

Report on Dance Residency: z 73.3 - Exhausted Elegance (working title)

from 23.9. - 11.11.24

This report outlines the activities and findings from our recent dance residency, focused on exploring the theme of BURNOUT through movement. Over the course of three weeks, we engaged in a process that combined movement training, research, experimentation, and creative expression to articulate the physical and emotional manifestations of burnout.

Week 1: Researching Movement Phrases

The first week was dedicated to researching movement phrases that capture the symptoms of burnout. We began by discussing the physical sensations associated with burnout—such as fatigue, tension, and emotional exhaustion. The dancers were asked about personal experiences and observations and we researched and began translating these feelings into movement.

We began each day with a movement training. After training, we started creating phrases and movement figures that reflected:

- Physical Fatigue: Movements that portrayed heaviness, slowness, and lack of energy.
- Emotional Exhaustion: Gestures that conveyed withdrawal, disconnection, and frustration.
- Mental Overload: Sharp, erratic movements representing scattered thoughts and anxiety.

By the end of the week, we had compiled a diverse repertoire of movement phrases that vividly illustrated the multifaceted experience of burnout.

Week 2: Researching Patterns in Burnout

In the second week, our focus shifted to understanding the underlying patterns of burnout. We discussed the causes and consequences of burnout, examining the systemic factors. This involved:

- Individual discussions: Sharing personal stories and research findings on burnout.
- Analysing movement phrases: Creating sequences that represented cyclical patterns of stress and finding a way to create this emotional state of going into burnout.
- Visual tools: Examining what visual tools, and stage sets can set a room that gives space to explore the effect of a person experiencing the onset of burnout.

Together, with the dancers, we collaborated to develop choreographic structures that highlighted the repetitive nature of burnout—illustrating how individuals often find themselves caught in cycles of overwork and exhaustion.

Week 3: Structuring the Story of Burnout

The final week was dedicated to structuring our findings into a cohesive narrative. We aimed to depict the story of how the body experiences and ultimately breaks down due to burnout. This involved:

- Choreographic Development: Using the movement phrases and patterns created in previous weeks, we crafted a big part of our full-length piece that represented the journey through burnout.
- Narrative Structure: We established key moments in the choreography, such as episodes in a person's life showing the onset of stress, escalation of symptoms, and the eventual breakdown of both body and mind.

The culmination of our residency was a presentation that showcased our findings. We used a blend of movement and visual elements to convey the complex experience of burnout, aiming to foster empathy and understanding in our audience.

Conclusion

This dance residency provided an invaluable opportunity to explore the theme of burnout through a movement lens. By investigating movement phrases, patterns, and narratives, we not only gained deeper insights into the phenomenon but also created a powerful artistic representation of its impact. Moving forward, we hope to share our findings with a broader audience and continue the conversation around burnout, mental health, and the importance of self-care.