

# Dancing with technology

The *Years 7–10 Dance Syllabus* and the *Stage 6 Dance Syllabus* are fostering the integration of technology into classroom practice.

The draft Years 7–10 syllabus outlines opportunities to introduce students to technologies and new media that can assist student learning in dance.

The Stage 6 syllabus allows students to study Dance and Technology as a major, in either virtual dance or film and video.

The following are ICT examples, which students can employ in their dance studies:

**Multimedia presentation** to video dance performances and compositions in order to manipulate materials, present, and critically appraise works.

**Simulation/modelling** using movement application software to enhance the study of dance composition.

**Software programs** to create, store and edit movement.

**Electronic communication** to communicate with individuals or dance organisations for a variety of purposes (*Dance Years 7–10 Draft Syllabus*, p. 22)

## What technology is useful to dance programs?

Dance teachers have access to a number of hardware and software programs which they can integrate into classroom teaching practice. These include:

- video cameras
- the CD-ROM *Stagestruck* and *Lifeform* software
- CD and DVD players and recorders
- videos of dances
- music and video editing programs
- Internet and other research tools.

The level to which these are used is dependent on the student's stage of learning and the school's dance resources.

## How can technology be integrated into dance programs and units of work?

Video cameras can be used to record students' works in progress, and for assessment. Students can use these recordings to analyse their performances in relation to:

- alignment and safe dance practices
- potential for injury
- phrasing and sequencing
- application of performance quality and interpretation.

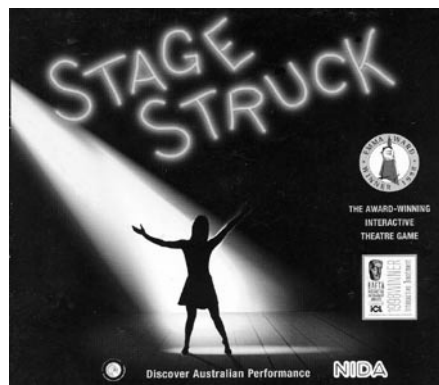
In composition students can examine their video recordings for:

- application and manipulation of the elements of dance
- the use and manipulation of motifs
- use of phrases, transitions, variation and contrast in structuring their dances.

Teachers could then access recordings of the student's work to monitor progress in technique or to review the student's understanding of the compositional process.

## Stagestruck

*Stagestruck* is a CD-ROM distributed to schools in 1999 that can be used by dance and drama students. (Additional copies can be ordered from NIDA at: [www.nida.com.au](http://www.nida.com.au))



## Activities

The dance part of the program is found by following the prompts to the backstage area. These areas light up as the screen rotates around

the foyer of the Opera House. From the backstage scene, click onto the stage space that is lit.

The movements are found in the **action** area. There are movements for male and female, locomotor, non-locomotor, turns etc. These **actions** are linked together in the **timeline**. Music is accessed under **sounds**. Students can then add sets and a context.

Students could:

- create phrases of movement for a single dancer from the **action** menu
- attach music to suit the movement phrases
- use the choreographic process to: add other dancers, work in canon, change levels, directions, and spatial relationships between dancers
- put the work in context, by creating the set, background and other effects that will enhance the aesthetics of the finished product.

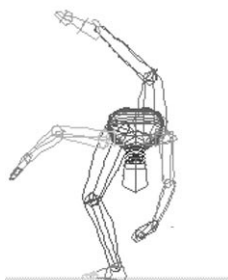
## Lifeforms

*Lifeforms* is an animation program, which allows students to access composition through the medium of virtual dance. Students learn to create movement from shapes. They then can manipulate level, direction, pathways and speed within the virtual space. Movement can be viewed from all perspectives, and students can explore movement potential available to them that may not be possible on real bodies.

### Activities

Students can use the software to:

- create movement in real space and translate this movement into the virtual medium
- explore manipulations of a motif in virtual space



- work from a stimulus to develop motif shapes

- create phrases of movement related to a motif, then cut and paste onto additional figures



- create movement phrases in virtual space, and then either replicate this in real space or manipulate it using the elements of space, time and dynamics.

Introductory tutorials on the *Lifeforms* program are available on the Professional Support and Curriculum web site:

[www.curriculumsupport.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.curriculumsupport.det.nsw.edu.au)

Go to *Dance* and then to *11–12 resources*.

**Music and video editing programs** are more applicable to students in senior classes. Students who choose to do a major study in Dance and Technology will learn to use and apply skills in music and video editing. However students should be building their skills in using video and sound equipment in their junior dance program.

Video editing and production programs such as *Imovie*, *Premier* and *Pinnacle* offer teachers and students software, which is user-friendly and available at a reasonable price for schools.

Music editing programs are many and varied. Teachers need to be aware that some programs will only work with *Apple* or *PC*. The Internet will provide teachers with the best information on what will work for them and meet their needs.

The use of technology is a valuable tool in exploring the elements of dance through a different perspective. Performance, composition and appreciation can be interrelated by accessing technological tools, which will enhance teaching strategies. It also has the added benefit of enhancing learning opportunities, by giving students with different learning styles another access point to achieving syllabus outcomes.

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