

Steppenwolf Education's Maker May Week 2 – MAKER CHALLENGE Peek into Erika L. Sánchez's Creative Process

Step One: GENERATE MATERIALS

On Tuesday, May 12 in part one of our workshop, participants were led through these two brainstorming activities to generate material that can be pulled from when completing STEP TWO, the Maker Challenge, below. If you didn't get to join us for part one, you can be guided through these exercises by watching the livestream video on Steppenwolf Theatre Company's Facebook page, [here](#).

Use these two writing exercises to help generate a bank of material you can use later in the challenge when you are beginning to write your poem.

Visual Translation Exercise:

The poem attached (*on the last page of this document*) is translated to Ukrainian. (We're assuming you don't know the language, but if you do, please find another poem in a language you are not familiar with to use instead.) Look at the poem and "translate" it based on how the words look and what they evoke for you. Don't censor yourself with logic or reason. It can be completely nonsensical. Go with your initial instincts.

Music Exercise:

This is a free write! As you listen to the song ([Opening by Philip Glass](#)), write down whatever comes to mind. Again, don't limit and don't edit yourself. Try to have a goal of keeping your pen moving the entire time even if that means repeating the same word over and over until a new avenue or idea opens up to you.

Step Two: MAKER CHALLENGE

Pick 1 object that means something special to you, something unique. An object that has a very specific relationship to you (*you will not be sharing with anyone what that relationship or what this object is unless you would like to*)

Using the ingredients below, write a 10 – 15-line poem that attempts to communicate how your *chosen object* makes you feel without being literal, without telling anyone what the actual relationship is between you and this object.

Ingredients:

- 3 lines from your response to the Visual Translation Exercise.
- 3 lines from your response to the Music Exercise.
- 1 line that's a question

Guiding Questions:

- *Think about what kind of images, sounds, smells, colors, textures that this object brings up?*
- *You can shift, edit and adjust your lines and ingredients, arrange them however will work for you.*
- *Think about how the lines are structured when someone reads them (refer to the Visual Translation Exercise)*
- *How do you communicate and translate a feeling?*

This maker challenge was inspired by Erika's poem *Suadade*. Here is a video of her reading the piece: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InFFLZX_UCo

For Friday, May 15:

Come ready to share: Some participants will have an opportunity to opt into sharing their poems with Erika and the other participants of the webinar. Please only have a maximum of 15-lines to share from your poem. Don't worry about it being "finished" or "perfect." You only had 72 hours to create this! This is an in-process sharing of our collective work. And no worries if you would not like to share, only 3- 5 participants will have the opportunity to share with Erika. Erika will also give us insight into her writing process, and you'll hear the feedback she gives others.

How you'll receive feedback:

In Steppenwolf Education, when giving constructive critique we use an adapted form of Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process. Erika will verbally give constructive feedback to those that opt in to sharing and participants will be able to give feedback in the chat.

- **Step One:** Statements of Meaning – as a listener, you state what you observe/hear. *Example sentence starters: I noticed... I heard... This piece made me feel...*
- **Step Two:** Artist as Questioner – the artist who shared their work poses questions they have about their work to each other to get specific feedback.

Read more about Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process [here](#).

If you want to share your work virtually:

Whether on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook – use the hashtag **#virtualstepped** or tag **@steppenwolfthtr** (Instagram and Twitter) or **@steppenwolftheatre** (Facebook) in your posts!

Enjoy making and we will see you Friday, May 15!

Американські мрії

Котику, нам нарешті вдалося!
Ми їдемо на задніх сидіннях чорного
лімузина. Обабіч дороги
юрмляться люди, всі викрикують наші імена.
Люди увірували в твоє золотаве волосся
і твій блакитний випрасуваний костюм.
Я для них – свідома громадянка. Я люблю
свою країну. Вдаю, що нічого не сталося.
Вдаю, що не бачу, як чоловік
прикриває свою біляву донечку
від кулі, як ти не називаєш
мене на ім'я, ніби все, що надовкіл,
не скидається на побоїще. Насправді я не Джекі-О,
та й дірки в голові у тебе немає, на мить
якась веселка спливає серед туману
непам'яті. Люблю свою країну,
але кого я обдурюю? Я притримую тобі мізки,
коханий, мій солодкий, солодкий Джек.
Я тягнуся в багажник за осколком твоєї пам'яті,
де ми цілуємось, і наш народ
аж сяє від радості. Ти спадаєш назад.
Твоя рука відпускає мою. Ти вже розкинувся
на все сидіння, поглиблюючи
рожевість моєї сукні. Але я свідомо
громадянка, огорнена Ісусом
і каретами швидкої допомоги. Я люблю
цю країну. Ці перекривлені обличчя.
Моя країна. Блакитне небо. Чорний
лімузин. Моя біла рукавичка
багровіє – кольором усіх наших
американських мрій.