**UMS Night School 2/24/14**

**Key Themes, Players, and Definitions**

**This week’s session entitled “Body Experiments” was designed to reflect on The Suit and to prepare the UMS Night School community for upcoming performance with Jennifer Monson and DD Dorvillier.**

* Gillian Eaton (Assistant Professor of Theatre, University of Michigan) speaks to Peter Brooks’ *The Suit* as one of “the greats” that serves as a metaphor to apartheid. Other Resources mentioned include: [*The Island*](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wcyOBQonABU)

Experimentation

* Clare Croft (UMS Night School Host)
  + Contextualizes the [Performance RMW(a)/RMW](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3LhLQYHDMRU) presented by Jennifer Monson and DD Dorvillier
    - AIDS activism
    - 2nd half of work created in 1993; 1st half created a decade later.
    - Partnerships on stage
      * Physical closeness and intimacy
  + How does one decide how an idea is best expressed?
  + How do you make choices in creation?
  + “Queer: It is malleable and amorphous”
    - It is an interesting linguistic location
      * Identifying LGBT issues
      * Location of political critique
* Larry La Fountain-Stokes (Associate Professor of American Culture, University of Michigan)
  + Talked about experimentation and imagination in process
  + *Writer* and *performer* roles influence each other
  + Collaboration is essential in his process
  + Being a performing participant in the work is a huge part of his research
* Amy Chavasse (Associate Professor of Dance, University of Michigan)
  + Talked about her process in creating “86 Questions” a work about President Clinton impeachment hearings
  + The use of absurdity is essential to her process
  + Issues of power are often a charged starting point
  + Improvisation used in creation of work
* What is Improvisation?
  + A tool for creation in performance
  + Composing without a net on the spot (Chavasse)
  + Working without an eraser (Chavasse)
  + Rewriting and riffing off text (Lafontain)
  + An opportunity to “interact with the audience) (Lafontain)
  + “You can go places original text didn’t have” (Lafontain)