

Glossary

This glossary lists select practices that inform the creative process and teaching of Maree ReMalia. She draws from these methods and more as a way to invite participants to arrive at new discoveries while building relationships. She aims to facilitate experiences in which individuals feel empowered, vulnerable, valuable, and honest.

Influential Improvisational Methods and Somatic Practices

Action Theater

Action Theater functions as a physical practice and performance method with the intention of unleashing, unselfconscious, spontaneous expressions through movement, sound, and speech. Out of necessity, Ruth Zaporah began developing exercises that became the practice of Action Theater when transitioning from dancer to a professor in the Drama Department at Maryland College. Zaporah began to see the body as inseparable from the mind and through this practice aimed to embody and reveal the way in which each informs the other. Explorations in this methodology are approached with a sense of play that honors the intelligence of bodily impulses.

Authentic Movement

Mary Starks Whitehouse and Janet Adler developed the practice of Authentic Movement. Early on, the form drew from the philosophies of Carl Jung and improvisational practitioners in modern dance. Traditionally, the practice involves a mover and a witness. For a specified period of time, the mover follows subtle bodily impulses with eyes closed with the intention of moving or sounding from an unconscious state in order to reveal yet to be known information about her/himself. The witness observes the mover's actions. Each role has the duty of tracking the mover's actions in first person, present tense, as well as tracking her/his personal response to what is being experienced/witnessed. When the movement session comes to a close, uninterrupted, the mover shares her/his experience in chronological order; the witness shares what she/he witnessed in her/himself while observing, but traditionally is only permitted to comment on what the mover has already mentioned. The practice of Authentic Movement is used as a form of meditation, therapy, community building, and creative process.

Bebe Miller's Emergent Approach to Choreography

Choreographer, professor, and performer, Bebe Miller, utilizes improvisational methods in her creative process to generate movement material. She is led by a string of curiosities that relate to who and what is in the room and considering the moving body as a site for memory and beauty. Miller invites students and dancers to not only create movement, but to consider how and why they are arriving at each decision and through what lens they are seeing. Select explorations and inquiries in her process drew from the work and ponderings of NY-based artists such as David Gordon, Tere O'Connor, and Susan Rethorst.

Body-Mind Centering

Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen developed the somatic, experiential practice of Body-Mind Centering to bring better understanding to the interrelationship of body and mind. The body-mind is explored through movement, touch, and voice. BMC offers practitioners channels through which to better understand anatomy, physiology, and developmental principles.

BodyMindMovement

The Center for BodyMindMovement is directed by Mark Chandlee Taylor. This practice integrates new approaches to anatomy, physiology, and developmental movement with traditional techniques of somatic awareness such as yoga, massage, dance, and guided meditation. Students learn revolutionary approaches to working with movement, touch, and sound to facilitate deep transformation.

Butoh

The ever-evolving practice of Butoh originated in Japan in the mid twentieth century and includes elements of dance, theater, and improvisation; its influences also draw from traditional Japanese performance and German Expressionist dance. It acts as an imagistic, embodied training method and performance genre. In practice and performance, styles vary amongst practitioners. Oftentimes, explorations give attention to subtle detail in bodily awareness, sensation, and a range in qualities and states in addition to testing endurance and limitations. Two of its earliest practitioners were Tatsumi Hijikata and Kazuo Ohno.

Dance Theatre | Tanztheater

Dance Theatre or Tanztheater weaves together the artistic genres of dance and theater. In the mid twentieth century, German choreographer and performer, Pina Bausch began to expand traditional performance models found in classical ballet, modern dance, and theater productions by establishing this hybrid form. It allowed her to create works that investigated issues related to memory, identity, and social and political influences on behavior – or the nature of being human.

