

4-30-2005

Addendum: Joe Williams

Joe Williams

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/mimejournal>

Recommended Citation

Williams, Joe (2005) "Addendum: Joe Williams," *Mime Journal*: Vol. 23, Article 13. DOI: 10.5642/mimejournal.20052301.13

Available at: <https://scholarship.claremont.edu/mimejournal/vol23/iss1/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Current Journals at Scholarship @ Claremont. It has been accepted for inclusion in Mime Journal by an authorized editor of Scholarship @ Claremont. For more information, please contact scholarship@cuc.claremont.edu.



ADDENDUM

Note: Contemporary theatre practitioners continue to be influenced by Delsarte's ideas, either through Delsarte's own words or books about him, or through others who were influenced by him. Two practitioners responded to our call for articles, and we have included photographs and text from each of them.

—The Editors

Bust of François Delsarte.

1959 Gift of M.K. Curtis to Dartmouth College. Courtesy of Dartmouth College Library.

JOE WILLIAMS



Williams demonstrating the harmonic movement in Delsarte's principle of "Opposition," using head and arm. Non-harmonic, and angular movements are also explored in a thorough study of Delsarte as taught by Williams. March, 2004. *Photograph by Sueellen Tuttle.*

Joe Williams, a theatre practitioner living in New York City, began teaching himself in 1995 using *The Delsarte System of Expression* by Genevieve Stebbins and continued with other texts. Meeting weekly with friends, he studied and practiced exercises suggested by Stebbins, Shawn, Brown and by Delsarte's own writing. Williams' confidence in the Delsarte technique led him to create his own teaching program, The Delsarte Project, dedicated to restoring the credibility and validity of Delsartean practice,

and he has begun training other teachers. Williams asks: "How has a study based on the Law of Correspondence—"To each spiritual function responds a function of the body; to each grand function of the body corresponds a spiritual act" (Shawn, 31)—become identified as an 'external' acting technique?" In his teaching, Williams carries forward Stebbins' admonitions against "mechanical mugging," "imitation" and "consciously" using Delsarte while acting, and has, instead, created a range of exercises, demonstrating Delsartean principles as an illustration of human nature and body language. As taught by Williams, Delsarte is not an acting technique, but a movement



Without a mirror, and without looking at one another, these students at Iowa State University find gestural unity within minutes, when, according to Delsartean principles, the space around their bodies is explored as a language. March, 2004. *Photograph by Sueellen Tuttle.*

exploration that coordinates the physical language of body, mind and heart for creative work, and improves motor efficiency, reflexes and range of motion. For Williams, the Delsarte material is part spiritual practice, part physical training for actors, and part therapeutic movement. He includes Delsarte materials in yoga classes he teaches, and uses Delsarte in training actors, dancers, singers and visual artists. He frequently travels to teach seminars and master classes on Delsarte, and is currently a faculty member of the Dalcroze Institute at Juilliard, using Delsarte to teach movement to musicians and music teachers. In addition to work as a teacher, he has for five years directed The Delsarte Dance Ensemble at the Fourth Universalist Society in Manhattan.

Williams and the Fourth Universalist Delsarte Dance Ensemble in “The Call of Pan.” Movement through space, and use of time, from Delsarte’s “Laws of Gesture” are central to their dance vocabulary. May, 2004. *Un-attributed photograph.*

