

Jamie McHugh, MA, MSMT – Teacher and Artist

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Jamie McHugh, MA, MSMT is a Registered Master Somatic Movement Therapist (ISMETA), somatic movement specialist, and interdisciplinary artist living in Western Massachusetts. He is the creator of Somatic Expression® - Body Wisdom for Modern Minds, an integrative approach to the art and craft of embodiment. www.somaticexpression.com

He offers trainings, classes, and individual sessions both in person and online in pragmatic body wisdom to empower individuals in reclaiming bodily agency through the five indigenous technologies of the body: Breath – Vocalization – Contact – Movement - Stillness. The accessibility and simplicity of this approach comes out of 45 years of personal and professional practice with a wide range of students and clients in varied contexts.

McHugh is also the creator of NatureBeingArt, abstract contemplative photography of the natural environment for both fine art reproductions and two online video stream collections - “contemplative motional art”: 7 Days of Beauty Project and The Breathing Room Series. www.naturebeingart.org

Jamie McHugh is available for online or in-person guest lectures, master classes, seminars and podcasts revolving around the somatic movement arts and their application to the performing arts, mindfulness, ecology, healthcare and overall wellness.

Education

- **B.S.** Education, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI 1981
- Apprenticeship with **Anna Halprin** at **Tamalpa Institute**, Kentfield, CA (1986-88)
- **M.A.** Movement Education, Sierra University, Costa Mesa, CA 1988
- **MSMT** (Registered Master Somatic Movement Therapist), International Somatic Movement Education and Therapy Association, NYC, NY (1989-present)

Teaching History

- Teacher of Creative Dance and Drama in Madison, Wisconsin public schools (1978-82)
- Director children’s dance theater in Madison, WI - **Shazzam!** (1980-82) and **Co-Motion Theater** (1984-86)
- Touring Artist and Teacher, National Endowment for the Arts Artist-in-Residence in Wisconsin K-12 Education (1982-86)
- **Tamalpa Institute** (1988-2017) As a collaborator and teaching associate of **Anna Halprin** over a span of 30 years, McHugh furthered her legacy of somatically-based, non-stylized movement in three areas: (Movement Ritual 1/Dance Explorations), Dance in the Natural Environment, and Community-based Rituals (Circle the Earth and The Planetary Dance).

Tamalpa Institute Core faculty (1988-94):

- The Training Program (Movement Ritual 1 emphasis in full-time 6 month program)
- The Healing Arts Program (ongoing classes for people with life-threatening illnesses)
- Community classes (weekly community building dance with live music)
- The Summer Intensive (2 weeks of the 4-week intensive, focusing on Movement Ritual 1 and Dance in the natural environment at Point Reyes Seashore)

Tamalpa Institute Adjunct faculty (1995-2017):

- Summer Intensive: 2 weeks of the 4-week intensive (1995-2007)
- Level 2 Facilitator Training: Seminar in Somatic Skills (1995-2017)

San Francisco Bay Area and Northern California Teaching:

- Adjunct faculty at **John F. Kennedy University** (Master's Program in Holistic Health Education) Practicums in Somatic Movement Education (1991-2015)
- Facilitator at **The Institute for Health and Healing** at Columbia Pacific Medical Center "Movement as Medicine" classes for HIV+ people (1998-2000)
- Director and Facilitator: **Somatic-Expressive Movement Arts** (SEMA) Training Group Monthly Intensives for 6 months, Berkeley, CA (1999-2005)
- Facilitator at **Gay Life Program**, The San Francisco AIDS Foundation "Inhabiting the Body of Love" classes (2003-2006)
- Facilitator: **Embodying Nature** Annual Week-long Retreats at Sea Ranch, CA (2012-2015; 2018-2023)
- Director and Facilitator: **Somatic Explorations/Active Meditations Training Group** Sea Ranch, CA (2012-13)

International Affiliations:

- Consultant for the **Swiss AIDS Federation** Annual "Movement as Medicine" retreats for HIV+ people and their caregivers (1998-2007)
- Director and Facilitator: **Somatic-Expressive Healing Arts Program** (with guest teachers) Annual Training Group in Dortmund and Dusseldorf, Germany (1997-2007)

Selected Guest Teaching

- Alanus University, Bonn, Germany – Embodying Nature (2014 & 2016)
- American Dance Festival, Chapel Hill, NC (2007)
- Breitenbush Hot Springs, Breitenbush, OR (2016)

