

About Galumpha Workshops
-by Judy Plotz, Providence, RI

Galumpha promised us “improvisational creation, and unusual lifts and balances.” Their instructions were: "come with loose clothes, an open mind, and an appetite for fun!"

Having seen Galumpha in performance, we looked forward to an extraordinary workshop. Even so, we were astonished by the sheer joy in a kind of relationship barely possible outside the enchanted realm Galumpha created for us. Imagine walking up to someone and saying, "Why don't you hug my ankles and lean back until you lift me off the floor?" In a Galumpha workshop it seemed perfectly natural.

Andy, Greg, and Marlon showed us what to do, posture by posture, move by move. Then they fanned out among groups of us, here balancing a person upside-down on the soles of his feet, there providing support until we could balance each other. We learned sequences to build multi-person balances and take them apart again or flow on to other balances. But the specific postures were just a starting point. Andy, Greg, and Marlon showed us their process of creation in which talk, experimentation, play, care for safety, balance, movement, rhythm, anatomy, physics, and symbol all happen at once. We learned principles of creation through games which began simply and then grew complex enough to demand our full concentration. It was a meditative experience to tune in to the rhythms around oneself in order to carry a movement seamlessly from one person to another. Remarkably, this rapport was possible in a group that included children as young as seven, teens, and adults as old as fifty. Some were experienced dancers, and others not much fitter, but certainly more adventurous, than couch potatoes. People came from five states to our workshop -- that shows Galumpha's drawing power.

Respect, warmth, care, trust -- Galumpha's dance style celebrates these qualities. Because our world suffers a dangerous shortage of these qualities, we instinctively recognized this was something we had been seeking. We are grateful to Andy, Greg, and Marlon for showing us how to create such relationships, and for extending their warmth to us.

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