

Megan Kendzior, Gluck Fellow in Experimental Choreography

Dancing Outdoors: Improvisational Movements Inspired by Natural Surroundings

Abstract: Through this DIY curriculum, students will learn choreography and dance skills while also developing their sensorial awareness through improvisational dance exercises outdoors. The materials include a document explaining how to use the materials, a warm up video, and a worksheet for students to take with them outdoors. By engaging with these materials, students will experience a sense of their individual power while also developing a connection with the natural surroundings near the classroom or home. In the current reality of spending so much time indoors and on electronic devices, these materials work to offer a breath of fresh air and moment for physicality. It provides an outlet for creative expression as well as technical movement and choreography training. Students will feel valued as they share their personal interpretations of their surroundings and they will learn to articulate their unique perspectives through their bodies.

Target Audience: K – 2nd grade, 3rd-6th grade, Middle School, High School, Family Learning

Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

By using this Digital DIY Curriculum, students will have learned how to use dance improvisation and choreography as relevant and generative tools for creative expression, performance, communication, and reflection. They will also find connections with their natural surroundings and a deeper awareness of their senses.

Megan Danielle Kendzior is a dance maker and arts advocate, originally hailing from Sarasota, Florida. She moved to California last year after spending ten years in New York City as a professional dancer and choreographer. She is a second year MFA student in Experimental Choreography at the University of California at Riverside. Her creative practice and research are centered on the convergence of choreographic and improvisational structures, and the ways that systemic oppression is part of the development and presentation of experimental dances. Her choreographic work offers buoyant explorative scores that allow imagination to blend with environmental influence, abstract narrative, and historical inquiry. Her experience as the Managing Director of the interdisciplinary Laboratory for Art, Nature, and Dance (iLAND) in New York directly relates to her capacity as an educator of site-specific and sensory-based improvisational dance classes.

Her creative work has been presented by Danspace Project and New York Live Arts (Fresh Tracks), among many other venues in New York, Florida, California, North Carolina, Illinois, Virginia, Montana, Washington DC and in Germany, Guatemala and Israel. Her five-year performative research project, Witness, centered on detailed Holocaust research that resulted in national and international public performances, the National College Dance Festival's Outstanding Student Choreographer Award at the Kennedy Center, and publication of an article in the University of Florida Journal of Undergraduate Research. She graduated with a BFA in Dance from the University of Florida in 2010 and then moved to New York, where she worked as an arts administrator and community organizer for a variety of artists and organizations, including: Movement Research, the American Alliance of Artists and Audiences, the interdisciplinary Laboratory for Art, Nature and Dance, Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, UHURU of the African People's Socialist Movement, and Artists Co-Creating Real Equity of the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, among others.

Gluck Creative Classroom Digital DIY files:

D_Dancing Outdoors-syllabus.pdf
 D_Dancing Outdoors-info.pdf
 D_Dancing Outdoors-info.pptx

Activity

D_Dancing Outdoors Warm up.mp4