

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Jano Cohen

Casual Crackles: A Write Back Atcha

by Megan Mizanty

Christ Church Neighborhood House bustles with excitement. The pale blue stage lights glow, and a packed house chatters above the 100 degree heat outside moments before *I've got a tape I wanna play* begins. Then we hear a clarinet warble from backstage. The audience becomes silent, and Lily Kind strolls onstage with a live musician, fingers fluttering over their instrument. Kind's body syncs and crescendos with the sounds - an invigorating, clear, strong welcome.

The following "Write Back Atcha" is a compilation of responses from over 15 audience members. A "Write Back Atcha" is a post-show discussion and mini-writing workshop, yielding a crowd-sourced review. For this show, audience members shared "moments that resonated" to a wider existential question - how is dancing with people through a playlist just like moving through the stages of life?

The whimsy of the first few pieces...

*each song shifts the mood, at ease with ourselves and our bodies.**

Each [dancer] gave a piece of their personality to us (Tachi Tanani), *and pieces of our own life reverberate (Nilanoan Haldar).*

The solo clarinet plays a folk tune, similar yet foreign to me... *Lily's percussive interpretation tightly connects with the music (Chris Deephouse).*

The second dance, a duet *set to Fiona Apple*, had such tenderness of movement passed between them (Ellen Graff)... *the moments they were nestled into one another, I could feel their kinesthetic responses (Ann Cooper Albright).*

"When everyone sat and munched on Rice Crispies, I didn't expect it to be so funny!" (overheard).

The Tierra Whack song/shower performance brought me back to my own specific memory of driving last summer. Of course, the performance had nothing to do with summer or driving, but Tierra's unique timbre of voice felt familiar (Blake Newcomer).

Mixing 21st century experiences, like PayPal payments and sexting, with classically recognized music like Bolero sparked energetic watching. *..the six beat box step, with the hands going simply side-to-side, but at different rhythms, was a mesmerizing juxtaposition.** Bolero took on a life of its own (D. Hunt).

***vivacious to salacious,
back to gentle and tender.****

It felt like a long dream, mirroring the cadence of life....I really enjoyed the percussive themes - the synchronized stomping, pounding, and smacking of the floor.*

*The broad definition of dance was felt throughout (Lauren Dillay McKinney) - sound was tightly tied to memory, even though we don't know what the memory is.**

We finish with a slow crawl back to sleep, after a long summer dream (Tachi Tanani).

A note: comments with an asterisk (*) are anonymous.

While facilitating the post-performance discussion, we shared our thoughts in small groups. I was struck by how folks who participated used 'we/us' so often, as though breathing and bending and stepping on stage with the dancers. Perhaps the ease and warmth of the five-person ensemble yielded this: an invitation, a varied mix of songs they shared with us in this strange dream we call life. They want to play the tape for us.

[*I've gotta tape I wanna play*](#), Lily Kind, Philadelphia Dance Projects, Christ Church Neighborhood House, June 26 & 27.

By Megan Mizanty
June 30, 2024