**Dancers' Symposium Policy Papers**

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[Dance Marathon omitted]

**2.Auditions**

Auditions occur at the beginning of each semester. Any individual directly affiliated with Carnegie Mellon who has paid their Student Activities fee is welcome to participate in Auditions regardless of background or dance style preference. (In some cases, members of the University of Pittsburgh or other local communities may participate as well.) Experience is not necessary. All Dancers have the right to a fair Audition process.

**Audition Process**

The Audition process may take anywhere from 3-5 hours, on average. The breakdown of events is as follows:

•Tap Audition registration begins at 10:30am

•Tap Auditions begin 11:00am

• Dancers arrive & check-in starts at 11:00am

• Explanation of Dancer expectations, audition process, and Introduction of Directors starts at noon

• Choreographers introduce themselves and show 30 seconds of their piece

• Directors and Dancers warm-up and teach an audition piece

• Dancers are given extra time to practice and to complete dance preference sheet with Choreographer/Dance ranking

• Dancers enter in their Choreographer/Dance ranking and their audition number in computers

• Directors make a master spreadsheet indicating who tried out for which pieces

• Dancers audition in groups based on numerical order, usually in groups of 10.

• Dancers will perform the dance twice per cycle (a cycle meaning the sequence of groups 80-89, 90-99, etc. until all dancers have danced.) The cycle will then repeat.

• Choreographers are given a spreadsheet indicating which dancers ranked his or her dance.

• The audition tape as well as the make-up audition will be open to viewing by the Choreographers after the auditions are completed.

• Once the audition is finished, Dancers are asked to return their audition number and leave

• Choreographers complete the Dancer selection sheet and are asked to leave

• Directors place the Dancers

• Dancers are notified within 24 hours whether or not they are in a DS dance. Choreographers are told who their dancers are and are responsible for emailing their individual dancers.

The order of dances is determined by the order in which they are listed on the Dancer Preference Sheets (mostly grouped by dance style). Before auditioning (i.e. getting on stage), all Dancers MUST turn in their Dancer Preference Sheet with their rankings of dances. Otherwise Directors will not be able to place them in any dance, and they will automatically go onto the Unassigned Dancer List.

**Make Up Audition Process**

Make-up auditions must be scheduled at least a day before main stage auditions. They follow a similar process to the main auditions. No choreographers are allowed to attend make up auditions. Auditions will be recorded for later viewing by the choreographers.

Any individual who cannot be present at Make-up or Main stage Auditions but would like the possibility of being placed in a dance should email a Director. This must occur before the Audition process has begun. If this is done, the individual may be placed on the Unassigned Dancer List, along with any Dancers who attended Auditions but could not be placed in a dance due to whatever circumstances. Choreographers consult this list if they are in need of additional Dancers for their piece. (See the policy paper on Dancer Placement and Unassigned Dancer List for more details.)

**3. Dancer Placement and the Unassigned Dancer List**

**Dancer Placement**

After each Audition process is complete, the Directors begin the Dancer Placement process. This involves a complex mapping of Dancers to Dances, according to both the Choreographers’ requests and the Dancers’ rankings. Dancer Placement involves the following:

• Directors consult each Choreographer Sheet and determine which Dancers can be placed in that dance

• Placement occurs when:

o The Choreographer has listed the Dancer as either a “definite” or an “alternate”

o And the Dancer has ranked the Choreographer’s piece

o And the Dancer has not already been placed in his/her max number of dances\*

\*Note: The maximum number of dances a Dancer can be in during any given semester is 3, unless they are also choreographing or in a Senior Solo/Showcase. (See the Constitution or the Policy Paper on Senior Solos/Showcases for more details.) However, a Dancer may request that they be placed in less than 3 dances as a maximum, and that request will be granted during the Dancer Placement process. For any Dancer who does not mark a maximum on his/her Dancer Preference Sheet, the Directors will first call the Dancer to verify. Otherwise, Directors will assume the default for that semester, 2 dances, depending on how many people went through the Auditions process that semester.

A computer algorithm has been created to place the dancers electronically but the Directors have a responsibility to check the results by hand to avoid an error of data input.

There are always special considerations or circumstances that must be taken into account during the Placement process, which may seem to be/cause errors but in fact are completely correct (ex. a dance may require the same number of male and female Dancers). Any and all concerns regarding Dancer Placement should be addressed immediately to the Directors.

