

The PUBLIC SPEAKS feedback from some of 600 past participants

"People I encountered had powerful life stories to share about themselves, family members and life ...sad/inspiring stories of survival and hope...life is precarious and you never know what's around the corner...courage, faith, support and hope get you through the hard times..."

"It was fun. The work was of excellent quality. Interesting people were involved and I got to meet them. Art is a powerful way to communicate."

"Art has the power to highlight issues in our society that need addressing – making you look at things we tend to overlook."

"A sense of belonging, and making people aware of different life situations and persecutions."

"The range of emotions was huge and the experiences also vary immensely throughout the process."

"I felt a great sense of community."

"It was great to see how the professional artists were accepted by Busby visitors/participants and to see the impact the artists presence had on people - wonderful & enlightening."

"It's important to advocate for the arts and to get it out there. Small cities are often sheltered. The arts are for everyone. Projects that involve everyone are more meaningful."

"As someone who was dealing with 10 years of living in an unsafe environment and experienced personal trauma, I found the performance to be very vivid, touching on my intimate realities."

"I am pleased that this expression of crisis took place in my community because it strengthens our ability as a community to talk about what makes us uncomfortable."

"I never imagined being a part of this kind of project. I was honoured and had a sense of pride that I accomplished something after losing my eyesight."

"I like to do things that give me purpose and meaning and helps build my confidence."

"I learned that when I put my mind to something I could do it."

"I had more courage, you saw me for who I was. I felt a connection with you. You had faith in me".

"Made me feel included for a change,"

"Glad to have something happy, different to do & being treated with respect."

Hi Maxine !!

What a great success...congratulations !! A wonderful group of people to spend time with...such good energy at all times. The whole evolutionary process of rehearsals was fascinating to teachers like Bonnie and me (we've both done our fair share of organizing large art performances).

And as I mentioned to you the other day, your energy, relaxed good humour, and personal attention to even minor players like myself, is very inspiring...you are a wonderful teacher!

Hope you enjoyed some of my letters... it was a good opportunity for me to remind myself of the serious ideas I am trying to make a major part of my life (and some silly notes too!)

Really looking forward to seeing everyone again when the film is edited and we can really celebrate a successful adventure!!

Thanx so much for finding a cameo role for me... turned out be the perfect thing!

**Gordon Way, Performer
(Senior Educator, Toronto School Board)**

Congratulations, it was a fantastic trio of shows. I hope you are fed by the experience and above all that you were able to enjoy the day. Thanks again for entrusting me with the introduction. I had a lot of fun!

**Andrea Nann, Performer
(Artistic director, Dreamwalker Productions)**

Hello Maxine,

**Krima was a wonderful event. Keep up the good work and stay in touch.
Regards,**

**Mi Young Kim, Performer, Elder Dance Artist and Artistic Director
(Soo Ryu Dance Festival and Mi Young Kim Dance Company)**

"It was a great experience and my pleasure absolutely."

**Sashar Zarif, Performer, and Artistic Director,
SasharZarifDanceTheatre, Joshgoon, Canadian Academy of Azerbaijani Dance**

Hi Maxine:

It's been so fast and I cannot believe that the KRIMA performance happened two weeks ago...

It was a powerful event and a lot of fun to dance with more than 130 performers.

Your strong energy made that event possible.

I am so glad that I was involved in it. Thank you for asking me.

**Keiko Kitano-Thomson, Performer
(Professor of Dance, York University)**

Hi Maxine,

I appreciate the experience of being in Krima.

It was a once in a lifetime kind of event, I think, and did a lot to bring the community together and bring up important conversations. Congratulations on all your work and vision and organizing!

I heard Hamilton went really well too, and that you actually joined in the performance!

Big Hug,

**Heidi Strauss, Performer
(Artistic Director, Adelheid productions)**

Hi Maxine!

Wow, I enjoyed doing the piece!

