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Ballet Technique II  
23 Apr 2024

### UDT Paper

Taking this journey as a dance major has been a riveting experience for me. For the first time in my entertainment career, I was a part of a style of dance that I was completely unfamiliar with. Being showcased in a choreographed modern dance piece like the one I was in for the UDT concert taught me more than what I expected. What I learned during the rehearsal process was that it's okay to step outside the box and take risks. What I am referring to is James' piece "Rip Tide". His piece was cryptic, edgy and eclectic. The rehearsal process involved learning how to do a mosh pit. This was particularly difficult for me and a lot of other students because it was hard to understand and execute his idea when most of us had never been in a mosh pit nor were we familiar with what a mosh pit was. This brought on a lot of uncertainty and discomfort amongst the dancers. Despite our discomfort we did the best we could to bring his vision to life. Each rehearsal we got better at showcasing his perspective and the mosh pit became less intimidating. During the week of the performance, we spent two days in dress rehearsal. I learned that rehearsing on stage is quite different than rehearsing in the studio. One reason being is that the lighting is very different. There were times when it was pitch black on stage. I couldn't tell how far downstage or upstage I was. Skepticism began to fill my mind, often scared that myself or someone else would fall off the front of the stage because we couldn't see. My worst fear came to fruition and there was an accident during rehearsal where unfortunately someone fell upstage and got hurt. Fortunately for her, she was not severely injured and could continue in the

performances. There was another near miss during the actual show when a dancer was lifted in the air, similarly to how people crowd surf during a concert. This lift was not well supported, it was unstable, and had we not grabbed her at the right time she would have fallen on the floor which could have caused a serious injury.

Additionally, I learned that even though I am a part of a dance piece, it doesn't mean that I fully understand the intended message. What I mainly took from this was simply the experience. It doesn't matter whether I like it or not. What matters is I gained information and knowledge from it. I learned what it takes to run a show. There are a lot of areas that need to be covered. It's not just about the performers. The success of a show is also dependent on the camera crew, lighting crew, curtain crew, the box office, the backstage manager, the producer/director and the volunteers just to name a few.

My thoughts as it relates to James' project in comparison to what we've learned in ballet class really doesn't correlate in my opinion. Even though modern dance evolved from some aspects of ballet, I don't think there were any aspects of ballet in his piece. What stood out most to me was the mosh pit scene. I would describe it as gritty, chaotic, sporadic and scary. Quite contrary to the traditional ballet we do in class. What I appreciate most about partaking in this process is how I have improved in my health and well-being. I have gotten stronger, gained muscle/flexibility, better posture and implemented a new exercise routine. Furthermore, I have gained more confidence and understanding of ballet as well as modern dance. I am excited and look forward to new explorations in this journey and evolving as a dancer.