

SPARE**Times**

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### Works & Process: 'The Art of Teaching: Participation and Perception'

When the former New York City Ballet principal Damian Woetzel was learning to dance as a child, he took the fairly structured sort of classes you'd expect from the Boston Ballet.

On Sunday, when Mr. Woetzel, above at the Vail International Dance Festival, which he directs, leads a session of the Guggenheim Museum's Works & Process series with the Harvard political philosopher Michael J. Sandel, he will take a slightly different approach.

"We plan it to be fairly freewheeling in format," Mr. Woetzel explained via e-mail, "but essentially we will go back and forth between examining teaching, participation and performance in the arts and in the classroom."

Translation: the audience will get to dance.

The event, "The Art of Teaching: Participation and Perception," promises to be an enhanced version of the course on justice that Mr. Sandel teaches at Harvard (and online and on PBS), Mr. Woetzel said, supplemented by an examination of performing. Fortunately for balletomanes, that examination will involve the New York City Ballet principals Robert Fairchild, Tiler Peck and Joaquin De Luz, who will demonstrate repertory and will be coached by Mr. Woetzel, presumably so that we can see how they learn.

And the audience gets its turn, too.

"We will explore dancing and learning through choreography, examining and using various works by Balanchine and Robbins," Mr. Woetzel said. "In fact, I am going to teach the audience a small piece of work created by each of them."

This is not the first time that Mr. Woetzel will explore dance with people who are not as, er, lithe as he. Last year Mr. Woetzel, who graduated from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government in 2007, led an audience-participation event as part of the university's commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That occasion evidently planted the seeds for this one.

"When you learn and participate in a dance, no matter how simple, you experience a unique transformation because you yourself are what the art is made of," Mr. Woetzel said. "You are the art, and it can be a revelation."

(Sunday at 7:30 p.m., Peter B. Lewis Theater, Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, at 89th Street, 212-423-3587, [worksandprocess.org](http://worksandprocess.org); \$30; \$25 for members; \$10 for students and anyone 25 and under.)

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