

# EXIT DANCE THEATRE

24 ALLEN ST. NEWBURYPORT, MA. 01950 (978) 462-1010

FONTAINE DUBUS, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

FOUNDED 1987

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Dear Educator,

By way of introduction, Exit Dance Theatre (EXIT) is a modern dance company, based in Newburyport, Massachusetts. EXIT was founded in 1987 and has performed throughout New England as well as Western Europe. More information about the company itself can be found at the end of this letter. The real purpose of this correspondence is to inform you of an educational performance that you may find valuable to specific courses at your institution and/or relevant to the student body in general.

Recently, a professor at Lesley College approached the company about a collection of student essays. She had assigned **body image** as the topic of a writing exercise. When the assignments were turned in, an astonishing number expressed the negative self-images experienced by their authors. Specifically, students revealed their inner struggles with the most prevalent eating disorders - anorexia and bulimia. Disturbed and concerned by the responses, the professor decided to create an open forum in which her students could, as a group, address and discuss these issues.

Enter EXIT. The professor consulted long-time friend and fellow educator, Fontaine Dubus, the artistic director of EXIT. She shared the essays with Fontaine, as well as the other dancers, to brainstorm over how to develop this forum. Together, they decided the most effective way to achieve a dialogue would be if the dancers approached the subject from a personal perspective - meshing their own experiences with those presented in the students' stories. The end result is a multimedia piece titled "Starving for Perfection." It weaves together excerpts of text from these essays and interpretive dance that draws from the disturbing images painted within them.

It is no secret that negative self-image and the resulting behaviors are a significant problem for young adults and college students. Eating disorders affect an alarming number of people. After premiering "Starving for Perfection" at Lesley College, the response from the audience was overwhelming. The reactions were emotional and honest and it was described as "cathartic," "passionate," and "accurate" with respect to these disorders.

EXIT wants you to consider bringing the piece to your school. Contact information for the company follows and enclosed is a recent flyer as well as a publicity photo. EXIT hopes that this program can apply to some of your educational and/or social needs and looks forward to hearing from you.

## **More About EXIT**

Through 15 years of making art through movement, EXIT has explored a diverse array of cultural themes, musical repertoires, and performance mediums. Topics that EXIT has addressed range from controversial issues such as domestic violence to historical events such as the Jewish Holocaust to light-hearted takes on contemporary doldrums such as

the daily commute. Although EXIT performs primarily in Boston and on its North Shore, the company's reputation has landed invitations to Poland, Germany, and other locations in Western Europe.

EXIT has carved a particular niche for itself in its role as an educational springboard. The company has performed demonstrations at colleges, universities and community art centers for a variety of audiences, exposing students to movement-theater and expression through movement. EXIT has found that dance, like many other art forms, serves as a powerful catalyst for purposeful and effective human interaction. The company openly welcomes inquiries and considers all ideas negotiable.

Sincerely,

Fontaine Dubus  
Exit Dance Theatre