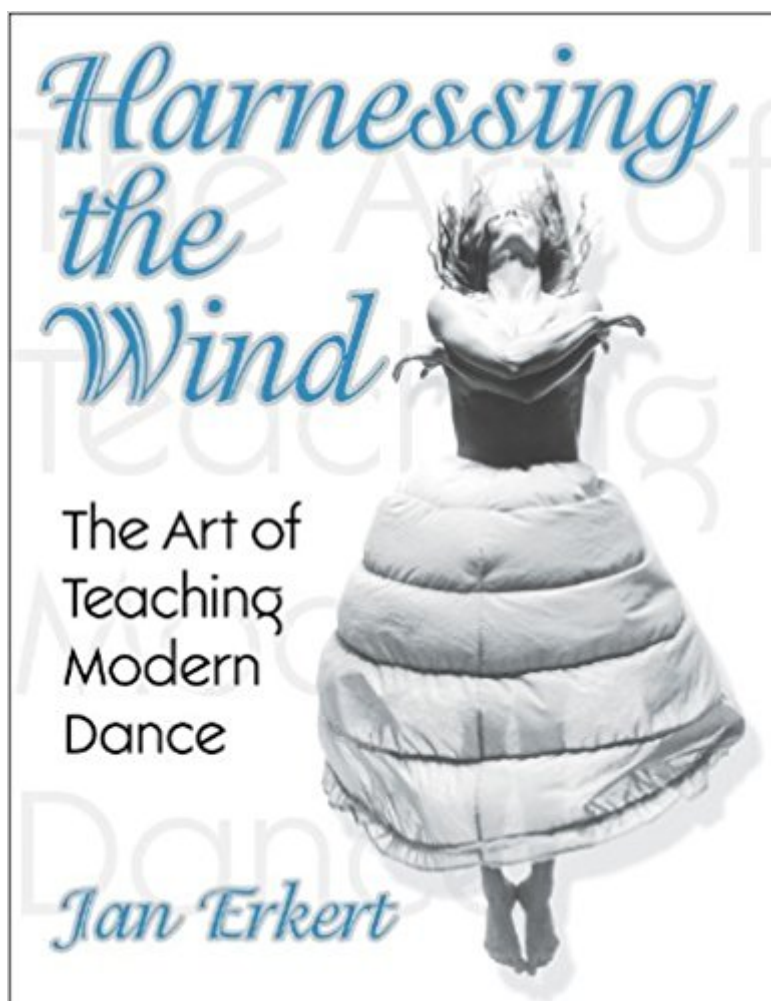


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# Harnessing The Wind: The Art Of Teaching Modern Dance



## Synopsis

*Harnessing the Wind: The Art of Teaching Modern Dance* gives you the theoretical knowledge, the practical tips, and the inspiration to prepare the next generation of dancers to meet the demands of contemporary dance. This book combines information about constructing and presenting a dance class with personal reflections about the art of teaching modern dance and integrating somatic theories, scientific research, and contemporary aesthetic practices. It provides new teachers with a solid theoretical base and incites experienced teachers to reexamine and revitalize their teaching. The book asks dance instructors to make conscious choices about what, why, and how they teach. Advocating an individualistic approach, it helps teachers understand how their personal dance interests and interpretations influence their teaching styles.

Part I, "The Vision," provides a philosophical perspective. It defines the role of technique and explores the delicate job of nurturing the artist during the quest for technical control. Part II, "Class Preparation," is where the planning process takes shape. This section shows how to - set strategies and realistic goals to lay the groundwork for a carefully built progression of movement skills;- use rituals to facilitate centering; - safely incorporate conditioning principles into dance training, thus encouraging the development of powerful and resilient dancers;- understand the interplay between gravity and rhythm, space and energy to shape phrasing; and- sequence exercises effectively using helpful graphs and planning guides. Part III, "Class Presentation," covers essential issues such as pacing, making good corrections, building images to enhance movement learning, and collaborating successfully with musicians. Finally, part IV, "Professional Concerns," embraces important issues that touch the teaching professional, such as how to objectively analyze and critique a very subjective subject—the body—and how to maintain a healthy body, mind, and spirit.

**Learning Aids: Investigations and Reflections** Each chapter is followed by a series of investigations and a reflection designed to challenge and inspire students and teachers. The investigations are concise exercises that explore theories both in and out of the classroom. They cover a range of activities including writing, drawing, chart making, observing, and experiential processing. The reflections provide insight to a dancer's world. Told through the eyes of a dance teacher, these narratives unveil the intangibles that are taught in dance, such as breathing, centering, playfulness, presence, and discipline.

**Teacher Resources** The appendixes are full of practical tools, including a sample syllabus, sample grading policies, placement goals for four levels of technique, and assessment and evaluation forms. Throughout the book, abstract and highly imagistic photographs by dance photographers Erika Dufour and William Frederking provide a powerful visual stimulus that captures mood, motion, and emotion. This book provides dance

students the information and theory necessary to begin the task of teaching. For seasoned teachers, it will inspire new questions and introduce new possibilities. Either way, readers will unleash a world of potential with *Harnessing the Wind*.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Jan Erkert is a dance artist, leader, and builder in contemporary dance. As artistic director of Jan Erkert & Dancers from 1979 to 2000, she presented her work throughout the United States as well as in Germany, Mexico, Taiwan, Japan, Uruguay, and Israel. Erkert has been honored with numerous choreographic awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Illinois Arts Council. Erkert also received a CalArts Alpert Award nomination, a Fulbright Award, and a Ruth Page Award for choreography and performance. Erkert is currently a professor at the Dance Center of Columbia College Chicago, where she teaches modern dance technique, pedagogy, anatomy, kinesiology, improvisation, and composition. She recently received the prestigious Excellence in Teaching Award from the college. She conducts training workshops at major dance departments to help faculty, teaching assistants, and dance majors learn how to teach modern dance more effectively. Erkert is known throughout the United States and internationally as a master teacher, inspiring people with her intense, honest approach that interweaves scientific principles with the artistic drive for excellence. In her free time, Erkert likes to spend time outdoors hiking, swimming, gardening, bicycling, and traveling. She also enjoys sewing, cooking, and practicing Ashtanga yoga. Erkert and her husband, Bernt Lewy, live in Chicago.

It was what I expected and came quickly

Good knowledgeable book

Wonderful book

I bought this for my first time teaching Modern dance. I have dance training, but have never taught before. This was a great resource. Broke down information so it was useful but still spoke about modern dance with respect and creativity. Also had a great outline on how to run a class, structure dances, ect. It has made my first months teaching a success.

I recommend this book to seasoned as well as aspiring dance teachers. I think it broadens one's perspective on dance. I was looking for specific dance steps to incorporate in dance class. However, this gave me an even broader base in which the creative abilities can be neverending! It provides a great structure and foundation for teaching dance of creative movement or modern dance.

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