Movement – An intangible factor

It isn’t just about choreography or tempo. As a dancer you feel it; as a member of the audience you see it. What is it? How do you define it? How does the designer capture and weave it into the style and fabric of the dancewear?

I see movement as continuous motion, an extension of my entire body blending the choreography in expression of the music. I am looking for my dancewear to enhance this motion. Whether an elegant entrance for waltz with flexible rotation and sway, a sharp turn of head with a twist to Tango, skirt whipping with precise steps of the Viennese Waltz, articulated footwork intertwined for Fox Trot, or syncopation of dress as feet track the whimsical rhythm in Quick Step, what you wear significantly matters.

For some reflections on Latin dancewear, please keep reading. Clearly my current specialty is International Standard; similar considerations can be made for American Smooth. I also have experience in Latin and rhythm so in this genre, be sure your dancewear is completely flexible, stays in place or covers areas you want to be covered. You want to test the leg movements such as wraparounds and extensions. Take a good look at placement of slits, shape to the hips, shoulder to waist design and effect of ruffles or drapes. Remember to consider leg movements and arm styling. It may initially feel good or look sharp, but if you can’t comfortably move on the dance floor the impact of harmonious motion cancels out.

Let’s pause… Your thoughts may have taken you to visualizing a masterfully designed and stunning dance dress under the bright lights. I am also talking about what you wear in the studio. If it doesn’t work in practice, it won’t happen when you perform or compete. When you try on new dancewear make sure you can twist and turn, reach your total stride, kick with full extension, rotate and sway, and hems or rolls will not catch the heels of your shoes. When you consider a color, stay current with new shades, fabric designs and styles. It brightens any day to see a little creativity and variation in studio attire, a welcome change from basic black.

Whether in a studio or formal ballroom, I feel dancewear has a significant effect on my dance experience. Walking into my first Chrisanne-Clover showroom I was certain they understood, too. They had an actual mini-ballroom floor right in the center of their display for their shoppers to try out their dancewear. I appreciate the time and care they supply to their designs for the pleasure and performance of their customers.