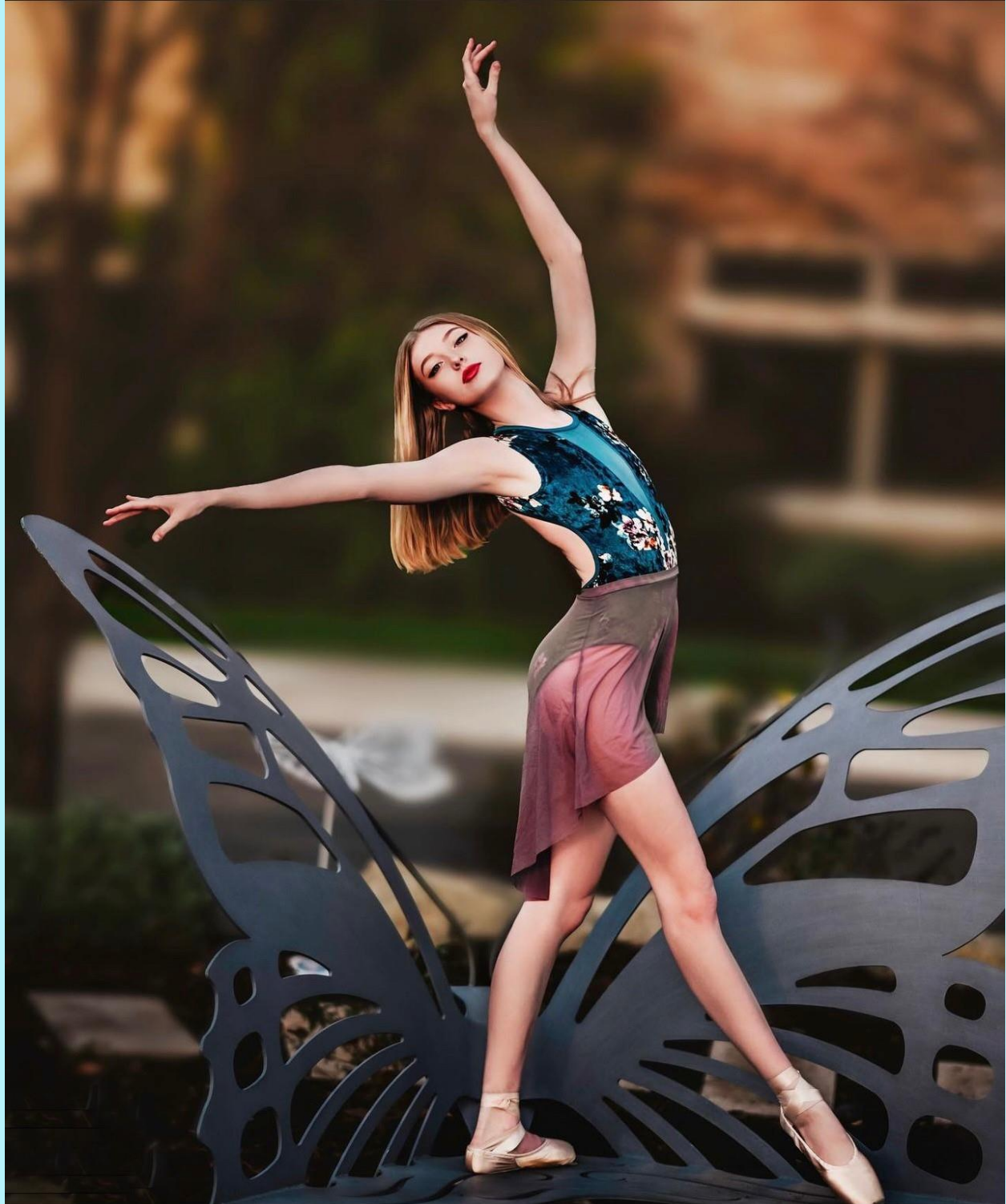




Dance Arts

Now!

*The official Junior/Secondary NHSDA Newsletter
Spring Edition 2024*





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"I was adopted"

By: Jojo Peace Kinsella

I was adopted.
Now, I know that was an awkward way
to start conversation that happens every day,
but it's become the sinking ship
of so much pain, it's built my identity and
I don't remember my mom's warm embrace.

