Elements of Choreography - Tools You Can Use to Create Dance

BASIC ELEMENTS (all ages)

SHAPES – the lines the dancer's body forms
- straight
curved
angular
twisted
symmetrical
asymmetrical
on-balance
off-balance

ACTIONS/MOVEMENTS – the locomotor and nonlocomotor motions of the dancer's body
- step
walk
run
hop
jump
leap
twist
turn
bend
crawl
roll
slither
pull
push
gestures
stretch
swing
shake
rise
fall

TIME
- Rhythm – beat
even
uneven
syncopated
accented
- Tempo – speed
fast/sudden
slow/sustained
accelerating
decelerating
- Unison/Canon – moving together or asynchronously

Carmina Burana by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin
Silence Within Silence by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin
Carmina Burana by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin

Kai by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin
Science Within Silence by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin

Carmina Burana by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin

Kai by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin

Science Within Silence by Stephen Mills, performed by Ballet Austin
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SPACE
- **Placement** – where the dancer’s body is on-stage; the horizontal space the dancer’s body occupies

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- **Formation** – where the dancer’s body is in relation to other dancers; the space that groups of dancers occupy
  - lines (straight, diagonal, curved, circular)
  - blocks (square, rectangle)
  - staggered lines

- **Focus** – where the dancer is looking
  - front
  - back
  - sides
  - corners
  - up
  - down

- **Direction/Pathway** – where the dancer is moving
  - forward
  - backward
  - sideways
  - diagonally
  - upward
  - downward

- **Level** – where the dancer’s body is in the air; the vertical space the dancer’s body occupies
  - high
  - medium
  - low
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ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS

- Force – the power with which a dancer performs a movement
  - light to strong
- Flow – the energy a dancer uses to perform a movement
  - bound/controlled to free/uncontrolled

ELEMENTS THAT ADD COMPLEXITY

- repetition – recurring steps or patterns
- contrast – opposition in steps or patterns
- transitions – movement connecting steps
- sequence – flow of steps from one to another and the order in which they are arranged
- relationships
  - between people/characters
  - partnering
  - leading/following