Dare to Dance
A Choreography Showcase

An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

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Abstract

Dare to Dance is a showcase of my own choreography. The purpose of this project is to display my growth over the past four years as both a choreographer and performer. A rigorous rehearsal schedule has allowed me to explore new aspects of choreography. I have choreographed new works, reconstructed old works, and set works on large ensembles as well as soloists. By creating and directing my own show, I have also learned a great deal about the production process.
Conception

Before I began to choreograph for Dare to Dance, I held an audition for dancers interested in my show. Prior to the actual audition, however, I designed and printed posters announcing the audition date and location. Several dancers attended and it was a lengthy process choosing which dancers which would best suit my show. After choosing my dancers, I cast them in each of my pieces based upon their dance ability and availability.

Once I chose my dancers, I set up a rehearsal schedule with my advisor. Rehearsals took place in various studios in Ball Gymnasium and these rooms were signed out in my name weekly. I generally rehearsed three nights a week for two hours, with extra weekly rehearsals for my solo and duet pieces. Although this was quite a rigorous rehearsal schedule, it did give me ample time to explore my choreography and also allowed my dancers the opportunity to feel more comfortable with the movement.

Each of my pieces had a specific choreographic concept and a choreographic goal. My solo, Last Dance, was a lyrical dance performed to “I Will Remember You”. I had previously performed this improvised solo as a senior in high school. After four years of college, I have developed a much broader movement vocabulary and thought it would be an interesting challenge to attempt the solo a second time. My choreographic goal was to create one movement phrase and then to improvise throughout the solo by building upon and altering the phrase.

New Horizon was originally performed in the Junior Choreography Showcase last year. Since then, I lost three of the original cast members and thus had to choose three new dancers to fill their places. The challenge in this piece was to integrate these new dancers into a cast of original dancers already familiar with the movement. It was quite a challenge to put the piece back together and it took a great deal of effort on my part to re-learn the choreography and re-create the piece.
Faculty member Michele Kriner performed *Inside Out*, a modern solo. The choreographic goal in this piece was to hide the performer's face from the audience until the end of the solo. This was very difficult and it took a great deal of choreographic experimentation to find subtle ways to do so. I also focused on utilizing floor work in the solo, which is generally rare in my choreography.

*Party of Pain* is a quartet in which I originally planned to perform. After the first few rehearsals, however, I found that it was too difficult to choreograph, teach and perform in the same piece. Thus I asked another one of my dancers to learn my part and she filled in for me. I created one movement phrase to serve as the theme and then built the rest of the choreography around that phrase. I also focused on using space in an asymmetrical manner, which is not typical of the majority of my choreography.

In one of my choreography classes we were required to create a piece of choreography for our final. I created a duet and enjoyed it so much that I decided I would later expand the piece. Thus for *Dare to Dance* I developed a piece which was based upon that duet. This new large ensemble piece was titled *Diagnosis*. For this piece I used scarves as a symbol for disease. The use of scarves was a new challenge to me, as I have never before used them in my choreography.

I presented myself with yet another choreographic challenge in the duet titled *Serendipity*. Although I allowed the couple to move very close to one another in the space, I did not allow them to actually touch one another until the end of the piece. I also attempted to create a sense of energy between the couples which seemed to pull them together at the end.

*Twilight* was my senior choreography project. This piece was a challenge choreographically because I utilized several styles: modern, ballet, lyrical and jazz. It was very difficult to make this eclectic piece seem unified. I was again faced with losing dancers and finding new dancers to fill their places. Thus extra rehearsal time was needed with each individual dancer new to the piece.
Production

Perhaps the most difficult part of Dare to Dance was putting together the production aspects of the show. While I was still in the process of choreographing, I was also searching for a poster designer, lighting designer and costumes. Although I had previously constructed some of the costumes which appeared in my show, others had to be newly purchased and some used costumes were pulled from the dance department costume loft.

Not only did I purchase new costumes, but I also paid to have my posters designed and printed. It took several e-mails and phone calls to find someone willing to design my posters for me. Once I found a designer, Janelle Cipriano, I met with her several times to discuss and preview the design and then to pick up the printed posters. I later spent several days posting them around campus to advertise my show. Because the posters were so costly, I decided to design and print my programs myself.

Much time was spent searching for and training my lighting designer, Sara Parks. Unfortunately Sara was not familiar with the light board in my performance space so I set up a meeting with myself, my designer and another technician from the Department of Theatre and Dance. It took several sessions for Sara to feel comfortable with the board. I also spent time meeting with and training my crew, who helped with videography, sound and backstage during the final dress rehearsal and performance.

Small details, such as setting the curtains before each rehearsal or locking up the studio after each rehearsal, were all my responsibility. I often asked for help from my crew or other dancers but found that the only way to be sure that things were done was to do them myself. I had to keep track of all technical aspects of Dare to Dance, including costume, lighting and advertisement issues.

