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Improvisation as an important element of future choreographers training

It is typical for every person to have his/her own unique and distinctive world reflection. This is why every problem in life lies not in the situation, but in the way of perceiving it. And the inability to create, as a rule, is a result of an overly fixated worldview with its typical movement patterns and specific forming of a life composition in space. Development of personality's creative potential is one of the most vital tasks of modern society.

Analysis of choreographic art specifics shows that expressive moves, actions, and gestures are of great significance in human converse; they are an important way of communication and characterize a person's emotional state.

When we use different kinds of arts for self-development and development of creative potential in psychotherapeutic processes, we do not care about aesthetics and technical skills. For example, when we look at the dance and possibilities of dancing improvisation, we focus attention on the idea of improvisation being a kind of a game/process. In this case, we use dance (movement) for self-expression, self-acceptance,

self-realization, awareness, development of introspection and creative worldview. And the highest value here lies in the process of movement/dance itself, although the result is always interesting and important.

There are different definitions of the term 'improvisation'. First of all, improvisation is a process of creating a 'here and now' composition. Spontaneous improvisation is a process of gradual and structured form-making in a specific, actual moment that excludes the influential importance of external factors and directives [3, p. 41].

Improvisation develops the body that feels, "thinks" and makes decisions based on its own wisdom.

This is why we use dance movement improvisation as a universal system in practical psychologist's work and in teaching future choreographers.

The goal of this article is to look into the possibilities of the improvisation process for creative potential development of the future choreographers.

Training of highly skilled, competitive and creatively fulfilled specialists in contemporary choreography is a main task of the higher professional education. It requires creating a set of psycho-pedagogical conditions for the development of the student's creative potential. One of the most important components of choreography education today is to work with improvisation techniques.

We will address creative potential (lat. *potentia* -force, power) as defined by V.O. Moliako, as "resource of a person's creative capabilities, the capacity of a specific person for creative actions, creative activity", as the capacity for creativity.

Improvisation (*fr.improvisation, ital.improvvisazione,lat.improvisus* - unpredictable) - creating of an art composition (for example, *musical, poetic, scenic*) in the moment of performing without preliminary preparations [2, p. 708].

Therefore, we can say that the technique of improvisation is important for future specialists because, according to our materials, it includes:

- opportunity to let oneself be and sense oneself;
- symbolic dance language that transmits the content of the person's inescape into the outside world;
- ability to have sensibility at the level of the body, movement, action; to have the interest towards one's own choice, development of creative potential;
- ability to listen and hear the universe, follow attractors, involving

co-creation with the body, including gained life experience and impulses that appear, as an inner necessity "here and now".

Personal emotional experience and decades of work experience (over 20 years), allow to state that for a person who exercises in improvisation, there are **three typical stages** of one's own dance development:

1. *Primary nonconscious motion activity*, characterized by openness and spontaneity of feelings. The emotional component is dominant; moves are unpredictable, chaotic, often lack form, not memorized. When music is repeated movement response can be expressed in different motor variation.
2. At the second stage creative processing of spontaneous motor material begins, a certain systematization. We can say that *affect motor alphabet and vocabulary of distinctive movement language are being formed*. This process occurs consciously, according to received knowledge and one's own experience, taking into account one's weight, movement quality, spatial characteristics, attention, etc., as a result of differentiation and combination of processes that happen in the inner and outer personality space.
3. The third stage is characterized by *a high level of motor processes awareness, processes that appear from the inner impulse and develop in external space*.

Body movements of a human always have different trajectories that reflect both conscious and nonconscious reactions of a person. The dance, like a painting, always give an insight into what the "usual movement", "usual picture" is. Dance improvisation always involves movement experiments of unusual and nonconscious nature. The results are unplanned and unpredictable. It allows setting free from strict meaning systems and usual behavioral models. Being an expression of kinetic subjectivity, dance, on one hand, disorganizes regular patterns, hyperstability, and on the other hand, builds and structures a certain order. Develop the skill to consciously work on creating of This is why during the work, a process of creating the dance allows students to consciously and more actively connect with themselves and with the surrounding world, as well as consciously work on dance composition structure creating.

