

FIRST CITY
 SCHOOL OF
DANCE
 DANCE EDUCATION IN FOUNDATION AND ARTISTRY
Monthly Newsletter

Inside the Issue



DANCE BOOKS THAT INSPIRE

Books can inspire, that's no secret. We pulled together a list of books to inspire your dancer, just in time for Christmas!

THE ADULT DANCE EXPERIENCE

One of our adult dancers reflects on her experience as a beginner in our adult classes.

DEVELOPING THE WHOLE DANCER

Developing a dancer isn't just about excellence in technique. Learn how facilitating autonomy can keep our dancers healthy, mentally.

BOOKS THAT INSPIRE

Book recommendations by FCSD teachers

Ages 2 - 4

- Amazing Me Dance - Carol Thompson
- Dancing Feet - Lindsay Craig
- Flora the Flamingo - Molly Idle
- Barnyard Dance - Sandra Boynton

Ages 5 - 10

- Firebird - Misty Copeland
- How Do You Dance? -Thyra Heder
- I Will Dance - Nancy Bo Flood
- This is It - Daria Riley
- To Dance - Siena Cherson Siegel
- My Story My Dance - Lesa Cline-Ransome

Ages 11+

- Life in Motion (also in a young reader's edition) - Brandy Colbert and Misty Copeland





Adult Beginner Contemporary

DEVELOPING THE WHOLE DANCER

by Marcia Dysart

A dance teacher once told me that the joy I sought was within. It took me years to truly understand what she was eluding to.

Dancers strive for perfection, we compare ourselves to others, we look for approval from our teachers and we can very quickly develop a negative critical approach to our dancing. Perfectionism can stunt the growth of a dancer's technique and artistry but also their mental capacity to find the joy within.

Helping dancers reach their goals in a healthy, joyful and sustainable way means we need to offer our students opportunities for autonomy. A dancer needs to be the primary agent in their learning. As educators, we give our dancers opportunities to share their experience, feelings, struggles and goals. Allowing opportunity for freedom of expression can also be a powerful tool to maintain a healthy self perspective.

“

A dancer needs to be the primary agent in their learning.

Dancers are more likely to be motivated to dance, intrinsically, if in an autonomy supportive environment. They benefit from developing coping strategies for moments of negative self perception and enhancing their awareness of self. Increased confidence and connection are direct results. Developing the whole dancer means ensuring their safety both physically and mentally. At First City, nurturing the desire to find joy within is the cornerstone of our approach to dance education.

THE ADULT DANCE EXPERIENCE

by Katie Bestwater

I consider myself a reasonably active person - I don't shy away from a hike, I carry heavy boxes at work, and I've been blessed not to have to deal with any number of the chronic pains that affect so many (knock on wood!)...but I don't think I realized until my first class of this 10-week Adult Beginner Contemporary session just how little I MOVE my body (Or rather, how often I move the same few parts of my body in the same few ways...and essentially nothing else).

What a gift it has been to point my toes and bend my knees and fling my arms in the air! (not all at the same time, thankfully...at least not yet). I can't tell you the freedom that comes with letting the music into your body and stepping past your insecurities with a 5, 6, 7, 8! ...I can't quite describe the thrilling sound of 20 women sliding their foot across the dance floor at exactly the same time! In fact, I really can't tell you - you'll have to come experience it for yourself.



Ms Nerah and Ms Anna collaborating to create new movement ideas