Can I tell you a secret?
Sometimes, I stand in front of the mirror,
tilting my head from side to side to side,
searching for some semblance of a staticky resemblance.
I've been told I have her smile; I like to think I have his eyes,
and we all carry the same laugh in disguise.

I have a confession.
I don't sleep most nights; I sit.
Wonder if my dad is ever breathing,
finding my peace is fleeting.
Sometimes, I panic, and I'm drowning.
My whole life is tearing at the seams.
What to do when no one hears your silent screams,
forgetting that what I have seen is that I'm not
enough, easily given up.

I've lost too much. I ~ sorry,
I guess I should actually answer the question ~
there I go again, running off on a tangent.
Have you ever seen *Pride and Prejudice* where
Darcy confesses to his dear Lizzy, "I love you ardently.?"
Isn't that lovely?
I've never been loved like that.
None that I felt.



Why do people put so much focus on feeling?
Don't we realize what we are revealing,
like our hearts are now, tourist traps open to sightseeing?
Come on, focus, JoJo, focus.
What is the question?

Oh yeah, "Why do I dance?"
Honestly, I don't know. Every time I answer,
it's as though I owe someone an ode.
There's not just one train of thought
or pathway to follow. If I wrote it all down,
you would call me insane,
like a female joker of the modern age.

But to be quick and simple, to seem
some type of normal,
it's because it's the one time my family
feels close, and I'm able to let go.

When I move, the feeling is
stimulating, electrifying,
bordering on addicting.
For the first time, nothing is at stake.

I've lost close friends and family,
all who I thought would stay close to me.,
now, total strangers.
I can barely stand to sometimes see.
Wait, the question.

I danced my own story of rebellion.
Break generational curses that want to
keep me locked in: Loss of control,
connection, voice, dream, discipline.
All this, just 'cause

I was adopted.



Synopsis for "I was adopted"

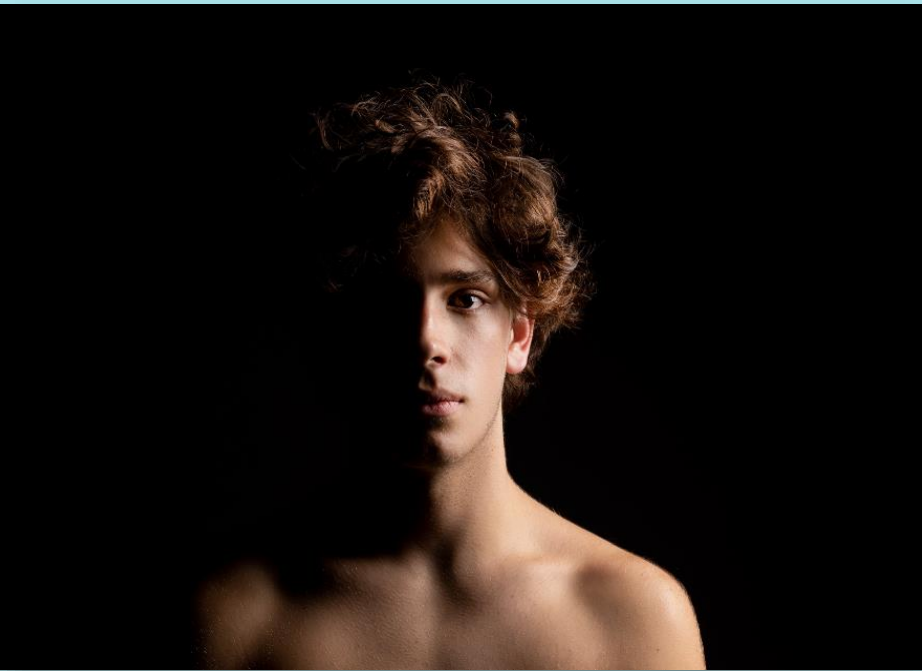
"I was adopted" developed from my school's sophomore dance final, where we were tasked to create a dance-for-camera piece that captured why we dance. It was to be as deep or goofy as we wanted. I realized I had no idea why I danced. It had always been something I had just done. So, I wrote my poem., which was the first time I combined my love of writing and movement for a project. While my peers found cool new shots to insert, I kept my video simple. I wanted to make my audience feel the desperation/honesty in my confession, to take whatever they needed from those 3 minutes of honesty. I was coming to terms with my adoption and what love meant to me, and I needed to share. It was my healing.