Here a space perception is crucial. For us, space is a living organism, holistic and smart. As living creatures, we constantly animate the space around us, we create it and fill it. During the in-class work, some of the tasks are targeted to help track one's impulses even more precisely, establish a connection between inner and outer spaces. Realize, that inner

universe and the world around us can and must be one's resource and support. To achieve this result one should work individually, as well as in pairs and small groups.

The goal of such classes-expansion of conscious bodily and motor lexical material, the realization of one's movement patterns as a certain interaction style with others and space, shaping openness to the new knowledge, possibilities and actions. The way others see me and how I percept information from the outside world is always important.

How do we start improvisation classes during the training? First, we start walking around the whole room, the goal is to achieve a certain (new) level of introduction to the surrounding space (even if space is already familiar).

There are several tasks while moving around the space:

1. Pay attention to one's body and feelings that arise during the movement through the room:

- how exactly do we put our feet on the floor while we walk: from toes, from heels, the entire foot surface;
- how does the bodyweight distribute: on the entire foot surface or is there rolling to the outer or inner side of the foot; are feet parallel to each other, or toes placed more outwardly or inwardly;
- how mobile are one's joints, and how mindfully are they used;
- does one have a sense of center and what are the specifics of interconnections in the body (LMA and BF basics).

2. Be attentive and see other people in the space (because during the first stage, as a rule, most of the participants look at the floor).

3. Try to hold the space balance. Only possible with mindful and precisely chosen movement trajectory.

4. Precision and quality of intentions: using different directions and movement patterns, trying rapid movement changes in space and a different rhythm, common to the whole group (at the first stage very often a circular movement can be tracked, if other options and abstracting from stereotypes are not emphasized).

Depending on the emphasis on one of the given tasks, further development of the exercise can differ. As a rule, attention can be focused on levels of movement. It is possible to move around not only on the upper level but one also can move to the floor (using a lower level) and middle level (in between the floor and usual movement on foot). In the process, one finds most natural (using joints and body widening or shortening) way of moving between levels, continuing the journey through space.

Another option of the situation development - movement in different tempos to find out which of them is:

- the most familiar,
- used in life very seldom,
- the most comfortable,
- the most productive.

During the movement, it is important to remember about even breathing.

Improvisation allows to develop a body that feels, "thinks" and gives the opportunity to learn how to see, percept, realize and reflect on material that makes our reality, in our case - the dance. That is why practical work requires the use of different improvisational tasks, relaxation technique, and body awareness to develop a more subtle sense of inner signals, movement impulses, sense of the partner, space/time as elements that produce interaction and create a composition.

When working with students, search and creation of their dance is the key element. That is why to learn improvisation and composition basics we turn to the name, well known in contemporary dance - Iztoka Kovaca. His system is designed for work with a group of dancers and focuses on creating a composition according to 3q-system (Iztoka Kovaca, Slovenia). So another variant that we actively use to develop mindfulness and abstract from usual actions, - work with counterthemes.

Every participant in the subgroup creates his/her own small improvisational dance solo. A starting point can be music (movements associated with the music), the movement itself (for example, its character -Statics/dynamics), or any other principle.

The future general Composition will consist of these solos, more specifically dance-movement material, created during further work. Order of solos will be decided by a die: the person with the bigger number goes first, and so on as the number decreases. Participants with the equal die number will roll the die again. If participants have several combinations, they roll the die according to the number of combinations, so they could have specific places in general composition; the order of their combinations is up for them to decide.

After that work continues as follows: the first Chief - the one who presents his/her solo - offers a combination, and other participants, with the help of the die, chose what they will be doing during the solo. There are only three possible actions-reactions:

- 1) copy, die numbers 1 or 2;
- 2) countertheme and counteractions, numbers 3 or 4;

3) stop, numbers 5 or 6.

Copy (3) - participant fully copies Chief's moves (including dynamics and direction).

Countertheme (0) - the action opposite the Chief's action. There are counterthemes variations. Leaders within countertheme group change between each other.

