



**SEASON 43:  
PERSPECTIVE**

**HUBBARD STREET  
DANCE CHICAGO**

# HALF OF US

Robyn Mineko Williams, Co-Director and Choreographer  
C.J. Arellano, Co-Director and Film Editor  
Ohmme, Original Music Composition

As part of our virtual presentation of Season 43, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago has created a series of multi-media study guides exploring dance choreography and performance in practice. These guides are designed for middle and high school students and contain videos, discussion questions, activity prompts, and pre-recorded lessons. These Dance Discussions are designed to stand alone or accompany the dance films in our virtual season as we invite you to CONNECT, EXPLORE, CREATE, AND RESPOND.

LET'S  
DIVE IN!



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MEET THE ARTISTS

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NOTE FROM THE ARTIST

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VOCABULARY REVIEW

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4

CHARACTER AND RELATIONSHIPS: ANALYZE, INFER, REFLECT

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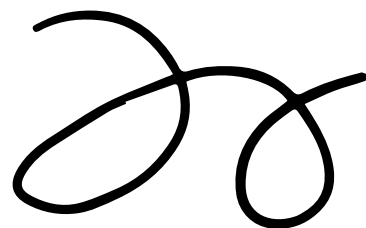
# MEET THE ARTISTS



## ROBYN MINEKO WILLIAMS

Robyn Mineko Williams began making her own work in 2001 through Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's Inside/Out Choreographic Workshop. She was a dancer with the company for twelve seasons. She has since created multiple premieres for HSDC and has choreographed for Pacific Northwest Ballet, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Malpas Dance Company, Ballet Idaho, Charlotte Ballet and others. She created Robyn Mineko Williams and Artists in 2015 as a platform for her independent, immersive and collaborative new works. Her pieces have been presented at the Kennedy Center, Harris Theater for Music and Dance, Jacob's Pillow, American Dance Festival, the Joyce Theater, MCA Chicago and more.

Named by Dance Magazine in 2014 as one of "25 to Watch" and "Best Choreographer" by Chicago Mag's "Best of Chicago, 2016", Robyn is a Princess Grace Foundation-USA award winner and has been recognized as one of NewCity's Players: 50 People Who Really Perform for Chicago. Collaborations include projects with Manual Cinema, Califone, Verger, Kyle Vegter, the Second City, Alicia Walter, Aitis Band and more.



## OHMME

There's an obvious chemistry emanating throughout Ohmme's music that's so tangible it can only come from a decades-spanning friendship. Songwriters Sima Cunningham and Macie Stewart formed their unbreakable bond performing throughout the fringes of Chicago's many interlocking communities, collaborating with titans from the city's indie rock, hip-hop, and improvised worlds. Together they've stretched the boundaries of what guitar music can do starting with the band's experimental 2016 self-titled EP, their adventurous 2018 debut *Parts*, and into the 2020 release of the stunning and muscular *Fantasize Your Ghost*.

Ohmme formed in 2014 as an outlet for Cunningham and Stewart to explore an unconventional approach to their instruments. "That's the whole genesis of the band: us walking up to our guitars and saying, 'how can we make this noisemaker do something different?'" says Cunningham. *Fantasize Your Ghost* found NPR Music agreeing, "Taken as a whole, Ohmme's music feels experimental and strange yet still accessible, with an underlying gut-level rumble that keeps its songs from floating into the ether."



## C.J. ARELLANO

C.J. is a media creator specializing in genre-driven, comedic, and human interest content.

As a video director, C.J. has directed video for big names such as The Second City, McDonald's, Chef Boyardee, Motorola, and the Heaven's Door whiskey brand co-created by Bob Dylan. His videos have been spotlighted several times on the front page of Funny or Die. C.J.'s directing work has been featured at the New York Television Film Festival, the Independent Television Festival, Out Web Fest, London Short Series Festival, and was a finalist at the Chicago International Blow-Up Arthouse Film Festival.

He has also provided video content for theatre companies including Joffrey Ballet and Victory Gardens Theatre. Chicago Reader declared, "The show boasts slick video design by C.J. Arellano," and Time Out Chicago called his video work "astounding."





HALF OF US IS A CAPTIVATING NEW FILM BY ACCLAIMED CHOREOGRAPHER ROBYN MINEKO WILLIAMS. THE PRINCESS GRACE AWARD WINNER AND FORMER HUBBARD STREET DANCER CREATES A MESMERIZING EBB AND FLOW OF MELODY AND MOVEMENT, AS TWO DANCERS AND TWO MUSICIANS MERGE THEIR ARTISTRY UPON A LONELY LANDSCAPE. AT TIMES PLAYFUL AND PENSIVE, HALF OF US INVITES US INTO A 16-MINUTE MEDITATION ON THE HEART OF HUMAN CONNECTION AND THE MYRIAD OF WAYS WE EXPERIENCE IT.





# *HALF OF US*



This film features two duets - the dance and the music.

Let's explore character development in the film.



# REVIEW VOCABULARY:

## \* Inference

- An inference is an idea or conclusion
- that's drawn from evidence and
- reasoning. An inference is an educated guess.

## \* Partnering

- In dance, partnering dancing
- together and sharing weight.
- 

## \* Relationship

- Dancers explore the relationships
- of self to self, individuals to groups,
- self to objects, individuals to groups and objects, individuals and groups to the room/space.

## \* Setting/ Costumes

- The environment, time period or
- place in which a story exists.
- 

## \* Symmetry

- A symmetric sequence is one in which
- movements to the right are mirrored
- by movements to the left, and vice versa.

