

Freedom
adventurous mind

Rigour
scientific mind

Virtue
simple heart



Danza Duende



"Dancing your Life"

Authentic in your art, Artist in your life !

Small summary guide for beginners in Duende Dance

«Without fear, without second thoughts, and without effort, we'll let unknown gestures, dance movements, and songs never heard spring from spiritual space. The dance must arise from emptiness, free from attachment, as a rainbow takes shape in space. The gesture of the dance is a reflection in the mirror of enlightenment. »

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What is Duende ?

Duende is a word that evokes a **moment of authentic presence, manifested poetically through artistic expression**. It is an experience that goes beyond concepts, memory, and projections. It brings together like a magnet, the witnesses of its manifestations, and it opens their spirits, as the sunlight seeps through a gap into a cave.

Duende cannot be grasped or learned, or transmitted. It cannot be defined. It does not depend on the technique or the skill of the artists. It manifests spontaneously, opens our hearts, and then goes away as mysteriously as it came.

How do you evoke Duende?

By renouncing what is not Duende. By giving up the idea of self as the structure, the systematic centre that determines what we perceive. By fully letting yourself go, immediately, without reservation, without hope and fear. **By opening our awareness to space and without restraint to the here and now**. To leave behind the blind attachment to a dualistic view of our ordinary perceptions: self/other; here, there; good/bad; inside/outside; show/watch. Allow yourself to be as you are, here and now, without hope or fear, free and spontaneous. Train to let the natural beauty of your feelings flow unimpeded and truthfully, free of mental fabrications. Open up the channels through which your inner invisible and unspeakable experience can manifest outward freely. Train your body to channel this flow, with sensitivity and precision.

Why do you have to practice Duende Dance?

For oneself: to recognize and to open out the natural qualities we are endowed with as human beings, to cultivate them, share them and live our love of poetry. Abandon your fear of freedom.

For others: to inspire the birth/growth/maturity of a society whose motivation, inspiration and priorities cultivate dignity, kindness and intelligence of the heart in all their aspects. To create joy and happiness around you thanks to a simple, gentle and strong clarity.

The fundamental structure of Duende Dance

Although elusive, and impossible to grasp, **Duende is always latent in every situation**. Discovering it is like opening a window into an infinite landscape: behind the wall, space and light have always existed, but we have never noticed them.

If you often find Duende in your artistic expression, you hold the keys to extending the experience to all other aspects of your life: **"just live as you sing, live as you dance, and live as you cook food"**. Duende teaches us the attitude that suits itself. We can live

Duende. We can train ourselves to live with the door open onto the space where Duende unfolds, the space where Duende dances.

Methods of training in Duende

All methods of the school solely aim at **creating situations, which allow possibilities for us to let our intrinsic qualities of wisdom and goodness come out.** Such qualities are bright and instinctive but it's necessary that an absolute sense of freedom, attention and sensitivity are present for them to come out. A continuous training enables us to change our usual trends with the aim of connecting us with the afore said dimension. We have to **change our perspectives** as regards dualistic mental phenomena and improve our physical and mental skills as well as our skills in language in order to easily share this vision avoiding any aggressiveness and manipulation.

Such training includes innumerable possible exercises, that relate to situations in which one or more among the following experiences are actualized:

A. FREEDOM: space and time without hindrances, here and now, the non-dual perspective of our cognitive perceptions.

B. RIGOUR: the union of natural rhythm and harmony, the fundamental health which gives the energy needed to travel arises from the deep insight in nature.

C. VIRTUE: the intrinsic qualities that create joy are at the same time the foundation and the natural result of such kind of freedom as it is possible to attain thanks to discipline. In the same way as « poisoned » behaviours generate suffering and suffering at its turn influences ignorance, non-dual virtue fathers an unconditional joyfulness, which at its turn engenders still more virtue.

How do you get it ?

- ❖ The training in Duende Dance cannot and must not be formatted.
- ❖ The training avails of a full array of exercises as well as of the spontaneous creation of situations that enable the pupil to freely explore the whole of his/her senses, his/her body, language and mind.
- ❖ The structure of the work takes always inspiration from the paradoxical symbolical link between Heaven and Earth that is represented by the human being.
- ❖ Examples of themes for the exercises:
 - **Meditation and meditative walking.**
 - **Space: Exterior** / exercise aimed at improving our skills in managing such space and in connecting simultaneously with the vastness of space, the geometrical cuts in space, or chaos inside space. **Space: Interior** / our management of interior

space and its language. No more separation between the notions of exterior and interior space, but the rejoining of such notions attained through the work on sensitive and cognitive perceptions.

