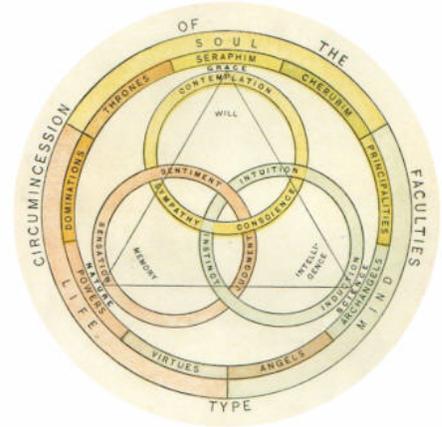


Three Pillars Arts

Dedicated to **shattering** the myths about the teachings of Francois Delsarte and to sharing the truths and artistic value of his work



The Delsarte Project

Developed nearly 150 years ago, the Delsarte System of Expression was, and remains, a powerful force in our understanding of human movement and expression. Nearly lost in history after being reduced by Victorian culture to a melodramatic mockery of its power, today, Joe Williams and Three Pillars ARTS! through the Delsarte Project are working hard to ensure Delsarte's research and teachings are never lost in history again! Delsarte's System of Expression is the body language study that influenced the birth of modern theater, the Alexander Technique, Modern Dance, and the Dalcroze method of music study.

The Delsarte System

The Lost Yoga of Action, Expression and Dance

The authentic Delsarte System of Expression is a complete and universally accurate map of the symbolic meanings of most parts of the body and of basic human movement patterns. It is based on fundamental laws of physics, "body, mind, and spirit" ideas, and on the ancient wisdom of yoga and cabala.

This training awakens the innate athletic prowess and expressive power of the human body, and consists of relaxing exercises to eliminate tension and ready the reflexes, exercises in balance to harmonize all parts of the body, and explorations of the universal symbolism in the body's basic nature to express itself as body, mind and spirit.

Delsarte's studies proved that if body, mind and spirit are our three basic impulses, it follows that all human movement has to be inspired by one or a combination of these three. **Every part of the body that willfully moves or gestures must contain all three and be able to show all three.**

Who benefits from Delsarte?

All students of Delsarte learn how to better understand the forces of life, their own self-expression and that of those around them.

Dancers receive a powerful tool for understanding choreography and styles and for creating dance.

Actors awaken the unconscious power of the body for expressing creativity and responding to other actors.

Singers empower gesture to reveal depth and subtext.

Yogis learn the tangible side of the normally esoteric "body, mind, spirit" trinity.

Painters, sculptors, and digital artists find universal tools for recreating emotion and expression in their medium.

Body, Mind, and Spirit

Does it make sense to you that a person can be described as a combination of Body, Mind and Spirit? The basic impulses of a human being are, after all, survival instinct, intellect, and that mysterious harmony called spirit or emotion. In Delsarte training, we explore body, mind and spirit not as esoteric ideas, but as very real and very practical forces in the body with very specific locations in which they show themselves.

Three different fingers show three different energies



Index finger—Mind

The index finger represents the mind and is used for teaching and instructing.



Middle finger—Spirit

The middle finger manifests the spirit and, when used to touch or caress, shows tenderness, love, mystery.



Thumb—Body

The thumb denotes the force of the body and can be crushing or commanding.

A training in Delsarte awakens the student to the basic expressive meaning of every part of the body. You are a person, body, mind and spirit. Therefore, every movement you make and every part of your body will be an expression of these three things.

The Law of Unity and the Purity of Balance

Delsartean theory describes movement and life. Rather than the “poses and gestures” incorrectly associated with Delsarte, the mathematical and philosophical principles of Monad, Duad, and Trinity, and how they manifest in life and expression are the true center of Delsarte’s work:

Monad Oneness, either on a Universal plane, or the wholeness of a person or object.

Duad Two-ness, polarities or opposites within the oneness, i.e., inner-outer, expansive-contractive, active-passive.

Trinity Harmony between opposites that is necessary to maintain the original oneness.

Unity The coordination of all three forces, the result of the harmony between opposites. This **Law of Unity** plays out in opposite and equal motion, which is the basis of balance. The core of the Delsartean practice is this purity of balance clearly supported by the laws of physics.

Balance sustains itself, while imbalance collapses. Balance creates ease and relaxation, and imbalance brings tension and reduced range of motion.



Joe demonstrates the Law of Opposite and Equal Motion.



A Brief History of Francois Delsarte

Francois Delsarte (1811-1871) was a student at the Paris Conservatory, who, unsatisfied with the subjective and posed style of acting taught at the Conservatory, began an intensive study of human movement and behavior. He studied in parks, cafes, hospital wards, churches, mortuaries, and even scenes of disasters. He also studied anatomical medicine. Eventually expressive patterns emerged that he could clearly observe. His “Science of Applied Aesthetics” was a thorough examination of voice, breath, movement dynamics, line and form, and virtually all the elements of the body in their roles as expressive agents of the human impulses, mind, spirit, and vital instinct.

