

Mia Michaels is the ultimate, edgy artist, who dares to push the boundaries of the dance world with her choreography. She's choreographed for Madonna, Cirque du Soleil, Celine Dion, and *So You Think You Can Dance*, as well as judged. Coming from a family of dancers, she learned during adolescence that she had a passion for dancing and being creative that she couldn't get away from, which decided her career as a choreographer. Her style? "Some people call it contemporary. Some people call it a fusion of movement. [She] call[s] it Mia."

Michaels gets inspiration for her pieces from her personal life. She tries to be open to everything going on around her to use when choreographing. She used to just make a pretty dance, but now, when she choreographs, she tells a story. A fan-favorite piece of hers is *Addiction* to Sara Bareilles's *Gravity* that tells a story of a girl struggling with addiction, which was played by the man. He pulls, pushes, and controls her throughout the piece, symbolizing how dominating addictions are. The emotions in her piece though are relatable to everyone, so they understand her story better. Even if the viewer isn't a trained dancer, he/she can appreciate the beauty and passion guiding the movements across the stage.

She's a self-proclaimed "commercial artist". She makes her dancing appeal to the public who don't appreciate the abstractness of some dances, but keeps enough artistry for the audience to be captured by her creative intelligence. Her dancers are humans first. They show the raw emotion that makes humanity as distinct as it is. They are artists second as they use that emotion to evoke a reaction out of the audience. They are dancers third because they use the steps to paint an emotion during a piece, but they can't hide behind the steps when they perform. She's really into having the fervor speak louder than the steps in a dance.

She also approaches her work like Paul Taylor does in a sense. She use lights and props as the central focus of some of her dances, which makes the dancing and the props equal to each

other instead of the prop being just an additional object on stage. Michaels also makes her own movements, which seem a bit out there, like Taylors, but actually give the dances another dynamic because of the peculiarity. Mia Michael's willingness to try something new and challenge what is expected made her a household name across the nation.