- **Time** / the relativity of our perception of time and our ability to live speed in slow motion or the suspension of time with intensity.
- **The Others and Me** / thanks to the previous exercises we can start to include the "others" in our experience of space and time. In this way we find ourselves in a different perspective: the "others" are neither more a potential promise or a potential threat, they form a natural part of our experience and we offer them our being open to the Duende. We identify ourselves with the whole situation instead of being tightened to our obsession of "me", which make us stay in the wait for something or be afraid of something else. In this way we free ourselves totally from the prejudices that hinders the manifestation of Duende.
- **First thought, best thought and sculpture alternated with improvisation in chaos** / this a method, which allow us to improve our ability in improvisation at the same time as it enables us to nurture our spontaneous clarity of language. Such technique allow us also to get a flexible mind, to develop our observing feeling, to stay keeping our hear to the ground without grabbing experiences and keep them still, while we learn how to invoke the manifestation of such experiences. Thanks to such methods we can quickly learn very different forms, we can learn how to create new forms, or to recognize the unconscious memory of our body. We can also learn how to see through the sense of improvisation of other people and communicate with them in a spontaneous way.
- **To ride** / set of exercises consisting in getting supported by a set of iterative combinations, more or less elaborate, in order to reach a clear and rigorous state of mind. This is the ideal training to allow us approach the mathematical dimension and get accustomed to it. It is very effective in relation to choreographic improvisations and creations.
- **To whirl** / set of exercises consisting in whirling for a long time with different techniques. It is very important and definitely essential in the course of this training.
- **The invocation** / this technique consists in a full connection with an emotion, a quality, a feeling, or an archetype (this last may be someone in the flesh), which are then immediately brought to life. Invocations can comprehend all our perceptions and lead us to immediately overtake our imaginary limitations.
- **Feminine energy and masculine energy** / this work consists in finding, harmonizing and balancing our yin and yang qualities. We learn how to bring them to life, pace them and harmonize them.
- And so on...and so on...

- ❖ The teacher devotes himself/herself in full to the transmission of the essence of his/her own realization in steady evolution. As Duende is by nature elusive, the teaching of Duende is based on the very grace, which becomes manifest once the availability, integrity, openness and generosity of the teacher are brought to life here and now.
- ❖ The pupil discovers the infinite potential of his/her existence as human being. He/she becomes conscious that is possible to work at all levels of his/her life.
- ❖ The pupil gets accustomed to overcoming the limitations that are created by his/her usual habits. He/she establishes the foundations of a close and deep friendship with him/herself and with the whole world. He/she explores the mechanisms that entail suffering. He/she uses the support of his/her discipline in order to transform hindrances into sources of inspiration and knowledge.
- ❖ The pupil, inspired by the energy of Duende and based on the strength of his/her discipline becomes aware of his/her active participation in the life of humanity. He/she gives his/her contribution to the creation of a society oriented to the culture of goodness and knowledge. Beyond his/her relevant fears to the perspective of failures and insecurity, liberated from his/her expectancy of success, fame and prosperity, he/she finds an undeniable satisfaction in unconditional love, which is a source of inspiration for him/her as well as he/she finds satisfaction in the very discovery of the freshness of his/her existence. He/she can relax him/herself and enjoy a permanent openness that connects him/her to the reality of his/her experience, beyond differing conceptions and opinions.

Difficulty and value of apprehending Duende Dance

Learning brings many difficulties as the sources, perspectives and objectives of Duende training are real, and they can be hard on the consciousness of the pupil, whose education, generally speaking, didn't include an awareness of the existence of such a clear consciousness.

The Duende pupil is a pioneer and he/she grasps the signification of such a charge by opening tracks for the others in an absurd jungle where the spiritual needs of human beings are willingly and habitually ignored and from an unacknowledged fear of freedom.

