

Barnard College Dance in Paris Summer Program

(Appropriated from the USF/Barnard Dance in Paris program syllabus used for the past 9 years)

Paris, France
June 1-30, 2020

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Course Outline/Syllabus

Course Description

This 28-day course is an immersion in Parisian culture from the point of view of the dancer. The course is divided into three major components: technique, composition, and history. Students will take a series of technique classes in modern, ballet, improvisation, world dance forms, and yoga, taught by Barnard/USF and international guest faculty, as well as opportunities to take alternative technique classes in some of Paris's professional dance studios. Students will be exposed to the rich artistic side of Paris through lectures and performances, as well as assigned readings by major dancers/writers/artists who have drawn on the Parisian landscape as inspiration for their work.

A final choreographic project based on compositional exercises that will take students to various Parisian locales, will be presented during the final week of the course. We will also visit many important locations essential to studying the history of dance in Western culture, including Versailles, Théâtre de la Ville and the Paris Opera.

Outcomes

- Students will develop a sense of themselves as artists on a global scale
- Students will study the connection between artists of different mediums (literature, painting, etc.) and their relationship to art-making
- Students will experience a new laboratory for their own choreography
- Students will present one's own choreography to the Barnard community in order to share their singular experience with international artists in a new setting, which allows for feedback, exposure to a new dance audience, and a broader community.
- Students will be introduced to artists, teachers, choreographers and performances that rarely make their way to the United States thus opening students up to a broader palette of movement language.
- Students will build confidence as an independent artist in an urban environment, and using that information as inspiration for new choices as a dancer/choreographer in the professional world.

Course Requirements and Grading

Since this is an intensive course, a thorough dedication and active participation is essential. Many of the assignments will require that the student go very far outside of one's comfort zone, not only as dancers, but as people. How far one ventures outside this zone toward become fuller artists will determine not only a student's success in this course, but will be lessons students can carry with them, hopefully, forever.

The readings are included to enhance an understanding of the artist's approach to being a global citizen in the city of Paris, as well as to provide historical and logistical information about dance in Paris. Students are required to complete the reading assignment in a timely fashion in order to be able to participate in the class discussions.

Students are required to keep a journal of their observations on their choreographic journeys through Paris, as well as their choreographic assignment, technique class observations and other discoveries during their time in Paris. A final choreographic piece to be presented to a live audience should be the product of the month-long investigation of a particular subject/theme (in whatever shape that may take) during their time in Paris.

There will also be a required final paper to be handed in via e-mail after the final class day in Paris.

- 15% Attendance at all technique classes, workshops and performances
- 15% Pro-active involvement in all aspects of the course via discussions, class participation
- 45% Journal and final choreographic study/presentation
- 25% Final Paper

Course Schedule

Week #1:

“We shall travel many thousands of miles after we leave here and visit many great cities, but we shall find none so enchanting as this.” (Mark Twain)

Technique:

- Master class with Hofesh Schechter Company
- Contact Improv with Colleen Thomas

Readings:

- Art Buchwald, “April in Paris”, pp. 12 – 15
- Ernest Hemingway, “Hunger Was Good Discipline”, pp. 63 – 70
- David Sedaris, “The City of Light in the Dark”, pp. 97 – 101
- Langston Hughes, “Montmartre” and “Le Grand Duc”, pp. 159 – 171
- Mark Twain, from “The Innocents Abroad”, pp. 190 – 211
- David Barry, “Parlez-vous Français” and “Aesthetically Challenged...”, pp. 212 - 217

Discussion:

- How do artists use the urban landscape as inspiration for their work?