It is not often that I get the opportunity to be a part of another artist's vision, and I wish it would happen more often. So thanks for asking me to be involved.

It was also lovely to hang out with such an interesting variety of folks that I don't get to see that often. I'm glad it went well and hope it was also successful in Hamilton! Keep me up to date on all your doings etc.! And, for the record, I'm always game for performing and working and having new experiences...

Cheers!

Allison Cummings, (Performer, Choreographer, Toronto)

Hi Maxine,

Just wanted to thank you again for giving me the opportunity last week to volunteer and see the workings-on of your show KRIMA! It was really fun, and I had a wonderful experience. If you ever need extra hands in future productions, let me know, I would be glad to help.

Cheers,

Jessica Chen, Technical assistant

Hi Maxine,

Writing to say thanks. Being part of KRIMA was certainly an interesting experience. Special, memorable, exhausting, even moving at times.

**Ariel. Performer
(Dancer Clown)**

Hi Maxine,

Wanting to write and tell you that it was quite an amazing experience performing in Krima. What a surreal opportunity to perform alongside so many faces... some new, some old...artists whose past performances had inspired me to choose dance as a career! Let's just say, it was an opportunity that I will never forget!

Thanks again for this crazy fun amidst a cold winter.

Cheers,

**Emily Poirier, Performer
(Dance artist)**

Hey Maxine,

Congrats on all your success of the Krima shows!!!

What an accomplishment.

It's my honour to be part of that and I appreciate your support of my art.

Had a blast creating the cardboard figures for the show, and equally exciting to dance with such calibre of dancers from Toronto!!

What an experience!

Take care Maxine!!

See you real soon.

**Harvey Chan, Set Dresser and Performer
(Professor, Visual Arts, Ontario College of Art and Design)**

Hello Maxine...

It was a great pleasure to take part in Krima and I am excited about our paths crossing more and more as well...

Michael Caldwell, performer (Dance Artist, Curator)

Aloha Maxine,

I need to say thanks again for the opportunity to be part of the project.

I had a blast!

Lynnsey Larre, Performer, Co-artistic director (Crazyfish Collective,)

Hi Maxine,

Oh you must be exhausted. I looked on with great admiration when you were telling people things for the umpteenth time, and I know Dave felt the same. I hear it was beautiful in Hamilton. I was rehearsing that day so couldn't make it. You can have a rest now.

I had a wonderful time. It was so lovely seeing faces I hadn't seen in a while and dancing with them. Regarding the money. Thank you very much, it's not like I'm a millionaire but you should put mine back into your coffers and know that I had a good time in the community.

Love

Viv Moore, Performer

(Dancer/actor, Professor in Drama, George Brown College)

Hi Maxine,

Wanted to say thanks again for the great event the other weekend. I was so impressed with how you organized all 130+ and seemed to have fun while doing it. Wow, what a feat! As I was saying, being in it was such a great opportunity for me to get to know many more dancers/choreographers in the city. I loved the community feel of the show, and the simple structures you used to highlight events, I'd love to hear more about your process. I know Yves and Chantelle your theatre students, who've taken my contact classes, really love your work too. Are you working on anymore Toronto projects this year? If/when you are and you're looking for dancers I'd be very interested :)

Suzanne Liska, Performer (Dance artist, Co-Director, The Contact Collective)

Hi Maxine!!!

I hear KRIMA in Hamilton was a great success!!!

I have on my list to email you and say what a wonderful experience KRIMA was for me. I can only talk about it from the "inside" perspective, which was emotionally charged. It was so powerful to be surrounded by that many people, friends and strangers. I loved the scene with the babies. And it seemed to me that it was organized very well! There was little confusion, and everyone was nice, and helpful.

So thank you so much for having me!!!!

Malgorzata Nowacka, Performer (Artistic director, The Chimera Project)

Hi Maxine,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in Krima. It was a fantastic experience, and I really enjoyed being a part of the project. I hope this leads to other great things!

