

Isaac Jung

Dance Major Reflection

I am struggling to fathom that it is my junior year, while I joined the major later than most, I feel like it was just yesterday I added the major. In this wonderful time of e-portfolios and reflection, I get to look back at my progress and be proud of myself.

I would say the recent development of my prefrontal cortex has been a huge factor in my recent improvement. The week after my twenty-first birthday, it felt like I had been enlightened and I have continued to expand my awareness everyday. I feel, for the first time, I have actually enjoyed and fully grasped the complexities and nuances of a core class. This change has also influenced my dance practices as well. Feedback I had gotten my freshman and sophomore year in dance classes are finally clicking. My brain was ready for change and so was my body.

I have been asked a few times about my weight loss and what that process was like. People have asked if I got liposuction, tried a semaglutide, or did anything drastic to lose weight. The truth is it just happened. Since this past summer I have not been trying to lose weight, it has just been happening congruent to my decluttering of my personal life. I have been trying to get rid of metaphorical dead weight, like my own toxic masculinity, and bad friends. In my shedding of these burdens I came to a realization that I am worthy of simply existing. There was no voice in my head chastising me for being queer or “friends” diminishing me as a dancer and human. I never had a great relationship with my body. I grew up chubby and awkward, and was aware of people’s idea of me changing based on my body. People didn’t like that I was big, but when I would lose weight I was not being healthy. I would say that now I have found a good balance. I do not starve myself and when I look in the mirror, I like the guy looking back at me. Of course the new hairdo also helps with how I see myself.

Now with my “new” brain, body, and haircut, I was ready for all of the knowledge I could receive my senior year. When dancing I still feel like froshmore year Isaac, flailing around struggling to remember let alone do the combination. But when I saw the e-portfolio, I was shocked. I get emotional looking at my e-portfolio, I hardly recognize myself from those videos and pictures. I think my confidence is so bad because I believed it was better to be underestimated than overestimated, but if everyone underestimates me then how would I get any opportunity to succeed. Confidence must come from within, if I do not believe in myself then why should anyone else? My own use of the words froshmore, jophomore, and junior probably did not help. It just added an artificial barrier between me and the rest of my class. During my actual freshman year, back when I was just a theater major, I always felt alone. It took time for the other dance majors to warm up to me, I feel the community we have fostered is part of what makes this program so special.

I love the other dance majors so much, they have seen me at my best and my lowest. I think I was able to grow so much because of how supportive and kind my peers have been. I have enjoyed getting to know them better and watching them grow, there is no preying on downfall like I faced with the theater. It is going to be hard not seeing them everyday. But that is a whole semester in the future, if I spend all of my time thinking like that then, I will miss all of the fun I can have with them next semester.

I do not know what the future holds for me, but I plan to never stop dancing. I would love to try everything, I am keeping my options open. I owe everything to this program, I would not be who I am today without it.