

KCFAA In-School Residency/Workshop

“Dance comes from the people and should be delivered back to the people.”

~ Alvin Ailey

The *In-School Residency* is an engaging workshop for students grades K - 12. The workshop's main emphasis is to provide students with background information on the components of dance, basic dance movement, basic dance vocabulary and particular techniques and methods that are utilized to help learn and retain choreography. Techniques for learning that transfer to learning in other areas. The program goals are: to continue *Alvin Ailey's* vision of extending dance into the community; exposing students to the art of modern dance while allowing them to participate actively in the learning experience. The instructor will teach students about the importance of “focusing”, sequencing, memorization, work ethic, stamina and determination.

Meet the Artist

Michael Joy - Director of Artistic and Educational Programs

Michael began his dance training at age 21 as a certificate student at The Ailey School, where he continued his training on full scholarship while performing with other companies. In 1984, he joined Ailey II in 1986. Michael was personally asked by Alvin Ailey to join Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in December, 1989. Michael was an original member of KCFAA's Ailey Male Trio. Most recently, Michael appeared on Broadway as an original cast member in the Tony Award winning musical, *The Lion King*. Mr. Joy has served as a site director of AileyCamp since 2002 KCFAA Master teaching Artist in 2004 and as Director of Artistic and Educational Programs for KCFAA since 2006.

Paula Chappell Lang- Master Teaching Artist/AileyCamp Director-KS

Paula is looking forward to working once again with KCFAA's Ailey Camp. She most recently worked as an educator with St. Mark's Child and Family Development Center and Paseo Visual and Performing Arts High School. She has a Bachelors of Arts Degree in dance from UMKC. Her performing credits include the Broadway musicals, *Sugar Babies*, *Annie*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'* at the Starlight Theater. Paula owns and operates her own dance studio, Lang School of Dance. As a choreographer her work has earned critical acclaim and numerous awards, which includes the theater production of *Donnie's House* for PBS, *Guys and Dolls*, *Oliver*, *Ceremonies of Dark Old Men*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, and the Coterie's *Rotten Apples* and *Me, Myself, and I*.

Elements of Dance

GENERAL OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS

We wish for students to:

- demonstrate teamwork, while working with others in the dance environment
- understand the directions of movements
- demonstrate the changing of levels throughout movements
- perform proper pathways introduced in the lesson
- use dance vocabulary introduced in the lesson.
- develop a greater awareness of techniques and methods to assist learning
- Receive a positive dance experience.
- Increase their knowledge of the arts, Alvin Ailey and dancers, to develop skills of perception and communication
- Collect knowledge before, during, and after the presentation, aided by a teacher who freely adapts our study guide or his or her own use! Please adapt this guide to fit your needs.
- Connect the arts across the curriculum.

TEACHER REMINDERS

- **Teacher Guide.** We hope that teachers will photocopy pages in this guide as needed for all instructors to use with their students.
- **Preparation for Students.** Please remind students that they will participate in a movement workshop.

Mighty Movers. One theory about the word “muscle” is that it comes from a Greek expression meaning, “to enclose,” because layers of muscle enclose the body. There are more than six hundred muscle groups in the human body. The muscles that you can see on the body's surface are called “landmarks”. You can find pictures that show these landmarks, such as the deltoids, triceps, biceps quadriceps, *etc.* You will also be able to see most of them on the Ailey Trio! Just like other athletes, dancers' muscles are well defined.

Muscles make up about 40 percent of the weight of a man and about 30 percent of the weight of a woman. The *Blood and Guts* book [see *Resources* on page 4] lists two amazing facts:

- If all the muscles in the body could pull in one direction in one mighty heave, the force would equal 25 tons.
- The average person's muscles do daily work amounting to loading 24,000 pounds onto a four-foot-high shelf. Think about that over a lifetime.

