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She/Her/Hers

Teaching Philosophy

I would like to turn my attention to the teaching industry's overarching question: What kind of teacher do I want to be? To that question, I would answer: "The type of teacher that a student never forgets." As I dive into the breadth of my philosophy, I plan to address the factors that are deemed most relevant in establishing my own pedagogical approach and to discuss the other course materials that were transformative for my learning. As a dance teacher, I see a lot of similar patterns in behavior, work ethic, and the desires of my students so it becomes easy to create an assumed set of expectations for a class. While this technique is effective, I realized that straying away from this "expectational" approach can allow room for more moments of spontaneity and improvisation to breathe within class, while still maintaining the balance between setting goals, planning, and creating a lesson plan for each class.

In my recent years of teaching, I quickly learned that my niche was to create work and an environment that is fun to perform in and harbors a space for students to find a sense of "home" and safety in belonging amongst the group. I believe there is vitality in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships with students. The art of teaching has always been a collaborative process in my personal practice so much so that I always encourage my students to use their voices to advocate and communicate their ideas, questions, and concerns. This empowers my students and promotes them to take on leadership in expressing their own meanings, as opposed to silencing their ideas. At this point in my career, I believe that the most important part of my personal pedagogy is creating a safe and equal space amongst my students. Creating a learning environment that allows everyone's opinions, thoughts, and experiences to be expressed is a very crucial part of my personal teaching style. The more my students trust me, the more I can trust them to execute my choreography and bring our vision to life **together**. WE ARE A TEAM! The act of belonging should not be a gift given from a particular group or person, it should exist in all spaces, everywhere and anywhere. Bias and judgment are not given the opportunity to live or thrive in these spaces.

As an arts educator, my focus is not solely relied upon "teaching dance", my goal is to guide my students through a journey of self discovery in finding their *will* and *purpose* in the arts. As an educator, I aim to teach basic fundamentals, terminology, and offer artistic prompts to promote the exploration of finding one's own movement within choreography. I identify as a teacher, but I am a student first; meaning that I am always learning and looking for new ways to grow. The benefit of seeing my work as part of the arts education is that I

have the opportunity to have a voice and a platform in the dance industry. My current teachings contribute to both new old aesthetics within dance genres and will hopefully inspire others to want to teach.

When thinking about dance teaching and education as a Black woman, my primary areas of focus include topics that discuss privilege, accessibility, stereotypes, inequality, and racism; all of which are issues present in the everyday lives of P.O.C. My goal is to eliminate environments where judgements and bias' like these exist. When teaching, I use feedback as connective tissue that prompts me to motivate, reinforce, teach analytical skills, and engage with students in a supportive manner. I have grown to understand that there is a great deal of power in language and terminology within dance and how these terms create harmful barriers that Black dancers often get trapped inside of. All in all, speaking about diversity is not enough and it never was. I hold myself accountable in knowing that I have to model the behaviors that I want my students to manifest. As teachers, we must be the living change we wish to see in the industry and that begins with us and ends with our students.

As I reflect upon the development of my own teaching philosophy, my goal is to guide my students through a journey of self discovery in finding their will and purpose in the arts. As of now, I strive to create spaces where my students and peers can discover their own voices through movement and help them realize the true and unique potential they all harbor from within. My goal is to change the lives of the people I collaborate with and can only hope that these practices can live on beyond the studio walls.