

JOURNAL 1: STATEMENTS OF MEANING

In *Towards a Processes for Critical Response*, Liz Lerman states:

It is my sense, that no matter how short the performance, people want to hear that what they have just completed has meaning to another human being. This natural condition appears to be so intense at times as to appear desperate. My own experience points to the very fragile moment when we first show another person our creative effort, whether a fragment or a completed work, new or old. It makes sense to me, then, that the first response takes the form of some kind of affirmation. (Remember, it is not going to be "that is the greatest thing ever," but it does need to be honest and true for the responder.) So I have been trying to expand the palette of what constitutes positive feedback. I like to use words such as **"when you did such-and-such it was surprising, challenging, evocative, compelling, delightful, unique, touching, poignant, different for you, interesting," and many more.**

I am aware that there are many people exploring the question of feedback; one way that folks are working a lot right now is for people to practice saying what they saw--with the idea that there is no positive or negative implied. I too have experimented with that approach, using it here in step one. However, I keep coming back to the need for positive, affirmative information. I suspect that people will challenge this as being too needy, too thin-skinned. But after all these years of doing work, and after many positive comments from others, it still makes sense to me that we tell each other **at least one thing that we noticed about the work being discussed that brought us something special.**

1. Using this approach, view the modern dance video links below and write a statement of meaning for each one: "What has meaning for you about what you have just seen?" or "What was stimulating, surprising, evocative, memorable, touching, unique, compelling, meaningful for you?"
 - a. Jose Limon: <https://vimeo.com/69934132>
 - b. Martha Graham: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieMO1Z0UhGQ> (from 2:21-5:50)
 - c. Merce Cunningham: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IH_rrpj0CU
 - d. Paul Taylor: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHkciz_yYYI
 - e. Anna Sokolow: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7c9XBgj6F0>
 - f. Donald McKayle: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BCjW1ORie0g> (from 0:50-4:40)
2. After viewing all 6 videos, please write a brief paragraph on if/how your thoughts or understanding of modern dance has changed after viewing these. (Did you see similarities between all 6? How does it differ or relate to the dance that you have experienced or seen? What surprised you? etc....)

JOURNAL 2: BRAIN DANCE

Practice the 8 step progression of Anne Green Gilbert's Brain Dance 3 times throughout this coming week. The variations are endless, so feel free to modify and explore as you need to (try it sitting on a chair, laying on the floor etc.)

For each practice take note of how you feel before/after, which parts you enjoy the most, which parts challenge you the most, did the time of day affect your practice, etc...

Practice 1: Insert Reflection

Practice 2: Insert Reflection

Practice 3: Insert Reflection

Here are some videos and documents to help you throughout the process

Brain Dance Patterns: PDF

Brain Dance Benefits: PDF

Anne Greene Gilbert on developing the brain dance:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=003KTf598Rg>

Basic Pattern demonstration: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UH2xNx2t6Xw>

JOURNAL 3: BARTENIEFF FUNDAMENTALS

Irmgard Bartenieff, as a student of Roudolf Laban, developed a series of movement exercises to increase connectivity in the body and improve coordination and flow of movement.

Select one of the Bartenieff Funamental Exercises we learned today (Heel Rock, Femoral Flexion, Sagital Pelvic Shift, Lateral Pelvic Shift, Knee Drop, Arm Circles, Body Half) and practice it 3 times this week.

Tell me which exercise you chose and list each practice separately. For example:

Heel Rock

Practice 1: Insert Reflection

Practice 2: Insert Reflection

Practice 3: Insert Reflection

Write a detailed reflection after each practice: Did anything change? What did you notice this time? What worked? What challenged you? Did you have tension - if so, where? Did you find stability? Did the flow move smoothly throughout the body or get stuck? Did the time of day affect you? How does the practice this time feel different from the last time you practiced it? etc..

JOURNAL 4: MOVEMENT OBSERVATIONS

Observe 3 different workers throughout the week (any occupation you choose).

Write a detailed description of what you saw.

- Use the Laban vocabulary that we talked about in class: talk about their attitudes towards time (quick or sustained) weight (light or strong) and space (direct or indirect), what combinations do you see in their movement?
- Be specific about the body parts used and the isolation of movement (ex. only his right forearm moved - bending at the elbow, he lifted...) What types of actions were they doing? (twisting, bending, balancing... gestures or postures)
- Talk about their relationships – to others or the space. (ex. Were they above, beside, under, behind, close, far, facing towards or away etc...)
- Be detailed, be specific, be descriptive... this is a practice in seeing movement in front of you and recognizing/breaking down the elements that make it unique.

Remember your favorite one! When you come into class we will use these observations as a seed to develop some movement studies.

