



On Pointe



Dance History Unit Studies

Merce Cunningham (1919-2009) was a highly influential modern dancer and choreographer, whose style of movement is still taught today.

Cunningham was intensely interested in the use of chance and indeterminacy in developing his pieces. Sequences could be decided by the flip of a coin. In some dances, the dancers themselves decided how many times they would do a certain combination of movements.

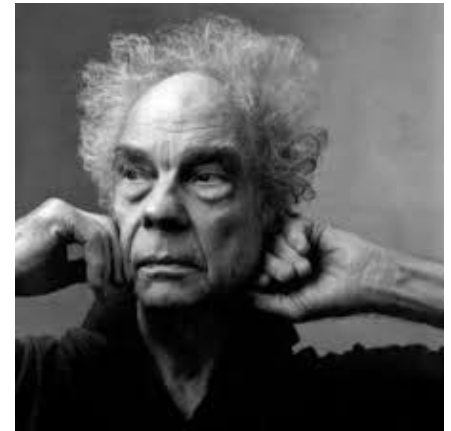
Cunningham frequently collaborated with other artists, notably painter Robert Rauschenberg and composer John Cage.

On Pointe, the CSD Dance History Unit Studies is a regular feature of the Claire School of Dance curriculum, providing students and parents the context for the appreciation of dance in all its forms.



Classroom Activities

- flipping a coin to determine a dance sequence
- basic Cunningham technique



Merce Cunningham

In *Suite for Five*, we see Merce himself as dancer:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yOAagU6cfBw>.
Rauschenberg did the costumes.

In *Beach Birds for Camera*, we see independence of music and movement, as well as simplicity.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IH_rrpj0CU