In return the universal force of the discoveries that the pupils gather little by little in the course of their investigation will enable them to create solidarity, tolerance and deep friendship bonds with the various, exceptional persons who carry on maintaining their same direction. If we as single individuals engender, cultivate and protect « Duende » spirit, the structures of our society will be altered by this in a natural way. All human beings create, all they once created and all they will create in future is a product of their spirit. If we discover the nature of such spirit – the one which perceives the world – and work on it then we are on our way to heal the illnesses of the world.

To begin with the pupil faces the discovery of fundamental Goodness. Such term was chosen by Chogyam Trungpa in order to designate the nature of our spirit, which is free, sweet, rich, careful, intense, open and infinite. Such nature is clear and bright, always present, just like sky is always there. It gives a foundation to all conceivable possibilities of enlightenment. It's an accessible, open field- you just need to connect to it. In order to make this connection it is necessary to let go of heaps of conceptions, which limit and confuse your spirit and with which we are accustomed to identify ourselves. (read Dharma Art)

The power to discern fundamental goodness in everyday life opens the door to an unconceivable space of chaotic creativity. Such power inspires us and allows us to appreciate the wonderful subtlety of the quality of our everyday life experience. Nonetheless the prodigious freedom, which is implicit in this discovery is terrifying because of its richness, mobility, quickness and because of the complexity of its creativeness. The control of emotional states as well as conceptual creations can arise.

In a paradoxical way the clarity engendered by the knowledge of our conscious space prevents us from deceiving ourselves any longer as regards our contradictions, our little tricks and our latent mediocrity. The Duende pupil pitilessly discovers that his/her nature is creative and destructive at the same time.

THE FEARS:

The first difficulty appears in the form of our secret fears, which come to the surface. The apprentice discovers the richness of such spirit of his/her own, which life he/she had ignored until the moment he/she sifts his/her perception of the world through such awareness. The confused, restless and fast nature of thoughts, as well as the living stream of the emotions arising there are incredibly intense.

Such a sudden awareness of reality is painful and the clear vastness of the landscape that takes shape in conscience is not reassuring at all. What to do with all this? How to manage so many pieces of information? Wasn't I quieter before this? Am I really so brilliant and hideous at the same time? Wasn't it more comfortable to carry on living in an unconscious way, under the usual anaesthetic? (and comment on my latent blue devils with my colleagues when, becoming 40/45/50 years of age, nothing can prevent me any more from asking myself determinate questions?)

The rigor consists in making the necessary effort during the first step of Duende training with the aim of protecting ourselves from the damages entailed by panic, imagination, cogitation and obsessive preoccupation about ourselves. Thanks to afore said rigor we create and research for our own sake the external situations and conditions and the inner peace that are necessary for our evolution, rather than being oppressed by the difficulties of the journey. Such practise is based on a deep sense of sweetness, goodness and friendship towards ourselves in order to help us become softer, accept our own rhythm and persevere on all fronts. The rigor signals us the childishness of the comparisons we make between us

and the others and we learn to respect the gap which exists between what we actually see, what we refuse to accept and what we project onto the others. Harmony simply consists in disciplining ourselves and accepting ourselves as we are now, while we go on nurturing our consciousness on all front.

Anyway, if we have come here we don't have any reason either to go back or to panic. We have luck. A lot of luck. Let's apply to ourselves all the tenderness, sweetness, wisdom and refinement of feeling that we hope to receive from others: in this way we will be able to show the qualities, which we wish to see expressed by our entourage. It's simply like that, that afore said qualities show themselves, are attracted magnetically and increase. If we were able to learn to walk, speak, read, count, drive a car, dance and sing we can also learn to be good. It's possible. Goodness is no trophy to conquer: it's simply a natural state, engendered by letting the ego go.

THE SENSE OF HUMOUR:

Alain Baudet, the master of Qi Gong and Tai Chi is always evoking the 8th Chakra in his lessons. The Chakra of the sense of humour..and sometime the pupils take note, taking the joke in earnest, instead of laughing at it!

The sense of humour is a fresh shower of gaiety that makes us learn better, relax and not attach too much seriousness to what we feel and what we discover.

Human beings have a natural aptitude to dramatise their emotions, which is normal, as we are dominated by our emotions as a matter of fact. But the sense of humour is the first step to take towards the emancipation from such Shakespearian trend. Without confounding the sense of humour with a poisonous sarcasm, which is a weak method to hide ourselves behind a vulgar joke or disguise a malevolent attitude, we can give ourselves the satisfaction of laughing in the situations without either showing disrespect to anybody or losing concentration. Such lightness is needed in order to prevent the intellectual sclerosis which lies in wait for such pupils as are too serious. The Duende teacher definitely has to foster the sense of humour in the frame of the training.

