

another language

performing arts company

Season XXXX

Volume 22 Issue 1

January-December 2025



XMISSION

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SPOTLIGHT

1991 DOCUMENTATION

Home Movies & Other Family Secrets (1991)

FULL CLOSETS



Dancers: Chara Huckins, Lori Hunter,
and Sarah Hudelson-Stack

Choreographed by: Elizabeth Miklavcic

Photograph: Video Still

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40 years of creative expression 1985-2025



Ted Speaks His Mind - Site Specific Performance (1986)

Dancer Placement

Upstage Rt - Geneva Ann Moss, Elizabeth Miklavcic and Downstage Lft - Jimmy Miklavcic

THE STAGE AND THE FRAME

A Comparison Between Choreography and Photography

I've spent years studying choreography and I have spent years studying photography. As I pursue the visual 2D frame more and more I am struck by the creative and technical parallels of these seemingly different artistic pursuits.

In choreography, the knowledge of where the stage impact spaces are for positioning dancers in places of power, such as the four corners, movement on the diagonals from upstage to downstage, center stage as an anchor, and off-center positioning used for visual tension enhances the composition. The choreographer understands this, the audience, maybe, not so much, but the audience does know how the dance they just experienced impacted them.

(Continued)

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Wide Shot - Purple Mtn Area (2024)
Classical Grand Landscape

Photo Elizabeth Miklavcic
Foreground, Mid-Ground, Background

There are a variety of factors, for example, where and how the dancers move in the space, and the pathways upon which they travel will draw the audience's attention. There are so many other elements to consider, such as movement invention and dynamics, rhythm, levels, repetition, as well as, technical elements such as lighting and sound.

Understanding the stage space you are working with is, also, an important factor. Are you choreographing for a large proscenium stage with the audience sitting on different levels? Those levels consist of the orchestra, the mezzanine, and all the way in the rear balcony, affectionately known as the nose bleed section. Seating placement impacts the experience for the audience member.

Other stages can be very intimate. Is the audience on the same level as the performer? Is it theater in the round? Some performances might be sight specific, which Another Language Performing Arts Company has done many through the years, such as Ted Speaks His Mind (1986), Where Paths Seldom Cross (1989), and Alley (1989) just to mention a few. All of these factors change the viewing and, also, the kinetic experience for the member of the audience.

When a movement piece begins to come together, an important factor that I examine is if the composition is reaching beyond the stage into the house, to the audience member. Has it touched the viewer in some manner? Is there a response? One of my favorite things to take into consideration about a dance that I have created is to examine the impact of the choreographic motional dynamics. If I've touched you, if my work has impacted you, that is important. Otherwise, you are just looking at wallpaper.

The capturing of a photograph is anything but still, as the photographer goes through the process of making the frame. Getting to the location, finding a composition, knowing the camera settings for the conditions at hand, waiting for the light, battling the elements, and finally taking the photo, are factors that require a maximum amount of effort.

There are many parallels between a photographic composition and staging a piece of choreography that can be examined. The use of levels is interesting. Think about where the photographer is shooting from; at ground level, mid-range, eye level, or from above, either because of being at a viewpoint or using aerial equipment such as a drone, or shooting from a helicopter. These points-of-view can be applied to the low, medium and high levels of the dancer, as well as, understanding the stage space placements discussed earlier.

There is the foreground, mid-ground and background compositional considerations of the photographic frame. What element in the composition is moving the viewers eye through the photograph? Is there a leading line? Where is the point-of-focus? Is there something interesting happening in the captured moment such as the splash of a wave, a storm, lightning, sunlight cresting or setting over the horizon? Another consideration can be the actions of what a person might be doing at the *decisive* moment that makes the photographer want to click (Continued)



Newsletter



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the shutter. How does that translate to the 2D end product that ends up on a wall or on the monitor of a device?

There is a series of compositional templates that photographers use to place points-of-interests in the stronger areas of the visual frame. There is the *Rule of Thirds*, the *Golden Ratio*, the *Golden Triangle*, the *Diagonal*, the *Fibonacci Spiral*, and many more. The thought is to place important compositional elements where the template lines intersect. The viewer will respond to a composition that is constructed in this manner. Of course, rules are always made to be broken, but it is interesting upon evaluation of many photographs how often some element of compositional design translates to a more impactful image.

Time is a huge component of photography and of dance. Is the dancer performing movement at a slow, medium, or quick pace? What is the timing between the dancer and the music? Is the dancer on the beat, or purposefully off the implied rhythm?

Considerations of time are key to creating a photograph. What is the shutter speed? Is it rapid fire to freeze motion such as a bird in flight, or is the photographer taking a long exposure? That can be anything from .5 seconds to several minutes, and possibly longer to create a dream-like image that can smooth out water, or create motion blur of the subjects being captured.

In photography, the exposure triangle is taken into consideration. You have the shutter speed, the aperture, and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), which is the camera's sensitivity to light, all needing to work in tandem. ISO is derived from the greek isos, meaning equal. The camera's technical elements require balance. This means choosing how wide or narrow the camera's f-stop is for the shot. A wide open aperture such as a 1.4 f-stop can create a soft surrounding environment, whereas f/16 or narrower will sharpen the landscape from front to back. Additionally, choosing the speed of the shutter involves an ISO setting that will let in enough light. Arresting a moment in time on the camera's recording element, such as an image sensor or a frame of film.

The best parallel I can think of is how technical theater enhances a dance. A spotlight on the dancer with the rest of the stage dark narrows the focus of the audience to the highlighted motion. Lights on-full opens the view of the stage and all the activity taking place. Technical theater elements are imperative for a full immersive experience. Though super-simple performances without any stage components can also be impactful. Nothing is set in stone. I'm just making comparisons between these art forms.

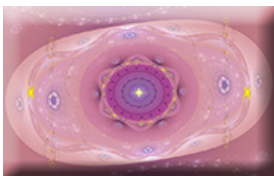
I look at the stage space and the photographic frame in very similar ways. The same considerations are taken into account to create a compelling piece of art. I'm influenced by the history of my experiences, and I find it fun to realize how similar very different art forms can be.

– By Elizabeth Miklavcic - Founding Co-Director

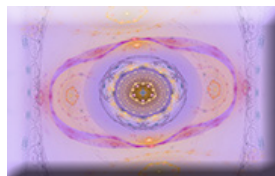
ART Of The Month

Another Language Performing Arts Company's *Art-of-the-Month* was created to publicly feature a variety of visual art expressions created by the directors of Another Language.

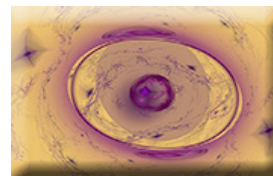
Below are four of Elizabeth Miklavcic's works:



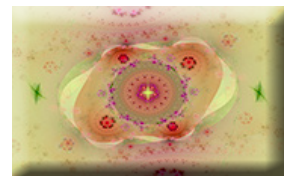
Retro - 1 (2024)



Retro - 2 (2024)



Retro - 3 (2024)

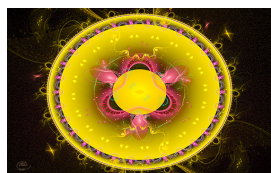


Retro - 4 (2024)

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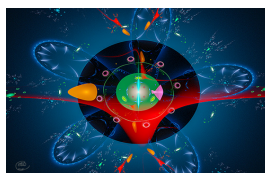
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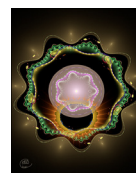
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