

Jamie McHugh, MA, MSMT

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Summary:

Jamie McHugh, MA, MSMT is a Registered Master Somatic Movement Therapist (ISMETA), somatic movement specialist, and interdisciplinary artist living in Western Massachusetts. He is the creator of Somatic Expression® - Body Wisdom for Modern Minds, an integrative approach to the art and craft of embodiment. www.somaticexpression.com

He offers trainings, classes, and individual sessions in pragmatic body wisdom and somatic literacy to empower individuals and groups in reclaiming bodily agency through the five indigenous technologies of the body: Breath – Vocalization – Contact – Movement - Stillness. The accessibility and simplicity of his approach comes from 45 years of personal and professional practice with a wide range of students and clients in varied contexts.

McHugh is also the creator of NatureBeingArt, abstract contemplative photography of the natural environment for both fine art reproductions and two online video stream collections - “motional art for soul-settling”: 7 Days of Beauty Project and The Breathing Room Series. www.naturebeingart.org

Education

B.S. Education, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 1981

M.A. Movement Education, Sierra University, Costa Mesa, CA 1988

MSMT (Registered Master Somatic Movement Therapist), International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association, NYC, NY 1989-present

Teaching History

- Teacher of Creative Dance and Drama in Madison, Wisconsin public schools (1978-82)
- Director children’s dance theater in Madison, WI (Shazzam! (1980-82) and Co-Motion Theater (1984-86)
- Touring Artist and Teacher, National Endowment for the Arts Artist-in-Residence in Wisconsin K-12 Education (1982-86)
- Apprenticeship with dance pioneer Anna Halprin at **Tamalpa Institute** (1986-88)

As a collaborator and teaching associate of Anna Halprin over a span of 30 years, McHugh furthered her legacy of somatically-based, non-stylized movement in three areas: (Movement Ritual 1/Dance Explorations), Dance in the Natural Environment, and Community-based Rituals (Circle The Earth: 1988-91, Assistant Director) and (The Planetary Dance: 1992-2012, Co-leader).

Tamalpa Institute Core faculty (1988-94):

- The Training Program (Movement Ritual 1 emphasis in full-time 6 month program)
- The Healing Arts Program (ongoing classes for people with life-threatening illnesses)
- Community classes (weekly community building dance with live music)
- The Summer Intensive (2 weeks of the 4-week intensive, focusing on Movement Ritual 1 and Dance in the natural environment at Point Reyes Seashore)

Tamalpa Institute Adjunct faculty (1995-2017):

- Summer Intensive: 2 weeks of the 4-week intensive, 1 week on Movement Ritual 1 (studio) and 1 week on Dance in the Natural Environment - Residential at Point Reyes Seashore (1995-2007)
- Level 2 Facilitator Training Seminars in Somatic Skills (1995-2017)

San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California:

Adjunct faculty at John F. Kennedy University (Master's Program in Holistic Health Education)

- Practicums in Somatic Movement Education (1991-2015)

Facilitator at The Institute for Health and Healing at Columbia Pacific Medical Center

- "Movement as Medicine" classes for HIV+ people (1998-2000)

Director and Facilitator: Somatic-Expressive Movement Arts (SEMA) Training Group

- Monthly Intensives for 6 months, Berkeley, CA (1999-2005)

Facilitator at Gay Life Program, The San Francisco AIDS Foundation

- "Inhabiting the Body of Love" classes (2003-2006)

Facilitator: Embodying Nature

- Annual Week-long Retreats at Sea Ranch, CA (2012-2015; 2018-present)

Director and Facilitator: Somatic Explorations/Active Meditations Training Group

- Sea Ranch, CA (2012-14)

Internationally:

Consultant for the Swiss AIDS Federation

- Annual "Movement as Medicine" retreats for HIV+ people and their caregivers (1998-2007)

Director and Facilitator: Somatic-Expressive Healing Arts (with guest teachers)

- Annual 9 month Training Group in Dortmund and Dusseldorf, Germany (1997-2007)

Selected Guest Teaching

- Alanus University, Bonn, Germany – Embodying Nature (2014 & 2016)
- American Dance Festival, Chapel Hill, NC (2007)
- Breitenbush Hot Springs, Breitenbush, OR (2016)
- Bristol Cancer Center, Bristol, England (1990)
- Dartington Hall, Totnes, England – Embodying Nature (2023)
- Denison University, Granville, OH (2018)
- Esalen Institute, Big Sur, CA (1996)
- National Association for Contemporary Dance, Paris, France (2012)
- Saitama University, Art Department, Tokyo, Japan (2011)
- Sasana Institute for Psychotherapy, Bogota, Colombia (2013)
- Stanford University, Dance Department (2006)

- Tamalpa France, Embodying Nature (2023 & 2024)
- University of Hong Kong, Behavioral Medicine Department (2007)
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dance Department (2016)

Online:

- Embodied Mindfulness Training Groups (2015-present)
- Thinking Body classes (2019-present)
- Somatic Movement Lab Series (2020-present)

Private Practice:

- Individual Sessions in Somatic Movement Education and Therapy – in-person and online (1990-present)

Publications:

- 2021: Guest editor and contributor to *Embodying Eco-Consciousness: Somatics, Aesthetic Practices and Social Action*, Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices (Vol. 13, Issues 1 & 2)
- 2021: *Neo-Luddite of the Dance* – Interview with Victoria Thomas for The Sublime (LA, CA)
- 2017: *Footprints in the Sand* in “Beauty is Experience: Dancing 50 and Beyond” by Emmaly Wiederholt
- 2017: Book Review: *Mindful Movement: The Evolution of the Somatic Arts and Conscious Action* by Martha Eddy, Journal of Dance, Movement and Spiritualities (Vol. 4, Issue 1)
- 2010: *Living with Purpose in the End Times* in “Hope Beneath Our Feet: Restoring Our Place in the Natural World” edited by Martin Keogh (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA)
- 2006: *Soma Play with Gay Men: From Self-Expression to Self-Acceptance* in Yogi Times
- 2000: *Alive at the Edge: Journeying Through Hope and Fear* in Contact Quarterly (Vol. 25, No. 1)
- 1996-97: Monthly Column in The Monthly Aspectarian Magazine (Chicago, IL)
- 1989: *Elemental Motion: Dancing Myths and Rituals*. Contact Quarterly (Vol. 14 No. 2, Spring/Summer)

In addition to Anna Halprin, McHugh’s primary teachers over the years have included:

- Marjorie Barstow (Alexander Technique)
- Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen (Body-Mind Centering)
- Emilie Conrad (Continuum)
- Thich Nhat Hanh (Engaged Buddhism)
- Lorin Smith (Indigenous Healing)

From my early beginnings in 1978 as a creative dance specialist and community artist in public schools to my many years teaching somatic movement as a healing art practice, my consistent mission has been to make dance and movement accessible to every-body, to understand and explore the intelligence, humanity and self-regulating capacities of the body, and to support each person in developing an intimate, pro-active relationship with their own body’s natural creativity – and Grace.

Last updated: 10/2024