THE CONFUSION:

Sometimes it happens that, when we start a new work, the panoply of choices that are offered to us comes out to be deafening. So many paths, which one do we travel?

This is an aspect of Freedom.

Discipline consists in carefully choosing the direction in which we have to move and follow the path we have chosen. If a million ideas come to us, let's go back to the starting point. Let go, meditate or start a minimal work aimed at just one element: this can be the solution. It's not necessary to hang on to all ideas that pop up. They don't belong to us. We can let them go without regretting... more ideas will pop up anew...

In order to develop a work, the connection with the spirit of such work allows us to attune our body, language and mind to the sense of the work itself. Even if the exercises we propose seem totally to differ from one another, we know that they will get one meaning when all the pieces of the jigsaw puzzle will be assembled. Because of this, the Duende pupils have to accept that they will sometimes feel confused. Two mainstream techniques exist, which allow us to bypass the rational function of the "Big Supervisor" and leave room to intuition (like the one children possess).

1. By launching the pupil at the core of an anarchic vortex, which will make him/her feel euphoric thanks to such movements as let the neck free or complex rapid changes impossible to foresee.
2. By creating a precise, extremely complex form of working, which will occupy the intellectual capability of the pupil so much that he/she will be left no time to supervise/control, anything at all. This method applies to several sacred dances.

In the Duende training we "surf" from one technique to the other.

THE DOUBTS:

The dance of the spirit consists in going upwards, going downwards, whirling, moving back, moving in a crazy way, and whirling...it's a perpetual movement.

The doubts act in a way like terrorist cells, which sabotage here and there all they can by commenting and judging, thus bringing anguish and suffering. The fear that others wouldn't like us, the fear of not being able to do something, the jealousy, the transfer of our own aggression to the teacher, such little stories as we go on telling to ourselves for hours in details... cogitations that develop in a little stifling dimension, in which the Duende perspective cannot exist. We completely lose the sense of health and freshness. We keep tight to what we want to see. We must allow space to breathe, we must relieve the pressure. We must go back to our inner sense of goodness. The knot is too tight. Let it loosen a little, relax and.. here it is.. go back to the training of what is beautiful, after you have let your thoughts go.

Let's come back to the starting point, practise meditation and exercises relevant to the quiet of the mind, appreciate the details of our lives, observe nature, look at the sky, breathe, sing, have rest in the field of fundamental goodness, all this help us "defuse" doubts. But the greatest protection of all consists in leaving and letting such mechanisms go, as pass from expectance to fear and vice versa. (egocentrism)

THE ENVIRONMENT:

We live extraordinary experiences and we would like to share them with the persons who are closer to us and whom we cherish. Nonetheless, when we try to report our memories of such experiences, we only get to recount our inner experience, which words can never tell.

Our interlocutor can politely let us believe that he/she is listening to us and come to the conclusion that we have lost our head a little. This way we can get to argue with someone, who “doesn’t understand” what we are feeling. It would be wise to be prudent the moment we communicate our inner experiences.

Anyway it is possible to share our experiences. But such sharing is always a matter of here and now. What we share can have the same source, quality, and colours as the memory of our experience but it is always new, it is always happening here and now. Do like Zorba the Greek does, dance your story. Don’t tell it, sing it, write it in a poem, cook a good meal while you are thinking of what you want to offer your friends. It’s definitely more effective. Don’t try to explain what has no explanation.

Duende in our life is like that. And this way it prevents the engendering of shocks, that can destabilize the persons in your environment, who cannot always be ready to share such inner elements on rational terms. On the contrary we always like to share such unexpected and sudden experience of Duende, an angel passing by, a breach through which light enters...

THE SURVIVAL:

One of the key subjects of Duende training is survival: the trading of art and the way we manage our relation to such aspects of our activity. If we grasp how to connect with “Duende” our professional relationships implying money can follow the same principles of freedom, rigour and virtue. The difficult aspect in this field is the development of a true confidence in the validity of our path, so that we aren’t apt to give up at the first occasion. “To give up” here means to lie, offer an adulterated product, take part in a bad work being unaware of such aspect, deceive people, manipulate them, betray ourselves, fail to respect the market of work and not take into account the needs of the team of our colleagues.