**Unassigned Dancer List**

Any Dancer who is not, for whatever reasons, placed in a dance will be placed on the Unassigned Dancer List. This is not an indication of a Dancer’s ability or desirability, by any means. Additionally, any individual who cannot be present at Auditions but would like the possibility of being placed in a dance should contact one of the Directors. This must occur before the Auditions process has begun. Any Choreographer, whose dance is not filled, for whatever reasons, may request/invite Dancers from the Unassigned Dancer List and only from the Unassigned Dancer List until checkpoint. After checkpoint, Choreographer can pull in anyone in DS not meeting the maximum dance criteria OR anyone with past DS experience. This is allowed due to the time constraint the Choreographer faces and to meet the desired show quality.

**4. Music and Choreography Restrictions**

**Music**

A dance may be a maximum of 3 minutes and 30 seconds long. If the dance has more than 12 dancers, the dance may be 4 minutes. There are certain circumstances under which this time limit may be subject to change, such as size of dance (i.e. number of Dancers) or length of Show. It is the responsibility of the Choreographer(s) to censor choreography and lyrics to the song(s) of choice. (Please see details below regarding Strong Language/Choreography.) Once used, a song may not be used again for at least 2 years. If a remixed version of a song is used, the original song may not be used for 1 year. A song cannot be in a Show more than once. If more than one Choreographer selects the same song, he or she who submitted their program info first gets priority. If an Outside Organization has the same song as one already in the show, the Organization will have to alter their song or mix.

**Choreography**

In regards to borrowing dance moves or being inspired by other performances, if 32 or more counts of unoriginal choreography are used, they must be given credit in the Show’s program info.

**Strong Language/Choreography**

The Dancers’ Symposium Show is a performance for people of all ages. Although there are no direct restrictions on the use of harsh language and/or suggestive choreography, it is important that dances maintain a high level of artistic value that is presentable to a broad audience. Strong language (profanity) is to be used only when relevant to the piece. Strong language may not stand alone. It should have no insulting or condescending implications. Choreography should always be pertinent to the overall performance. No degrading moves that might be interpreted in a disdainful manner are permitted. All choreography must be clear in context. Dancers must a Director if they do not feel comfortable with the content of the choreography, at which point the Directing staff will contact the Choreographer.

**5. Checkpoint**

Checkpoint is held approximately Week 9 of the semester. A Choreographer is responsible for having at least 1⁄2 of the dance taught and in presentable condition by this time. (Depending on the Checkpoint date, this may change to a minimum of 2/3 of the dance.) Choreographers are assigned a time slot by the Directors (15 minutes long) and should inform their Dancers of when and where they must attend Checkpoint. A dance cannot be performed at the Show unless performed at Checkpoint and approved by the Directors. In order to maintain a high quality Show and uphold the Dancers' Symposium name, Directors reserve the right/responsibility of assuring that all dances meet certain performance expectations. If a dance does not appear to meet these standards, the Directors will speak with the Choreographer(s) to see what action, if any, needs to be taken.

Choreographer’s final music cut is due by Checkpoint. Program information is due at a later date set by the directors. Directors take notes during Checkpoint and send said notes to their individual Choreographer Buddies. Checkpoint performances will be videotaped and posted online for Choreographers to better review and revise their choreography or staging.

During checkpoint, Outside Organizations may audition to be in the final show. They must perform their entire piece and have provided necessary information as stated in their application. During Checkpoint, graduating students or may audition to perform senior solos. They must perform half their piece (~45 seconds; total length a minute and a half). They may choose to perform in the spring or fall regardless of the semester that they graduate but must audition in the semester they intend to perform.

**6. Outside Organizations**

In support of diversity and greater opportunity to showcase student performance, Dancers’ Symposium welcomes other dance-related organizations to participate in our Show. They are, however, subject to the following guidelines:

• Outside Organizations must audition at Checkpoint to be considered for the show. They must perform their dance in its entirety with final music cuts. Costumes are encouraged.

• The Directors will choose up to three Outside Organizations to be allowed to participate in the Show based on the style, music, history of the organization, preparedness, and ability

•Outside Organizations must sign the Outside Organization Contract, which states all their rights and responsibilities in full. Failure to abide may result in being cut from the current show or not be chosen for a future one.

• Outside Organizations selected by directors must meet deadlines for due dates which are listed in the Outside Organization Contract.

• If the Outside Organization does not open itself to DS members through the DS Auditions process, they are not eligible to receive DS funding for costumes. DS also cannot guarantee rehearsal space to closed dances.

• Outside Organization dances are subject to similar regulations as DS dances, which are explained in their acceptance email. Also, all Dancers in the piece must participate in Checkpoint, Tech Rehearsal and Dress Rehearsal, AND must stay for the Curtain Call on both nights of the Show.

