

HEALTH ARTICLE

by Marlen Schumann



Daily dance and training: How can athletic training be sensibly integrated into a dancer's everyday lives?

In the last two newsletters, I wrote about which aspects of athletic training inspired me most as a dancer, which insights can be gained from the training sciences, and I referred to some of the existing initiatives in this regard. But ultimately, it is all about implementing this training in one's own professional life as a dancer. How do we do this?

The approaches are different depending on whether one works as a freelancer or is employed by a company. Freelancers are fully responsible for structuring their own daily routines, and with the respective expertise they can allocate the necessary time for dance and athletic training. Training can be planned over a longer period while taking into consideration the rehearsal and performance phases.

In my opinion, for a dancer employed at an opera house or theatre, it is the company management's responsibility to establish the structures for the dancers' daily routines. Very often, there is a packed daily schedule that starts with ballet training in the morning, goes on with rehearsals, and ends with the evening performances. Fortunately, there are increasing numbers of dance companies in Germany who promote the health and fitness of their dancers and allow free time for this. Two examples for this are the Health Program of the Leipzig Ballet (Podcast Fermate episode 14 of the Leipzig Opera: <https://www.oper-leipzig.de/de/fermate>) or, soon, the dance company of Landesbühnen Sachsen under its new director Natalie Wagner. Often, the scheduling is the biggest challenge. Fitness and health require time, and often this hasn't been available up to now in the regular training and rehearsal schedules. This requires courage. The secret to success is not MORE training but **SMARTER** training!

What does **SMARTER** mean?

One fundamental factor is regeneration as part of the training. If this is neglected and training is continued to the point of exhaustion, injuries are an almost inevitable consequence. Stress-bearing capacity decreases and our physiological and mental strength are reduced. Another aspect is the distribution of dance training and fitness training while considering rehearsal and performance times. With a full 90 minutes of dance training and rehearsals every day, there will be no energy left for strength, stamina, or somatic training. I speak out in favour of having the courage to **replace dance training with well thought-out athletic training**

units. When these are adapted to the expected or actual requirements of a piece, dancers will immediately feel the benefits. Dance techniques can be optimized despite fewer hours of dance training. Fundamental athletic training should be permanently included in the schedule and should be oriented toward possible personal injury histories or the current needs of the dancers. By fundamental, I mean well-balanced full-body training, a minimum of **twice a week**, that also covers muscle chains that generally receive less attention in (classical) dance training. This promotes the muscles' overall functionality and flexibility and will be beneficial for the dancer's technique. Moreover, **aerobic stamina training** helps to improve stress-bearing capacity.

To realize this, there must be enthusiastic and committed people who guide the dancers: doctors and physical therapists, fitness trainers and sports scientists.

Before the training starts, a screening should take place to determine the dancer's current condition. This will be the basis for the training schedule that will be worked out together with the dancer. And this is where the challenge lies for all freelance dancers. If this is not organized and funded by a company, this step often represents a financial obstacle. I recommend beginning full-body training under the supervision of an experienced instructor. Here, the dancer's current condition can also be determined even without a full-scale screening. This can also take place during the drafting of training schedule. This investment will be worth the while because it will constantly add knowledge and the dancers are enabled to exercise on their own and to have the instructor assist them only as necessary.

We have the advantage as dancers that we have excellent body perception skills and can understand and realize the corresponding movements and dynamics quickly. Our ability to consciously imagine movements helps us to swiftly familiarize ourselves with athletic training units.

Insights in the health programmes of the Royal Ballet and the Pacific Northwest Ballet show how such a training can function as an addition to dance training:

Royal Ballet Health Suite:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0uVH62QPXo>

Pacific Northwest Ballet:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4q9b5Upby9Y>

Would you like to start right away? Then try out these video exercises with me: https://youtu.be/10_aj-zWm8A.

www.marlenschumann.de

Palucca Hochschule für Tanz Dresden
Rector: Prof. Jason Beechey

Edit & Layout: Minh Huyen Pietruske
Department of Strategic Development/Communication/Student Marketing & Alumni
Coordination
alumni@palucca.eu | +49 351 25906-45

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PALUCCA
HOCHSCHULE
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PALUCCA - ALUMNI
JULY & AUGUST 2022

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



I am very pleased to present you the new edition of our alumni newsletter!



First, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Minh Huyen Pietruske and on 22 June, I assumed Shalene Schmidt's multifaceted position. I am especially looking forward to those tasks involving coming events and the alumni network.

This newsletter will give you an overview of the coming University events and alumni news. You will find more detailed information at the University news pages on our website.

