

Revolution, Cascade and Resistance: the 3 axes for the 2024-25 season

This guideline gathers the works of the community. It has been devised by the TOI International Choreographic Committee and is be distributed to all TOI teams worldwide.

Revolution may refer to society, technology, industry, music, fashion, medicine... It may happen suddenly through a crisis, violence or strong confrontation. It may also happen through change or transition. A change of behavior or habits, for instance, or a change in the way one sees social norms, when they are shaken by a fashion designer. Change may then take place more slowly, even through love. In any case, revolution does have an impact.

The discussions lead us to propose a widened guideline (rather than a strict definition).

The definition given earlier by the Choreographic Committee might be slightly improved around two key words: cycle, and change:

Stemming from the Latin "Revolvere" (to turn, roll back), revolution originally referred to the circuit of the stars through the sky. Today, it still means circuit when talking about the RPM, or revolutions per minute, in an engine. A revolution is also a drastic change in a field such as the fashion industry or technology, a drastic and far-reaching change in ways of thinking and behaving or, similarly, a sudden, sometimes violent uprising from the people to change the political system.

Suggested Examples:

Cultural Revolution: a radical reform in China initiated by Mao Zedong in 1965 and carried out largely by the Red Guard.

Green Revolution: the introduction of pesticides and high yield grains and better management during the 1960s and 1970s which greatly increased agricultural productivity.

Cascade: « *Action, to fall. Sequential movement in which the larger pattern is dependent on the individual movement connecting one to another.* » (Choreographic Dictionary).

The videos proposed (see Appendix) show that cascade can be considered as a sort of canon.

The sequence of movements that are being reproduced in time and space is shorter for cascade (1 or 2 movements max.), and longer for canon.

Dependance appears as the key word of cascade. One action generates the next. The proximity between skaters is not a must. Cascade doesn't rely on touching one another. The flow of music may carry it by itself. The whole team doesn't need to be involved. The more skaters, the more readable, of course, but maybe also the lesser variety.

Cascade is usually seen through movements. Yet cascade here is a choreographic process, not a gesture. The way skaters are moving generate the visual effect of cascade.

Presenting endless repetitions of movements would become rather boring to the audience after a while. The direction may change. Skaters may add accumulation (or diminution) to their movements.

Finally, « action, to fall » of the current definition seems to be rather limiting. Unless "to fall" maybe considered in all directions, even upward. Gravity will add to the movement, even if the propulsion or force starts in a direction other than down.

The definition might be refined in the following way: « Cascade: short actions (1 or 2 movements), each one generating the next, happening sequentially in time and space ».

Most important, it has to be visible, readable while performed on the ice and predominant through the program.

Resistance, « Movements which resist an opposite strength (for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction) » (Choreographic Dictionary).

The definition appears to be both precise and inclusive. The videos and discussions lead to several conclusions:

- Resistance may apply to entities that are external to the skater's body: walls, ice, or another skater.
- It may also apply to an external entity that remains unseen or imaginary (like in a pantomime, with a rope or another skater that is pure imagination).
- It may also apply within one skater's body, when one resists against one's muscle tension to generate the movement. Resistance thus appears in every movement, which it generates. Release (when well executed) can even emphasize resistance.
- Readability may be emphasized by muscle tension. It is even more visible when performed on a slow tempo (adagio).
- Readability will be key on the ice. The parti-pris is a great help to point out the originality and variety of resistance portrayed through the program.

APPENDIX – Videos

Cascade appears like a sort of a canon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WhzDEhdOeic> – Predominance is obvious. No variety and no complexity.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qx8Q5LXXIFw> – One movement generates the next. Resistant gesture may be noted.

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C04wt2uoiGK/?igsh=OGFxZG5ubGpianBr>

<https://youtube.com/clip/UqkxBkeFWKOTZSxyDpFTIGVVZG6UIE1wdxot?si=7foYIU89JPKTPXKw> – Cascade doesn't limit itself to falling. It's mostly dealing with the connection from one movement to the next. Skaters don't even have to touch one another to launch the movement, music is enough.

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/1csrpi5obc0uaew8qpgoy/4-Back-to-Back-Cascades-2-Canons-1-with-Resistance.mov?rlkey=1iericjekir3mqkcyv1ckcs47&st=4z5us3jo&dl=0> – Falling may be directed upward! Cascade is better seen as it depends on space and time, especially when it stages brief choreographic sequences (one or two movements). The 3 cascades presented here are different, which create variety.

https://youtu.be/-I-SE6Q9Le0?si=dKeq_341qX0xpuYW&t=44 – Cascade may be carried by individuals, it may also be carried by groups of individuals. Cascade is predominant here but one can find unison and repetition. Cascade may be not only vertical, but also lateral (to the side), to figure the flow of a river.

<https://youtu.be/qybUFnY7Y8w?feature=shared> – Cascade of objects producing different chain actions. The cascade movements are linked to each other and one of them triggers the next.

Resistance

https://youtube.com/shorts/TIne0cTt_vI?si=5fOvHuwkDXVxmKnR – Teaching resistance to 7 years old

<https://youtu.be/TUCmSvmDIzo?si=31uhRJCbpiXvsPFa> – Resistance to the ground is predominant: one may also note the resistance connected to muscle tension within the dancer's body.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jpe-QU867xE> – A body to body resistance, where each one is bearing opposite forces.

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/cjt685q432m0os55clw74/Resistance-in-a-Variety-of-Ways.mov?rlkey=ap65cqa8jp0je22iqxlq9hz2d&st=qdhpocy2&dl=0> – Resistance may lead to oscillatory movements, through come and come-back. Force is alternatively pushing and pushing back against an inner resistance.

Video Editing of Cascade and Resistance

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UO9AeF39QcOJNKRqgXVAyLu_uI8Xopag

American Ice Theatre : vidéo de présentation des axes 2024 – 2025 :

<https://youtu.be/BrMEbhBDDUY?si=1QdKAXXkRL9TWzqk> – The video illustrates a whole array of cascades and resistant gesture. The American Ice Theatre, which produced the video, led by Kate McSwain and Garrett Kling in the U.S., volunteered its time and effort. No skater in the group belongs to any current TOI team whatsoever. Its sole purpose is to research on movement and explore how processes and gestures may be translated onto the ice. It shows, among others, that resistance requires a slower tempo to be visible, while cascade gains to be performed on a faster tempo.