

Dance Contact Improvisation

Geneviève Cron

Semestre de printemps 2016-2017

Teacher :

Dr Geneviève Cron, MS, PhD in Computer Sciences is also graduated as dance and movement therapist (MA Université Paris Descartes) and and gymnastic teacher. She studied and has worked in several companies while teaching and performing dance. She is associate researcher at Laboratoire Technique et Enjeux du Corps (TEC, Body Techniques and Politics), Université Paris Descartes.

She's been performing solo in several companies since 1990. Now she is mainly working with Compagnie Tangible, on performances, on explorative spaces and on « Tango-contact bal-jams ». They are social dance meetings inspired by tango milongas, bals, and contact improvisation jams. She is doing personal and collective research around inputs from collaboration and opposition, martial arts in contact improvisation and in dance.

Between 2012 and 2015 she stops her scientific activities to dedicate her time to movement and dance studies and researches and performances. Since 2015, she's been back in engineering and project leading activities at Sciences Po Paris Library while teaching dance, dance and movement therapy and launching training programs and personal consulting about "Professional posture and engagement in movement".

She's been teaching contact improvisation since 2010 in France, Italy (Brüneck), South Africa, Malaysia and in various Festivals. She is also organizing international events around the pedagogy of contact improvisation and initiated bilateral exchanges (Paris, London, Bruxelles).

Her teaching is influenced by contemporary dance, somatic practices, martial arts, tango-contact, movement analysis, sensorial movement, thaï massage.



Credit : Pierre-Yves Rollo

What is Contact improvisation¹

“There are many ways of defining the dance form Contact Improvisation. Here are two:

Contact Improvisation is an evolving system of movement initiated in 1972 by American choreographer Steve Paxton. The improvised dance form is based on the communication between two moving bodies that are in physical contact and their combined relationship to the physical laws that govern their motion—gravity, momentum, inertia. The body, in order to open to these sensations, learns to release excess muscular tension and abandon a certain quality of willfulness to experience the natural flow of movement. Practice includes rolling, falling, being upside down, following a physical point of contact, supporting and giving weight to a partner.

Contact improvisations are spontaneous physical dialogues that range from stillness to highly energetic exchanges. Alertness is developed in order to work in an energetic state of physical disorientation, trusting in one's basic survival instincts. It is a free play with balance, self-correcting the wrong moves and reinforcing the right ones, bringing forth a physical/emotional truth about a shared moment of movement that leaves the participants informed, centered, and enlivened. (early definition by Steve Paxton and others, 1970s, from CQ Vol. 5:1, Fall 1979)

Contact Improvisation is an open-ended exploration of the kinaesthetic possibilities of bodies moving through contact. Sometimes wild and athletic, sometimes quiet and meditative, it is a form open to all bodies and enquiring minds. (from Ray Chung workshop announcement, London, 2009)”



¹ From Contact Quarterly, Dance & Improvisation Journal, <http://contactquarterly.com>

Workshops

This program is composed of 4 workshops of 3 hours each. They aim to introduce students to contact improvisation, and to acquire base skills to feel comfortable while improvising with others ; such as inner and outer perception of space, improvisation, varieties of movement and of contact, weight sharing. They are time for experimenting propositions of movement and support. Each workshop is divided into 4 basic parts :

- body awareness and awakening : sensing, moving, feeling ready to meet a partner
- exploration through touch and shared weight : guiding, following, listening, trust, safety, being ready,
- collective improvisation (Jam) : a free space to develop your own practice
- verbal sharing : sharing your thoughts,

This program is open to everyone. People with dance, improvisation, partnering, acrobatic skills are also welcome.

Please come with loose clothes to feel comfortable.

This program is taught in English.