

Casey Shea

Artist statement

As a maker I am interested in a lack of transitions, various levels of effort, exhaustion, using pain to make work, exaggeration, and the different versions of self.

I am drawn to watching dance that is multi layered and in a constant flow of ideas. I want my dances to feel like a run-on sentence, overlapping and overlaying different segments of my work to create that consistent flow. I construct clear sequencing in the body and in the structure of the piece, allowing for more layering. I want my work to feel like there is no end, my transitions are the piece. What happens if we dance like there is no rush and there is an infinite amount of time?

I am interested in the physical and emotional labor of effort in movement. I want to push and exhaust physical ideas that lead to states of exhaustion and vulnerability. My work involves physically ambitious movement as a way of trying to reach this state of fatigue to see what comes from that. I am infatuated with the state of being that comes from this rigorous push, a less fabricated version of self, less of a will to fight what your body is naturally drawn to producing, and a heightened awareness of your body, breath, and self.

I want to play with the polarity of different forms of energy and effort. I'm in a constant battle with doing too much and not doing enough but I don't think that's bad, the middle isn't somewhere I want to spend much time. I understand two types of effort, simple exertion and strenuous exertion. I am drawn to the extremeness of these two polarities, and work with amplifying the 'carelessness' of ease and the hardness of attempting. I speculate that raising the

stakes with this idea of overdoing makes things clearer, more stimulating and more likely to lead to that state of exhaustion. While I appreciate the separation of these two opposites, I also work on doing both at the same time, softening while committing to the severity of effort, trying to blur the lines between these contradictions. I'm interested in moving between these things, using the two as extremes and playing with them as opposite sides, moving from one to the other abruptly, and mixing them together to create a new quality of movement.

My goal is to curate a safe space for me and my dancers to explore the objectives at hand, eliminate pressure, and work on our connections with each other and ourselves as a way to express these notions. I'm interested in intimacy, with the space, with each other, and with ourselves. For me this word means closeness, familiarity, comfort, affection, and understanding and I want to access this understanding in my process so that the relationships and space we have created could possibly allow for a viewer to also feel that tenderness. I want my dancers to experience softening, feel held, and intertwined.

My work speaks to my life experiences and this tension between specific parts of who I am (my past selves, current self, and future selves.) I'm currently interested in overemphasizing the dissonance between who we are, what we want to be, and how others perceive us. In my current work I am researching identity cravings and desire. I'm experimenting with over doing the parts of myself that I wish were more visible and seeing what that does to my body and persona.

In communication with my past selves, I have generated a lot of work based on my relationship with my own body. I'm interested in using my pain as a way of making work, to better understand it and potentially learn about how to move through it, using process as a way of

healing. My history of the liaison with my body/pain is inescapably relevant in my process because of its ongoing relevance in my life. My work and process always has an underlying theme or influence of a complicated contingency between myself internally and myself in terms of physicality. I am constantly in strain between acceptance and wanting to change and that drives how I create dance.

My work contains a constant tension between acceptance and change, effort and ease, self and past selves, and vulnerability with safeness. The middle space for me is transitional, seamless and a blurring between the two contending qualities. I'm fueled by the act of doing, researching, and observing, in solitude or with dancers apart of my process. I'm galvanized by self discovery, healing, softening, hardening, opening, and closeness and how that can be just important to my dancers and the audience as it is to me.

'To the school that gives more than it contains'