

dawn lane

artist statement

We live in a vertical world, where we are led to believe that we must continue ever upward as a way to measure acceptance and success. My work with adult dancers with developmental disabilities seeks to turn the vertical on its side, level the field and encourage audiences to encounter developmental disabilities as a metaphor for re-examining the societal and artistic measuring stick.

I am fascinated by the talent and intensity of my Moving Company dancers, especially those with Down Syndrome. I have learned that this is a disability that comes with extraordinary gifts that we, the so called "normal" population could all learn from. An ability to focus, to express, to be honest, to have confidence. These are attributes that any choreographer would expect from a cast of dancers. I apply my own artistic standards to working with this population. If/When I do need to make adjustments, I feel very strongly that the onus is on me to function as a designer/problem solver, to work within the limitations of my dancers without sacrificing my choreographic intentions.

My work has always used limitations as structure from which to create choreography. These structures were fiction, made up by me or other choreographers- a place from which to create something that might not otherwise be created. Now, 30 years into my choreographic journey, the limitations are non-fiction, people with real, sometimes seemingly insurmountable limitations. I encounter these limitations as motivation to explore new ground, to challenge my own definitions of what dance can be. Who gets to be the dancer? Who does the audience see?