Faye Driscoll Performance Intensive

FAYE DRISCOLL is a Bessie Award-winning performance maker who has been hailed as a “startlingly original talent” (Roslyn Sulcas, The New York Times) and “a postmillenium postmodern wild woman” (Deborah Jowitt, The Village Voice). Her work has been presented nationally at the Wexner Center for the Arts, the Walker Art Center, The Institute for Contemporary Art/Boston, MCA/Chicago and BAM/Brooklyn Academy of Music and internationally at La Biennale di Venezia, Festival d’Automne à Paris, Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, Melbourne Festival, Belfast International Arts Festival, Onassis Cultural Centre in Athens and Centro de Arte Experimental (Universidad Nacional de San Martín) in Buenos Aires. Driscoll has been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Creative Capital award, a NEFA National Dance Project Award, MAP Fund Grant, a French-US Exchange in Dance Grant, Jerome Foundation Grant, a Foundation for Contemporary Art Grant, a Doris Duke Artist Award, and a US Artists Doris Duke Fellowship and she is the recipient of the 2018 Jacob’s Pillow

Dance Award. She recently choreographed for Young Jean Lee's *Straight White Men* on Broadway and for *Madeline's Madeline*, a film by Josephine Decker.

[Gaga movement language](#)

The *Gaga* movement language is an innovative, sensory-based, improvisational practice that continues to be developed by its Israeli-born originator, Ohad Naharin. It has been adopted as the primary training method for the internationally acclaimed Batsheva Dance Company. *Gaga* aims to assist populations ranging from professional dancers to individuals with no formal training in dance in awakening bodily sensation and discovering a range of possibilities in an effort to develop skills that support the navigation of the choreographic process and daily life. Students are instructed to move according to individual ability and to constantly research the boundaries of one's strengths and limitations and the range that exists within and beyond what is presently known.

[Miguel Gutierrez Composition](#)

Miguel Gutierrez is a choreographer, composer, performer, singer, writer, educator and advocate who has lived in New York for over twenty years. He is fascinated by the time-based nature of performance and how it creates an ideal frame for phenomenological questions around presence and meaning-making. His work proposes an immersive state, for performer and audience alike, where attention itself becomes an elastic material. He believes in an approach to art making that is fierce, fragile, empathetic, political, and irreverent.

[Improvisational Technologies](#)

William Forsythe, former director of The Forsythe Company in Frankfurt, Germany and current director of USC Dance Program, created the CD-ROM of *Improvisational Technologies* in 1994. It displays videos embedded with interactive technologies of a number of his improvisational, choreographic tools in an effort to make visible the creative process and to function as a resource for dancers, audience members, and innovators across disciplines.

[Jess Curtis Improvisation and Composition](#)

Jess Curtis is a choreographer, performer, and teacher. His company, Gravity, aims to create and produce exceptionally engaging body-based art that explores and addresses issues and ideas of substance and relevance to a broad popular public, using a variety of disciplines including contemporary dance, performance/live art, live music, media, and circus. He leads improvisational classes and workshops relating to composition, Contact Improvisation, and interdisciplinary work while living between the United States and Europe.

[Nina Martin's Ensemble Thinking](#)

Nina Martin is a professor and dance artist who uses improvisation in teaching, process, and performance. She coined Ensemble Thinking methods as a way to create compositional sensibilities when working with groups.

Theatre of the Oppressed

In the 1970's, Augusto Boal, developed Theatre of the Oppressed to address specific regional issues endemic to the country of Brazil. Boal used theatrical structures and role playing as a means to find new solutions to social and political issues; it was a way for local populations to explore concerns related to oppression, power dynamics, empathy, and cooperation.

Viewpoints

Viewpoints is a method of training and compositional tool that grew out of the 1960's artist revolution in NY, which valued nonhierarchical art and rejected traditional approaches to creation. Participants engage in game-like structures and task-oriented activities in an effort to train cast members, build ensemble, and make movement for performance. Mary Overlie and Anne Bogart developed the early structure of this practice and it is now used in a variety of settings spanning dance and theater. The SITI Company was founded in 1992 by Anne Bogart and Tadashi Suzuki to redefine and revitalize contemporary theater in the United States through an emphasis on international cultural exchange and collaboration.

Voice work and Liberation Singing

Carol Swann facilitates courses in voice work and singing both independently and through Moving on Center School for Participatory Arts. Her explorations attempted to discover range and liberation through the voice of the individual regardless of previous musical or dramatic training. Often, exercises relied on sound impulses within the body and the ability of students to work in a playful way.