- Bristol Cancer Center, Bristol, England (1990)
- Dartington Hall, Totnes, England – Embodying Nature (2023)
- Denison University, Granville, OH (2018)
- Esalen Institute, Big Sur, CA (1996)
- National Association for Contemporary Dance, Paris, France (2012)
- Saitama University, Art Department, Tokyo, Japan (2011)
- Sasana Institute for Psychotherapy, Bogota, Colombia (2013)
- Stanford University, Dance Department (2006)
- Tamalpa France, Embodying Nature (2023, 2024 & 2025)
- University of Hong Kong, Behavioral Medicine Department (2007)
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dance Department (2016)

Online Teaching:

- Embodied Mindfulness Training Groups (2015-present)
- Unplug to Connect – A Somatic Approach to NSDR: Non-Sleep Deep Rest (2019-present)
- Somatic Movement Lab Series (2020-2023)
- Embodying Nature – Explorations in One’s own Bioregion (2022-present)

Selected NatureBeingArt Exhibits:

- “Living Oceans” Group Show, Falkirk Cultural Center, San Rafael, CA (2017)
- “Living Water” Group Show, Cavallo Point, Sausalito, CA (2012)
- Solo Show, First Unitarian Church, San Francisco, CA (2009)
- Solo Show, The Bay Model, Sausalito, CA (2009)
- Solo Show, Claremont Club Gallery, Berkeley, CA (2008)
- Solo Show, Alta Bates Hospital Gallery, Berkeley, CA (2008)
- Solo show, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA (2007)

Online NatureBeingArt Videos:

- “7 Days of Beauty” and “Breathing Room Series” Contemplative Motion Art (2016-present)

Residencies:

- Glacier National Park, West Glacier, MT (October 2018)
- Denison University, Dance and Somatics, Granville, OH (April 2018)
- University of Wisconsin-Madison, Dance Department (September 2016)

Selected Performances:

- **Murmurations** (performer, 2024) A sonic improvisation based on current events for the Somatic Dance and Performance Festival, Geneva, NY
- **My Flag** (performer, 2004/2018) A solo theater/dance piece to reclaim the American flag created for an ACLU benefit in San Francisco; re-staged in 2018 for a studio concert.
- **Alive at the Edge: Field Notes from an Endangered Species** (performer, 1994-96) A solo show focusing on HIV, ecology, and social repression that toured the US, Canada, Germany and Switzerland over the span of 2 years for 28 performances.
- **Circle the Earth** (performer and assistant director, 1987-91) Community dance project by Anna Halprin in California focusing on world issues involving 100+ non-professional dancers.

Private Practice:

- Individual Sessions in Somatic Movement Education and Therapy – in-person and online (1990-present)

Publications:

- 2021: Guest editor and contributor to *Embodying Eco-Consciousness: Somatics, Aesthetic Practices and Social Action*, Journal of Dance and Somatic Practices (Vol. 13, Issues 1 & 2)
- 2021: *Neo-Luddite of the Dance* – Interview with Victoria Thomas for The Sublime (LA, CA)
- 2017: *Footprints in the Sand* in “Beauty is Experience: Dancing 50 and Beyond” by Emmaly Wiederholt
- 2017: Book Review: *Mindful Movement: The Evolution of the Somatic Arts and Conscious Action* by Martha Eddy, Journal of Dance, Movement and Spiritualities (Vol. 4, Issue 1)
- 2010: *Living with Purpose in the End Times* in “Hope Beneath Our Feet: Restoring Our Place in the Natural World” edited by Martin Keogh (North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, CA)
- 2006: *Soma Play with Gay Men: From Self-Expression to Self-Acceptance* in Yogi Times
- 2000: *Alive at the Edge: Journeying Through Hope and Fear* in Contact Quarterly (Vol. 25, No. 1)
- 1996-97: Monthly Column in The Monthly Aspectarian Magazine (Chicago, IL)
- 1989: *Elemental Motion: Dancing Myths and Rituals*. Contact Quarterly (Vol. 14 No. 2, Spring/Summer)

In addition to Anna Halprin, McHugh’s primary teachers over the years included:

- **Marjorie Barstow** (Alexander Technique)
- **Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen** (Body-Mind Centering)
- **Emilie Conrad** (Continuum)
- **Thich Nhat Hanh** (Engaged Buddhism)
- **Lorin Smith** (Indigenous Healing)

Last updated: 02/2026