

Fall 2011

HOLD ME TIGHT // I NEVER GOT THE MESSAGE

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HOLD ME TIGHT // I NEVER GOT THE MESSAGE
SENIOR PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE DIVISION OF THE ARTS
BARD COLLEGE

BY:
BRIEZE LEVY

ANNANDALE-ON-HUDSON,
NEW YORK
FALL 2011

ARTIST STATEMENT:
BRIEZE LEVY

I believe in a balance – a force that drives and thrives from resistance, ritual, imagination, and collective minds. I believe our nuances work through us like waves rippling in and out, between our bodies and our environments. My art shows an interest in the difference between ritual and routine, the power of symbols, the transmission of information and the sacred vs.

profane. As an artist I am interested in how our human condition drives people into pattern, and how these patterns are added to the accumulation of time. Experience, the basic coupling of human, environment, and lineage, is universal to all. I am interested in cultivating a practice in perception, and artistically challenging my esthetic opinions as I experience more. I believe objects and symbols, those found in daily life as well as those affiliated with the sacred, can be used to manipulated expression and find emotions within those who see them. I like to create experiences that tailor our reactions to objects in specific ways, illuminating what is normally left in the dark. As a choreographer, I am interested in the combination of athletic and technically trained movement with our found pedestrian habits and objects. Smoking, eating, drinking, and masturbating are not the selling points of 'Today's Way of Life' – but they exist in the background, informing how we act upon a need for meaning and altering the way we act in the future. I am interested in how our addictive qualities often hinder the way we become informed and how this obstacle influences our abilities in perception and experience.

How experiences manifest range from simple to complex and add to a collective database of what John Dewey calls our "doings and undergoings." We all celebrate, mourn, reflect, imagine, and move. We do not live in isolation. All habits, desires, beliefs, and needs come from a source, a plural source made from the mix of environment and actions. Communication is sharing at the basic level. I believe doors of possibilities can be opened with acknowledging the importance of communication in building individuality and sympathy towards human kind. As a culture, our ability to share is steadily increasing, changing with progression. Collectively we shape information as much as it shapes us, and as artist I work to keep this reflexive property in the conscious mind. When creating art, collective imagination

is an asset. Watching relationships unfold in time and space builds an experience specific to dance. My esthetic preference maintains the agency of the performer, and plays with boundaries revolving around universals and the inevitable.

THE COLLECTIVE/GROUP MIND:
ISABEL COTTINGHAM and BRIEZE LEVY

We are patterned to be individuals who exist in a world that sustains itself through a web of group thinking. Our political leaders, business CEO's, inspirational stories usually involve more than one person. Our ability to communicate is a direct representation of our societal norms; communication is a process that opens a door to possibilities unknown to a single human mind. The isolation of an individual from his/her environment, other humans included, only limits imagination and cuts available potential short. The "real" world functions collectively, yet we are schooled to be independent. Furthermore, most of our education has trained us to see working with another as cheating, copying, or an easy-way-out. The ability to communicate is grossly ignored and looked down upon until school ends. We are expected to be efficient in communication, working with others, building a relationship based on equality and trust, yet have no practice. We (Isabel and I) wanted to change that.

We set out on this collaboration to challenge ourselves in working with another artist as a balanced pair. Our process is stressed with the same intensity as the product. We are interested in learning about the benefits of teamwork, and how to overcome the obstacles that naturally appear. We took this theory to heart and structured our entire process from it. This influenced everything from housekeeping-- managing emails, planning meetings, making to-do lists, and organizing odds and

ends-- to rehearsal structures and finding multimedia supplements. I believe our process is reflected in our product. For example, a method during the building phase was for one to say an idea (some vision or inspiration) and the other to think on it, visualize, and explain other possibilities from there. Little by little decisions become finalized. Each rehearsal became a practice in cultivating esthetic preference, informing what I find important. Simultaneously I witnessed Isa's mental process, a stimulus and challenge to keep me on the path we set out on. I have realized that as an artist I enjoy using this method for costumes, stage design, lights, and others, but see the value in independent working as well.

This group-oriented mind has facilitated a greater understanding of our individual identities as choreographers and has illuminated the benefits of a partnership. This model will serve as a guide and a map into how we proceed into the future. As artists, we are looking forward to building on what we have established and using our community as our greatest resource. I look forward to progressing the communication skills I gained from working with Isa and applying them to the environments I encounter.





I NEVER GOT THE MESSAGE

BY ISABEL

COTTINGHAM AND

BRIEZE LEVY

IN THE:
**OLD
GYM**

DECEMBER:
2 & 3 AT 7:00 PM
4 AT 5:00 PM

Questions Over Whether Terror Suspects' Aid in Inquiries Was Voluntary
New York
The New York Times

Their Air, or Carry On and Profit Soon