Performances:

- Hofesh Schechter’s *Barbarians* at Théâtre de la Ville
- Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui’s *Noetic* at Villette

Week #2:

“Paris is a beautiful woman, but so surpassingly so, so vital and self-renewing, that nothing – not the passage of years, not drink or drugs, not bad investments or unworthy lovers, not neglect or debauchery – can ruin her.” (Irwin Shaw)

Technique:

- Contemporary Ballet/Choreography workshops with Kévin Quinaou
- Modern with Catherine Dénécy and Clint Lutes

Readings:

- Irwin Shaw, “Paris in Winter”, pp. 40 - 48
- M.F.K. Fischer, “The Measurer of My Powers”, pp. 78 – 79
- Grant Rosenberg, “A Day in the Life of a Parisian Café”, pp. 90 – 93
- Anaïs Nin, “from *The Early Diary*”, pp. 111 – 114
- Stanley Karnow, “The Glass Fashion”, pp. 115 – 126

Discussion:

- What is *la vie quotidienne* for an artist?

Performances:

- Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui’s *Fractus V* at Villette
- Elodie Sicard's *Les Alibis*, Pierre Pontvianne's *Motifs* and Fabrice Lambert's *Jamais Assez* at La Cartoucherie

Week #3:

**“I have ever believed that had there been no queen, there would have been no revolution.”
(Thomas Jefferson)**

Technique:

- Modern with Catherine Dénécy, Julien Desplantez and Michael Foley
- Ballet with Jenny Sandler
- Yoga with Michelle Jacobi at the Centre de Yoga du Marais

Readings:

- E.B. White, “Liberation of Paris”, pp. 5 – 6
- Edith Wharton, “from *A Backward Glance*”, pp. 7 – 11
- Thomas Jefferson, “from *The Autobiography*”, pp. 135 – 149

Discussion:

- Paris’ history has been a difficult and varied one, how has that changed the artist? Does history resonate within us? How do we incorporate history into our work? How does it inspire us to change our work?

Performances:

- Anna Teresa de Keersmaeker’s *La Nuit Transfigurée* at Théâtre de la Ville
- Anarchy Dance Theater’s *Another Body* at salle Maria Casares

Excursion:

- Le Château de Versailles

Week #4:

“In Paris, they were fully free to be American. It was from abroad that they sent imaginative rays homeward.” (Saul Bellow)

Technique:

- Yoga intensive with Michelle Jacobi at the Centre de Yoga du Marais
- Workshops with Julien Desplantez
- Piso Movil with Vladimir Rodriguez
- Modern with Asha Thomas

Readings:

- A.J. Liebling, “Passable”, pp. 16 - 31
- Saul Bellow, “My Paris”, pp. 49 – 59
- Patri Kuh, “Boulevard Des Italiens”, pp. 71 – 77
- Gertrude Stein, “from *Paris, France*”, pp. 150 – 155
- Jennifer Allen, “Euro Disney: A Postcard”, pp. 172 – 176
- Janet Flanner, “Tourist”, pp. 222 – 235
- James Baldwin, “from *No Name in the Street*”, pp. 247 – 261

Discussion:

- Paris’ underbelly – did you find it? What have been some of the conflicts during the artistic process with living in Paris and making work here? Changed impressions of the city? Has your working process changed along with it?

Performances:

- José Montalvo's *Shiganè Nai* with the Nat Dance Co. of Korea at Théâtre de Chaillot
- Viewing rehearsal of Justin Peck and George Balanchine show at Paris Opera Garnier

Excursion:

- A tour of the Paris Opera

Week #5:**Performances:**

- Sankai Juku's *Meguri* at Théâtre de la Ville
- New York City Ballet's all Balanchine concert at Théâtre du Châtelet

July 10th: Final Paper Due for those leaving Paris on June 30th

July 17th: Final Paper Due for all others

“After all, everybody, that is, everybody who writes is interested in living inside themselves in order to tell what is inside themselves. That is why writers have to have two countries, the one where they belong and the one in which they live really. The second is romantic, it is separate from themselves, it is not real but it is really there.”

-Gertrude Stein (1874 – 1946)

Syllabus and Course Schedule are subject to change

The Choreographic Process – Making Solo Work in Paris

This course is designed to provide students with the necessary tools to continue the process of making dances by building on choreographic exercises/studies they have investigated in their beginner composition classes. Students will explore a greater range of material for creating choreography and will continue to gain more confidence in their own dance-making abilities as well as develop a stronger awareness of choreographic structures in Dance. These conceptual models for choreography will be based on *Le Dérive*.

