

Theatre, Dance and Performance Training (TDPT)

**Special issue: *Independent Dance and Movement Training*
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Call for contributions, ideas, proposals and dialogue with the editors

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Independent Dance Training (Issue 12.2)

This special issue guest edited by Henrietta Hale, Nikki Tomlinson and Gitta Wigro draws from our roles at Independent Dance, an organisation that supports and sustains independent dance artists to develop dance as an art form. The 'independent dance artists' that ID engages with can be many things. They may produce or perform in choreographic works in theatres, galleries, digital formats or outdoor / informal sites. They may work as facilitators or teachers with other professionals or in community settings, engaging untrained people in dance. Or they may be practitioners from other disciplines such as fine arts, architecture or science who engage in an embodied movement practice to complement and bring new knowledge to their field.

The aim of this issue is to consider and map how movement practices that have evolved from specific traditions or situations are used and re-articulated for other purposes; and show how this plays out in inter-related, international networks of practitioners.

We want to focus on informal methods of training and practice in as broad a range of contexts as possible. We consider the term *informal training* to include practices and training programmes that may not lead to a certificate or qualification, or that offer a different set of skills than those that are commonly associated with university or conservatoire models.

Some artists may not have had access to traditional codified dance training for specific reasons. We want to chart the altered or alternative training routes that can embrace diverse body capabilities and cognitive/sensory modalities. In other cases, formal training may not be available in a particular cultural or historical form of dance; we are interested in the alternative training routes people create to develop less-mapped creative fields.

Working outside of larger institutions and the more mainstream dance sectors, independent artists and practices exist in precarious conditions where resources and finance are uncertain and unstable. We recognise the element of assertion and activism needed for artists to gain traction with experimental, disruptive or innovative forms of work. We therefore invite proposals that explore how precarity in independent dance can, and has, fostered care and collective solidarity across local and global networks.

Our interest in artists' self-training extends to the ways in which groups form to train together, often in ad-hoc, self-organising ways; without a defined teacher role but variations of expertise and skills sharing. These might include improvisation groups, training groups (e.g. martial arts), practice forums, groups using public spaces

for street dance or parkour; and equally those that cross over with social forms (e.g. movement practices that happen in the club scene).

Digital technologies have opened new paths of access to training and networks in the last 15 years, and we invite proposals examining how digital formats and online training programmes have supported greater accessibility and inclusivity.

Through paying attention to inclusivity in dance practice we wish to interrogate how embodied choreographic / improvisation practices develop their own intrinsic ethics. What can we learn from understanding the complex processes people with disabilities or diverse sensory modalities undertake; or the process undertaken by people who face daily situations of exclusion for all kinds of reasons?

We are interested in, but not limited by, responses to the following questions.

- What are the points of divergence between independent training forms and more traditional views of dance training, and what do current practitioners consider to be important?
- How do we chart the web of influence of somatic practices and improvisation techniques globally, particularly drawing on non-western originated movement cultures such as yoga, Butoh and African dance forms?
- What approaches to training equip artists for the sustenance and resilience needed for independent arts practice, beyond traditional and institutional settings or normative capacities?
- How are practices shared through international festivals, events, residencies?
- How has technology enabled artists to allow other, new informal kinds of training and self-training?
- How do alternative training programmes for dance emerge in rural areas or situations where an artist practicing a specific form may be geographically or socially isolated?
- How can we trace the impact and effects of dancers training in these informal situations (i.e. not for a qualification), and how does this sit within the current arts ecology and its economic structures?
- What will fuel a rich debate about the value and impact of embodied work, both as an approach to the person and in terms of thinking about techniques of the body?

Submitting a Proposal

To signal your interest and intention to make a contribution to this special issue in any one of the ways identified, please email an abstract (max 250 words) to **Henrietta Hale** and **Nikki Tomlinson** (info@independentdance.co.uk) and **Gitta Wigro** (gwigro@gmail.com). Training Grounds proposals are to be made to Sara Reed, (ab5421@coventry.ac.uk) with copies to Henrietta and Nikki.

Our deadline for these abstracts is **24 April 2020**.

Theatre, Dance and Performance Training has three sections:

- “Articles” features contributions in a range of critical and scholarly formats (approx. 5,000-7,000 words)
- “Sources” provides an outlet for the documentation and analysis of primary materials of performer training.
- “Training Grounds” hosts shorter pieces, which are not peer reviewed, including essays (up to 3,000 words), postcards (up to 200 words), visual essays and book or event reviews. We welcome a wide range of different proposals for contributions including edited interviews and suggestions for recent books on the theme to be reviewed; or for foundational texts to be re-reviewed.

Innovative cross-over print/digital formats are possible, including the submission of audiovisual training materials, which can be housed on the online interactive *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* journal blog:

<http://theatredanceperformancetraining.org>

About *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training* (TDPT)

Special Issues of [Theatre, Dance and Performance Training](#) (TDPT) are an essential part of its offer and complement the open issues in each volume. TDPT is an international academic journal devoted to all aspects of ‘training’ (broadly defined) within the performing arts. It was founded in 2010 and launched its [own blog](#) in 2015. Our target readership comprises scholars and the many varieties of professional performers, makers, choreographers, directors, dramaturgs and composers working in theatre, dance, performance and live art who have an interest in the practices of training. TDPT’s co-editors are Jonathan Pitches (University of Leeds) and Libby Worth (Royal Holloway, University of London).

Issue Schedule:

24 April 2020: proposals to be submitted to Henrietta Hale and Nikki Tomlinson

May 2020: Response from editor and, if successful, invitation to submit contribution

May to 10 August 2020: writing/preparation period

August to early October 2020: peer review period

October 2020 – January 2020: author revisions post peer review

June 2021: publication as Issue 12.2

We look forward to hearing from you.