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Wednesday, July 19, 2017

### Disability. Dance. Artistry. Conversation Series Speakers

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ALICE SHEPPARD took her first dance class in order to make good on a dare. After a performance, disabled dancer Homer Avila challenged Alice to take a dance class. She did. And she loved moving so much that she resigned her academic professorship at Pennsylvania State University in order to begin a career in dance. She studied ballet and modern dance with Kitty Lunn and made her debut with Infinity Dance Theater. After an apprenticeship, Sheppard joined AXIS Dance Company, where she toured nationally and taught in the company's education and outreach programs. Since becoming an independent artist, Sheppard has danced in projects with Ballet Cymru, GDance, and Marc Brew Company in the United Kingdom and Full Radius Dance, Marjani Forté, MBDance, Infinity Dance Theater, and Steve Paxton in the United States. As an emerging, award-winning choreographer, Sheppard creates movement that challenges conventional understandings of disabled and dancing bodies. Engaging with disability arts, culture, and history, she is intrigued by the intersections of disability, gender, and race. In addition to performance and choreography, Sheppard is a sought-after speaker and has lectured on topics related to disability arts, race, and dance. [AliceSheppard.com](http://AliceSheppard.com)



BEN PRYOR From 2009 - 2016 Ben Pryor worked as an independent curator and producer under the moniker tbspMGMT, through which he produced and toured contemporary performance works by Miguel Gutierrez, Trajal Harrell, Ishmael Houston-Jones/Dennis Cooper/Chris Cochrane, Yvonne Meier, Wally Cardona/Jennifer Lacey/Jonathan Bepler and Deborah Hay to venues and festivals including Festival d'Automne, Centre Pompidou (Paris), ImPulsTanz (Vienna), Festival TransAmeriques (Montreal), Tanz Im August (Berlin), Kampnagel (Hamburg), Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival, Whitney Museum of American Art, Walker Art Center, Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago and Portland Institute of Contemporary Art's Time Based Art Festival, among others. Pryor created American Realness, an annual festival of dance and contemporary performance, at the Abrons Arts Center in New York City in

January 2010. Previously Pryor worked as Director of Operations for Center for Performance Research, an Artist Representative at Pentacle, a project manager for Chez Bushwick and in the Planning and Development department at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He served as chair of the Agents Council and Trustee for Dance USA from 2008-2010. Pryor has served as a panelist for CEC ArtsLink, the Jerome Foundation, Creative Capital and the National Endowment for the Arts and has been a guest lecturer for NYU Performance Studies, The New School, Marymount Manhattan College and at the National Dance Center in Bucharest, Romania.



CATHERINE MEREDITH, as a performer, has worked in TV, film, musical theater and on the concert dance stage with such companies as Cortez & Co. Contemporary/Ballet, Verb Ballets, and Karen Reedy Dance Company. She has performed in works by Alvin Ailey, George Balanchine, Talley Beatty, Paul Taylor, David Rousseve, David Parsons, Shapiro & Smith, and Hernando Cortez, with principal roles in Heinz Poll's "Bolero", Martha Graham's "Appalachian Spring", and Ulysses Dove's "Vespers." She was a choreographic contributor on "Why I had to Dance" by Ntozake Shange and Dianne McIntyre. Ms. Meredith's choreography has been presented at AVAYAVA Festival (India), American Dance Guild (NYC), DUMBO Dance Festival, Dance St. Louis, HATCH Series (Jennifer Muller), Playhouse Square, Cain Park, and The American Dance Festival. As the Rehearsal Director/Resident Choreographer for the Dancing Wheels Company, Ms. Meredith leads workshops for Teaching And Working in the Physically Integrated Dance Setting. She is certified in the Horton technique and has adapted it using a method called Translation (a

pedagogic tool in which the elements of movement, space, and time are manipulated to enable sit-down and stand-up dancers to train together.) Ms. Meredith currently teaches at Cuyahoga Community College and has been on faculty at Slippery Rock University, Joffrey Ballet, Brooklyn Music School, and London's Pineapple Studios. She received her MFA from Hollins University/American Dance Festival.