The *dérive* is an essential part of your time in Paris and is the student's opportunity to get to know a small part of the city in a very intimate way. Students will be exploring an area of Paris, which will become their own personal neighborhood during the month of June. Students will discover its secrets, witness the comings and goings of the people who inhabit this neighborhood, observe and respond to its essence.

Dériver, in French, literally means: "to drift". That infinitive should provide students the inspiration to drift through their walks and become: distracted, highly focused, merely interested, repulsed, curious, enamored, reflective, opinionated, bewildered, awed, emotional, etc.

Each *dérive* has been created especially for each individual student, and no two *dérives* are alike in the city, and nor do any of the *dérives* ever cross one another geographically. Some may begin or end at the same place, but they will never cross each other. All the *dérives* begin and end at a metro stop. Some *dérives* may cross from one arrondissement to another, but it will never go outside the map on a given page in the student's *plan de Paris*.

Students use their own personal observations based on their *dérive* to create a 2 – 2 ½ minute solo during their time in Paris, and it is important that students document their observations for later retrieval. Documentation can be in the form of a journal, pictures or video.

Students should go on their *dérive* within the first few days of receiving it to start mapping it out in the *plan de Paris*, but also start imprinting the route in their memory. Students are free to take someone along the first time if they are a bit nervous going it alone, but students must walk the *dérive* by themselves at some point. Again, the point is to have a personal relationship with your walk, as opposed to constantly checking in with another person about what you are observing. It is encouraged that students vary the times they walk the *dérive* as a neighborhood can change depending on the time of day or day of the week. All the walks are in safe neighborhoods, but students should always remain aware of their surroundings.

It is encouraged that students walk the entire length of the *dérive* at least once, but they should go on your *dérive* several times to get the full experience. Most students in this course walk their *dérive* at least three times.

Course Objectives:

- Developing an appreciation of one's creativity through improvisation and using improvisation as a tool of making dances. The goal is to continue "getting out of your own way" – how does one do that after feeling locked into a particular style/technique?
- The ability to critique with an open mind, a cautious voice and an articulate language both of one's own work and their fellow students'. Since all students have had experience in a composition course and have provided critical feedback to one another, the criticisms should become less "couched" and more detailed.
- To offer students the freedom and opportunity to create and perform their own work, which can have long-range possibilities.
- To challenge students' preconceived notions about choreographic boundaries through rhythmic dynamism, expressive changes and new procedures.
- We are not making dances in a vacuum of creativity. This class will be looking at several performance of contemporary choreographers and deconstructing some of their choreographic process, thus enhancing our own understanding of structure, inspiration and creativity.

In-class work:

- There will be presentations of choreographic concepts once a week. These presentations may be specific studies or may involve improvisation depending on the assignment.
- Class discussions and critiques of work with accompany improvisations and choreographic showings.
- Journaling: students are expected to keep a journal of their assignments, critiques, choreographic exercises and impressions of the class material.
- All students must participate in the mid-month and final showing, which will be graded.

Gradable material:

- Progress and improvement in the development of one's choreographic voice
- Understanding and exploration of choreographic assignments and concepts
- Absorption of critical feedback and the ability to apply criticism to one's choreographic process
- Participation in class discussion and developing an articulate language for criticism
- Recording all assignments, including all improvisational and choreographic concepts and studies
- Thoughts, feelings and wanderings about the direction and realization of your work in the class through the improvisations and studies
- Personal critiques given to you about your studies and the showings
- Observations of live performances

Course outline regarding the Choreography assignments

Week #1:

- Initial forays into the neighborhoods of Paris on assignments based off of *Le Dérive*
- Initial construction/ruminations on movement ideas to be recorded in journals
- Beginning exercises toward the development of movement material based on improvisation and images

Week #2:

- Working in pairs/groups to tease out different kinds of creative information
- Giving critical feedback on initial movement studies
- Evaluations of choreographic patterns based on journal entries