The hardest part of the process was putting movement to words whilst playing with the shadow of the light. I learned that utilizing the whole space would be my strength in this situation. My movement had to be big, sweeping, creating a shape within those moments of true silence to breathe. I would get so frustrated when the timing would not fit, thinking maybe I should quit. Nonetheless, I persevered, making sure my vision shone through. The project became a beautiful result of my tears and time. No matter how old I have gotten, it is the one video that captures the essence of my unique artistry.



All PC Jojo Peace Kinsell

~ Jojo Peace Kinsella
NHSDA Finalist Award
Advisor: Rachel Oliver-Young
Denver School of the Arts



PC Colin Gross

Viewpoint
Grounded Discipline
Brings Freedom in Life
By: Colin Gross
NHSDA Finalist Award
Advisor: Dani Warden
Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy

I do not know what I would be without Dance because it has provided me with a space to discover myself on many positive levels rather than a bunch of numbers facelessly representing me.

Dance has genuinely changed my life, shaping me as a person, member of society, and artist. I discovered social Dance in fourth grade while in the "Christmas Story" play, as I had to learn a ballroom number for one scene. I have been ambitious and passionate about Dance and where it will take me. On this path, I have become disciplined, including how to manage my schedule.

As a competitive dancer at a fine arts school during the day and a contemporary company on weekends. Because of my massive amounts of dancing, I have found a healthy balance between Dance, school, diet, rest, and free time. While the schedule is challenging to maintain, I can cope with it through the discipline lessons required in dance education. Stretching every night, attending countless rehearsals, learning ballet strict basics, and more have made me an organized and determined person.

Outside the studio, these disciplines have become my everyday life. At school,

I have maintained a high GPA because I understand how to separate rest from work, ensuring I complete all my homework during pauses in my rigorous schedule.

Dance has had not only an educational impact on my life but also an emotional and social one. I would not be doing it if I put this much time and exertion into something that would not maintain my happiness. I genuinely look forward to dancing each day, as it gives me a huge platform to explore my physicality and tell stories through movement. I do not know what I would be without Dance because it has presented me with a space to discover who I am on a more emotional level rather than mere numbers, making me faceless.

In all, Dance's impact has been life-changing, to say the least, and I am thrilled to explore new and creative ways to move forward in my life. Hopefully, with my mentors' support and personal independence, I am motivated to share my love and passion for Dance with as many people as possible.

Good News!

JFAA Resonates With an Evening Of Original Music & Dance

*Last spring a year ago,
the Idaho Fine Arts
Academy High School
Dancers and Classical
Pianists united in
their concert ~
"Resonance."*

Young pianist Samuel Bell described his original composition: *This piece revolved around hope. The music began slowly with a single dancer on stage looking for others, but she had lost her 'spark'... Through disconnection, there is always a path of reconnection. When the other dancers appeared, they moved in unison ~ showing they found hope in each other.* Choreographers and dancers included Tessa Trites, Ella Dabney, Isabella de Belloy, and Arwin Hall.

Dedicated to an English icon, Carlos Torres played his own variation, "Prelude on a Theme of Elgar." Carlos commented: *"Edward Elgar's 'Cello Concerto in E Minor' is a beloved work within the classical repertoire, widely considered one of the greatest works for cello and orchestra. It features a soulfully warm melody that echoes throughout. In my version, the piano transcribed all the dark tones with the dancers, bringing motion to the simple yet deep melody. Elgar wrote his piece amidst terrible grief, which resonates with a sensation of longing incomparable to any other pain."*



PC Idaho Fine Arts Academy High School

Choreographers and dancers Tenley Howell, Lilee McClain, and Isabel Sanchez added: *"The music's fast-changing tempo inspired this contemporary modern Dance. Emotions throughout added to how the music paced ~ when heavy and slow, so were the movements. When dark, foreboding, the pianist struck the keys intensely as the choreography embodied the feeling with unexpected moments."*

Bravo to all the young artists!





PC All That Dance

Good News! (Cont.)



PC Idaho Fine Arts Academy



Mark Your NHSDA Calendar!

* **Dance A Difference Week**
March 3rd -9th

* **ThankADanceTeacher Day**
May 4th

* **NHSDA Day of Recognition & Senior Slide Show**
June 6th

Learn More:
<https://www.ndeo.org/nhstda/events>



PC McCallum Dance Academy HS

Good News! (cont.)