Break a leg for the next show in Hamilton!

Natasha Frid, Performer

Dear Maxine and Jonathan,

I just wanted to thank you both so much for the wonderful experience of being apart of Krima this past weekend. It was honestly so much fun, stressful, but so much fun!!! Thank you so much for letting me be apart of such a fantastic show! Best of luck on the Hamilton show and any future endeavours! It was great meeting and working with you both and I hope I can do it again some day!!

Sincerely,
Charlotte Moffatt, Volunteer Technical Crew

Hi Maxine and Jonathan,

I just wanted to say thank you for such a wonderful experience yesterday working on the Krima! Production. I had a fantastic time and congratulations once again!

Take care and speak to you soon!

Angelina Chan, Volunteer House Management

Congratulations on mounting such an amazing project. I had such a wonderful time! Thank you for allowing me to be a part of the Toronto production of KRIMA!

Allison Payne, performer (Toronto)

This experience that you allowed me to share with you will never be forgotten. You are a kindred spirit, and a wonderful human being...and brilliant! If you ever need someone in the future, I'm yours! Thank you from the bottom of my heart, for your words...they mean alot...and now,i feel complete again. Please thank Takako for me, she too is a wonderful creation, and i am a better person knowing both of you! My highest regards to you Maxine...

Ronaldo Valere De Jonkheere, Performer (Actor,)

“for the first time (he) truly believed in what dance can be and do. “

In 2007 I was a small-town girl in a big city. I'd moved to Toronto to study dance at York University. My not overly dance-inclined father had just come for a visit and we went to see Krima being presented at the Young Centre for Performing Arts.

I was totally enraptured by the performance but what really stole my heart was seeing my father's reaction. He was enthralled and I think for the first time truly believed in what dance can be and do.

Being a part of the 2014 Barrie version, I have come to realize that Maxine Heppner's Krima, without me even being fully conscious of it, has been an important part of my growth as an artist both as observer and doer. There is nothing more rewarding than community based art projects and I think Krima takes a step further by involving people from *all* walks of life. Working with people from the Busby Street Centre made the work just that much more relevant. The promo says "Unexpected things happen to good people" and Maxine structured the piece for both audience and performers to cope with surprises at every moment.

Being a performer in Krima reinforced that at the end of the day Humanity is what makes sharing this planet so special; there is always someone willing to lend a hand or a shoulder to lean on. And when there isn't, the floor is there to catch me instead. While potentially a "dark" work, Krima, for myself, is actually Hopeful. It is a positive cycle that keeps repeating...

Alison Keery, Performer (dance artist)

"Forever grateful"

My friend Kathy first told me about Krima, and at first I was a little intimidated with the idea of performing-after all, many of the people who would be performing were professionals, and other than belly dancing for mostly fun and exercise, I had absolutely no experience. Still, my husband had passed away the year before and I found there were too many empty hours to fill. I decided to go for it.

Probably one of the most profound experiences of my life!

To begin with, Maxine the director was so warm and welcoming that I soon felt like I was part of something great and that no one was there to judge me on my ability. My fellow dancers and performers were equally lovely and special and I found myself feeling I truly belonged, even at the times when I was out of my comfort zone, I enjoyed very much the dance, the rehearsals and finally the performance. Magical!

But probably the most amazing thing for me was after, when the show was over and we said our goodbyes, not knowing if we would ever meet again. I walked to my car feeling exhilarated for one, but also incredibly sad. And then the tears fell, and I cried for three days.

I know that most of my tears were because I had lost my husband, and because he never had a chance to see the performance (he would have been so proud), but it was the piece itself. How to cope, and how we adapt was so much a part of my life the past year, just trying to get by without my husband to care for me and help me through. It was profound, and finally by performing I was able to let go of all the emotions that I had been holding in.

Thank you for the wonderful opportunity. I am forever grateful!

Elisabeth Ashe, Performer (B&B owner)