

## VANESSA EWAN

**Job title**

Senior Lecturer, Movement, Co-Course Leader  
MA/MFA Movement: Directing and Teaching

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### COURSES

Acting, BA  
Movement: Directing and Teaching, MA/MFA

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### PROFILE

I am currently a Senior Lecturer in Movement for Actors at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, teaching on both the [Acting \(Hons\) BA](#), and the [Movement: Directing and Teaching MA/MFA](#) (of which I am Co-Course Leader). This means that as well as facilitating the work of actors in the studio/rehearsal room, I also take the lead on teaching pedagogy to our MA trainee movement directors and teachers. My core philosophy is always to empower the learner. I see my role as ensuring that every person I teach cultivates an excitement about and keen interest in the language of the body, and the potential of physically expressing the human condition. My role is in establishing Actor Movement as a subject and my hope is that students and colleagues alike might take Actor Movement away as a subject they cannot only define, but also love and respect.

After studying on the Dance Theatre Course at Laban Centre (1978-81), I immediately pursued a life as a specialist in Movement for Actors. Before joining Central 1989, I worked at most of the major drama schools, including East 15 (Head of Movement), Guildhall, Webber Douglas and RADA. During my time at Central I have designed the movement curriculum for the 3-year Acting Course and co-authored the first ever UK MA course in movement for teachers and directors of actors (*MA MFA Movement: Directing and Teaching*). I have also developed and implemented a strand of teaching around Professional Rehearsal Room Practice (PRRP) which interrogates the safety and ethics of the creative process, including producing guidelines for topics such as teaching via online video conferencing and intimacy work.

Along with teaching I have worked on over 100 public productions at Central alone, as movement coach, movement director, and/or choreographer. Interspersed with my work at Central I have worked as a movement consultant and coach in theatre, film and television. As a visiting lecturer offering masterclasses and specialist workshops internationally. I am a fellow of the Higher Education Academy and have worked as a consultant on curriculum development at other institutions, including RADA, East 15 and UNAM. My first book [Actor Movement: Expression of the Physical Being](#), co-written with Debbie Green, was published by Bloomsbury in 2015. This is a movement handbook for actors that offers the reader practice and philosophy in the areas of expertise listed below. A second book [Laban's Efforts in Action, A Movement Handbook for Actors](#), co-written with Kate Sagovsky, was published by Bloomsbury in 2019. This offers my philosophy and a stage-by-stage account of my complete practical process for actors to work with 'The Efforts' - one key part of Laban's work.

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## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- [Actor Movement](#)
- Conservatoire subjects: Movement Expression; Animal Study; Actor's Dance; Observation and Translation
- Character Transformation
- Specialist Keys and Codes: Etiquette, Animal, Drunk, Age, Gender,
- [Laban's Efforts of Action Drive](#)
- Movement in Production: Coach, Advisor,
- Movement Director
- Movement Pedagogy and Curriculum Design
- Professional Rehearsal Room Practice (PRRP): Ethics in the rehearsal room and in Movement Practice
- Intimacy work (Pedagogy of Intimacy Work: Intimacy Direction/Co-ordination)
- The Actor's Body: Identity and Image (TABII)

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## PHD SUPERVISION

I am interested in supervising doctoral projects in the areas of Movement and the Actor; Actor Movement Pedagogy; Professional Rehearsal Room Practice (PRRP); Intimacy Work; Laban and his work.

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## KEY PUBLICATIONS

2019. [Laban's Efforts in Action, A Movement Handbook for Actors](#) by Vanessa Ewan with Kate Sagovsky (Bloomsbury UK/USA)

2018. [Giraffe Time](#) by Nicky Coutts and Vanessa Ewan, Journal of Photography and Culture, vol. 11, Issue 2 (2018), DOI: 10.1080/17514517.2018.1467085

2014. [Actor Movement: Expression of the Physical Being](#) by Vanessa Ewan and Debbie Green (Bloomsbury UK/USA)

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## EXTERNAL PRACTICE

2021. (Invited Speaker). *Public Conversation Intimacy and Actor Training (for publication) Online*. GSA, University of Surrey.

2021. (Invited Speaker/Panellist) *The S Word: Stanislavsky and Intimacy*, Stanislavsky Research Centre,

2021. (Invited Speaker & Panellist) *History Webinar: Realities of Online Teaching: Experiences and Challenges*, Healthy Conservatoires Network Meeting.

2020. (Invited Speaker & Panellist) *History of Intimacy Direction*, Intimacy DI.

2019. (Invited Speaker & Panellist) *The Actors Body Identity and Image*, Healthy Conservatoires Network Meeting. Imperial College London.

**Recent masterclasses and lecture demonstrations which I have delivered include**

2021. (Guest Lecturer) *A Night at the Theatre*, Courtauld Institute.

2018. (Lecturer (Masterclass) *Pedagogy of Intimacy Professional Rehearsal Room Practice for Movement Directors and Teachers*, [ICM](#), Royal Central School of Speech and Drama.

2018. *Embodied Perspectives on Sculpture - A Case Study in Interdisciplinary Research*; with [Ayse Tashkiran](#) and Alexandra Gerstein, Art History Undisciplined 'Actions' Conference, Courtauld Institute, 2018.

2017. (Invited Keynote Speaker) *Thinking in Terms of Movement: A perspective on Laban for Actors*, launch of the Labanarium, GSA, University of Surrey.

2015. (Master Lecture) *Actor Movement: Observation and Translation*, Ingmar Bergman Chair, UNAM, Mexico.

2014. (Masterclass Series) *Movement Direction: Creating Character*, National Theatre.

From 2014 to the present; Ayse Tashkiran and I have been initiating ways in which Central can function as an international centre for actor movement and movement direction (ICM) and have hosted over 150 professional movement practitioners at our ongoing workshop series. Recently, we led a research project collaborating with Dr Alexandra Gerstein, art curator at the Courtauld Institute, to run alongside the Rodin Exhibition at the Courtauld in 2016 and at their conference in 2018.

From 2013 to present I have been leading professional seminars on 'Laban's Efforts of Action Drive', including an *Efforts in Action Intensive* (two-week professional development workshop for actors). Visit [www.labaneffortsinaction.com](http://www.labaneffortsinaction.com) for more information.

From 2009 to present; Founder member of 'The Actor's Body: Image and Identity' working group, researching issues around image in relation to actor training in higher education and in industry practice.

## REGISTER OF INTEREST

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Nothing to declare.