

## CROSS-CULTURAL INTERDISCIPLINARY PERFORMANCE

### Course Overview

Open to all departments, this new course offers students the opportunity to participate in collaboration techniques used in Maureen Fleming Performance Company's cross cultural, multimedia performances that have been presented internationally spanning five continents in venues ranging from New York's City Center to Boston's Institute of Contemporary Art.

This new course is an intensive study of Cross-Cultural Interdisciplinary Performance with a focus on the human form as the instrument for creation. Students participate in movement classes that enhance flexibility, improve alignment, and build vital energy, awareness, strength and endurance. This course culminates in a presentation involving students' collaborative participation in Fleming's interdisciplinary work 'Mother and Child/33' and/or 'The New Sphere' in addition to a presentation of students' collaborative projects involving photography of student work, which can potentially be used for auditions for graduate schools, scholarships and summer programs.

Student's access creative inspiration and learn to move in new and transformative ways. Maureen Fleming, acclaimed New York City choreographer and dancer, creates surreal movement poetry that gives birth to a new vision of the body.

In this workshop, Maureen shares her distinctive approach to movement, which originally arose from the avant-garde Japanese dance movement: *butoh*. Her unique approach adds catharsis and alchemy to the traditional dance techniques of strength, flexibility, and balance. In a disciplined way, Maureen expertly guides students to their deepest creative core, helping them discover and reveal the transcendent that resides in physical form.

Using the body as a vehicle for personal transformation, students will utilize subtle movement exercises and partner work to bring them deep into their internal body. They will learn:

- Fleming Technique and core exercises to initiate movement from the innermost layer of muscles, promoting efficient movement and increased flexibility
- Gain a personal awareness of the alignment necessary for regenerative and sustainable movement through a study of Maureen Fleming's Ten Images.
- Transformative imagery to challenge the way you think and help you move past physical form
- Improvisation to access the inner body and expand movement potential
- Massage that incorporates stretching and *shiatsu* techniques to increase joint flexibility and unlock energy blockages.

This deep, regenerative inner work allows for a more complete realization of personal and creative vision.

Following movement classes, students have the opportunity to participate in collaboration techniques used in Maureen Fleming Performance Company's cross cultural,

multimedia performances involving both media artists and dance/theater artists. Students will collaborate within the class in the creation of self-portraits taking the form of photographs that will serve as a basis for group choreography.

This course is open to all students interested in expanding movement potential and participating in cross-cultural, interdisciplinary performance. This can include students in: DANCE, THEATER, PERFORMANCE ART, PAINTING, SCULPTURE, LIGHT DESIGN, PHOTOGRAPHY, and VIDEO ART.

### **Objectives, Content, and Assessment**

Course Objectives are to gain a personal awareness of the alignment necessary for regenerative and sustainable movement; to learn to initiate movement from the first layer of muscles in the body through a series of daily exercises, improvisation, and composition; to understand and experience principles of gravity used in efficient expansive movement; to improve students' ability to access imagery into physical creativity; to gain an understanding of the elements necessary to create multidiscipline performance within the areas of performance art, dance, music, photography, video, light design, and theater arts through the creation and performance of final projects at the culmination of the Semester.

Skills include the ability to edit choreography and visual work in the creation of self portraits that uncover the layers of experience within a moment, reveal intention and accident, being attentive to the transformative in movement and the ability to create images that convey intangible and poignant meanings. These skills are incorporated into the creation of group choreography involving the creation of archetypal moments, where through a combination of movement, lighting, costumes and music, images are created that exist beyond the pairs of opposites. Birth and death, pain and ecstasy, solid and fluid are present in the same moment, exploring images that touch what is universal about the journey of the soul.

All students are involved in the final performance and are expected to develop the necessary performance skills for the performance art and ensemble choreography presented in the final presentation.

### **Assignments**

During the course sessions, videos will be presented as background for creation. Maureen Fleming Company's personal library of videos of Butoh and related topics, including six of Joseph Campbell's The Power of Myth videos will provide points of discussion relating to the creative process involved in the class. There will be minimal written assignments, however, journaling is required and the following bibliography is suggested:

Campbell, Joseph, The Power of Myth, Doubleday, 1988

Jung, Karl Gustav. Alchemical Studies  
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967

Jung, Karl Gustav, Symbols of Transformation  
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1967

Jung, Karl Gustav, *The Psychology of Kundalini Yoga*  
Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1999

Klein, Susan Blakeley, *Ankoku Buto, The Premodern Influences on  
the Dance of Utter Darkness*, Cornell East Asia Papers, 1988

Buber, Martin, Walter Kaufman (Translator), S. G. Smith (Translator) *I and Thou*,  
Simon and Schuster Adult Publishing Group, 1971

Barks, Coleman, *The Essential Rumi*, HarperCollins Publisher Inc., 1996

Article: "Japanese Artistry of Butoh" *Dance Views* 1999 10.11.13

### Grading

25% Fleming Technique Execution

25% Written Test

25% Self Portrait Photo

25% Final Performance