

Alexis Laureano

Manny Laureano and Lynn DesJardins

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My playlist on my iPod consists of many different genres of music. I like to listen to many different things. When I turn on a song I want to be able to dance to it. But there is one song that I wasn't so sure about dancing to. The meanings to do this song had a great impact on me and other people's lives but in the end there was a beautiful routine that had evolved from one idea, one reason why we danced to this song. The song was Amazing Grace that was dedicated to Courtney's Grandmother.

The song was different; I had never done a dance to a song like this one. Theoretically this score of this song was different. The first part of the song was all acappella, and that was difficult to get used to. The song kept building and building until the end forcing us to, as a group, portray that through our movements. We had to work hard so that our movements matched and looked good when we were on stage. Some times when we would practice it, we would be off with our counts but we still tried our best to keep with it. With the part at the beginning being only words we had to watch each other and work as a team to make our movements flow together and look nice while we performed it.

When we started this routine we were with partners and my partner was Sarah Mills. The first times during practice that we would do the routine she would cry because the song and the movements of the routine touched her and she was really able to relate to the song in an emotional way. When she did the dance she would put those emotions through the steps and movements that she did. Watching her really helped me find ways that I could show my emotions through, a little bit better, while I performed it. Just letting everything go, with keeping good technique and not doing "change-ography", helped me relax and get into the mood of the song and dance a little bit more. I felt the aura in the room change when we did the dance and when we would show and tell other people were almost silent because in some way they could

relate to the song and the emotions that went along with it. I think that every time we did it, the dance would have some effect on a person even if they did not show it on their face.

Just the song Amazing Grace gets me thinking of the hardships that people have to deal with each and every day. Some of those hardships could be minor but some of them can be major. I know for me just some of the little things in life would pile up and after awhile it would just become stressful. When I would dance to Amazing Grace I felt like I could “set free” all of those unwanted emotions that I had. I do that when I dance but when I danced to that song I felt like it was easier to just let all of my emotions out and just dance and not have to worry about anything else.

When we took this piece to competition I felt like I didn't have to worry about anything. I felt like I could just go out there onstage and give my best and dance my heart out. I felt like everyone else felt the same way about it too. And it showed when we got the judges scores back. Even though we are hard on ourselves critiquing every little thing that we did wrong, right when we got off the stage, we still felt like we had accomplished what we needed to and that we showed the audience what we wanted to portray with the piece.

This dance would not have turned out the same if Courtney would not have had the inspiration that she had from her grandmother. It would not have had the same effect on all of us when we performed this routine either. I enjoyed learning this routine because there were many things that I learned and experienced. Amazing Grace is also really memorable to me because it was one of my first lyrical routines as a senior. With the story behind the dance and emotion that went behind it I will never be able to forget this dance, it was amazing, it was Amazing Grace.