JOURNAL 5: NEUTRAL QUESTIONS

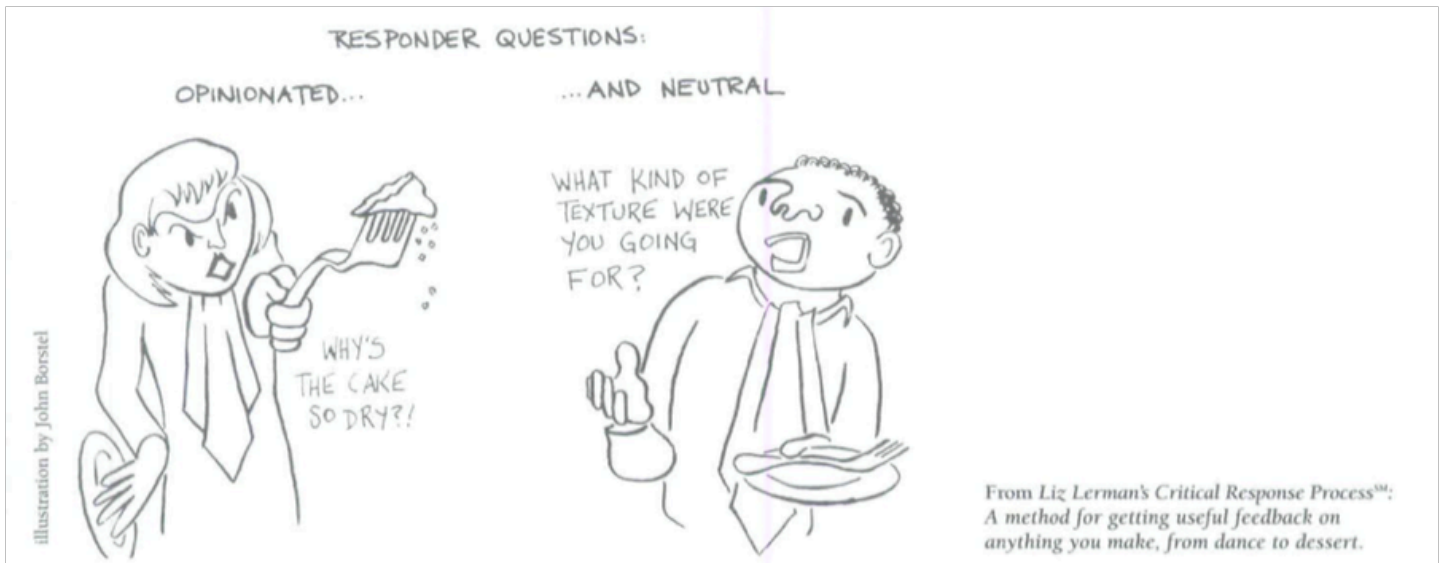
For this journal we will be working on practicing some of our responses to choreography (using Liz Lerman's guidelines as we did in the first journal). To do this you will start by making sure you have added your favorite dance video from your modern pioneer to the discussion found under assignments. Make a new thread for your artist and then add the link to the video.

View at least 4 videos that were posted by your classmates and write response (see below) for each. Note this may not reach the normal 250 word guide which is fine as long as you respond to each prompt below.

1. **Name of the artist you are watching:** (ie. Martha Graham)
2. **Statement of Meaning:** what stands out to you, intrigues you, surprised you, resonated with you?
3. **A personal opinion:** (I wish there had been less unison. I thought it ended too soon. I wish the partners had ended together. There was too much floorwork. etc.)
4. **What does your opinion relate to:** (relationships, structure, timing, message of the piece, levels, quality of movement etc.)
5. **Try to write a neutral question that you would pose to the choreographer:**
Read the description of a neutral question below and then look at your personal opinion and what it is related to before rewording it in this format...Step 3 in Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process emphasizes the benefits of getting artists to think about their work in a

fresh way, as opposed to telling them how to improve their work or asking them to defend it. This aim is supported by the discipline of the neutral question.

So instead of saying, "It's too long," a person might ask, "What were you trying to accomplish in the circle section?" or "Tell me what's the most important idea you want us to get and where is that happening in this piece?"



JOURNAL 6: RHYTHM AND POETRY

Select one of the Haikus from below and create a movement phrase inspired by it.

As this is a movement journal it will not need to have a written component unless that is helpful to you – prepare the movement and bring it into class, ready to share. As with the observation phrase, let your movement be inspired by what you see/feel remembering that it can be abstract and does not have to be a narrative or "tell this specific story."

Which level does it fit into? Does it feel to have a sustained attitude or a driven one? Is it internally focused (nearer space) or externally focused (far space)? Is it direct or does it talk around the main point? Are there actions that it inspires? Is it soft or jagged? What kind of pathways does it inspire? Once you have come up with a movement phrase, take a look at the "rhythmic phrasing" of your work - again use the Haiku to help and make sure to have a set beginning and end.

An old silent pond...
A frog jumps into the pond,
splash! Silence again.

Autumn moonlight—
a worm digs silently
into the chestnut.

Lightning flash—
what I thought were faces
are plumes of pampas grass.

A summer river being crossed
how pleasing
with sandals in my hands!

Light of the moon
Moves west, flowers' shadows
Creep eastward.

In the moonlight,
The color and scent of the wisteria
Seems far away.

O snail
Climb Mount Fuji,
But slowly, slowly!

Everything I touch
with tenderness, alas,
pricks like a bramble.

Over the wintry
forest, winds howl in rage
with no leaves to blow.

The crow has flown away:
swaying in the evening sun,
a leafless tree.

JOURNAL 7: CHOREOGRAPHIC TOOLBOX

Take a look at this document regarding your **Choreographic Toolbox**:

It is a list of different considerations, methods for movement development and options for structuring your work. Once you have looked over the sheet, take a look at the videos links below and see if you notice any of these elements:

Bill T. Jones: (insert links)

Paul Taylor: (insert links)

Mark Morris: (insert links)

Write a reflection on the elements that you saw and address questions you have about any of the choreographic tools. What elements are you most excited to play with in your own choreography? Why?