Communication with my dancers and crew was imperative. I found myself sending out weekly e-mails regarding rehearsal times and performance dates. I regularly printed and distributed handouts with the most current information regarding my show.
Reflection

I learned a great deal by choreographing for and performing in Dare to Dance. As a choreographer, I have realized my ability to build an entire piece based upon one movement phrase. My movement vocabulary has grown immensely and my ability to effectively communicate concepts through movement has drastically improved. I have also recognized my ability to work well with large ensembles.

During the actual performance of Dare to Dance, my crew was not there for me like I would have liked them to be. The night of the performance some people were tardy and others missed their cues. This was rather disheartening because the production meant a lot to me; not only because I put so much work into it, but because my dancers and designers put so much work into it as well. I suppose what I have realized most through this whole process is that, like anything in life, although you cannot do it alone, you also cannot necessarily trust others to do it for you.

Other than the technical mishaps, I was quite pleased with the show. I couldn’t have asked my dancers for a better performance. I am glad that I have been able to learn so much about choreography and dance production via this project, and I hope that all who view it will be urged to DARE TO DANCE!
Acknowledgments

I would especially like to thank my advisor, Sarah Mangelsdorf, for all of her advice and assistance in this project. Thank you to Janelle Cipriano for my poster design and Sara Parks for my lighting design. A special thanks to Michele Kriner, my soloist, who has been a wonderful teacher, mentor and friend. Thanks to all of the dance faculty for their amazing talents, knowledge and support over the past four years of my dance career here at Ball State University.
DANCERS NEEDED!
for
Dare to Dance
A Choreography Showcase by Tiffany Powers

Auditions
Thursday, January 9
5:30 p.m.
Ball Gym KDS

Dare to Dance will be performed on Saturday, April 26 at 7 p.m.

Questions?
Call 254-9499
Dare to Dance Show Order

Last Dance (Tiffany’s Solo)

New Horizon (Junior Project)

Inside Out (Michele’s Solo)

Party of Pain (Quartet)

Intermission (5 minutes)

Diagnosis

Serendipity (Duet)

Twilight (Senior Project)

One Step at a Time (Michael’s Piece)
Dare to Dance
A Choreography Showcase by Tiffany Powers
A Senior Honors Thesis

Tiffany Powers is a Senior Dance Performance Major with a French Minor from Terre Haute, IN. She is a four year member of Ball State Dance Theatre and performed for two years on the Ball State University Poms Squad. Previous stage credits include West Side Story and A Little Night Music. Tiffany has done professional work performing as a dancer/singer at Cedar Point in Sandusky, OH as well as industrial work with the Sallie Mae Foundation and Cedia, Inc. She would like to thank the dance faculty for their amazing talents, knowledge and encouragement. Special thanks to her friends, family and Corey for their undying love and support. After graduation, Tiffany plans to continue her professional career as a dancer and is considering a contract with Royal Caribbean International. In the future, Tiffany hopes to continue teaching and choreographing so that she can share her passion for dance with others, and urges everyone to DARE TO DANCE!

Last Dance
Dancer: Tiffany Powers
Music: “I Will Remember You” by Sarah McLachlin

New Horizon
Dancers: Betsy Byrd, Mariah Highlen, Heather Hoffman, Katie Huneke, Jenny Kelm, Jackie Pall, Robin Sunderman, Alisha Tresslar
Music: “Voices” by Dario & Vanessa Quinones

Inside Out
Dancer: Michele Kriner
Music: “Colorblind” by Counting Crows

Party of Pain
Dancers: Adrienne DeWeese, Katie Huneke, Christa Kischnick, Jackie Pall
Music: “Party” by Nelly Furtado
Intermission (5 minutes)

Diagnosis
Dancers: Kim Blake, Adrienne DeWeese, Michelle Dobbins, Katie Hunke, Jenny Kelm, Christa Kischnick, Abby Siskind, Alisha Tresslar
Music: “Prologue” by Loreena McKennitt

Serendipity
Dancers: Kim Blake & Noah Rogers
Music: “January Rain” by David Gray

Twilight
Dancers: Teressa Burtner, Adrienne DeWeese, Lauren Fullen, Brin Hamblin, Mariah Highlen, Jackie Pall, Noah Rogers, Terra Schmitt, Robin Sunderman

One Step At A Time
It is through our training that we attain the freedom to dance the movement. It is through the movement that our inner self escapes into the open.
Choreography by Michael Worcel
Dancers: Kevin Davis, Katie Hunke, Jenny Kelm, Tiffany Powers, Michael Worcel
Music: Rolf Lovland

Special Thanks
Janelle Cipriano - Poster Design
Sara Parks - Lighting Design
Sarah Mangelsdorf - Advisor
Kevin Davis, Betsy New, Katesin Ryan and Whitney Spencer - Crew
Dare to dance

A Senior Honors Thesis

Saturday, April 26th at 7 p.m.

Free Performance in Ball Gym KDS
Choreography Showcase of