CEC Celebrates Multicultural Understanding

Conchita Espinosa Conservatory of the Arts includes a high-level professional faculty and guest artists with a vocation for pedagogy. Instructors and alums perform in the area, inspiring young dancers who see their mentors and "idols" display their art on stage. Thanks to their formidable reputation for excellent technique, professionalism, and artistry in an age-appropriate manner, they are invited to participate in community performances, workshops, and other learning opportunities throughout each year. Stepping outside the campus with other artists and professional entities provides students with exceptional learning moments.



All PC Conchita Espinosa Conservatory of the Arts

CEC creates an environment where young artists train in their chosen discipline and learn from, appreciate, and respect others' talents and interests. A collaborative culture is cultivated with young artists uniting through cross-disciplinary experiences that enrich their educational experiences and artistic development, creating artists and human beings deeply connected to new friends, teachers, and the community. Training amplifies their understanding of the world, igniting their creativity and collaborative adaptability with skills that apply within and beyond the Arts scope. From studying Ballet and Contemporary to Hip Hop and Tap to Spanish and Cuban styles, these young dance ambassadors learn to respect many cultures.



rather than demote some to a lower rank or humiliate them. We must note, nevertheless, that young dancers sometimes need to be placed in a less advanced class to ensure that they succeed. Teachers should also receive personal evaluations because they are not exempt from improvement.

Although not witnessed everywhere, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements are essential in teaching. If the teacher leads with these prescribed rules, the students will fulfill their passion through drive in all these positive aspects.





PC Chelsea Mugambe

My piece, "*Transcend*," expresses my intent to be honest in movement. I wanted to create what would serve me first: to truly feel right within my body and emotional state and then share my experiences with an audience. I gained great inspiration and guidance from my modern teachers, who emphasized the importance of relaxing into the movement and feeling at ease with visualized thinking.

Dance has had a tremendous impact on my life. I did not start formal training until my first high school year, and that alone has pushed me to be on the same level as dancers who have trained their whole lives. Before this time, not much was going on for me. I was a knowledgeable student earning good grades, but that was about it. My life felt nowhere near complete, and I had low self-esteem within consistent emptiness.

Going to a vocational school has allowed me to study Dance in many approaches (holistic, somatic, etc.). I decided to concentrate on Dance, unbeknownst to what that would mean regarding my future. Four years later, I look ahead to the next four years with excitement, goals, and full anticipation. While Dance can be both grueling and taxing (physically and mentally), I have met the best people out of

Feature

Thank You, My Mentors ~

I Will Transcend

By: Chelsea Mugambe

NHSDA Honorable Mention Award

Advisor: Heather Warfel

High Tech High School

this experience and formed relationships that will last a lifetime.

Dance has taught me the importance of showing up for myself, even when it feels as if nobody is in my corner or cheering me on. Yes, hard work pays off, but passion and feeling are irreplaceable. It is crucial to be unapologetic about what gives me a reason to be content, which presents us with a reason to live. My teachers have supported me through these doubts and ultimate success. During the choreographic process, my ideas shifted amid level changes, focus, musicality, and overall mood. I experimented with my personality and introversion to thoroughly be candid. My major challenge was choosing music and finding a composer who would fully complement the intention. It was a total surprise how difficult that would be, but I was glad to discover music that matched my movement in the best way possible.

This past year, I was honored to perform with my teachers in a dance by Heidi Latsky at a local professional theater. As a mentor, I plan to use this constructive influence to impact people and communities. I hope to obtain a professional career, and when that is near its end, I want to give back and share a dance with people who may not have had the opportunity to train. I desire to be there for these people like my teachers and mentors, who have been there in my darkest times and when things felt nearly impossible.

I want to assure them we can do anything when things get complicated and strenuous. I want to validate their ideas and creativity in ways that will enrich them in the same ways that mine were. I plan to go to college to study Dance and return with enlightenment to share with those around me.

Once, I did not have dreams and looked forward to life with no enthusiasm. Then, I started training seriously, which, with my teachers' mentorship, has given me an optimistic view about my future. I have met the best people and formed relationships that will last a lifetime.