Move and Remember. [*concentration, sequencing, physical memory*] Have each student make up three different “classroom-sized” movements that can be connected into a *combination*, or movement sequence. For example: both arms start stretched above the head; arms drop even with the shoulders (a “T”) with palms up, then both elbows bend and palms touch shoulders, elbows straighten back to “T” position. Working in partners, each student repeats his/her own

combination while watching the other student repeat theirs. The challenge is to be able to **concentrate** and not “pick up” the partner’s combination. Do this several times with different partners. Next, combine into groups of four students. Have each student learn the other three combinations. Then, as a group, they put together all four combinations into one 12-count combination. (NOTE: Some of the movements may need to be altered slightly in order to connect to the next set of three.) Ask the group to rehearse their combination until they can do it without error. Finally, the group demonstrates their combination to the rest of the class and then they watch while the class tries to repeat their combination. The students in the performing group serve as “judges”. Was any student able to perform the combination with only one viewing?

Contour Drawing. Contour drawing means drawing only the outside edge of a thing—an outline. Students can quickly do a contour drawing of their hand; place one hand, with fingers spread apart, on a paper and draw around it. By questioning, you can help them discover that this drawing doesn’t show whether or not the person is wearing rings (at least not what kind) or where the knuckles, scars, wrinkles and lines come, or whether the hands are clean or dirty. A contour drawing only talks about edges, but it can be very useful. It speaks of shape, size, and sometimes spacing. Rembrandt made telling contour drawings. So do a number of cartoonists and commercial designers.

Have each student gather three to five objects between the size of an eraser and a pair of scissors. They can probably find them in their desks, pockets or book bags; or, several days before you do contour drawing, ask them to bring in some small objects like juice cans, bottle tops, shells, spools, toothbrushes. To reinforce the concept of contour, the students will draw around these objects repeatedly, to create a design or pattern. It is most fun to use wrapping paper or butcher paper so they can draw long lines of shapes moving across the paper in a variety of ways.

This experience provides the opportunity to talk about and arrange shapes to convey a visual idea, just as every artist does. With **organization**, an artist and a dancer/choreographer attempt to bring different units together to create a satisfying whole. Some of the principles of organization in both visual art and dance are **balance** (symmetrical, asymmetrical, radial), **unity with variety**, **movement**, and **spacing**. Although the principles overlap in actual practice and cannot be separated, it is less confusing for the student if one is emphasized at a time and their relatedness unfolds naturally.

How much space do you fill? Can you fill a lot of space? The space you don’t fill with your body is still **space**—it is called *negative space*. How little space can you occupy? Can two people occupy the same space? Where is the negative space in their connection? Can we move around the room in our own paths without colliding? How important is the negative space? The answers to these questions about space are of vital importance to anybody who has ever had to fill a stage with “presence,” or for a member of a basketball team working in conjunction with other players in the carefully delineated space of a playing court. The use of space, spatial relationships, and negative space are part of the Ailey Male Trio performance.

To experiment with **spacing** and **unity with variety** in a non-movement way, have students fold a paper in half horizontally, then in half vertically, so when opened it has four equal boxes. Pick one shape and draw around it in the same way in the same spot in each rectangle. Ask them if this repetition would tend to get boring after five or six pages. How could they vary it? Choose another shape of a different size, and draw it next to or over part of the first shape, in all four boxes. Try a third shape if needed. A pattern occurs, giving a kind of unity with variety. This makes it possible for us to look at two or three different kinds of objects at one time because of the structure and order in which they occur.

Encourage students to notice the effects of *negative space*! They can see negative space in the patterns of their **contour** drawings as well as in their **unity with variety** drawings.

Resources

Barlin, Anne and Paul. *The Art of Learning Through Movement*, 1971.

ATTENTION TEACHERS & STUDENTS

We would like to read essays and poems, see and listen to video- and audio-tapes, and enjoy artwork and photographs resulting from activity choices you make after seeing *The Ailey Trio*.

Send to: The *Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey*
Arts Education Programs
1714 East 18th Street
Kansas City, MO 64108

Send E-mail to: michael@kcfaa.org