Common Questions

How can a practice developed over 150 years ago benefit artists of today? Delsarte's nine principles of gesture, his law of correspondence between inner experience and physical manifestation, his description of the symbolic nature of straight lines, curves, spirals, diagonals, angles, parallel and sequential movements, and their relationship to human awareness are as artistically valid today as they were when he first began defining them. His analysis of the body and its agents of expression resonate a profound truth, and are a powerful tool for developing body awareness for any artist who aspires to honestly communicate the passions of life.

How did "Delsarte-mania" ruin the legacy of Delsarte's teachings? After being brought to America in 1871 by Steele Mackaye, the only designated protégé of Delsarte, the popularity of Delsarte and his material exploded not only with artists, but in all levels of the culture. Twenty years later, society salons, clubs, and schools were flooded with demands for Delsarte. Victorian culture, however, was not ready for the higher principles of Delsarte, and by 1891, the "Delsarte" practiced across America had become identified with the "poses" and "gestures" taught by the lesser teachers. That fashion of practice was rightly tossed into the trash later when the hunger for more "realistic" acting was awakened again, as it once had been with Delsarte himself. Unfortunately, along with the trash, the real principles of Delsarte's system, as passed on to Mackaye and then Stebbens, and out into the very first schools of dance and drama were also discarded. The name of Francois Delsarte, appeared irretrievably connected to work that neither he nor any of his true followers had created.

Computer Game Animation and Delsarte

Delsarte's principles are not only for dancers and actors, digital animation artists who bring virtual actors to life in computer software games are using his ideas to create ever more realistic and convincing computer animation.

Have you noticed how virtual actors in computer software games are getting better at expressing body language? Steven McBride, a character animator who studied movement at the American Repertory Theater and now works as Cyberflick's in-house dramaturge explains in an article by J.C. Herz in *The New York Times* (9/3/98), "I become a choreographer...I'll set every single dance step so you can see how they're thinking—there might be a blink, a grimace or the raising of a brow just prior to their utterance. That's the difference between theater and dealing with animated characters. You have to go from the outside in."

Working with cutting-edge technology, Mr. McBride continues, "It's funny...I kind of dug back to a really old set of theories—Francois Delsarte. He basically developed a system which lent itself well to gestural work. If you see a character whose elbows are away from the body—like, you see this with a lot of football players, where their elbows are way out from the body—it shows a confidence."

Understanding how to recreate the symbolic emotional code we carry in our bodies is a valuable skill in today's digital animation market. It's interesting to know how "Delsarte's ghost is rattling the machine."

Modern Science Proves Delsarte's Theories

In a recent article by Sandra Blakeslee in *The New York Times* (1/10/06), Sandra writes, "the human brain has multiple mirror neuron systems that specialize in carrying out and understanding not just the actions of others but their intentions, the social meaning of the behavior and their emotions. Mirror neurons allow us to grasp the minds of others not through conceptual reasoning but through direct simulation. By feeling, not by thinking." The discovery is shaking up numerous scientific disciplines, and everyday experiences are being viewed in a new light. Mirror neurons reveal why people respond to certain types of sports, dance, music and art, supporting Delsarte's theory that we value art to the degree that we see ourselves in it, and also supporting his theory of universal gestures having resonance in others.

About Three Pillars Arts

Three Pillars Arts is the first organization dedicated to teaching and promoting the authentic Delsarte System of Expression in this century! Determined to bring the art and science of Delsarte's teachings back to the prominence it deserves, Three Pillars Arts offers programs, workshops, seminars, and guidance to anyone interested in learning and using Delsarte's System of Expression



About Joe Master Delsarte Teacher and Delsarte Evangelist!

Considered the world's leading authority in Delsarte, Joe Williams is internationally recognized for rediscovering the validity of Delsarte for the modern theater. He is on the movement faculty for the Dalcroze Institute at Juilliard, where students of theater, music and dance from around the world learn his Three Pillars approach to Delsarte. His master classes are always received with excited acclaim by artists, and very often with surprise as artists discover how relevant and powerful Delsarte's work is in today's world.

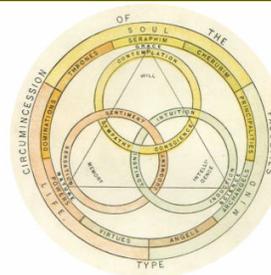
"Joe Williams is a true teacher, one of the finest in the world, and certainly among the best at Juilliard. Any student anywhere can feel fortunate to have him as a teacher." Robert Abramson,
Dalcroze Institute at Juilliard

"Joe Williams embodies the spiritual essence of Delsarte's message for a contemporary world, and for many people of many walks of life. It is a pleasure to understand body language through the Delsarte system, and Joe is a master of it."

*Lori Belilove Artistic Director,
The Isadora Duncan Dance Foundation*

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