Ms. Schumann has contributed a further health article for you in this edition. It deals with integrating athletic training in your daily routines. To keep your training units diverse in the future too, we kindly invite you to watch the videos that have been especially made for you and to integrate them in your training routines.

Many of the Palucca Summer Stage events have already taken place and we can now happily present our latest merchandised product: the Palucca Summer Stage t-shirt! You can order the t-shirts directly from us. For more information, please contact us by email at: xxxxxxxx

We are looking forward to receiving articles from our alumni for the next issue of our newsletter (publication: end of August 2022).

I wish you much pleasure in reading and I am looking forward to a time abundant with events at the Palucca University of Dance Dresden.

Kind regards,

Minh Huyen Pietruske

Department of Strategic Development/Communication
Student Marketing & Alumni Coordination
alumni@palucca.eu | +49 351 25906-45

UNIVERSITY NEWS

TANZWOCHE HIDDENSEE

From 17 to 22 July 2022, there will be the 25th Dance Week at Hiddensee by Palucca University of Dance Dresden. With Tanzwoche Hiddensee, we commemorate our founder Gret Palucca (1902-1993).

TANZWOCHE SYLT

"Auf den Spuren Gret Paluccas" - This dance event that combines nature and dance will take place at the island of Sylt in the North Sea from 24 to 30 July 2022.
Place: Klappholtal, Sylt



Palucca e.V

The Palucca e. V. association won the "Kulturfonds Sachsen-Ukraine" tender by the Cultural Foundation of the Free State of Saxony. With this funding, Palucca e. V. offers stipends in the amount of EUR500 each to refugees from Ukraine so that they can continue their dance education at Palucca University of Dance Dresden. With this money, the minor students can buy their training clothes and dance shoes.

Beside the permanent pointe shoe sponsoring project, in the summer semester 2022, Palucca e. V. supported the graduating class of the BA Dance programme with a printing cost allowance in the amount of 500 euros and provided funding for individual applications from students of the graduating class. You can support our association's work and the students of Palucca University of Dance Dresden as a member of Palucca e. V. or through individual donations. For further information see: Förderverein Palucca e. V.



ALUMNI NEWS

Iskra Stoyanova



Dear Palucca Family,

I am very happy to be able to briefly share my news with you: After a diverse professional "journey" as a freelance dance educator and choreographer, as a teacher of classic dance at Dr. Hoch's Conservatory, Frankfurt am Main as an organizer of the international Tanzart Ostwest Festival and as a training and rehearsal director at the theatre in Koblenz, I am currently finishing a very intense and inspiring season as a rehearsal scheduler and production manager, and guest training director at the Ballet am Rhein in Dusseldorf.

From August 2022, I will act as **ballet master at the Finnish National Ballet** and are looking forward to an extraordinarily exciting repertoire there.

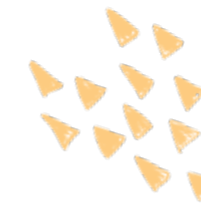
Follow us on the internet!

Ballett am Rhein, Düsseldorf:

<https://www.operamrhein.de/ueber-uns/ballett/> - Ballett am Rhein

<https://www.operamrhein.de/ueber-uns/menschen#ballett-direktion?a=ballett-direktion> - Direktion (with my name)

<https://www.operamrhein.de/ueber-uns/menschen#ballett-direktion?a=choreographie-teams> - Team (guest trainer)



ALUMNI NEWS AND MORE

Statements and Expectations

When I started working with Palucca after my piano studies in Weimar, I learnt that she called her subject area New Artistic Dance (NAT). Over time, we got to know each other. I wrote down Palucca's wishes for music and also suggestions for improvisations in my small blue vocabulary notebook. She also allowed me - implicitly - to write down the spontaneous statements that she uttered during the short breaks during the lessons.



One day, a first grader clumsily asked "Ms. Palucca" for advice. She smiled gently and answered: "I like it clear and simple. This helps me remember it as well." She expected the same from me on the piano. In the beginning, I often heard, "Fewer tones!",

Palucca could be patient but then, sometimes, also react harshly: "Wirsing, the pupils are the most ungrateful, remember this!", she exclaimed suddenly without even looking at the baffled girls. Palucca was annoyed because almost none of them had taken their homework seriously. "Today, everybody only thinks of their own comfort," she added contemptuously. What a blow!

Prior to the German reunification, we were working with a graduating class on presentations with topics critical of society. Her advice was: "**The most important thing is not what one says but what one does!**" In confidence, Palucca added: "The one who lies with words will reveal the truth with his or her actions." And that says is all. Nothing needs to be added to this.

Waldemar Wirsing
Palucca-Pianist, 1978-87
lebt und arbeitet in Berlin (UdK among others)