• If a DS member participates in an outside organization, then it counts toward the absolute max of 5 dances per show. If a DS choreographer participates in an outside organization as a Choreographer, then it does not count towards the 2 choreography per show.

\*Note: Dancers’ Symposium will not give out Dancers’ email addresses or other private information to Outside Organizations or any other parties, nor will they allow the misuse of the DS d-lists.

**7. Senior Solos/Showcases**

Graduating seniors in DS are allowed to perform either a senior solo or combined showcase in the year in which they are graduating. Any interested individual or party must fill out an application and audition at Checkpoint. They must show at least half of their completed dance at Checkpoint. Directors will review their audition and select up to three solos/showcases to be performed in any given show. Senior Solos cannot exceed a minute and thirty seconds. A senior showcase involving an ensemble of people cannot exceed two minutes and thirty seconds. Directors reserve the right to ask dancers to cut their music shorter than these given times, if it serves the purpose of keeping the show to a respectable length.

\*Note: a Dancer can participate in an absolute max of 5 dances per semester, and 2 pieces choreographed within DS. Senior solo counts toward the absolute max requirement, but not towards the choreography limit. All other policies and restrictions outlined in the Constitution regarding choreographers, also apply to solo and showcase dances. Directors are not responsible for giving space to any solos or showcases.

**8. Show Order**

Each semester after Checkpoint, the Directors determine Show Order, or the order in which dances will be performed during that semester's Show. Extensive thought is given to time required for Dancers' costume changes, stylistic redundancies, and audience appeal. An attempt is made to balance the two Acts in length, quality, and style. All these factors, and more, are taken into consideration with the goal of maximizing the production value of each Show.

Opener: Additionally, an opening performance can be organized by the Directors before the first number. Generally, the opener invites the audience into the show and uses DS dancers’ abilities. Towards the beginning of the show, the Directors come on stage to introduce themselves and the show. A curtain call is placed at the end of the show followed by thank you’s to necessary people, given by the Directors.

**9. Costume Closet**

Each semester Choreographers have the option of choosing clothing and/or props from the DS Costume Closet. Choreographers must sign out any items that are rented from the Costume Closet, recording the number of items and their descriptions. Anything rented from the Costume Closet must be returned to the Directors directly after Curtain Call on the last night of the Show. If anything is not returned, the Choreographer or Organization(s) who borrowed the item(s)—not the Dancer(s)—are financially responsible for what is missing. Each costumes item borrowed from the Costume Closet by DS choreographers will be rented at a price of $2.00. Accessories will be rented for $1.00. This comes from the budget allotted to each Choreographer or Organization. For example, if a Choreographer chooses to borrow shirts for each of his/her Dancers, then there will be $8.00 per Dancer remaining in their budget for further purchases (assuming the $10/dancer rule). This “rental” policy is meant to encourage Choreographers to use the Costume Closet to their benefit, rather than making unnecessary purchases. Organizations outside of DS who wish to borrow costume pieces from the closet will be charged $5.00 for large items and $1.00 for small items.

Costume Closet “office hours” may be held at various times throughout the semester, usually around Checkpoint and right before the Show. Alternatively, choreographers may request a closet appointment with a director at a mutually agreed time. Choreographers are encouraged to search through the Costume Closet to borrow costumes or to get ideas. Purchase of reusable costumes are encouraged, and purchase of personalized costumes are discouraged.

Infra Dance Company and Soulstylz may rent costumes for the rates listed above for extended periods of time (not more than 7 weeks) with the exception of an extension for show week or the final performance of the semester, whichever comes last. Otherwise, all costumes The Infra Dance Company liaison is responsible for managing these rentals.

**10. Tech and Dress Rehearsals**

Tech and Dress Rehearsals are held each semester during the week of the Show. Choreographers must have their dances finished and taught by this time. They must inform their Dancers of the dates of the Tech Rehearsals and Dress Rehearsal after the Directors assign them, and they must ensure that every Dancer in their dance is present at both. The order of dances of both the Tech and Dress Rehearsals will follow the Show Order, but Tech Rehearsals will be split over two days according to the Show’s Acts. (Please see the Show Order policy paper for more details on how Show Order is determined.) If choreographers have conflicts with their Tech Rehearsal times, it can be rescheduled out of Show Order.

Tech Rehearsals are held to ensure that lighting, music, and costumes will be adequate for the Show performance. After performing their dance, Choreographer(s) should consult with the organization providing tech support (lighting, music, etc.) for the Show to go over lighting and staging. Dancers and Choreographers are allowed to stay for the entirety of either or both Tech Rehearsals, but are only required to be present for the dance(s) they are in.

