

Moving Current *dance collective*

Field Trip Study Guide (Grades 5-12)

Who is Moving Current?

Moving: dance/movement **Current:** channeling contemporary work

Moving Current is a collection of choreographers, dancers and various guest artists in all forms of art, dedicated to producing professional contemporary dance in order to strengthen Tampa's dance community and enrich the lives of both artist and audience. The company's heart lies in directors, Erin Cardinal Wright, Cynthia Hennessy and Kristin O'Neal.

They along with their talented dancers, have years of dancing, choreographic, and teaching experience in contemporary dance. The Collective has earned annual funding from the State of Florida, Hillsborough County and local organizations such as Info-lution Corporation, Pilates Bodies and the Knox Family Foundation. Moving Current has received various awards including a total of five Creative Loafing Best of the Bay Awards including **Best Choreographers** and **Best Modern Dance Company**.



Suggested Lessons

Choreographic Principles, Processes and Structures

(Florida Sunshine State Standards, DA.A.2.3)

What are the choreographer's "tools" to create a dance?

When a choreographer sets out to create a dance, he or she may use tools just like a carpenter might use wood, hammer and nails to make a house! The tools a choreographer uses are much different from a carpenter: shape, improvisation, theme and variation, cannon, ABA.

Lesson: Discuss these elements with students and guide them through the choreographic principles as they create their own dances based on the choreographer's "tools".

Lesson: Students generate a study based on the principle of *improvisation*.

Lesson: Students work in groups to create a dance using *cannon*.

Dance as a Way to Create Meaning

(Florida Sunshine State Standards, DA.B.1.3)

How does a choreographer make meaning out of a dance? How does he or she communicate a thought through the use of movement?

Modern dance can be a literal form of art, but most of the time, dances are abstract. Choreographers use their keen observation skills to look at every day life and see it in a different light. Sometimes, these observations are then abstracted with the use of their choreographic "tools" and movement choices and their quality and energy.

Lesson: Students make an observation of something you do every day and *abstract* that task. (Brushing your teeth, combing your hair, eating lunch) Try not to pantomime, make a dance movement for each move you make while executing your task.

Lesson: Students investigate through *improvisation*, which *movement qualities* best describe the following: a cloud (light and sustained), spaghetti (free and indirect), popcorn popping (quick and percussive) a man with hiccups (percussive-slow, sustained-slow) walking on the moon.

Lesson: Discuss how lighting and costuming can enhance the meaning of a dance.

Critical and Creative Thinking in Dance

(Florida Sunshine State Standards, DA.D.1.3)

How does a choreographer evaluate his or her work?

Critical and creative thinking is an important skill for the choreographer. He or she needs to recognize if the movement choices they have used are communicating their thoughts or ideas in the dance. These same skills are used by audience members as they view the dance from an outside perspective. They ask themselves very similar questions; What does the dance *mean*? How do I feel after seeing the dance? Did I like the dance? Why or why not?

Lesson: View a dance by a professional choreographer on video tape or DVD. Discuss the choreographer's choices in movement, music, costume and lighting. Evaluate the choreographer's ability to effectively communicate, the dancer's ability to execute the movement and overall physical and conceptual ideas.

Lesson: Students create a list of their own *aesthetic criteria* for movement. With that list, evaluate a dancer(s) performance from video or DVD.

Lesson: Use the above information as a basis to write a critique of the Moving Current Dance Collective performance. The Question and Answer session directly following the performance is a great opportunity for students to ask the choreographers and dancers about their work. Students can create a list of questions before seeing the concert.

Making the Connection between Dance and Other Art Forms

(Florida Sunshine State Standards, DA.E.2.3)

How can a choreographer incorporate the use of other art forms?

Moving Current was founded as a creative foundation which can readily integrate other artists and art forms in our works. *Various media*, such as music, video, text, visual art and technology can *enhance, reinforce or alter* the choreographer's dance idea.

Lesson: Discuss the use of various media in dance. How can it enhance, or alter a dance for the audience or for the dancers?

Lesson: Students create a study using text. (An excellent source of material can be found in any book by Shel Silverstein.) Students have the choice to use the full text or just an excerpt to incorporate into their study.