Week #3:

- Self-critiquing/evaluation based on feedback and progress of accumulated material
- First informal showing to the group

Week #4:

- Final work on choreographic projects (solos and duets)
- Informal Performance at Foyer Lejeune

Week #5:

- Final showing of choreography at Micadanses

*“The body solves problems
before the mind knows you had one.”*

~Trisha Brown

Final Paper

The purpose of the final paper is not to summarize your 4-week experience in Paris. That would be impossible, as your experience is an ongoing one; perhaps one whose impact may not be felt for quite some time. Instead, the final paper should be a detailed analysis of some of the fundamental changes that happened in your working process as a dancer from three points of view: choreographic, performance, and historical. Remember that the goal of the Program was for you to start to become part of the global citizenry, as well as the global artistic community.

The first part of your paper should address the aspects of your choreographic process that were influenced by, among many things: the *dérive*, your creative time in the studio, the creation of new material, and any critical feedback.

The second part of your paper should reflect on the impact of particular performances you saw in Paris and how it/they affected the way you perceive dance, and what effects it had on your own choreographic process, if any.

The final part of your paper should draw upon the contemporary and historical aspects of French art/dance and its impression on you as a burgeoning artist. This could include references to Versailles as a baroque performance space and the beginning of an almost 400-year history of dance in France; your time in any of the many museums; some of the more historically-based performance material we saw; as well as citing any one of the many historical references in the readings from Paris in Mind.

Your paper can certainly include passages from your on-going journaling during your time in Paris, as well as any outside information as it pertains to the overall success of the paper.

The paper should be 6 – 10 pages in length, typed, double-spaced, and submitted to Professor Thomas and Professor Foley no later than **July 10th** for those returning to the U.S. on June 30th. The due date for those returning to the U.S. at a later date is **July 17th**.

STATEMENT ON STUDENT DISABILITIES

"If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations in this off-campus course, you must register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) for assistance. Students requesting accommodations for an off-campus course will need to first meet with an ODS staff member to discuss the particulars of the course location and how it may impact availability of particular accommodations. Please be advised that all disability accommodations available for on campus courses may not be available for off campus courses. ODS will discuss specifics of each off-campus course location and disability related needs at the time the disability accommodation request is received. Once registered, students are required to request

accommodation letters each semester to notify faculty. Accommodations are not retroactive, so it is best to contact ODS early each semester to access your accommodations. If you are registered with ODS, please see me to schedule a meeting outside of class in which you can bring me your faculty notification letter and we can discuss your accommodations for this course. Students are not eligible to use their accommodations in this course until they have met with me. ODS is located in Milbank Hall, Room 009."

Honor Code: This course is taught in the spirit of the Barnard College Honor Code (below) and the guidelines for academic integrity of Columbia College and the School of General Studies.

We, the students of Barnard College, resolve to uphold the honor of the College by engaging with integrity in all of our academic pursuits. We affirm that academic integrity is the honorable creation and presentation of our own work. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to seek clarification of proper forms of collaboration and use of academic resources in all assignments or exams. We consider academic integrity to include the proper use and care for all print, electronic, or other academic resources. We will respect the rights of others to engage in pursuit of learning in order to uphold our commitment to honor. We pledge to do all that is in our power to create a spirit of honesty and honor for its own sake.

Wellness Statement: It is important for undergraduates to recognize and identify the different pressures, burdens, and stressors you may be facing, whether personal, emotional, physical, financial, mental, or academic. We as a community urge you to make yourself--your own health, sanity, and wellness--your priority throughout this term and your career here. Sleep, exercise, and eating well can all be a part of a healthy regimen to cope with stress. Resources exist to support you in several sectors of your life, and we encourage you to make use of them. Should you have any questions about navigating these resources, please visit these sites:

- <http://barnard.edu/primarycare>
- <http://barnard.edu/counseling>
- <http://barnard.edu/wellwoman/about>
- [Stressbusters Support Network <pdf>](#)