

Mondays with MoMA



MoMA

Step 1 Look closely

This is a photograph of a performance. To see this work performed, visit this website: <https://youtu.be/JrxUoZ7HdRk>

Questions

1. What words would you use to describe the actions and gestures of the figures?
2. What do you notice about the way the figures interact with one another?
3. How are the board and ropes part of the performance?

Step 2 Learn more

Slant Board by Simone Forti is part of a series called *Dance Constructions*, based on everyday gestures such as walking, climbing, and standing. *Slant Board* features three or four performers who are instructed to pull on and hang from lengths of rope as they move from top to bottom and side to side on a wooden ramp placed at a forty-five-degree angle to the floor. The performers can improvise gestures as they move around one another's bodies, allowing for chance and play to be part of the process. Forti said, "We didn't know move by move what we were going to do, but we knew, for instance, in *Slant Board* that we were going to be on this inclined plane and that holding these ropes would help us stay on it. And I was interested... in the beauty of people doing this and how they'd shift their weight and grab hold and see what the next move might be."

Step 3 Activity: Cooperative gestures

Materials: Fabric, sheets, cables, ropes, or cords or any everyday items that can be a connector between two or more students. A stable object to attach them to such as a doorknob or door

1. Use your lengths of fabric, rope or cord to connect two or more students to each other or to a stable and secure object.
2. Have the students move around each other and the object in different ways, making sure to be aware of each other's spaces and positions.
3. Pause between movements to allow students to focus their breath and attention for the next movement.
4. Continue these movements for one minute to see how many different ways they can maneuver or navigate space without letting go of the fabric, rope, or cord.
5. Have the students reflect on the process. Reflection Questions: What kinds of movements did you choose? How did the movements of others affect your choices? What sensations or emotions did you experience?

Step 4 Share!

Share your experience with a friend or classmate. Or you can email it to us at MoMA: schoolprograms@moma.org.



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Image: Simone Forti. *Slant Board*. 1961. Dance Constructions, December 6, 2018, as part of Judson Dance Theater: *The Work Is Never Done*, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, September 19, 2018 – February 2, 2019. Performers: Samuel Hanson, Martita Abril, Quenton Stuckey. Digital image © 2021. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Photo: Paula Court