

MANITOBA CULTURAL SOCIETY OF THE DEAF

A NEW RHYTHM: TEACHING BEYOND SOUND

Working with an Interpreter:

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When working with an interpreter it is important to be aware of the following:

- Interpreters are trained professionals and adhere to a strict code of ethics. It is important to note that when hiring an interpreter, it is best to hire a trained interpreter who is a member of CASLI (Canadian Association of Sign Language Interpreters) or RID (Register of Interpreters for the Deaf). Find an interpreter at <https://www.avlic.ca/about/members-directory> or <https://myaccount.rid.org/Public/Search/Member.aspx>.
- Prior to the classes, the interpreter will be in contact to acquire preparation materials such as: teaching notes, choreography videos, class plans, and music. They will also ask for any dance related vocabulary that may be used. The preparation material collected is kept confidential and will not be shared with the Deaf or Hard of Hearing (DHH) individual. The sole purpose of this is for the interpreter to be prepared and provide the best interpretation possible.
- Make eye contact and speak directly to the Deaf or Hard of Hearing individual. When they respond, the interpreter will use first person language to convey their message. If the interpreter needs clarification or for you to slow down, they will clearly identify that they are asking as the interpreter and not for DHH individual.
- Interpreters are only there to facilitate communication and will remain impartial; this includes being neutral outside of the class as well. They will not answer questions themselves, give advice or add their opinion.
- The interpreting process takes time. Therefore, the interpreter could be behind a sentence or two. Please allow extra time when asking the class questions such as, 'Is that clear?' or 'Do you understand?' so that the DHH participants have an opportunity to respond before moving on to something new. Once the participants look at you after watching the interpreter it is a good indication that they are caught up on what was just said, and you can continue.
- Positioning is important. Lines of sight should be clear so students can always see both the instructor and interpreter. During instruction the interpreter should be beside the instructor. During the dancing portion of the class, the interpreter should be off to the side (beside the mirror), but still in the students' sight lines.
- Instructors should demonstrate the individual moves and show the beats/counts before asking the students to follow.
- It is important to note that every Deaf or Hard of Hearing participant has individual language preferences as well as varying degrees of hearing status. Some individuals can speak for themselves, lip-read, use hearing aids, have cochlear implants, and only use American Sign Language or a combination of any of the above. It is important to ask each dancer their preferred mode of communication.

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