Generative Explorations

Adaptive Catching

In process for *CMD No. 1*, we played with an adapted version of Bebe Miller's teaching of 'catching' or moving within the quality of another person and using this sharing of movement as a jumping off point for developing material. After creating our own phrase material, we taught it to each other and each individual adapted the phrase material in mash-up style. I would offer sensory or textural improvisational prompts and allow the dancers to follow this information.

Issue/Problem

Via John Giffin from Pina Bausch's work in Dance Theatre/Tanztheater
Articulating a selected social, political, ethical, cultural, sexual, racial issue; i.e. formality, assumptions regarding sex and gender, etc. as an overarching theme or loose narrative structure for choreographic work. Identifying a specific problem related to a selected issue; i.e. insincere human behavior due to a need to present themselves formally, women and men are expected to behave or dress in a manner that is dependent upon conventional social expectations, etc.

Tenderness Score

Via John Giffin from Pina Bausch's work in Dance Theatre/Tanztheater

Create five gestures or small movements that relate to tenderness. Put these gestures in an order and play with repeating the sequence while accelerating speed until the movements become abstracted or unrecognizable. I have also adapted this score to use with other descriptive words or playing with a range of textures.

Think of one part of your body you would like to change and physically manipulate this area to make the change. Continue this process with other body parts. With a group, line up and one at a time walk to the center of the space facing the "audience" and make one change to your body, then walk out of the space. The next person does the same and so on. You can continue this process adding more manipulations until folks become more and more distorted and unrecognizable. This was used as a way to comment on how attempts toward superficial beauty can sometimes make us more hideous than our original state.

Moving Like Her

Developed in-process with Jil Stifel for *Multiple Bodies Project*

Because Jil and I had worked together on several projects previous to *Multiple Bodies* and we have a shared admiration for the way the other moves, we would improvise together while moving in a way that we perceive the other person to move. After moving in this way in 5-minute timed explorations, we each developed phrases moving like the other person that then became material for the work and was later adapted, distilled, or exaggerated.

Rhythm Score

Developed by Candace Scarborough in process for the *Circulation Project*

During the *Circulation Project* rehearsal process, I invited the performers to bring a generative, improvisational score for us to develop material related to a topic they felt could help bring something they experience to be at the margins to the center. Candace responded with her experience of contemporary dance classes that lack attention to rhythm. We played with trying to find the downbeat with three select songs, then experimented with trying to only move while the artist was singing, still playing with the downbeat. We generated several, repetitive motifs and individual phrase material drawing from this investigation.

Seeing Score with Texture, Dynamic, and Speed

I facilitated a version of Pauline Koner's Area Focus in development for *CMD No. 1*, in which the dancers played with a range of seeing close to the body and far from the body, then layered clear or fuzzy focus while allowing this exploration to affect their movement while playing with phrase material.

Self-Direction

Drawing from Jess Curtis

Each individual verbally gives her/himself directives to complete by stating her/his name and then saying something to do. i.e. "Maree, walk to the corner." "Maree put your hand up." This can be used to generate movement to string into phrase material.

Sounding

Drawing from Jess Curtis

Participants travel 4 at a time across the floor moving to self-made sounds.

Sync

Developed by Hyun and Maree in the creation of *slants*

After generating and memorizing phrase material, participants begin moving through the same phrase as an ensemble. Eventually participants are invited to make decisions to play with time and space, which might create solos, duets, trios, etc.

Tangents

Developed by Hyun and Maree in the creation of *slants*

Movers begin an improvisation session together and "catch" occasional motifs, gestures, phrasing from the other person/people. After the 10-15 minute session each individual selects movement inspired by or deriving from the improvisation to build a phrase. With a partner, participants share the individual phrases and then construct new phrases with the compiled material; then the pair teaches each other the new phrases and play with moments of unison, solo moments, and finding moments while doing the individual phrases together that can sync up with the partner's phrasing.

