

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Irina Varina

Philly Arts, Half-Naked

by Irina Varina

I daydream a lot. Sometimes, I daydream about half-naked people. No, not in that sense. I mean, yes, in that sense too but not for this.

It was summer 2022. I was working on a solo show that would eventually become [Ministry of Loneliness](#). I was hot, I hate heat. I was feeling stuck. Not with the content of the show, I think, just overwhelmed with the self-producing aspect of it and the isolation solo work entails sometimes. And did I mention I was hot?

That was when I started daydreaming about half-naked people. More specifically, how fun it'd be to dress this friend up in that see-through tutu or have that friend be on a toilet holding their cat (?) or... I was seeing them as pictures. It felt amusing. There was a moment where a part of me said, let's take these pictures. I'm always curious about that "moment" of decision and I never quite remember how it happens.

I called the whole thing *Philly Arts, Half-Naked*. Because it sounded fun. Because most of my friends in Philly are dancers, movers, artists. And because they are indeed half-naked.

I wanted it to be the easiest and most easily satisfying project ever. What could be more satisfying than being with friends, taking pictures, and sharing them on Instagram? I'd bring one light, some props, but mostly just use whatever was in front of me in people's homes, where we were doing this.

If I asked for a vintage dress, I got it. A headpiece – here are ten. To try something weird – any time.

Looking at the photos now, I notice lots of fabric, softness. Glam? It also seems that, often, I was either seeking to emphasize a

dominant part of a person (whatever I thought that was) or to bring up a side I don't see them playing with as much but that could be fun.

If I had enough eloquence in me, I'd write a beautiful love letter to the Philly theater-dance community here. But the photos are the love letter. So I just say thank you, again, for being up for anything, so funny, sexy, inspiring, inspired, generous, you.



Annie



Ciera



Scott



Lily



Aaron



Laura



Desirée



Jacinto



Erica



Irina

For more from the series scroll down this [Insta](#).

Philly Arts, Half-Naked; Irina Varina.

By Irina Varina

June 28, 2023