

## Interview of Beata

Personal Interview of Beata related to West Coast and Dance Who or what did you see that first attracted you to dancing?

I couldn't tell you — Mom had me in Ballet lessons at 4 and to hear my parents tell it, that was just to tame the dancing I was already doing on a pretty constant basis. Which coach or dancer influenced you the most?

At which point in time? Old musicals, my ballet teachers, Michael Jackson Videos, when MTV started, Soul Train and American Bandstand, everyone dancing in the clubs during the disco days (early to mid 80s) in dance clubs 7 nights a week doing freestyle and hustle, my teaching pals at the Arthur Murray and other studios I worked in teaching ballroom.

Considering just WCS and my time competing in this dance community — Annie Hirsch, Jack Carey, Teddy Kern, Mark "the Marine" Scheuffele, Mario Robau, Jr., Mary Ann Nunez, every dancer I've seen or danced with — Are you working on anything in your own dancing?

Always — if I wasn't — Why do it?

Can I ask what it is? Diversity of use of my legs, feet, hips, ribs, and other "parts" for smooth and musical execution. Exploring delivery of emotion, message --art in movement. Hustle — modernizing my techniques and understanding the changes the dance has experienced

in the last 30 years. Teaching more Social Ballroom and working out a program to make it more dance floor and operator friendly. Do you feel like you've "made it" in your career?

I've absolutely reached a couple high points on a couple of goals that I don't expect to exceed in this lifetime but I have other goals in other parallel directions in my plans. My dance life is composed of a couple of different "careers" or goal lines. I probably won't surpass my competition accomplishments but there are always more people to teach and more dance difficulties to solve.

How do you know when you see a dancer who has lots of potential?

They are standing with 2 feet under them. (even 2 left feet or a peg leg will do) Every person who has any reach or desire for dance has potential --INFINITE POTENTIAL -limited only by THEIR decision and determination. Realization of that potential is almost completely a manifestation of the decisions about values that THAT individual makes related to the many elements that compose fair, good or great dancing, competing or performing. Is dance your career, or do you have another less important job?

Dance and things related to the dance events and dance community are my main source of income. Performing, Judging, Emceeing, Teaching, hosting cruises or vacations for dancers —. Are a few of the dance related activities that are part of my career. But I'd have to say life is my career and that social responsibility is as high a priority if not a bit higher priority for me. Dance is a perfect social, interactive, creative, expressive, invigorating endeavour but I can not in good conscience partake of dance without paying attention to and doing something about social ills. I run the Dallas Chapter of Criminon, a reform and rehabilitation program for people that have committed crimes and want to recover their self-respect. It is based upon 8 correspondence courses that are done from jail, prison or home. At this writing I have been working with the Inmate Programs Division of the Dallas County Jail. I have 45 men and women enrolled on the courses and we are preparing to do onsite delivery of the key course. What advice would you give to a beginner dancer who never thinks they will get West Coast Swing?

Cancel that thought. Wipe it out of existence because it is your first barrier to getting the dance. Once you see it as a possibility — To be good --your only limitations are the 3 Barriers to Study that can inhibit any form of study or learning. Those are 1. Misunderstanding or not understanding a word or idea related to what you are learning. 2. Lack of the Mass or physical thing you are working with — in dance this is key because it is a doing-ness that requires lots of practice to "make it your own". 3. Too Steep a Gradient — if you find yourself doing OK then not getting the new thing you are trying, you either didn't quite fully have the thing before or a step/idea/skill was skipped that is need to get this thing (you wouldn't ask a baby to go straight from crawling to running — walking would need to happen in between)

I always find, when someone is struggling with learning WCS or any dance, that one of these barriers is missed. This is often why — when you get with a teacher — they go back to basics with you or introduce you to some fundamental concept that is missing in your skill set.

People arrive at the dance — seeing it as possible, or they wouldn't try — then they run into a barrier and don't fix that — THEN they decide they "will never get this dance". Back up through the process — if you started thinking YOU COULD GET IT — THEN YOU CAN!!!! Find the barrier and clean it

up. Something not understood, not enough practice before pushing on, or something missed in the skills.

The Study Technology described above was developed by L Ron Hubbard and I apply it constantly in my teaching and my own learning. It is the biggest reason that I am a good instructor.

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