Like my dance "Transcend," I will enlighten people's lives the way Dance sparked mine for universal good while implementing the concepts of creation and visualized thinking.





At PC Arielle Bash

*Feature
"My World" ~*

Balancing Masculine/Feminine

NHSDA Finalist Award

Advisor: Rachel Oliver Young

Denver School of the Arts

*"By focusing my Mind
Upon Dance,
I find Peace."*

The title of my piece, *"My World,"* demonstrates the struggle to balance our feminine and masculine sides. I was inspired to create after listening to *"It's a Man's World,"* and with the meaning behind the song, I experienced how men are at an advantage in life. I then wanted to communicate the contrasts between masculine and feminine energy.

Society drowns in the masculine traits of competitiveness and power while suppressing feminine energy. By incorporating feminine energy into everyday life, everyone would be their best selves, and there would be more room for love and growth. For most of my life, masculine energy consumed the feminine aspect, which held me back from being vulnerable and loving myself. The soft and sharp movements I incorporated in my piece represent my battle between showing and accepting these conflicting elements.

Dance will always be the native language I am fluent in and a part of my identity. Dance has become what I turn to for comfort in a safe place; here, I communicate my opinions in a much more powerful way than words or scripts. Dance frees me from frustrations, releasing my negative thoughts about myself and the world around me.

At age 2, my mom introduced me to the dance world; she felt the need to raise her daughters to a hobby she was passionate about.

Although it took a lot of confusion and anger to do anything more advanced than walking, Dance has shaped me into who I am today.

There were moments when I was numb, with warning signs I could not face life anymore. But then there was Dance, my cure that brought me back, balancing the *"feminine"* with the *"masculine."* I have found who I am through Dance, and it has also impacted my existence outside the studio by teaching me discipline and artistry.

Every time I move, thoughts that make me feel worthless and alone disappear from my mind. I want others with similar views to emerge into an environment where words of value and self-love wash away all pessimistic thoughts. Being a dance teacher, I constantly explain to my students how Dance has rescued me and can rescue others. I have instructed my students about the importance of respecting their whole selves. I have also helped educate dancers on wellness and fueling their bodies.

With my experience, I will spread awareness of the importance of Dance and tell my story of how art eased conflicts that constantly ran through my mind. I will show how art heals those suffering from self-destructive thoughts. As one who struggled with an eating disorder

due to artificial societal perceptions, I understand how negative self-talk goes through one's mind. Dance saved me from being consumed by all this moaning inside.

As a choreographer, I tell stories about events that spark societal conversations. The challenge I encountered most when composing "*My World*." was creating movements that represented vulnerability; expressing this was difficult because my

typical style is dynamic and sharp. I also struggled to convey the tension between masculine and feminine energy due to my complications in revealing and accepting these contrasts in life.

I still apply dance to overcome these masculine/feminine issues. I am grateful my mom put me in classes because, without dance, I would never have achieved self-love and could reciprocate this love to others.



Feature

Speaking through Dance in "Numbers"

By: Phoebe Ho

NHSDA Honorable Mention Award

Advisor: Myra Jo Veluz

San Marino Dance Academy

Imagine being submerged in a tub of water in a crowded room, inertly listening as people talk around you, your words trapped in bubbles; you are drowning.

That was how I felt for the past two years. I was scared of rejection, so I locked away my voice.

My solo, titled "Numbers," aims to count the emotional challenges I experienced and, in the creative process, let go of all my internal frustrations. I was once unafraid to speak my mind, but after COVID, everything changed. I joined a new studio, a new church, and a new group of friends.

The first part of the piece represents the initial transitions into building new relationships and adapting to new environments. I integrated levels for the times I yearned to use my voice but backed down and hated myself for doing so.

For the longest time, I was fighting the people around me when I was, in reality, holding back ~ restraining myself from speaking. As illustrated in the last part of the piece, I could finally take risks and escape my comfort zone, detaching myself from repressive thoughts.

Walking away from the stage represented my choice to move forward while considering these experiences as life's lessons.

PC Phoebe Ho





All PC Idaho Fine Arts Academy

Feature

Preparing for a Career in a Nonprofit Dance Company

By: Tessa Trites

*Advisor/Sponsor: Rachel Swenson
Idaho Fine Arts Academy*

The Dance World contains a broad spectrum of career opportunities, ranging from regional groups to the commercial or entertainment industry to science and medicine. Performing in a nonprofit company is one of the more apparent paths that a dancer can pursue.

