

Steppenwolf Education's Maker May Week 1 – MAKER CHALLENGE *Exploring & Experimenting with Live Lit* with Samantha Irby & Ian Belknap

The Prompt: Write a paragraph (yes, a SINGLE PARAGRAPH) about a highly particular thing/experience you miss from your "pre-lockdown" life. Your objective is to make your reader miss this thing/experience as deeply as you do.

NOTHING generic, nothing that would be true for anybody (*for example: try to avoid "I miss hanging out with my friends."*) The ideal is to hit upon some very small, very specific thing and you might be the only person on earth who loves it.

Make the reader FEEL that loss/love along with you - by taking us fully inside YOUR experience of it (*for example: if you miss the heated seat in your car because you hardly drive now, what are the details - sensory, physical, emotional - that make THIS seat heater in THIS '13 Honda CRV the perfect companion and source of solace to THIS butt?!*)

Tonal variety is encouraged! If you wanna do a funny piece, cool; you wanna do a pathos/bittersweet feelings piece, so be it!

Step One: Brainstorm - think through some possibilities. Don't just go with the first idea that occurs to you - it may not be your best.

Step Two: Revise. Is there any detail that's not sharp? Is there any description that's unclear? Is there any language that's not fresh? Even if you feel like you've heard this idea or sentiment before, make it unique to you and drill down to the particular, even if it a sentiment that gets expressed frequently.

Step Three: Read it aloud. Repeatedly. Are there any spots where you get tripped up? Are there any places where your interest/focus drags? Are there any phrases that don't sound quite right? Revise again - fix this stuff.

For Thursday, May 7:

Come ready to share: Some participants will have an opportunity to opt into sharing their work with Samantha, Ian and the entire webinar. Please only have a 2-minute portion to share. Don't worry about it being "finished" or "perfect." You only had 48 hours to create it! This is an in-process sharing of our collective work. And no worries if you don't want to share! Samantha and Ian will give us insight into their writing process, and you'll hear the feedback they give 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. Samantha and Ian will verbally give constructive

feedback to those that share their work and participants will be able to give feedback in the chat.

Adapted Feedback Process:

- **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.
- **Step Three:** Neutral Wonderings – *Example: if you are discussing language used in a written passage, rather than asking the artist “Why did you write it in first person?” try “Tell me about your choice to write in first person.”*

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 Thursday, May 7!