CLAIRE CUNNINGHAM is a performer and creator of multi-disciplinary performance based in Glasgow, Scotland. One of the UK's most acclaimed and internationally renowned disabled artists, Cunningham's work is often rooted in the study and use/misuse of her crutches and the exploration of the potential of her own specific physicality with a conscious rejection of traditional dance techniques (developed for non-disabled bodies) or the attempt to move with the pretence of a body or aesthetic other than her own. A self-identifying disabled artist, Cunningham's work combines multiple art forms and ranges from the intimate solo show ME (Mobile/Evolution) (2009), to the large ensemble work "12" made for Candoco Dance Company. In 2014 she created a new solo: Give me a reason to live, inspired by the work of Dutch medieval painter Hieronymus Bosch and the role of beggars/cripples in his work, and the full-length show Guide Gods, looking at the perspectives of the major Faith traditions towards the issue of disability. She is a former Artist-in-Residence at the Women of the World Festival at the Southbank, London and of the Ulster Bank Belfast Festival at Queens. In 2016 she is the Artist in Residence with Perth International Arts Festival, Australia and Associate Artist at Tramway, Glasgow, and she has recently been awarded an Unlimited Commission for a new duet with choreographer Jess Curtis. [www.clairecunningham.co.uk](http://www.clairecunningham.co.uk)

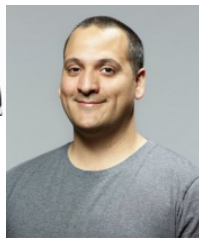


DANIEL SOTO is a cultural producer who believes in the power that artists have in addressing urgent social, political, and cultural issues of our time. He is currently the Associate Producer of Public Programming at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, where he works on two major outdoor summer festivals, Midsummer Night Swing and Lincoln Center Out of Doors. He holds a B.A. in Geography from UCLA, and is interested in the ways in which art creates and activates social spaces.



DOUGLAS SCOTT is the leading creative voice of Full Radius Dance. He discovered dance upon entering Western Kentucky University to earn a B.F.A. in Performing Arts. After graduation, he moved to Atlanta and spent several seasons with the Ruth Mitchell Dance Company, where he performed in works by Ruth Mitchell, Ron Cunningham, Monica Levy and Sal Aiello. In 1991, Douglas founded Dance Force, Inc. He began his exploration of physically integrated (dancers with and without disabilities) dance technique in 1993, and this interest led to the creation, with co-founder Ardath Prendergast, of E=emotion in 1995. In 1998, Dance Force and E=emotion merged to create Full Radius Dance. In 2014, he was honored by Governor and Mrs. Nathan Deal with The Governor's Awards for the Arts and Humanities. Douglas was cited as "a respected leader in modern dance" and for expanding "the definition and reach of modern dance by creating opportunities for dancers with and without disabilities . . . not only in the local Atlanta community, but throughout the State of Georgia, the United States and internationally." Douglas has extensive experience in teaching classes and workshops in modern and modern-based physically integrated dance for numerous schools and organizations. Internationally, he has taught workshops in technique for diverse bodies in Italy, Ireland, Germany, and Spain.

GINA GIBNEY is a choreographer, director and entrepreneur. She founded Gibney Dance in 1991 as a performing and social action dance company, and today the organization has rapidly emerged as a cultural leader that operates through three fields of action: Company, Community and Center.



GREGORY DORADO | Rehearsal Director

GREGORY DORADO is a dancer, choreographer, actor, writer and director of new original performance works and films. He is a graduate of The California Institute of the Arts and founder of SHIFT, a performance collective. He has performed for choreographers Natalie Metzger, Stephanie Nugent, Daniel Sharon, Meryl Murman and Zoe Scofield. His film credits include an adaptation of Natalie Metzger's Sacramento as well as starring along side performer Jordon Waters in an adaptation of Meryl Murman's Le Pain. Gregory's performance and film work include several concert dance pieces as well as non-traditional immersive theatrical experiences that blur the line between dance, film, theatre and performance art. His work investigates universal human experience, community engagement, and his own identity as a queer artist of color.

"At AXIS my goal is to curate a healthy, productive and playful working environment for company members in rehearsal. We keep the repertory work at AXIS alive by searching for inspiration in the choreography, the process and, most importantly, each other."