When interested in joining such an organization, dancers must consider the training and preparation, community involvement, research, audition processes, branding and networking, performance expectations, rehearsals, touring, and salaries. This lifestyle can entail instability or intense physical pressure; however, it is a life full of boundless artistic leadership and creative opportunities.

When considering such a career, we should remember the financial insecurity that often occurs with joining a company. Such a position is typically seasonal, part-time, or for a limited-run project. This reality means dancers should plan additional related employment such as teaching or choreographing. Then, dancers can plan to secure their position by pursuing a secondary education degree.

It is important to establish ourselves in the dance community by taking local dance

class, researching companies of interest and their members, and meticulously preparing audition materials with essential branding and networking. This thorough preparation may seem overwhelming, even burdensome. However, there are skills that dancers must acquire to complete this process successfully.

Primarily, we must acquire resilience and adaptability. Audition outcomes may lead to self-doubt, stifling us from further pursuing this career. Resilience and adaptability help dancers move forward to the next opportunity. Dancers must also obtain media skills to effectively create an online presence to develop and promote a performer brand. Colleagues that dancers have acquired through networking should reach out to the candidate with opportunities when viewing an active online presence. All these skills are necessary and can help us achieve security.

Talking to company members offers new insight, as in an interview with Virsky Company dancer Natalya Tuyagina. She discusses the physical and mental toll that this life can have on a dancer:

Sometimes I feel like my body hurts. I am tired, but then I see the audience standing and clapping during the concert; some people cry when it is over. This voice in my head says that is why I am performing. It is a challenging but rewarding job.

Tuyagina expresses how training, performance expectations, rehearsals, and touring are incredibly demanding. Nevertheless, the desire to perform and create undermines any doubts. Her colleagues are constantly improving, and their collective life is an endless cycle of self-evaluation.

After preparing for this career, I will take advantage of seasonal intensives and university programs. These should provide new insight into a company or explicitly into an "intensive-to-company" contract pipeline. A dancer should research this information online, or if receiving an offer to attend, we should reach out to management about whether participants can audition for a company position or internship.

Following an intensive program at an early age can also establish a positive relationship with the organizers and guest artists. The dancer should stay in contact with the company and then attend a future intensive to express a strong interest in the company or vice versa.

Universities reciprocate company life with intense training, acclimatizing students and interns to the semi-professional and professional world. Students collaborate with expert artists who demand they hold to these exact expectations, leading up a path to personal success. They are then prepared to collaborate through their experience. Repertory integrates with the university experience, providing priceless opportunities to learn original works. Thus, company life will transition much more smoothly with a university program that may help dancers land a contract.

These skills are necessary for a successful, fulfilling career as a performer in a nonprofit dance company. One more skill required to further my goals, which I have yet to acquire, is creating an effective online brand to network and market.

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While this lifestyle might involve instability and intense physical pressure, leadership amid creative opportunities annuls the disdain towards training and performance regimens. Applying these notes, the Love of Dance is more than a dream ~ it is a reality.

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PC Wayfair

Feature

Time Flows

By: Kati Lam

Advisor/Sponsor: Myra Joy Veluz
San Marino Dance Academy

As a child, I could not understand what people meant by "Time goes by so fast." However, in four years, I went from being a freshman curiously wandering the halls to losing a year and a half. And now, as a senior, I have no idea what the future holds.

Characteristically, I have always planned for any situation, so uncertainty scares me. In less than a year, I will be "an adult," which is a terrifying thought.

Time is such a simple yet complex concept. To me, this solo, titled "*Time*," aims to represent the flow of life as I am inspired by wanting to rewind to the feeling of my carefree childhood. My initial goal was to showcase the changes in speed as the music builds, highlighting the perception of *time* moving faster as we grow older.

My Dance represents the thought: "*I may not know what my future holds, but I have learned to live in the moment and trust the process, as time will never pause or return.*"

The repeated motifs represent how *time* is cyclical and never-ending. Some challenges I faced involved forcing movement rather than letting my body do what was natural. I also struggled with taking risks as I tend to have movement preferences, which I realize limits my horizons.

I discovered new pathways through this process, with unexpected but satisfying initiation points.





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Be Published!



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