thINKingDANCE
Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation

Meet the Writers: Megan Bridge

What is Thinking Dance REALLY about, in your opinion?
Thinking Dance is really about raising the bar on dance discourse. Right now, after almost 2 full years of existence, I think we have done a good job of that in Philadelphia. We are covering so much more than was previously possible, and, if I may say so, I think we've made dance in Philly more visible nationally and even internationally. Our writers cover a lot, and our editors are constantly trying to raise the level of writing and criticality in the pieces we publish. I'm really, really proud to be a part of TD.

"Good dance....."
Just like good writing, I really don't think there is any one rule about what good dance "is" or looks like. It might be virtuosic or pedestrian, it might be conceptual, abstract, moving, passionate. I think making good work as an artist, whether one is writing, choreographing, improvising, whatever, requires a certain kind of openness to the world, to ideas...a willingness to let things arise in the moment of the creative act. I think the craft is in knowing how to edit.

"Good writing..."
Good writing is unpredictable. Inconsistent. It might be tidy or a total mess, dry, clip reportage or the juiciest fiction. You know it when you read it. And sometimes when you write it.

Which part is challenging, scary, difficult about writing about dance?
Trying to write critically about the work of my colleagues and friends is absolutely terrifying. I keep trying. Sometimes it blows up in my face, but I don't think I've caused any permanent damage. At least none that I know of, yet. Yikes.

How did you learn to type?
I took a typing class in high school! Probably the most useful class I've ever taken. I never did get around to learning all the numbers though.

What is your "desert island" publication (periodical, book etc.)
Impossible to answer. Can I choose 10? Favorites of the recent past: Neal Stephenson's Anathem, Alain Badiou's In Praise of Love, Erin Manning's Always More Than One, Tom Wolfe's Bonfire of the Vanities, Kirsten Kaschock's Sleight, C. Carr's On Edge: Performance at the End of the 20th Century. Ok, and 4 all-time life-changing faves: Raoul Vanegeim's The Revolution of Everyday Life, Roselee Goldberg's Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present, Simone de Beauvoir's The Second Sex, Sally Banes' Democracy's Body: Judson Dance Theater, 1962-1964.
Sorry, did I break the rules on that question?

If I never see another _____ again, it will be too soon.
I have a lot of patience, and can watch pretty much anything if I'm in a generous enough mood. But my pet peeve has to do with a particular type of curtain call. I absolutely HATE it when people bow and don't drop their head till the very end. They keep their face focused out at the audience and do a sort of spine ripple, so that their head doesn't "bow" until the last minute. It drives me crazy, it is completely the opposite of what a bow is supposed to be, which to me is an act of humility.

How has TD affected your other dance-related work?

TD has allowed me to be a much more articulate dance maker and dance watcher. I think the biggest change I've noticed has come from being an editor for TD...writing about my own work has become slightly less painful.

What would your parents say about your work in the arts?

My parents are troopers. They come to whatever I tell them is the most important stuff, and what they do say, all the time, is that they know (because I've taught them over many years) that they are not supposed to try to "get it." I love this.

If I were to write a dance love-letter, it would be to_____.

My two-year-old daughter, Freya. <3

By Megan Bridge

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