

**Harmanie Rose Taylor describes her experience in Soma Dance with Donna:**

**How would you describe a Soma Dance Class with Donna (based on your own personal experience)?**

With Soma Dance and Donna Redlick's help I have gained a greater understanding of how all the parts and pieces of my body flow and move together. I have learned how to connect and dance using my whole body, even the parts that are paralysed. Soma dance is a beautiful meditative journey of the inner workings of your body using the joy of movement.

**As a dance artist who moves in and out of a wheelchair can you describe how the Laban/ Bartenieff applications (that Donna utilizes in class) support you?**

Before taking Donna's classes I rarely got onto the floor as I was afraid I couldn't get back into my wheelchair. My body is very asymmetrical with severe scoliosis that also affects my hip alignment. My legs have different levels of paralysis and move very differently which made moving on the floor very different. Learning Laban and Bartiniieff applications from Donna not only taught me ways that I could move on the floor safely it also helped build-up my core and leg muscles to help me get in and out of my chair safely. As I deepen my practice with Donna I'm learning how to access bones, muscles, and tissues that have long been in disuse to help me prevent injury and pain that have been a part of my daily life. I feel more connected to my body as a dancer, and I feel that overall I have a greater quality of life.

**Can you speak about the notion of how relationships are supported in one of Donna's Soma Dance classes, in regards to the relationship to your body, the relationship to gravity, to the environment, and to others?**

With Soma Dance and Donna's expert and gentle guidance I have developed a deeper connection with my body. I spend more time sensing where my body is at and learning to yield into gravity. Whether that is into the floor, my chair or the world around me. And when I find myself unable to connect and breathe into myself I lose my connection with gravity, the world around me and other people. Soma Dance classes help me find that connection and deepen my understanding with each course I take. It is life

long learning and I'm grateful for Donna for providing a platform for discovery.

### **How does your body feel at the end of a Soma Dance class?**

At the beginning of each Soma Dance class my body is stiff. I have a hard time settling into gravity and often feel disconnected from myself and the world around me. At the end of each class I am much more relaxed. I feel a deeper connection to my body and surroundings. I am able to listen with my whole being and anticipate the unexpected. Even on very stressful days Donna's classes are able to help me find a calm centre on which to approach the rest of my day.

### **Would you recommend Soma Dance with Donna? If yes, why? What is unique about these classes?**

I would highly recommend Soma Dance to anyone who enjoys moving. Donna brings joy and lightness to every class. She takes the time to evaluate your unique needs and supports them through each exploration. Thanks to Donna's support and encouragement I have seen more growth in my movement style in the past year than in the other 12 years I have been dancing.

#### ***Harmanie Rose (student of Soma Dance)***

(She/Her/Hers)

Living, dancing and gathering in community on the unceded and stolen traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations,