

Mary Roberts

Teaching Philosophy

“The one thing you have that nobody else has is you. Your voice, your mind, your story, your vision. So write and draw and build and play and dance and live as only you can.”
- Neil Gaiman

High kicks, high heels, high energy, and high seas took me on a performance career spanning more than a decade. I danced across the southeastern United States, from Atlanta, Georgia to Nashville, Tennessee, before heading abroad. In 2010, I opened the Celebrity Eclipse as part of the inaugural cast, and spent the next five years with Celebrity Cruises. After so many years of performing and traveling, I learned a lot about the practicalities of performer needs and how solid technique and somatic practice is so important in the preservation of the moving body. I was taught a lot about practical applications of technique from my teachers, such as Jo Rowan and Lyn Cramer. These teachers also taught me to focus on my talents, my voice, and my body.

As a teacher, I allow students to focus on their intrinsic abilities. I use the practical application of technique to free students to find their own voices as an artists. Whether I am teaching ballet, jazz, contemporary, tap, or any other style, I emphasize students finding the style for themselves. Benefits of technique are only found after a student understands their goals in learning, therefore becoming the architect of their own physical foundation. I provide a supportive environment filled with energy, positive reinforcement, practical technical knowledge, and inspiration.

In class, students will discover basic somatic practices combined with technical knowledge. In a ballet or jazz class, we start the semester with a warm-up structure, including floor barre. The focus is on finding the feeling of gravity and subtle movements from our core. Building upon this self-discovery, I integrate technique, always referring back to the subtle movements. However, the necessity of high-energy and a feeling of true physicality will always be present. A deepening education of bodily structure combined with movement, assists students in applying internal awareness with the fun and enjoyment of a dance class enhanced by true cardiovascular conditioning.

Whether a student is considering a career in dance or just enjoys dance as movement, they will walk away with a greater level of physical awareness, self-confidence, and liberated physicality in their everyday lives. I aim for lessons which translate to life outside of the dance class, encouraging creative and critical thinkers. Appreciation of dance as an art form comes naturally as students find their own unique voice within movement.