HEIDI LATSKY founded Heidi Latsky Dance in 2001 and, in 2006, began integrating works with people with disabilities after visual artist and bilateral amputee Lisa Bufano commissioned a solo from her. GIMP (2008) toured internationally, garnering praise for its provocative investigation of inclusion: Dance Magazine called the piece a milestone in contemporary dance and a news feature on the work was nominated for an Emmy. IF (2010) and TRIPTYCH (2015) followed as inclusive in concert pieces. In 2014, Latsky was named the first participant in "Dance for Film On Location at Montclair State University" produced by Peak Performances at Montclair State University and underwritten by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Soliloquy premiered within TRIPTYCH and has screened at

American Dance Festival, Festival de Marseille, ReelAbilities Film Festival, Dance on Camera at Lincoln Center, Miami Screendance, ICA Boston and The Whitney. Currently, Latsky is cultivating ON DISPLAY, a portfolio of works for public spaces, begun in 2015 at the request of The Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities in honor of the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. ON DISPLAY GLOBAL is its annual worldwide initiative in honor of International Day of Persons with Disabilities on December 3rd and has performed at the UN, NYU/Tisch, and in cities like Athens, LA, Palencia, Brighton, Austin, Toronto, Boston, Milwaukee, Zagreb, Monteroni, San Francisco, Madison, Rochester, and London.



JERRON HERMAN joined HLD in the summer of 2011 never having danced before. At first a writer, Jerron now tells story through his body. He is the Company Associate to broaden exposure to disability & dance, is a member of the Bessie's Selection Committee for excellence in dance, and was just named a Trustee of DanceUSA. He was diagnosed with Hemiplegia Cerebral Palsy at three months old. Extending his talents to education, Jerron is the resident dance teaching artist with HLD. A Bay Area native, Jerron holds a B.A. from The King's College and has written and produced a full-length musical and a one-man show. He was the subject of three specials, ON THE SCENE with John Bathke, Open Studio with Jared Bowen on PBS, and most recently Great Big Story. He has been a panelist for Dance/NYC, La

Mama ETC, and a Queensborough Community College Symposium. For his performance in the world premiere of TRIPTYCH, The New York Times called him, "the inexhaustible Mr. Herman..."

JESS CURTIS is an award-winning choreographer and performance artist who is committed to an art-making practice that is informed by experimentation, innovation, critical discourse, and social relevance at the intersections of fine art and popular culture. Curtis co-founded the radical performance collective CORE and created and performed multi-disciplinary dance theater throughout the U.S., Europe, and the former Soviet Union with Contraband in the 80's and 90's. In 2000, after 15 years of making dance in the Bay Area as an independent choreographer, Curtis founded his own company, Jess Curtis/Gravity. Known for his interdisciplinary and cross-genre work, Curtis has collaborated with some of the most innovative artists working today, including Guillermo Gómez-Peña, Jules Beckman, Keith Hennessy, Angela Schubot, Ingo Reulecke, Jochen Roller, Sommer Ulrickson, Maria Francesca Scaroni, Jörg Mül?ller, Claire Cunningham, and many others. He has been commissioned or co-commissioned to create works for Artblau, the LOFT Theater, Schloss Bröllin, Berlin Senat, and Fabrik Potsdam (Germany); ContactArt (Italy); Theatre de Cachan and Chien Cru (France); Blue Eyed Soul Dance Company and DaDa Fest (England); CROI Glan Integrated Dance (Ireland); Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the San Francisco Edge Festival, the Florida Dance Association/ Tigertail Productions, the National Performance Network, and ODC Theater (US.) The 2011 winner of the prestigious Alpert Award in the Arts for choreography, Curtis's other honors include six Isadora Duncan Dance awards, a Fringe First Award at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and two SF Weekly Black Box Awards. Curtis is active as an advocate and community organizer in the field of dance and disability and teaches Dance, Contact Improvisation, and Interdisciplinary Performance for individuals of all abilities throughout the US and Europe. He has been a visiting professor at UC Berkeley and the University of the Arts in Berlin. He holds an MFA in Choreography and Ph.D. in Performance

JILL STERNHEIMER is the Director of Public Programming at Lincoln Center. Prior to that, she was the Producer, Public Programming for eight years, working to produce and program two of the major summer festivals at Lincoln Center: Midsummer Night Swing and Lincoln Center Out of Doors. A native of Cleveland, Sternheimer is a graduate of Boston University and has lived in New York for more than 20 years. She has been working in the field of popular music production for most of her career, including stints with Festival Productions, which produces the Newport Folk and Jazz Festivals and the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Fest, and at WFUV Radio, where she served as Promotion Director. Her expertise is putting together shows that honor the legacies of American music, be it pop, jazz, Americana, rhythm & blues, etc.



