Saturday, June 18, 2016

The Phoenix Project

Company: Dances For A Variable Population
Venue: West Harlem Piers Park
Location: New York, NY

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Meg Goldman

Celebrating dance and the beauty of age, Dances For a Variable Population (DVP), will present three performances of The Phoenix Project, a citywide public dance project that empowers older adults and reevaluates the aesthetics of aging. This world premiere collaboration will take place in three boroughs—Bronx, Queens and Harlem—over three Saturdays, June 4, 11 and 13. The Phoenix Project will make its Bronx debut at the New York Botanical Garden's award-winning and picturesque Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden on June 4. In the subsequent weekends, the piece will move with excerpts of the full work to Queens at the Queensbridge Riis Senior Center on June 11, and close their performances as part of the Summer on the Hudson Festival at the West Harlem Piers Park on June 18 as part of a Family Day event.

Taking its inspiration from the immortality and drive of the phoenix, The Phoenix Project showcases and values older dancers' special contribution to the celebration of movement and expression—introducing audiences to the significant ways that memory, expectation, and power thrive in a senior mover. The collaborative work features choreography by DVP's Founder and Artistic Director Naomi Goldberg Haas, as well as legendary choreographers and performers Loretta Abbott (early member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater), George Faison (Tony award winning choreographer of The Wiz), Ellen Graff, Stuart Hodes, Marnie Thomas Wood (formerly of Martha Graham Company), Jim May (Artistic Director of the Sokolov Dance Company and formerly of Jose Limon Company), Alice Teirstein (2015 Bessie Lifetime Award winner and Director of the Young Dancemakers Company) Bernard Dove (Harlem Swing Dance Society) and invited guests Etta Dixon, Luther Gales, Rita Carrington, and the DVP company with seniors from DVP's Movement Speaks® programs in the Bronx, Queens and Harlem.

The Phoenix Project is a unique collaboration of legendary dance artists in their 70's, 80's and 90's. Paired with participatory community workshops for older adults, the project promotes strong and creative movement among adults of all ages and abilities with a special focus on seniors. These legendary artists are making new work from their current strengths as older dancers, focusing on how they can perform in the present, and discovering what continues to be important and powerful in their movement.

This is the first year that DVP's yearly performance project will be presented across three boroughs. The organization's Movement Speaks® programs take place throughout the year at 15 senior centers, community centers and library spaces throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queen and Bronx. The organization annually serves 2,500 seniors through its programming. The Phoenix Project will showcase 50 seniors from the Movement Speaks® programs in the three performances.

PROGRAM and VENUE INFORMATION

BRONX* – Saturday, June 4, 11:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. (various times)

Rose Garden Weekend

Performances will take place in the Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden. The New York Botanical Garden is located at 2900 Southern Blvd., Bronx and is accessible by the Metro North/Harlem Line to the Botanical Garden stop or by the B, D or 4 train to Bedford Park Blvd.

*New York Botanical Garden requires an admission fee of $25 for adults, $22 for students and senior and $10 for children 2-12. All children under 2 are free.

QUEENS – Saturday, June 11, 11:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Part of Jazz at Riis "Dances" with MoJazz Dance

The Queensbridge Riis Senior Center is located at 10-25 41st Avenue, Long Island City, Queens and is accessible by the 2,3,5,7 and F trains.

This performance is followed by a community barbeque (seniors only).

HARLEM – Saturday, June 18, 6:00 p.m.

A Family Day Event with Summer on the Hudson

West Harlem Piers Park is located at 125-133 St. at the Hudson River, across from Fairway Market, and is accessible by the 1 train.

Admission to performances are FREE. NYBG requires an admission fee to the Garden.

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ABOUT DANCES FOR A VARIABLE POPULATION

Founded in 2005 by Naomi Goldberg Haas, Dances for a Variable Population (DVP) creates performances that erases the traditional boundaries between dancers and non-dancers promoting strong and creative movement among people of all ages and abilities with a focus on seniors. The organization's programming includes: a multigenerational performance company that engages community members as participants and audiences; Movement Speaks® and Dances for Seniors, free, community-based programs for modest income and culturally underserved older adults, annually serves over 700 seniors; Variable Pop Method Expressive Dance and Fitness classes for adults of all ages, offered year-round; and performance and training opportunities for older professional dancers and choreographers. DVP's site-related performances have been presented in some of New York City's most iconic public spaces, including Times Square, Washington Square Park, and the High Line. DVP has also performed at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and internationally in Poland and British Columbia.

The development and performance of The Phoenix Project has been made possible with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, and funded in part by Council Members Inez Dickens, Mark Levine and Jimmy Van Bramer, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and the New York City Council; and the New York City Department for the Aging with support from Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer. Support is also provided by the West Harlem Development Corporation, Columbia Community Service and Eileen Fisher.

Dances For A Variable Population
125-133rd Streets and the Hudson River
New York, NY, 10027
http://www.dvpnyc.org

Schedule
June 18, 2016: 6:00pm