

noise  
ULTIMATELY MASCULINE



Suit - Absoluto  
Shoes - Sko Shoes  
Belt - Gucci



*The Dance Of Life*  
**TERENCE  
LEWIS**

An ace dance entrepreneur, choreographer and teacher, Terence Lewis dons many hats with panache. A Mumbai boy to the core, who grew up in a simple middle-class family with limited resources, Lewis' journey from being an untrained dancer, to finding himself studying at the Broadway Dance Centre, New York is an inspiring one. A yoga practitioner, Ted talk motivational speaker and India's most wanted popular reality show judge, Lewis speaks about his love for dance, and how it's an exciting yet intimidating time to be a dancer in the era of social media.

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Suit - Absoluto  
Shoes - Christian Louboutin  
Shades - Saint Laurent





Suit - Mehraab by Arun Ahuja & John Marya  
Shades - Bellofox



Suit - Absoluto  
Shoes - Nike

## What was your introduction to dance?

The youngest of eight siblings, I was an attention-seeking kid. I always wanted to be different. When my first-standard teacher was looking for participants for a dance competition, I was the only one to volunteer. To my good luck, I won. Thereafter, I was hooked on the adrenaline that came with applause and took any opportunity under the spotlight. With time, dance and theatre became my second language and the stage, my home.

## Who were your idols back then?

I grew up in the era of pop culture of Michael and Janet Jackson, Paula Abdul. Back home, I tripped on Govinda, Jeetendra (ji) and Mithunda. I remember seeing Bob Fosse's Broadway musicals and Jerome Robbins' West Side Story on VHS.

## So how did your time in New York change you?

The Terence Lewis before and after New York were two different people. It was a full-paradigm shift in so many wonderful ways. New York as a city, with its multiracial culture, changed my point of view, both towards life and dance. There, dance was a respected form of sport. When I came back, I focused on training every day. I stopped doing cheesy shows, where people would eat while I was on stage. I realised that I had to fight a long battle to raise the quality of dance in this country.

## What was your first audition like?

It was for a Britney Spears' concert, at the Broadway Dance Center. I was just 26. There were 1000+ professional dancers. Just watching each audition gave me goosebumps. I wasn't selected, but it was a great experience observing the community of dancers, hustling to get that job. I realised the importance of training - the right techniques and a lot of practice.

## You always seem flawless, have you ever had an embarrassing moment mid-performance?

I remember once whilst I was performing for a wedding sangeet, my pant slipped down midst performance. Costume malfunction is a common occupational hazard. As a performer, you get so used to this that it doesn't embarrass you. Besides, half my performances are without clothes [laughing cheekily].

## In what way has contemporary dance in

## India evolved today?

Until a few years back, Indian contemporary dance was relegated to a niche audience. I started presenting it on Dance India Dance using the art of storytelling. By season three, we had more contemporary dancers than hip-hop or Bollywood. It was only after we showcased dance as a serious art form and not just mere entertainment, that dancers started to enjoy the dignity of dance. But often, people wrongly assume what contemporary dance is. Dancing on TV currently is reduced to acrobatics. People jump, fly, and present more tricks and power moves. It's the responsibility of judges and creative directors to make the audience aware of nuances, rather than applauding showmanship. Contemporary dance once mastered, has amazing possibilities for an artist to express abstract or narrative themes and I'm seeing some artists that are doing great work.

## Tell us a bit about a social cause close to your heart.

We are so addicted to our cell phones, that with time it has become a sickness...a malady of our times. The consumption of internet, be it social media, binge-watching movies, texting, has robbed us of any meaningful connection. I succumbed to this too - I had become sluggish and unproductive! We are losing the essence of life and there will be a massive rise in depression and mental health issues in the future. So, I decided to encourage people to abandon their phones and be part of a real community with the ABCD Master Class Tour, where I personally go to various cities in India and conduct a Danceathon. It is open to all types of people, with a nominal entry fee of Rs 300 to ensure a safe space.

## What would you like to say to the young dancers?

Dancing is a tough profession. If you wish to be a professional dancer, you need to invest in your education, to dance with technique, ease and understanding of kinesiology and movement to prevent injury. Once you finish your foundation studies, you need to get work experience like in any other field. Join a reputed dance company, where you get training regularly and opportunities to learn the inner workings of a show. Just like an MBA or any professional course it will require a minimum of 3 years before you start to earn as a professional.





Bomber Set- Mehraab by Arun Ahuja & John Marya  
 Shoes - Dolce & Gabbana  
 Shades- Bellofox



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**What do you like about social media?**

I love anything that brings a smile to my face or makes me laugh. I enjoy watching stand-ups by Kunal Kamra, Sorabh Pant, Mallika Dua and Kusha Kapila, filter copy etc. I confess that I still subscribe to childhood favourites like Tom and Jerry as a stress buster. I also watch Nat Geo or History Channel, science inventions and discoveries about our planet and universe and can listen to podcasts on life and spirituality any time.

**What's the most ridiculous question someone has ever asked you online?**

During my Instagram episode Adulthood (where I take questions from my followers), someone asked me, 'If they are still a virgin despite masturbating'. I feel sad for women in our country with our attitude towards sex, sexuality and the feminine gender.

**One fashion advice you would like to give to men.**

Don't become a fashion victim. Don't wear something because it is trending. Always look at your body, profession, age, climate, environment to decide what is best for you. A nice white or black shirt with a well-

fitting pair of denim is a must-have in your wardrobe. Most importantly, you don't need brands, if you are comfortable in your skin and can be yourself, anything you wear will look good.

**If not a dancer...**

I would have been a creative writer or storyteller or possibly a life coach or a leadership trainer.

**How do you stay fit?**

I practise Iyengar Yoga everyday and workout thrice a week. I like working on my core in the gym and using the Bosu ball. I eat everything but in a controlled manner. I don't binge or have a sweet tooth. At times I fast, in order to detox the body. I practice meditation for ten minutes simply focussing on my breath, which helps a lot.

**One advice for the readers of NOISE.**

Cut out the white noise, let it turn into a melody or a song. What you listen to and read can really change you. So choose wisely!