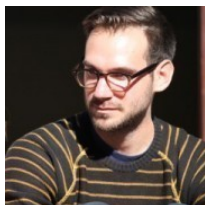
JORDANA PHOKOMPE is the Director of the David Rubenstein Atrium at Lincoln Center, a vibrant public space that is home to a robust, year-round program of free events including world-class performances, illuminating conversations, dance parties, kids programs, exclusive film screenings, and more. Since joining Lincoln Center in 2009, she has developed new programs for the Atrium including, Atrium 360°, ¡VAYA! 63, Poet-Linc, LCDJ, and AtriumFlix. Previously, she was a consultant for artists and festivals in the U.S., Europe, and Africa and served as the Associate Producer for MAPP International Productions from 2001-2008 where she produced projects with renowned artists such as Ralph Lemon, Sekou Sundiata, and Marc Bamuthi Joseph. During her tenure at MAPP she co-created the Africa Contemporary Arts Consortium - a landmark program designed to sustain a dynamic exchange of arts and

idea throughout the U.S. and the African continent. Jordana received her BA from the New School for Social Research and her MFA from Brooklyn College.



KARA GILMOUR is Senior Director of Community Action and Artist Services at Gibney Dance. The Community Action program provides movement workshops in domestic violence shelters and school-based violence prevention assemblies and residencies. The CA team works in close partnership with universities, community-based organizations and city agencies to catalyze discourse around the role of art as an essential element for healing, advocacy, and prevention of intimate partner violence. Ms. Gilmour also supervises Artist Services at Gibney, focusing on supporting artist's administrative, artistic and community practices. Prior to joining Gibney, Ms. Gilmour was part of Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy's leadership team for 8 years, working to create the park's education and volunteer programs. She also worked for NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, Applied Research and Consulting, and consulted for NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Education Development Center, Lincoln Center Institute, and Grand Street Settlement. As a professional dancer, Ms. Gilmour was a member of Gibney Dance Company (NYC), Compagnie Marie Chouinard (Montreal, QC) and Paula Josa-Jones Performance Works (Boston, MA). She has a BA from Wesleyan

University, attended NYU's George H. Heyman, Jr. Program for Philanthropy and Fundraising and was a New York Community Trust Leadership Fellow. She lives in Brooklyn with her husband and two boys.



KEVIN GOTKIN (Moderator) is Co-Founder and Co-Director of the Disability/Arts/NYC Task Force, an organization that advocates for the support and development of disability artistry. He is also an expert in Critical Disability Studies and teaches in the Disability Studies minor at New York University. In 2017, he will finish his Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania.



MARC BREW is acclaimed International choreographer and AXIS Artistic Director. He trained as a professional dancer at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and The Australian Ballet School. He has been working in the UK and Internationally for the past 20 years as a director, choreographer, dancer, teacher and speaker; with the Australian Ballet Company, State Theatre Ballet Company of South Africa, Infinity Dance Theatre, CandoCo Dance Company and AXIS Dance Company. Marc was Associate Director with Scottish Dance Theatre, Associate Artistic Director with Ballet Cymru in Wales and was Associate Artist in 2015 at Tramway Theatre in Glasgow. Since 2008 Marc has been dedicating time to his own choreography with Marc Brew Company and his recent choreographic commissions include Scottish Ballet, Ballet Cymru, YDance, AXIS Dance Company (USA), CandoCo Dance Company (UK), Touch Compass (NZ), Amy Seiwert's Imagery (USA), GDance, Scottish Dance Theatre, Greenwich & Docklands International Festival and City of London Festival (UK). Marc was featured by Time Out Magazine as the best of the new breed of London's Rising Dance Talent and was presented with a Centenary Medal for Outstanding Contribution as a dancer and choreographer. His work Remember

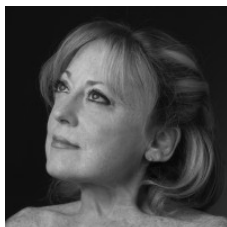
When was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Best Performance (individual) and his recent solo work For Now, I am... was listed in the Guardians Top 10 Dance Shows for 2016.