Counteractions:

- Mirror - mirroring Chief's movements.
- Up-down - if Chief's combination is performed in a vertical plane, countertheme - in horizontal.
- Marking - Chief moves in a sort of miniature version of the combination.
- Space: static-dynamic - if Chief's combination is static (in place), countertheme is dynamic (through the space). And vice versa.
- Block - countertheme participants actions kind of block Chief's moves (and copy them simultaneously).
 - ♦ Disturbing - doesn't mean mixing, but rather stopping Chief (and copying his moves simultaneously) from performing his moves.
 - ♦ Style of dynamics - changing the Chief's dynamics style.
 - ♦ Quality of movement - changing the Chief's movement quality.
 - Smooth - abrupt;
 - Soft-hard
 - Line-curve
 - Slow-fast
 - Grouping - getting in groups according to some similarity, for example, costumes - the majority in black, some in color.
 - Individual movement - a combination of any moves that countertheme group leader performs, not connected with Chief's theme.
 - Stop - freeze in a position (standing, lying, sitting, etc.) - useful when there are many countertheme performers.
 - Music attention - paying attention to the music, moves are formed according to the music character.
 - Action-reaction - countertheme is performed depending on participants of the theme; moves are the answer (reaction to the moves of main theme performers).
 - Non-dancing movement - voice, yawning, drinking water, etc.

Technical counteractions:

A combination is decomposed to separate elements, and a countertheme is built from these elements according to one of the following principles.

$a(\rightarrow), b(\rightarrow), c(\rightarrow), d(\rightarrow)$ - main theme.

$d(\leftarrow), c(\leftarrow), b(\leftarrow), a(\leftarrow)$ - a combination is performed from back to front, in reverse.

$a(\leftarrow), b(\leftarrow), c(\leftarrow), d(\leftarrow)$ - every element in the combination is performed in the reversed direction.

$d(\rightarrow), c(\rightarrow), b(\rightarrow), a(\rightarrow)$ - elements are performed in reverse, but movement direction of each element stays the same.

A free mix of parts.

a, a, a, a - repetition of one element from the Chief's combination.

$a, b, c \rightarrow d$ - speed up.

$a/x, b/x, c/x, d/x$ - not a full movement execution, stop in the middle.

x, a, b, c - canon - performing with delay.

Stop (X) - no response reaction - freezing. This stop can be executed not only by standing still but also by any other monotonous move: walking, running, turning, etc. Stops can be used to change one's position in space, stepping out of the composition logic (to avoid gathering of people in one place, to have enough space for next moves).

Still, the important point is to create one's own dance, work with counterthemes. Afterwards, participants are offered to memorize and repeat new moves combinations, and in the end, Chief can create the final variant. This way the whole composition comes together, where soloists take turns, and other participants build their reaction moves into a single phrase in connection with a soloist. Actually, everything happens like in real life. There is a situation and reaction to it, in our case - dance-movement. Work should be done in a small group of 6-8 people.

The idea of this way of working on creating a composition appeared after participation in Iztok Kovac laboratory within the framework of summer school activities of Moscow dance theater agency «LIEX» - 2005.

Later this experience was developed to perform individually and in duets. In an individual version, the performer creates his/her counterthemes, three variants maximum. When working in pairs participants are offered to create two counterthemes for the partner and then work on making a single composition together, when both partners learn each other's solos and counterthemes and have an opportunity to build a composition almost without limits.

Experience has shown that this is a quite difficult task. But the moment when participants detect the existence of certain patterns and their own choices are very surprising for them. And a certain difficulty of perceiving partner's countertheme also allows recognizing one's own "rules" and certain limitations.

On the first stages, parameters to build countertheme are usually very simple - laterality, tempo, sometimes level, and its change. But if practiced, counterthemes become much more diverse. And also, the view of one's possibilities changes, movement variations, as well as interaction strategies, expand. And the world, in general, feels wider, space becomes more complex, and, at the same time, clearer to understand. One begins to realize his/her internal necessity, choice, action or refusal, one's own kinesphere, surrounding space, movement quality, and life as well.

