

PhD Abstract

David Bloom



Desire to Become One - Sex, Spirit, and Choreography as Active and Receptive Practices

This PhD proposal critically examines a particular state of being I have been exploring and sharing with others in a diverse variety of pedagogical settings: the moment of a dancer and the world they inhabit enacting an erotic relationship to each other.

Besides choreography, I draw upon my experience working with Desire in the context of conscious sexuality, and spiritual practice - in my case, mystical Judaism - as strategies using the body as a channel for connection to something beyond the individual self. To me, these approaches are all but different aspects of the same prism.

Can erotic Desire emerge intersubjectively not only between people, but also between a performer and the space itself? And if so, how are the two phenomena connected?

I have found Desires between human beings, especially sexual ones, to be easy access points, as there's a lot of curiosity, fear, and energy around sexuality that doesn't take much to bubble up, so people are vividly present. Also, it's fun! But the more compelling question to me addresses a dancer's Desires that emerge during performance: for instance, to suddenly change their position in the performance space, their relationship to the audience, or the dynamics of their actions. Not compositional choices based on broad knowledge of improvisation techniques, but a clarity of decision-making in which consciousness is not located entirely within the individual, but rather emerges as an active interplay with their environment. There is often a sense of entering a pre-existing channel: it is clear what needs to happen.