Dress Rehearsal is held to make sure that the Show is ready to be performed. In order for this to be done, all Choreographers and Dancers are required to participate in both Tech and Dress Rehearsals. Dancers and Choreographers are required to stay through Dress Rehearsal until they are finished; however, everyone is encouraged to remain for the entirety of the Rehearsal. All costuming should be worn at Tech and Dress Rehearsal; makeup is optional. Choreographers are responsible for making sure that all their choreography, costuming, makeup, and props are in order for the Show. The opener will be taught prior to Tech week and will be rehearsed at the Dress Rehearsal. Curtain Call will be taught at Dress Rehearsal. All Dancers and Choreographers must be present for this. In order to maintain a high quality Show and uphold the Dancers' Symposium name, Directors reserve the right/responsibility of assuring that all dances meet certain performance expectations. If a dance does not appear to meet these standards, the Directors will speak with the Choreographer(s) to see what action, if any, needs to be taken. If Dancers or Choreographers are absent from Dress Rehearsal without being excused by the Directors prior to the day of Dress Rehearsal (advance notice highly preferred), the Directors reserve the right to Blacklist them.

**11. Open Classes**

Open classes are taught by DS members and are free and open to the entire campus and Pittsburgh community. Any style of dance or movement can be and encouraged to be taught. Classes are to be held weekly, in the best space available to the organization. At least two directors must set up, attend, run, and strike every Open Class. Dancers’ Symposium should be presented in a professional, artistic, and fun light. Open Classes should cover varying levels of difficulty across many different styles and strive to enhance the experience of the dance community as a whole. Various promotional tactics may be used at the Directors’ discretion such as but not limited to free DS dvds or T-shirts rewarded to high attendance. Open classes are an incredible way for DS members to reach out to the greater community and should be given the highest level of respect and importance within the organization.

**12. Infra Dance Company**

Infra Dance Company (formerly DS Company) was initiated in the summer of 2009 to establish a permanent Dancers’ Symposium contemporary performance team.

**Purpose**:

• To fill the greater need for artistic exploration in the dance community at Carnegie Mellon.

• To provide extended dance experience and periodic performance opportunities to DS dancers and choreographers

• To encourage collaboration within DS, with other CMU organizations, and with non-CMU organizations in the greater Pittsburgh area

**Structure:**

Please refer to the Infra Dance Company Constitution document for information regarding its existence, policies, and organization.

**13. Soulstylz**

Soulstylz was welcomed into Dancers' Symposium in the fall of 2010 as a permanent Dancers’ Symposium hiphop performance group.

**Structure:**

*Soulstylz Managers*

* Soulstylz Managers: Choreography (SSMC), Soulstylz Managers: Freestyle (SSMF)

•Selected by nomination and voting by group members based on ability, personality, organization, leadership skills, and dedication.

•Responsible for organizing who is choreographing (ability to choreograph preferred), lighting, staging, music, costumes and other rehearsal and performance related parameters

•The SSM has the right to delegate any and all tasks between to other Soulstylz members;

•SSM is in charge of managing the Soulstylz budget provided by the directors

•SSM is responsible for scheduling and producing all Soulstylz performances

*Soulstylz Dancers*

•A group of dancers chosen based on technique, emotion, cleanliness, speed, intensity, and attitude.

•Soulstylz Dancers must participate in DS auditions for every semester they participate in Soulstylz

•Selected by audition, all DS dancer responsibilities and expectations apply, see Constitution

**Process:**

Soulstylz is run under the supervision of the DS Directing staff.  The SSM must work within the policies set forth by the Staff.

SSM and Soulstylz Dancers must audition for Dancers’ Symposium.  Auditions are held after DS auditions in the Fall Semester, structured and led by the SSM.  All Soulstylz Dancers must attend the auditions in order to watch and evaluate auditionees.  Additional members may be added in the spring semester by the discretion of the SSM. 1 to 3 one and a half to two hour rehearsals a week are led by the SSM, contingent upon on rehearsal space.

**Performances:**

The SSM is responsible for producing at least two Random Acts of Dance (RAD) a semester.  These performances are on average one minute in length and can be performed without music.  The SSM is encouraged to pick a location within the campus that may stretch the boundaries of dance space, i.e. the cut.

Soulstylz must perform in every DS Show and abide by the choreographer expectations and responsibilities as seen in the constitution.

The Soulstylz members are expected to embrace the opportunities, to embody professionalism, and to be open to both the DS community and the greater Pittsburgh dance community.

**[Dance Marathon omitted]**