

Excerpt from *What Moves Us*, a devised and collaborative performance project at Emerson College investigating the connections we make between performance traditions in our upbringing and our current theatremaking.

Moment 6. What Sustains Us

A, L, R, and N enter from SL.

THEY walk in a counter-clockwise circle. L begins speaking. One-by-one the others join in until all are talking. ALL OTHERS join their semi-circle.

L: [Everyone stops on her words.] I was thinking about the many miles and oceans and forests we have crossed. And I guess when I say we I mean my ancestors. My great uncle Peter escaped the Russian revolution hiding in a wagon of hay. I am thinking about what he knows, what they knew, recipes, borscht, samovars, scents, smoke rising like life, like a tree, like a dance. This circle of great aunts and uncles, the laughter, the conversation, the posturing, the tears, my mother's people.

A: Heartbeat sound with us on the floor. Connecting with each other's despair and stories. I like the idea of a tree. And a journey.

N: Dealing with large amounts of anxiety more often than not I am always on the look out to find activities to create peace of mind. It's difficult to give my own head a break from running around in circles. I believe that I can use moment and joy to ease my brain and bring myself back to easier times of goldfish and my dad playing let it be on his record player echoing through the house. Culturally I am sustained by art. From crafting Valentine's day cards with my mom or looking at the prints of my spring kitten. My brother makes the most beautiful prints. Even the screeches of my brother and my father's contrasting vocal pitches across the hall singing Elton John & Billie Joel.

M steps center. On M's words, the ENSEMBLE begins moving in sudden, full-bodied movements, repeating words and making sounds in response to what M is saying.

Moment 7. Stream of Consciousness

M:

I am alone.

Who said what to me when?

Sifting to find where I try to see, I try so hard,

I couldn't realize that the space was

Kept locked and I own the key.

Why am I here and where do I go?

The ENSEMBLE continues to move and make sound, a little softer and slower.

M:

Someone said something at some point. To lead me down this path.

I am not alone.

The ENSEMBLE stops in place, "rooting themselves in the ground."

M:

No matter where my dandelion seed flies off to I am aware that there is a ...

Yellow and grey and green

ENSEMBLE: We are not alone.