## \* Character Traits

- Character traits are all the aspects of a
- person's behavior and attitudes that
- tell us who the character is - their actions, their feelings, their relationship to others.



# EXPLORE THE PROCESS



"TEXT TO SELF"

A hand-drawn graphic featuring the text "TEXT TO SELF" in a bold, black, sans-serif font. A curved arrow points from the text towards a series of six vertical black bars of varying heights, which are drawn with a rough, hand-painted style.

In the next few slides, we will explore the characters of this work and dive into our personal connection to the movement, musicians, and characters.

# LET'S EXPLORE THE WORK

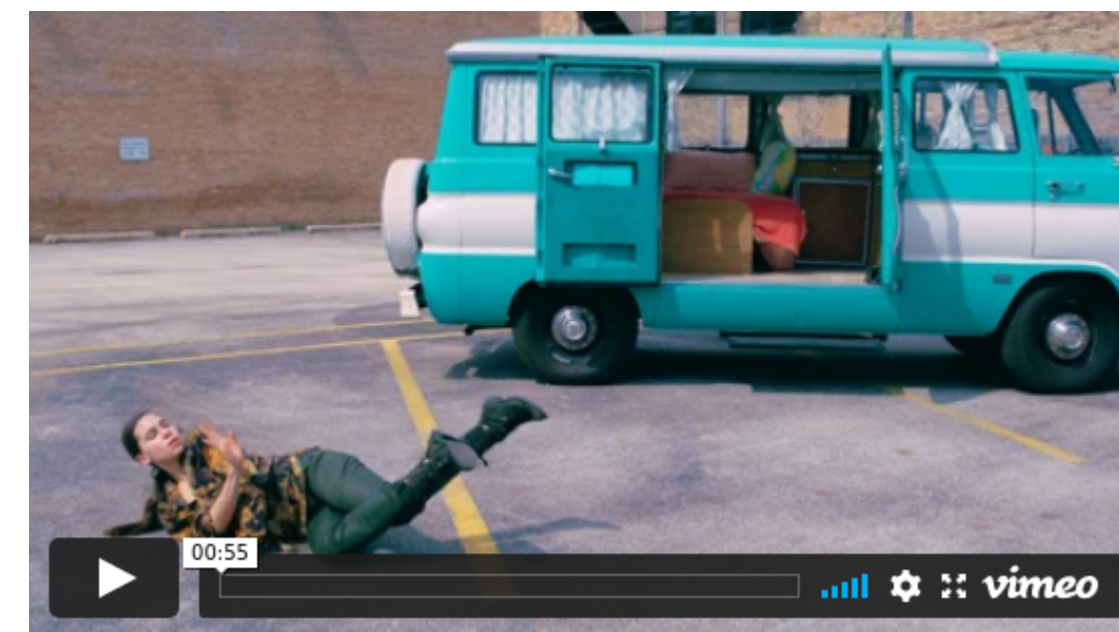
How does the characters' relationship evolve in these three sections? Use the worksheet on the next page to document how the choreographer's movement and music choices inform your understanding.



Section 1  
...



Section 2



Section 3  
...





# WORKSHEET



How do the characters relationships evolve through the three sections? How do the choreographer's movement and music choices inform your understanding?

## SECTION 1: MOVEMENT EVIDENCE

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## YOUR INTERPRETATION

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## SECTION 2: MOVEMENT EVIDENCE

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## YOUR INTERPRETATION

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## SECTION 3: MOVEMENT EVIDENCE

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## YOUR INTERPRETATION

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# SETTING



## QUESTION



How do the characters interact inside the van? How does this affect your interpretation of the relationships of the characters and the story of the film?

01

## QUESTION



Why do you think the choreographer chose to use a van and a parking lot for this film? What other non-stage spaces can you think of that you might create dance in?

02

## QUESTION



What do you think the open outdoor space represents in the film?

03



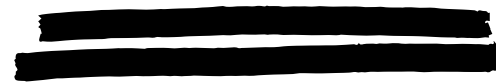
WATCH IT ALL  
COME TOGETHER



# REFLECTION



Which character did you relate to most? Why?





# Standards Addressed

## National Core Arts Standards

- DA:Cr2.1.3b Develop a dance phrase that expresses and communicates an idea or feeling. Discuss the effect of the movement choices.
- DA:Cr2.1.4b Develop a dance study that expresses and communicates a main idea. Discuss the reasons and effectiveness of the movement choices.
- DA:Cr2.1.5b Develop a dance study by selecting a specific movement vocabulary to communicate a main idea. Discuss how the dance communicates nonverbally. TH:Cr1.1.3c Collaborate to determine how characters might move and speak to support the story and given circumstances in drama/theatre work.
- TH:Cr1.1.4c Imagine how a character might move to support the story and given circumstances in a drama/theatre work.
- TH:Cr1.1.5c Imagine how a character’s inner thoughts impact the story and given circumstances in a drama/ theatre work.
- MU:Pr4.2.3 Demonstrate understanding of the structure in music selected for performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.4 Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, and form ) in music selected for performance.
- MU:Pr4.2.5 Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony ) in music selected for performance.

## Common Core Standards

- ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.3 Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character's thoughts, words, or actions).
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.4.5 Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g., verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2 Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text.
- ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact).
- ELA-LITERACY.W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.



**HUBBARD STREET**  
EDUCATION + COMMUNITY  
PROGRAMS

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For more information about all of available our education programs, please visit our website.





# Hubbard Street Dance Chicago Education & Community Programs

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