

TALKING POINTS FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: PARSONS DANCE

Show & Theater Company:

- Parsons Dance is a contemporary American dance company based in New York City

Art Form:

- Modern dance

Context:

- Founded in 1985 by Artistic Director David Parsons and Tony Award-winning lighting designer Howell Binkley, Parsons Dance is internationally renowned for its energized, athletic ensemble work.
- ? Where do you see dancing in your life? When do you like to dance?
- ? How is dancing on a stage for an audience different from dancing with your friends?

Main Concepts:

- Self-expression through movement: Sometimes ideas and feelings are better expressed through action, rather than through speaking or writing. Performance can help an expression become more intense, more memorable, and more universal, and even address ideas that can't be put into words at all.
 - ? How can you communicate without words or symbols?
 - ? What feelings make you want to move?

Special Things to Look for:

- Contemporary dance is a combination of individual and group performance.
 - ? How is dancing with a partner different than dancing by yourself?
 - ? Do you think the dancers trust each other? What do you see them doing that would require trust?
- Dance performances are based around themes, messages, and ideas.
 - ? Can you identify a movement or gesture that the dancers repeat? What do you think makes that movement special?

Theater Etiquette:

- Respect the theater, one person to a seat, limit bathroom breaks, do not kick the seats, no food or drink in the theater (bottled water okay), and turn off cell phones/no texting.
- ? How is watching live theater different than watching a movie or TV?
 - We can't pause, rewind, or fast forward with live theater.
 - Live theater is exciting because each performance is unique.
 - Students are in the same room as the performers. Moving around and making sounds can affect the performers and other members of the audience.