Focus Explorations

Meditation Walk

Taught by Nik Haffner drawing from Improvisational Technologies

Performers take specified amount of time (5-20 minutes) to cross a specified distance (across the studio, in public areas, etc.) while walking shoulder to shoulder in a horizontal line and trying to maintain the same pacing as the rest of the group. This exploration was also conducted outdoors in The Oval at The Ohio State University with each performer beginning the walk from a different starting point at the outer edges of the walkways and moving toward the center with the goal of sensing one another from a distance, but still arriving at the center at the same time. The performers were also given various verbal directives for each walk, such as, for the first half of the walk recall what you have done over the course of the day, week, break, etc. and for the second half of the walk imagine letting these memories fall behind you or begin to bring gestures or small movements from the memories into your walk.

Notice What You Notice

Adaptation of Norah Zuniga-Shaw's facilitation drawing from the work of Simone Forti

The improvisational practice of noticing what you notice was developed by Simone Forti after being inspired by dance artist, Anna Halprin's observations of spontaneity in nature and the way in which it led Halprin to improvisation through movement based on the impressions of what she witnessed. Forti began to use this practice as a means for constructing potential movement for dance making by drawing inspiration from her somatic response of nature. Each performer is instructed to take a walk by her/himself in a designated area and to note what his/her mental observations and sense impressions. After the walk the group is asked to write or draw what they remember from their walk. Participants are also asked to note and list what they did not see during their walk. Their memories become source material for movement in the way of pathway, phrase material, texture, and qualitative range. The performers are asked to learn one another's movement material, which can be mixed or strung together.

Sensory Awareness

Sensitive Fingers

Drawing from information in *Gaga* vocabulary

Performers are instructed to use the tips of their fingers to barely touch their necks while moving their hands around the area. Then they are told to imagine that someone else is touching them on specified areas of the body in this manner, while they continue lightly touching themselves on the neck. During the next layer they are told to imagine that they are being touched in this manner from the inside of their body and to imagine that they are being touched simultaneously inside and outside. Eventually, performers are invited to continue touching themselves, imagining being touched, and also touching another person in the room. Without hurting others, they are invited to become more assertive with their actions or to vary the quality through which they are carrying out the exploration. Finally, they are instructed to develop five gestures or movements inspired by this exercise.

Inside

Drawing from information in *Gaga* vocabulary

Performers are asked to imagine various substances traveling through the body at different temperatures and tempos in order to create a range in sensation and movement quality.

Outside

Drawing from information in *Gaga* vocabulary and *Butoh*

Performers are asked to imagine an assortment of objects/sensations on the exterior of their body, which in turn influence their movement. This exploration is also layered with taking turns attending to one individual in the group and various levels. (i.e. flower petals blowing, wind blowing).

Dynamic Range

Clustering

Practicing coming together as a group with a sense of swarming, writhing, waving.

Compression

Compressing movement material in tempo, duration, and range of motion.

Dancing as Hard as You Can

Open to interpretation of the individual.

Directing/Redirecting

The director shows the performers an improvised phrase to recall. After the performers have practiced the sequence together, each person takes turns directing another individual to perform her/his personalized iteration of the phrase.

Falling

Practicing falling with a sense of collapsing, melting and diving.

Group Directing

Via Kate Watson-Wallace drawing from work of Nina Martin

The group is divided in two. One group sits as the audience, the other group remains in the space to move. The seated group popcorns directives for the moving group to do. The directors accelerate their speed of directions, almost to the point that the movers can not complete each action being offered.

Hurling

Individuals practice various ways in which to “hurl” themselves through space on varying levels.

Laban Score

The performers are asked to interpret a Laban Motif score in order to create phrase material. It can be enacted as a literal translation of the score or as impressions of the shapes and personal interpretations that might be unrelated to the symbolic meaning.

Personas

Drawing from Improvisational Technologies and Dance Theatre

Each person imagines a person she/he would like to see again, but has not seen for quite some time. The performer is asked to feel what it would be like to be inside the imagined person's body, her/his postural or gestural habits, how the person speaks, what her/his touch might be like, how she/he would engage with this person, how does she/he feel when in the company of this person? The performer is then asked to create five gestures drawing from this exploratory state. Performers are invited to observe one another and then asked to play with tempo, qualitative variations, transposing the sequence onto different planes.

Virtuosic Score

Performers are asked to play with their perceptions of popular forms of virtuosity as well as personal or less common interpretations of the term.

