

Movement Reflective Workbook Summary

Name - Hayley Davies

Student Number – 2104565

Module – ADPA4011

Date Submitted - 10/12/21

Word Count - 1346

Movement...my initial thought was just dance. However, I didn't comprehend the extent and depth of knowledge that can be gained through different practitioners' and how you can use these methods to explore and express your physical movement's to interpret a person; animal; object or an element to create a storytelling performance. Moreover, I've never considered the importance of movement as an actor on stage.

One of my earliest insights was 'The Pushing Method' from Wangh (2000, p.90) I found it very intriguing. In the first stage of receiving I felt relaxed and trusting. When I began resisting a movement from a coach I became a little uptight, and it produced the same feelings as if I were taking part in an arm wrestle. When completing the task freely, I felt at ease, I envisaged a move and went with it. I felt energy was drawing me in certain directions; I was completely in the moment which seemed to drown out any background noise. Furthermore, I felt light on my feet and almost a feeling of being on a cloud. Even when I created resistance, I felt my inner body taken over and shaping the movement outside. This technique certainly works when practised well. Moreover, the psychophysical connection is well recognised in mental health where they use dance, music therapy and grounding techniques to achieve mental and emotional well being but to see it being used in acting I find extremely interesting.

When moving onto a holistic approach using Complicité (Lecoq, J. 2000). At first I felt connected to others. After repeated attempts it seemed I lost that communication. I sensed this was purely down to the method being unfamiliar. In time and with practice I'm sure I will master the psychophysical technique, but at the same time if others are not so determined and connected will a movement be successful? It's highly unlikely it will, but if we work as a team and put 100 percent effort in at all times as mentioned in 'The Statement of Principles' (Grotowski, 2002. P.211) we can accomplish great work through connecting, concentrating on the job at hand, learning from and accepting each other which in turn will create order and harmony within the group.

For my movement piece I decided on the poem 'Love after Love' by Derek Walcott (1976) and initially just combined the Plastiques method by Grotowski (2000). At first isolating a body part felt foreign, when I took that movement to another body part to produce the river I still felt a little lost, however, once I incorporated a real sense of purpose and used tension and relaxation within my movements, it all fell into place. Moreover, after watching my fellow students showing their movement piece I was spell bound and impressed by a few. Observing others gave me further insight on what I needed to do and how to develop in this area. It made me more aware that I needed to practice and connect my thinking to my movements whilst losing all inhibitions; therefore I have continued to practice my physicality and researched movement material in my spare time. Through gaining further knowledge I feel I am more confident in the understanding of this technique and how to implement it.

Delving deeper into the understanding of movement we looked at Laban Movement Analysis (2019) and the 8 efforts. I found this method useful for my movement piece and again implemented the same technique physically for a recent monologue; the efforts have encouraged contrast and depth within my work. Further more, I incorporated the same method with vocal technique; keeping the components in mind, I used sustained speed and bound flow within my words which changed the tempo and force of my voice, proving to make a positive impact. Using this approach has

helped change the narrative of my movement piece. I will continue to use this technique in my practice.

Practically playing out lamentation and elevation as a team task is one I thoroughly enjoyed. Lamentation I found easier to interpret and to practically perform. On choosing a different movement each time, it prompted me to show more depth to the meaning of grief and happiness. Looking back at photos on the movement as a group, it looked impressive and showed grief and happiness from different directions and within it telling a story. On further research I came across Martha Graham's (1930) iconic Lamentation dance. It shows the expression of internal grief and the struggle emotionally; although her face was expressionless her body movements conveyed the internal emotion of that grief. I found this impressive and as a result of this, within my movement piece I've implemented the same approach but as loss of oneself. When performing part of my solo, I inwardly think of loss, fear and panic which help to create the outward response I'm trying to achieve.

When it came to Jacques Lecoq's (2020) neutral mask to create a movement piece, I jumped at the chance to try it. I felt hidden behind the mask and just focused on using my entire body to show the fundamental journey whilst incorporating the 7 levels of tension. I felt vigilant when looking around and reactive when I was walking through woods or water and expressed this in the tension of my body. When the performance finished, the response I received was positive so I felt that I had achieved something. On watching others move with the neutral mask, the slower movements gave a stronger effect and undoubtedly produced an emotional piece of art just through body language. I found it compelling and also contrasting.

We are now at the stage where we are working collaboratively with fellow students to produce a piece of *Complicité* (Lecoq, J. 2020) which also includes our individual movement work. Initially it proved difficult to find an understanding of where to start. At first I was cautious in presenting my ideas, essentially due to the fact I'm a mature student and I didn't want to seem over bearing and take away from others. On reflection of the work we had already created, I decided to offer a few of my own ideas as I felt the routine needed more. I gauged how the others felt and it was unanimous, we all agreed on the new moves that I suggested such as further use of the chairs, using different levels and giving a more powerful ending to the movement piece. Not only did it achieve a positive reaction but other members of the group spoke up more and gave further ideas, it was a good outcome.

During one rehearsal of *Complicité*, I landed in a position where I couldn't see peripherally, or even feel the psychophysical connection; I've learnt from this and now stop in an area without obstruction and really concentrate on the sounds and feelings that surround me.

Overall when working collectively as a group, a good standard of work was achieved and completed in a short amount time. On a personal level, it has proved during team work that when working with others I shouldn't hold back as much and give my opinions as and when needed. In regards to my solo work, I felt I used most techniques within my performance to show my understanding whilst displaying a good amount of emotion. Moreover, I feel that I am losing the inhibitions that have held me back.

Studying this module has opened my eyes up to new ways of thinking. I've found the methods exhilarating and they've allowed my creative impulses to flow whilst shaping my movement and group work piece. Any feedback I've received I've taken on board and implemented where needed. Movement when used correctly is impressive and the likes of Growtowski, Lecoq, Laban and many others have paved the way for actors to use the whole body as an instrument and not just their voice. I am looking forward to gaining further knowledge and development within movement and it will be interesting to see what standard I can reach over the next few years.

Reference List

Graham, M. (1930) *Lamentation Dance* (video). Available at: <https://youtube.be/1-1cFwPJUXQ> (Accessed: 2 November 2021).

Grotowski, J. (1975) *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Methuen Drama: London.

Laban, R. (2019) *Laban Movement*. Available at: www.coursflorent.education (Accessed: 5th October 2021).

Lecoq, J. (2020) *The Moving Body*. 3rd edn. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc: London.

Walcott, D. (1976) *Love after Love* (poem). Available at: www.poemhunter.com (Accessed: 14 October 2021).

Wang, S. (2000) *An Acrobat of the Heart*. Vintage Books: London.

Bibliography

Callery, D. (2010) *The Body: A Practical Guide to Physical Theatre*. Nick Hern Books Limited: London.

Graham, M. (1930) *Lamentation Dance* (video). Available at: <https://youtube.be/1-1cFwPJUXQ> (Accessed: 2 November 2021).

Grotowski, J. (1975) *Towards a Poor Theatre*. Methuen Drama: London.

Laban, R. (2019) *Laban Movement*. Available at: www.coursflorent.education (Accessed: 5th October 2021).

Lecoq, J. (2020) *The Moving Body*. 3rd edn. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc: London.

Murray, S. and Keefe, J. (2007) *Physical Theatres: A Critical Introduction*. Routledge: New York.

Walcott, D. (1976) *Love after Love* (poem). Available at: www.poemhunter.com (Accessed: 14 October 2021).

Wang, S. (2000) *An Acrobat of the Heart*. Vintage Books: London.