



DANCE MATTERS

Old Donation Dance Education Program
Volume 1 Number 21
March, 2008



On the Magic of Dance...

by Jacques D'Amboise from Teaching the Magic of Dance

There seems to be a human need to dance—to dance for joy, for sadness, to petition the gods and then to thank them. Children feel this need to dance acutely; often it's just the opportunity, the invitation, they lack. It is, I'm sure, this human need that triggers the extraordinary changes I see in them. At the National Dance Institute we expose a thousand children a year to the mystery of dance—some who are deaf, some who don't know their left from their right, and some who never thought they could (or would even want to) dance—and all of them are changed by the experience, some in small ways, others profoundly.

In order to be free, in order to create, in order to learn, a student has to have limits imposed by his teacher. Students have to be given a framework within which to create. If you tell a class to “make up anything you like,” what you get is chaos. But impose a limit, “Make up anything you like, but do it in one foot square,” and you have the beginnings of creative thinking.” Add another limit: “Now still in one foot square, invent some movements that last thirty seconds” and you've introduced the concept of time. Next I might say to the class, “One thing you did, one gesture, was more interesting than another. Do you want to use it at the beginning of the exercise or at the end?”

That choice, that limitation, speaks to a very complex notion—the dramatic implications of gesture. The teacher/choreographer becomes the human link in the transmission of the mystery of dance. The children learn through me. They learn because I am the latest part of a continuous chain. They learn because I was carefully taught. And now it is my responsibility to teach them with care. Of all the arts, dance calls for the most direct human contact. The dancer is the art form.

Over the next four weeks, our own ODC dance teachers will share some of their thoughts and insights about the magic of dance - particularly from the perspective of their own creative and rehearsal process. Stay tuned!!!

Everything in the universe has rhythm. Everything dances.
Maya Angelou

Inside this issue:

On the Magic of Dance	1
Dance Legend	1
Helping Your Child	2
Dance Tour Schedule	2
Dancers on Dancing	2

Dance Legend:

Jacques D'Amboise

D'Amboise was a principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, where ballets were especially created for him by famous choreographer George Balanchine. Jacques d'Amboise has also choreographed ballets for the New York City Ballet. D'Amboise founded National Dance Institute in 1976, which has been teaching school children how to dance for the past 30 years. A documentary film about Jacques d'Amboise and National Dance Institute won an Academy Award. The NDI program often combines music and art with studies of other cultures, histories, and literature, offering a unique and comprehensive performing arts experience, while fostering curiosity and a sense of achievement.



PARENT INFORMATION


Ways to Support Your Dancer

Here are some ways you can support your dancer as he or she prepares for the dance concert:

- 1) Help your child find a regular time to rehearse his/her dance.
- 2) Ask to see his/her dance and help with the beats
- 3) Have your child point out details they are working on or ones they might need to ask their teacher about.
- 4) Encourage your child to talk about the theme for their creative dance and ask them to show some of the original movements their team has created
- 5) Look at the different ways your child has notated his/her dances.

(FYI) Homework for the past 2 weeks has been for the students to notate or write down their dances.

Dancers on Dancing



Dear Britni and Macy,


ODC has really been tough on me lately. My school grades are dropping and I am trying hard to do better, but it's hard. Do you have any advice that will help me balance school and ODC?

Sincerely,
Kady Munden (Friday Student)

Dear, Kady,

*We know how hard it is to keep up in school. We think every ODC dancer goes through the same thing. What you should do is create a system to make sure you always know what has happened throughout each class period that you missed at your home school. Also make sure each teacher is aware of your difficulty and ask them if they have any ideas to help you. We also have a special place in our planner for all of the stuff we have to do for ODC days and what has to be caught up on throughout the week. All we have to say is **Time Management** is the key to success in any school and conflict. Hope you do well!*

Kisses,
B@M



Calendar News

In the next couple weeks, tour permission forms and intention forms will be coming home. We appreciate your promptness in signing and returning this forms.

Your child does **not** have to re-audition to continue in the dance program but you do have to return an intention form to say whether or not you child intends to stay in the program for the following school year. This is important as the faculty begins to audition perspective new students. It lets us know how many places we have to fill.

Reminder: For the fifth graders who may be worried about juggling middle school and ODC, please come to the April 16th meeting at 6:30.

Parent/Teacher communication:

- 1) MYSCHOOL mail
- 2) ODC phone number 473-5043
- 3) Faculty e-mail addresses
Karen Buchheim - karen.buchheim@vbschools.com
Gwen Spear-Jones - gwen.spear-jones@vbschools.com
Valerie Winborne - valerie.winborne@vbschools.com
Laura Wright - laura.wright@vbschools.com
- 4) TeacherWeb(www.teacherweb.com/VA/OldDonationcenter/MrsWright/).

Bravo to Mrs. B.

Mrs. B. was recently "Tagged by the Superintendent." Twice a year outstanding teachers from each of the Virginia Beach Schools are recognized for their contributions to our students and the field of education. Our own Mrs. B. was tagged. You Go!! Mrs. B.

Parent Volunteers Are Needed for Dress Rehearsal

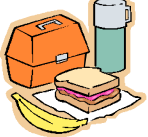
Please let Mrs. Spear-Jones know if you are interested in helping out at dress rehearsal. She sent out a mass e-mailing last week to the parents that had expressed interest in helping, however she is sure that she missed some folks. Please e-mail or call her if you are interested.

Dress Rehearsal - Saturday, April 19th -1:30-6:00, at Plaza Middle School

gwen.spear-jones@vbschools.com or ODC 473-5043

FYI

Effectively immediately, students will no longer be able to charge their lunches. If they forget their money or lunch, they will be given a free cheese sandwich, vegetable and drink. Please check with your child to make sure you don't owe money to the cafeteria.



Tour Schedule

Monday Dance Students
April 7th - Alanton ES - 10:00 and College Park ES - 12:10
April 14th - Landstown ES - 10:00

Tuesday Dance Students
April 8th - North Landing ES - 10:00 and Linkhorn Park ES - 12:00
April 15th - Thalia ES - 10:00

Wednesday Dance Students
April 9th - Creeds ES - 10:00 and Ocean Lakes ES - 12:00
April 16th - Rosemont ES - 10:00

Thursday Dance Students
April 10th - Pembroke Meadows ES -10:00 and Strawbridge ES- 12:00
April 17th - Princess Anne ES - 10:00

Friday Dance Students
April 4th - Three Oaks ES - 2 performances - 10:00 and 12:00
April 11th - Old Donation Center - 9:45