

# thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Carne Viva Dance Theater

## **Intimacy, Connection, and Personal Journeys at Mio / Tuyo / Nuestro**

**by Kalila Kingsford Smith**

At thINKingDANCE's second Write Back Atcha during the 2022 Cannonball Festival, a few brave audience members joined me after Carne Viva Dance Theatre's *Mio / Tuyo / Nuestro* to discuss the performance. I guided audience members to consider moments that were meaningful to them, impressions that were lasting, and overarching themes. These are their reflections, authored by the participants with minor editing from myself. tD has led a series of [Write Back Atcha](#) audience workshops at this year's Cannonball Festival!

***What was a moment that was meaningful to you?***

***Consider the themes of love, intimacy, play and community. What were some moments that represented these to you?***

*Memories and Meaningful Associations:*

The first part of the performance in front of the building seemed to invoke the idea of children playing. When the adult figure ran out to summon the children to "come in" it reminded me of a classic early 20th century book, play, and movie entitled "Yours, Mine, and Ours." It was, however, the only part of the show that seemed to reference it.

- Ray

My personal journey with the performance involved the music which highlighted the history of queer music. That was meaningful to me, especially as an artist. Some of the moments that I felt were really impactful were the group dance scenes. It felt like there was a celebration of so many identities and expressions. Each dancer got to express their joy. There was a lot of trust and intimacy in their

movements. There were a lot of different tones, happening dynamically in the dance. These themes felt like anxiety, discovery, apprehension, joy, and the movement between them was done seamlessly.

- Matt Battafarano

Throughout the performance, there were really beautiful moments of carefree looseness, a seamless deconstruction of the walls and installations of the performance space. Some moments sparked my memory: familiar moments of playing outside, mom or parent dragging me in, seeing / talking to a close friend. Seeing these glimpses of meaningful moments communicated the emotional and physical labor of moving through intimacy.

- Anonymous

*Intimacy and Connection:*

At the end, there was a circle when people went into the middle and were dancing. For me, watching the people on the outside was equally as interesting as watching the inside person. Seeing them see each other; support each other; cheer each other on. They then turned to us and cheered us on as if we were dancing as well. What we were doing (watching) was maybe as important as what they were doing onstage.

- Katherine Desimine

I recall the moment when those with more melanin were in a line upstage and smiling maniacally while the two lighter skinned folks were doing a duet featuring a moment where one straddled the other. I thought about the pockets of (dis)comfort we find ourselves in, sewn into the same article of clothing, but separate pieces of cloth. And then, THE CLOTH! Soaring into space, making a circle to cypher in and being more than just a costume, but an extension of dancers' limbs.

- Ew ! The Dancer

All five of the dancers are on stage, one right behind another, back to front. They all hold their arms up, curved around but not touching the person in front of them. An almost empty embrace. In a fast ripple, they swing one arm down towards the person behind them. I feel the connection between their bodies. It's close, it's soft, it's connected.

In another moment, they're clumped together, slowly swaying. One dancer falls back and the group catches them in a trust fall. Another dancer falls and is caught. I am reminded that many queer people gather a chosen family around them, a community of intimate carers that support them as they falter. I was very touched by this moment.

- Kalila Kingsford Smith

[Write Back Atcha](#) at [Mio / Tuyo / Nuestro, Carne Viva Dance Theatre](#), Cannonball Festival, Fringe Festival 2022, Sept. 7.

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