Voice

Moving with Morning Sharing

Drawing from Adil Mansoor's facilitation of opening circle with Dreams of Hope Queer Youth Arts During part of our process for *CMD No. 1*, we began some rehearsals warming up together by doing a morning sharing where we would discuss things such as recent dance inspirations, check-ins, goals or wishes for the future while moving together. This would organically flow into improvisational movement that was then layered with textural-sensory shifts.

Mutterings

Action Theater

Each individual spontaneously verbalizes what comes to mind beginning in a whisper, progressively increasing volume through incomprehensible muttering, to conversational tone, to shouting. Within the various stages of speaking, the individual is encouraged to play with using tones unrelated to what the individual is saying.

Object on an Object

Action Theater

The group stands in a circle and goes from one person to the next stating the first image that comes to mind of an "object on an object" (i.e. mouse on a car, feather on a windowsill, etc.) each round increasing in tempo and performers also maintain a light, in place jog.

Put it in the Pot

Action Theater

The group stands in a circle and goes from one person to the next stating something she/he would like to "burn" (i.e. speeding ticket, miscalculated cell phone bill, etc.) and makes a gesture to toss it

into the center of the circle and after each person has spoken the group responds with a burning sound, each round increasing with tempo (inspired by Carol Swann).

Ridiculous Opera

Carol Swann

The group is given a theme for which to carry on a performative dialogue in operatic style (i.e. what they ate for breakfast) in round robin fashion (2-3 people at a time) while using gesture/movement.

Sound Bubble

Action Theater

The group stands in a circle and each person begins to make sound based on an internal impulse, the person continues to make the sound until it morphs into a recognizable word. The tempo increases with each go around.

Storytelling

Drawing from Carol Swann's facilitation of the Hakomi Method

With a partner, 1 person has a designated amount of time to begin telling a story. The facilitator can offer a prompt (i.e. first memory, favorite memory, etc.). The storyteller's goal is to continue talking for the duration of the exploration; she/he can repeat what has already been said if necessary. The job of the other person is to practice active listening without interjecting and attempting to avoid mental responses to what is being said, but instead to hear what is being said by the storyteller in each moment. It is not a story the listener gets to respond to while it is being told or afterward. Then roles are switched.

Yes, And

Via Jessie Laurita-Spanglet drawing from the work of Leslie Felbain's Theatrical Clown Class During the *Circulation Project* rehearsal process, I invited the performers to bring a generative, improvisational score for us to develop materials. Jessie facilitated Yes, And. We would all be moving in our own way and one person would begin a sentence, "I am eating waffles," the next person would say, "Yes, I am eating waffles, and I am smelling the kitchen sink" and so forth. This game-like activity became a frequent warm-up and helped set the tone for some of our phrase material development.

Yes, Let's!

Theatre of the Oppressed

One person from the group makes a suggestion of something to do with a matching gesture/movement (i.e. kick the can, jump up and down, etc.) and the rest of the group responds "Yes, let's" and does the gesture/movement. This continues in popcorn fashion.

Spatial

Alignments

Improvisational Technologies

Individuals are invited to move in the space and to make the decision to align with another's movement or choose to solo.

Bubbles

Drawing from *Gaga*

Each individual imagines he/she is moving body parts or body around bubbles or that she/he is being moved through space from the sensation of bubbles moving within.

Electric Space

Developed in collaboration with Teoma Naccarato

With a partner, the performers begin standing in close proximity facing one another while tuning into the space felt between and around them. When the pair feels they have established a connection, they are asked to begin mirroring each other as they decide to step in any direction in space, while continuing to face each other. As they progress, they are permitted to play with allowing more distance between them, shifting facings, and adding more movement, with the intention of maintaining the spatial connection and awareness.

Ensemble and Detailed Landscape

Via Kate Watson-Wallace & Megan Pitcher's explorations drawing from work of Nina Martin

The group clears the space and 1 at a time enters the space to begin creating a sculptural display, image, or landscape setting. Participants are asked to consider where the space is weighted or saturated and where the space feels sparse or empty. The group clears and reclaims the space a number of times making these considerations and then is invited to insert movement by either staying in place, using movement to travel, sharing another person's movement or joining a flock, or choosing to counterpoint what others are doing.

