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Anomalies and Curiosities of Medicine

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Sponsored by Professor Gina Lori Riley, we began devising our original movement composition in October of this year. Inspired by the mysterious true story of Edward Mordrake (one of the oddest cases of human deformity ever recorded, having been born with his sister's face on the back of his head), we used the methodology of the Seven Viewpoints -- coined by Anne Bogart of the SITI Company -- and Contact improvisation to explore the themes of depression, suicide, and the complexities of sibling relationships. We used the method of Contact in order to better understand the depth of human connection; how can two people be entirely interlocked through the mind, body, and soul, even when they aren't touching? The giving and sharing of weight -- both physically and mentally -- is integral to the creation of character and relationship, and through this process we were able to discover how expression through the body can speak volumes, and how this work is not only applicable to our acting work, but throughout our daily lives. That being said, we posed the research question: can the physical connection, developed through the method of contact, strengthen the psychological relationship between two actors? The method of Contact allows for simple and fast devising -- as long as both partners commit entirely to the sharing and receiving of weight, imagination and creation is limitless. It strips away complexities and we were able to understand what it truly means to be present for your partner -- because if you aren't, injuries can easily occur. The strength of our relationship became so strong that we could mould our bodies together, acting in complete unison and becoming one powerful entity; this is a progressive way to approach theatre, and institutions such as the SITI company are making waves in the theatre world with their devised work. Contact that is as simple as eye-to-eye connection in daily life is something that is important to be sensitive to; a smile while passing a stranger can change a day, and calling attention to the way in which we connect as a society is incredibly informative. In addition, contact is an extremely important technique in regards to acting work as a whole; applying contact to scene work with a partner, as well as character development is a visceral way to embody the world of the play while still sharing energy, and not allowing it to become self-indulgent. It is a movement style of the future, based purely on what it means to connect to another human.