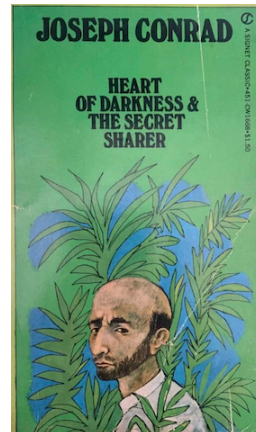




DNAWORKS

Dialogue and Healing through the Arts



Daniel Banks at a *The Secret Sharer* residency at Texas A&M University. Credit: Igor Kraguljac

Dear Friend,

Next week, we will start our fifth and final in-person developmental residency for *The Secret Sharer*, a multidisciplinary work based on Joseph Conrad's 1909 novella.

My connection to this text is deeply personal and goes back several decades.

I first read *The Secret Sharer* in high school, which was a hostile and challenging environment for me.

Reading Conrad's story about two men finding safety through proximity and intimacy in the face of danger resonated deeply. It made me feel less alone and less strange. *The Secret Sharer* profoundly impacted me and has been a companion ever since—after college, while working in physical theatre in Europe, I first imagined it as a dance-theatre piece. And in all my many moves, I have carried the original text from 1982 with me as one of my precious belongings.

More than three decades later, I began to notice the increased media reports of bullying, suicides, and murders of LGBTQQ2SPIAA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, Queer, questioning, Two-Spirit, pansexual, intersexual, asexual, allies, and others) teens across the country—with young people of the Global Majority at an even higher risk.

I immediately felt that our young people needed greater support and to know, without a shadow of a doubt, that they are not alone—that there is, in fact, hope for a safer and fulfilling life. And that this knowing can only happen in person, being in a space of love, care, and community where they are the "norm," not having to watch what they say, how they say it, or how they present themselves—where they experience belonging on an embodied level.

***The Secret Sharer* is my response to this need for Queer-normative spaces.** In 2019, I shared my story and Conrad's text with members of my art-family. Since then, we have been co-creating this

multidisciplinary work, providing time for the piece to develop at an organic pace that allows for our own healing first while responding as the world continues to change and states of global safety and danger continue to shift. As I often say, "What goes in the batter, comes out in the cake." If we are not attending to our well-being and health, how can we expect the work to support others in that process?

We are now close to completing *The Secret Sharer* and anticipate its premiere in 2025. After the premiere, we will tour the piece to bring together intergenerational groups of LGBTQ+ folks and those who love and stand with us. The ultimate goal is to take *The Secret Sharer* to the communities that have tragically lost LGBTQ+ youth as a way to hold spaces for resiliency and healing.

Today I invite you to help us finish this work. As you may know, by some reports, over 650 pieces of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation were introduced across the country last year. **Your support is as important as ever during this time of vulnerability for the LGBTQ+ community, our safety, our health, and our rights.**

With love,
Daniel

P.S. We need to raise \$25,000 before July 31. Thank you in advance for your support!

I WILL HELP DNAWORKS FINISH THE SECRET SHARER

The Secret Sharer is a touring, multi-media, dance-theatre work based on Joseph Conrad's 1909 novella, considered an early Queer text. The project is a response to the ever-increasing reports of the rise in bullying, suicides, and murders of LGBTQQ2SPIAA+ teens across the country, especially among youth of the Global Majority. Through community storycircles connected to the performance, we are holding Queer-centered spaces for LGBTQQ2SPIAA+ resilience and healing.