Instant Performance

Taught and conceived of by Miguel Gutierrez

Drawing from Miguel Gutierrez's 5-minute instant compositions in which the teacher does a 5-minute instant performance for the class, with the prompt don't hurt yourself, each other or the space and then the rest of the class does a 5-minute instant performance for the teacher. This can also be done with partners and in small groups to help generate and develop material.

The Grid

Via Sai Somboon's rehearsal process drawing from Viewpoints

Movers stand in a line upstage. Each person has their own lane in which they can travel back and forth with the options of running, walking, hopping, or going to the floor. As time passes, the facilitator invites movers to begin using pathways going side to side, then on diagonal, and finally using circular pathways. As the exploration progresses, movers are invited to allow other movements into their vocabulary. Movers are encouraged to sense oneself, other movers, the space, and listening for moments to connect with time and space.

Room Writing

Improvisational Technologies

The performer draws a floor plan of her or his room and the objects within it. Floor plans are shared with the ensemble. After looking over one another's floor plans each individual moves as though she/he is maneuvering around objects inside her/his room. Movement material can be woven together as phrase material, multiple phrases can be set in the same space or as though three rooms are one room. Performers may be asked to explore varying textures and qualities in approach to movement.

Play

Bunny Bunny

Via Adil Mansoor in facilitation of theater process

A group stands in a circle and one person at a time attempts to pass the words "bunny bunny, bunny bunny" while the rest of the circle is keeping a rhythmic clap in their thighs and saying "cuja" with the exception of the two people on either side of the bunny passer who are gesturing and saying "tokie tokie, tokie tokie." The object being to increase connection, awareness, and readiness in a playful way while increasing speed and coordination.

Dodge and Dart

Via Myrna Packer and Art Bridgeman in Contact Improvisation class

Performers run through the space and when they come face to face with another person the duo does a fake out and quickly runs away.

Ho!

Via Adil Mansoor in facilitation of theater process

A group stands in a circle and one person runs to another, both people jump in the air, clap hands, and say "ho!" This continues, then the facilitator can invite more people to start simultaneous "ho's" with the intention of becoming faster and more alert.

Pass the Clap

Via Adil Mansoor in facilitation of theater process

A group stands in a circle and attempts to pass a clap from person-to-person. Two people must clap together at the same time before passing it to the next. The goals are making connections, being clear with nonverbal communication, and increasing speed. After the circle gets going, the person receiving the clap can also decide to pass the clap back to the person from which she/he/they received to switch directions of the passing.

Relay Races

Speaks for itself.

Tag

Speaks for itself.

Tag Linked

Via Adil Mansoor in facilitation of theater process

Similar to the original tag, one person is it. The rest of the players are paired up with arms linked. The person fleeing from the tag has to join a duo by linking arms, thereby forcing the person on the other end to run.

Partner/Group

Assist

Drawing from Bebe Miller's "Me" improvisation

One person improvises movement while the group observes. As the improvisational solo continues the rest of the group finds ways to "assist" or support the individual who is moving. To cite a few examples, assistance can be provided through contact, observation, alignment, or counterpoint.

Partner Witnessing

Drawing from Authentic Movement

One person moves with her/his eyes closed based on internal impulses or from verbal directive while the other person observes the mover for specified amount of time. The partner who first observed then moves in response to what the mover did. This process continues and can be used to generate/develop movement phrases/material.

Person-ing and "Me" score

Bebe Miller

Bebe Miller's Person-ing involves one person dancing in her/his preferred manner. The remainder of the group observes the mover and takes impressions of qualities, use of weight, or how the individual is moving. After a specified period of observation, the group shows the mover their impressions of her/him (i.e. if Michael was moving, the group then does "Michaeling" in response). The "Me" score requires the group to simultaneously attend to compositional elements, while supporting an individual who verbalizes the word "Me" and takes a solo. The role shifts when the next person calls "Me." Material from these explorations can be developed into phrase material or layered into other explorations.

Touch Effect

Drawing from Body Mind Centering

One partner offers touch-based impulses to the other partner with varying qualities and efforts, which the second partner responds to with movement.