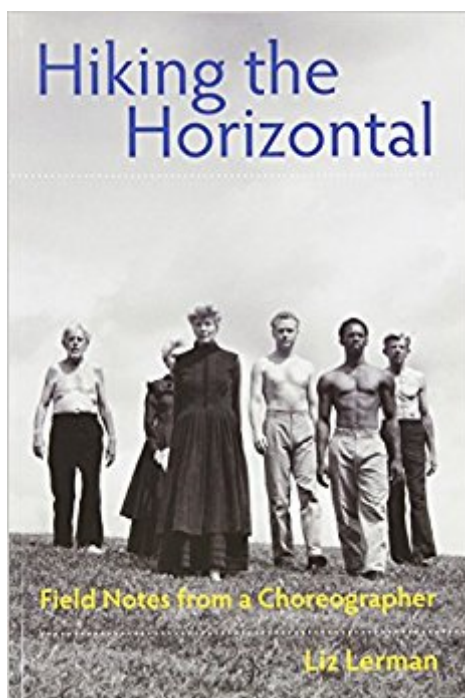


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# Hiking The Horizontal: Field Notes From A Choreographer



## Synopsis

The unique career of choreographer Liz Lerman has taken her from theater stages to shipyards, and from synagogues to science labs. In this wide-ranging collection of essays and articles, she reflects on her life-long exploration of dance as a vehicle for human insight and understanding of the world around us. Lerman has been described by the *Washington Post* as “the source of an epochal revolution in the scope and purposes of dance art.” Here, she combines broad outlooks on culture and society with practical applications and accessible stories. Her expansive scope encompasses the craft, structure, and inspiration that bring theatrical works to life as well as the applications of art in fields as diverse as faith, aging, particle physics, and human rights law. Offering readers a gentle manifesto describing methods that bring a horizontal focus to bear on a hierarchical world, this is the perfect book for anyone curious about the possible role for art in politics, science, community, motherhood, and the media. The paperback edition includes an afterword with updates and additions to each section of the book.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Lerman's concise text inspires and equips the reader with a host of new perspectives from which to tackle the making of artworks. Lerman's ideas are novel, deep, and challenging and, as such, require time to take in, analyze, and potentially adopt." —Lisa Jo Sagolla, *BackStage* magazine  
“(R)eaders will be excited to evaluate and evolve their own practices. Anyone interested in making or teaching dance, regardless of where the dance takes place, who is dancing,

or what it is about, will agree that this book matters. —Karen Schupp, *Journal of Dance Education* —“The strengths of this book lie in its broad reach and in Lerman’s capacity to share nuanced learning in conversational language. She investigates numerous processes central to making, working, and living in various professional and personal communities. —Hiking with wisdom and humility across the horizon of these years, she manages, nonetheless, to dig deeply —Highly recommended. —S.E. Friedler, *CHOICE* —“Hiking the Horizontal constructs a portrait of a compelling artist whose convictions are at the core of her creative engagement in dance —a choreographer whose activism is personal. —Rita Felciano, *Dance Chronicle* “Hiking the Horizontal is a necessary addition to the libraries of dance aficionados and artists. But it also has much to offer to the broader dialogue on the arts. Lerman is thoughtful, insightful and gentle in her approach, and her message carries deep value.” —Peter DeVries, *Dance International*

—“Lerman is that rare artist who has pioneered new pathways into the human spirit, and who is blessed with the facility of not just creating her art but of explaining it as well. *Hiking the Horizontal* is a combination of explanation and inquiry, couched in a narrative that is contagious with sensitivity, grace, and wisdom. — (Dr. Lawrence A. Hoffman, rabbi, Friedman Professor of Liturgy, Worship and Ritual, Hebrew Union College) —“Liz Lerman defies categorization, mixing ideas and practices we are taught to keep separate. She catapults herself into art and politics, science and spirituality, community-based and high art contexts. This generous book will give heart to artists who both respect tradition and seek their own path. — (Jan Cohen Cruz, director, *Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life*) “The author tells her story in such a generous and transparent fashion that one easily grasps her profound observations and provocative inquiries. You will feel like a partner in her journey. Lerman’s concise text inspires and equips the reader with a host of new perspectives from which to tackle the making of artworks. Probably best appreciated by those who have engaged in artistic explorations, Lerman’s ideas are novel, deep, and challenging and, as such, require time to take in, analyze, and potentially adopt.” (Lisa Jo Sagolla, *Back Stage*) —“Lerman is thoughtful, insightful and gentle in her approach, and her message carries deep value. — (Peter DeVries, *Dance International*) --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This book presented a cogent discussion of the evolution of dance as an art form. Insights presented were relevant to multiple fields.

Like her work itself, Lerman's book, *Hiking the Horizontal*, crosses boundaries in ways that are transformative for all who encounter it. The book emerges from her work in both "concert" and communal settings, i.e., from her decades of experience in both the professional/performance world and in senior centers, places of worship, scientific research facilities, universities, and beyond. So what results is an extraordinarily rich and generous sharing of her keen observations and of her probing, insatiable curiosity about humanity, society, community, art, religion, and, of course, dance. Her insights are simply brilliant, often astonishing, and conveyed in language that is intelligent yet relatable, philosophical yet down-to-earth. She invites readers to wonder and marvel along with her, and her invitation is irresistible. Whether you consider yourself an intellectual, spiritual, entrepreneurial, or creative soul, you will find this book profoundly thought-provoking, because regardless of your specific profession or interests, it will transform the way you think about the world and how you engage in it. As a rabbinical student, I have found selections in the book that are shaping how I see my role as a spiritual leader, how I understand community, how I will counsel and provide pastoral care, and how I understand innovation in relation to my religious tradition. The book helps me see some of the limits of our current societal and communal structures, constantly reminds me of the power of story, and teaches me tremendously important lessons about where religion and art intersect. The book also speaks to questions of personal spirituality, such as wholeness, prayer, transcending ourselves, and our sense of what is holy. I find reading *Hiking the Horizontal* to be a spiritual experience, in that it challenges me to be an attentive, creative, awake individual and begs me to think - and to act, to grow, and to reach - outside the box. The book, like the author's life's work, is a gift - a gift to a world that is aching for what it has to offer. -NICOLE ROBERTS, RABBINICAL STUDENT AT HEBREW UNION COLLEGE IN CINCINNATI, OH

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