Therefore, the improvisation technique plays an important part in training competitive contemporary dancers and choreographers today. It activates the ability to develop a dancer's personality and his/her body awareness. It also teaches how to reflect on the dance material.

For the future choreographer, it is important to understand the fact that besides technique training, many things depend on one's creative potential that closely related to self-awareness: the capability to act according to the current situation, bodily senses, perception of the initial impulse location, how much force should be applied to complete a move or interaction, how precise the direction for the move is, how one can feel the space, what is the quality of movement, what kind of emotions arise or block. Many things depend on the perception of given tasks and understanding of how they can be carried out.

The body is the most important aspect of choreographer's work, as well as any person that lives mindfully. It is important to realize and understand one's own bodily reactions and feelings, ability to act according to the internal necessity, taking into the account surrounding world. Having recourse and always giving oneself the opportunity to stop, change direction, force, weight, flow.

The essential question is whether the dancer is ready to be the soloist on the stage of his/her own life, filling the whole space, regardless of the size, with one's presence? Is the dancer ready to be with the others, working together for the best interaction, or act on his own (like in the childhood: close but not together)? Ability to get in the right mindset increases through developing the skill of "listening" and understanding oneself and the depth of one's own

bodily mindfulness. And the process of finding your dance is always connected to facts of life.

From this article we can draw an inference: for us, the improvisation technique is the opportunity to open personal potential, opportunity to develop sensitive and "thinking" body, acknowledging both the importance of our previous life experience and movement out of internal necessity. Improvisation teaches us to reflect on the material that makes up reality. At the same time we receive an opportunity to contact with the world in a brand new way, knowing that many things depend on the level of mindfulness: what is happening right now with the bodily senses: where initial impulse location is, how much force should be applied to complete a move or interaction, how precise the direction for the move is.

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Abstracts

МОВА ЛЮДМИЛА. Improvizacja jako ważny element w przygotowaniu przyszłych choreografów. Improvizacja jest uważana za ważną i integralną część przygotowania przyszłego choreografa, która przyczynia się do rozwoju osobowości przyszłego choreografa i jego potencjału twórczego. Rozważana jest struktura prac nad stworzeniem kompozycji według systemu 3q (Iztok Kovac, Słowenia). Podano przykłady i analizę własnych wariantów pracy z improwizacją w przygotowaniu studentów-choreografów.

Słowa kluczowe: improwizacja, kompozycja, potencjał twórczy.

МОВА ЛЮДМИЛА. Імпровізація як важливий елемент підготовки майбутніх хореографів. Імпровізація розглядається як важлива і невід'ємна складова підготовки майбутнього хореографа, що сприяє розвитку особистості майбутнього хореографа та його творчого потенціалу. Розглянуто структуру роботи над створенням композиції за 3q-системою (Iztok Kovac, Словенія). Наведено приклади і аналіз власних варіантів роботи з імпровізацією при підготовці студентів-хореографів.

Ключові слова: імпровізація, композиція, творчий потенціал.

МОВА ЛЮДМИЛА. Improvizacija kao važnyj element podgotovki budućih choreografov. Improvizacija razmatriva se kao važna i neotčemljena sastavljajuća podgotovki budućeg choreografa, što sposobstvuje razvitiu ličnosti budućeg choreografa i ego tvorcheskogo potencijala. Rassmotrena struktura raboty nad sozdaniem kompozicii po 3q-sisteme (Iztok Kovac, Slo-

вения). Приведены примеры и анализ собственных вариантов работы с импровизацией при подготовке студентов-хореографов.

Ключевые слова: импровизация, композиция, творческий потенциал.

MOVA LIUDMYLA. Improvisation as an important element of future choreographers training. *Improvisation is considered an important and indispensable element of future choreographer's training, that contributes to future choreographer's personality development and his/her creative potential. The author analyzes the structure of work when creating a composition according to the 3q-system (Iztok Kovac, Slovenia). This article shows cases and analysis of personal variants of working with improvisation when training students-choreographers.*

Keywords: improvisation, composition, creative potential.