This matter will be an important subject of investigation in the course of Duende training. In the wait for this it is good to intensify our own awareness of the issue of the management of our sustenance, especially if we are teachers or artists.

THE PASSION AND CURIOSITY:

All the experiences of our life, the good ones as well as the painful ones turn to precepts of Duende. Our interest in the phenomena and the world doesn’t stop growing and the smallest detail can answer our questions. The intuition of a symbolic dimension of the world offers itself to us. All this helps us go on with the humble and innocent aptitude of the beginner. All this contributes to give us more energy so that we are able to sincerely help the persons of our environment with love and in an effective way.

THE FORMS:

Duende gives us the keys to create or learn all possible forms and also to free ourselves of forms if it's necessary. Anyway it is recommended that the student keeps to a formal tradition that can be a basis for him/her. As far as what concerns Duende, such formal tradition can be any discipline that can transmit a true knowledge of body, energy, voice, as well as an intuitive knowledge. Examples: Kung Fu, Bharata Natyam Dance, Contemporary Dance, Chi kung, Chant, Music, Religious Practices, Drawing, Contact improvisation, Bhuto, Painting, Calligraphy, Cooking, Circus Arts, Sculpture, Dramatic Art, Architecture, Sport, etc...

THE PRIDE:

If, after the apprentice of Duende has crossed the dangerous regions of Duende voyage, he/she begins to feel happy, imaginative, generous, skilful, elegant, self-assured and a nice companion, people around him/her begin to praise his/her merits, sometimes make passionate declarations, thank him/her and gratify him/her. It's possible that he/she would better succeed in his/her activities in comparison with what happened before and his/her success would draw friends and jealous people around him/her.

It's the most awkward moment and it pops up any time in different forms in more than on occasion. If pride prevails on Duende, the apprentice will find it difficult to acknowledge his/her own "illness" and as a consequence he/she will transform his/her success into his/her curse. If the apprentice manipulates his/her environment as well as his/her own spirit in order to feel different from others, better than or superior to other people, he/she is going to lose all the benefits of Duende.

The self-esteem connected to our dignity doesn't consist at all in such pride as betrays a total lack of confidence in the reality of fundamental goodness. One day the proud one will see his/her mistake, but it will be too late and it will be a very painful acknowledgement for him/her. It's difficult for a proud person to get aware of his/her weakness and as a consequence, he/she will stop growing. In Facing pride any means is valid in order to prevent its prevailing. Especially the sense of humour, humility, attention to other people, acceptance of our own liability for others' mistakes, invocation, and the culture of unconditioned respect of our masters, are practices aimed at protection from pride.

It's appropriate for the artists to have a prudent attitude towards vanity and pride.

THE LINEAGE:

All those, who transmitted us their knowledge did this out of goodness. Thank to them, we talk, we walk, we read and possibly we wouldn't have been able to behave as human beings, if we hadn't received this education, that enables us to start the Duende voyage. Every day we can observe objects or works, even a simple pair of shoes, which someone skilfully designed for other people.

This network of transmission of knowledge and inspiration influences us more than we believe. If we harbour gratitude and avoid the trap of arrogance towards our predecessors, our connection with the lineage of knowledge is going to come to life through the precepts of Duende. We can connect with it by invoking the friends who inspire us or the masters, who are far from us or who are dead. Our gratitude is a real, powerful source of strength and energy. It enables us to give validity to our foundations, but it helps us also to preclude the risk posed by the trap of vanity. Gratitude towards the ones who have permitted us to live, love and understand our world is an honourable practice.

THE TRANSMISSION:

In our turn, we are the sole carriers of all that our life can transmit as regards our experience of the world. Each one of us has a special and unique quality, which he/she is going to offer to other people as an important inheritance. The nature of such inheritance will influence the future engendering either suffering or happiness for other human beings. What we learned, what we understood: that is what we can transmit while being fully calm and sincere. It's important. How many times has it happened that you remember a precious word or moment someone gave you as a gift, whereas the person who made such gift to you doesn't remember it?? All the gifts you can give advisedly and in a conscious way will not be unnecessary. A dance, a gesture, a word, a drawing, a smile, silence .. this world really needs love.