MARISSA/PEREL "Using a variety of media to bear on the subtleties of the human body, [Perel] conjures a cryptically alluring world that commands the gallery space," (Hyperallergic). Marissa Perel is an interdisciplinary artist based in New York. Working among the forms of dance, installation, and writing, their research is focused on choreography and disability, crip time and queerness, power and access, and pain and desire. Perel's work, (do not) despair solo made its world premiere at the American Realness Festival 2018 at Abrons Art Center. Perel has received commissions from the Department of Cultural Affairs, Chicago for Site Unseen: Disabling Conditions, and for the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act in collaboration with Gregg Bordowitz. Perel has also received commissions from The Chocolate Factory Theater and FringeArts, and has been presented at Danspace Project, Judson Memorial Church, Golden Gallery, Pseudo Empire Gallery, Dixon Place, and Center for Performance Research (NY), DIVO Institute (Prague, CR) and Medium Gallery (Slovakia) among others. Perel is a Lecturer at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago Low-

Residency M.F.A. and has been a visiting artist at such institutions as University of Michigan, Bryn Mawr, Barnard College, Wesleyan University,

and Konstack College of Art and Design in Stockholm, SE.



MARY VERDI-FLETCHER, President/Founding Artistic Director, has been a pioneering force in the development and success of physically integrated dance worldwide for nearly 4 decades. As one of the first and foremost professional wheelchair dancers, she has worked and studied with such esteemed artists as Donald McKayle, David Rousseve, Dianne McIntyre, Dennis Nahat, Keith Young, Ben Vereen, Christopher Reeve and many others. After the inception of the Dancing Wheels Company in 1980, Mary soon realized the dire need for training and career advancement for dancers of all ability levels, which ultimately lead to the creation of the multi-arts Dancing Wheels School in 1990. Attracting students from around the globe, the school rapidly became the most sought after site for training in the formal techniques of physically integrated dance. As an educator, Mary has conducted master classes, lectures and has consulted with notable arts institutions across several continents. Also a tireless arts administrator and advocate, Mary has contributed to the development of state and national programs for arts and

disability service organizations. She has worked to help pass significant pieces of legislation including the Americans with Disabilities Act established in 1990, which has paved the way for others in their quest for full and equal access



MIRANDA APPELBAUM is the Assistant Director of Accessibility & Guest Services at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. In that role, she implements accommodations and initiatives to increase accessibility, both physically and programmatically, for all visitors to Lincoln Center's campus, including initiatives to engage individuals with dementia and their caregivers and job-readiness programs for young people with developmental disabilities. Prior to this role, Miranda launched and managed access programs and resources for students, adults and families with disabilities at the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum. She is actively involved in the accessibility field in New York, as the former Chair and current Steering Committee Member of the Museum Access Consortium, and a member of the New York City Museum Educator's Roundtable Access Peer Group, the Long Island Children's Museum LICM4All Advisory Council, the Heidi Latsky Dance Advisory Board and the Lower East Side Tenement Museum's Access Advisory Council. She served as the New American Voices Reading Series Adviser for Queens Theatre for their Disability Series in 2016-2017. She has presented at local and national conferences on accessibility. Miranda has a B.A. in Anthropology and English from the University of Vermont and an M.A. in Museum Studies from New York

University.



LINDY DANNELLEY has nourished her passion for theater from an early age. She began stage acting at age 6, was a professional stage director at age 21, and later became the founding Artistic Director of Koalaty Presentations (now Process Theatre Company) and the Associate Artistic Director of Stage Door Players. Ms. Dannelley joined Full Radius Dance in 2011 where she brings both her theatrical experience and her Montessori teacher training to enrich educational programs for children and adults alike. She is a contributing writer for "Rolling Without Limits", "Two-Thirds of the Earth" and other online sites that focus on the arts and disability. When not performing with Full Radius Dance, she is an active member of Atlanta's Steampunk and alternative swing dance communities. She is happy to expand on her musical theatre roots with a new focus on the power of music and dance. She graduated magna cum laude from Georgia State University with a BA in Theatre and English and is an ordained minister.

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