

September, 17-18, 2022

Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble Rooftop Concerts

Company: Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble
Venue: Diego Salazar Artist Studios
Location: Long Island City, NY

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Courtesy of MBDE

Advance purchase of tickets required and proof of vaccination to enter.

The Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble returns to live performances with a special program that surrounds the audience with dance and music in a beautiful open air setting, with the Manhattan skyline as a backdrop. The program will feature "Asa Nisi Masa," originally created as a film, reconfigured for live performance. The work has choreography and costumes by Michele Brangwen and music composed by Danielle Reich, Thomas Helton and Tim Hagans, with sections of movement and music created spontaneously in the moment.

"Asa Nisi Masa" takes its title from the childhood incantation spoken in Federico Fellini's film "8 1/2." The phrase Asa Nisi Masa conjures a beautiful memory for the main character in the film of a time filled with compassion and love.

The final section of the Asa Nisi Masa is Brangwen's secular take on the idea of the Tibetan prayer flag. She writes: "The idea behind the prayer flag is not that the person who hangs it is asking the wind to carry a request for something, but rather seeking to send goodness out into all spaces. I feel we are now in a time where we need to send as much goodness and healing energy out into our fractured world as possible. Part of the costume that each performer wears becomes a flag at the end. I wanted to try and make the flag feel very personal.

Some people feel Fellini was sending a hidden message in the phrase Asa Nisi Masa, using an Italian form of pig Latin which adds a "sa" and a "si" to words in order to disguise them. If you take the roots of each word in the phrase Asa Nisi Masa, the letters form the word Anima, which is the Italian word for soul. This act of creating dance and music together is part of our soul, so what better thing could we send out into the world. Now with this live performance version of the work, the audience will become a part of this ritual of positivity."

The program will also include "Unending," a wild and jubilant purely abstract work with choreography by Michele Brangwen, music by Tim Hagans, and movement and music created in the moment by all performers.

Performers are dancers Meredith Fages, Cristian Laverde König, and Michele Brangwen; Tim Hagans, trumpet; Michael Eaton, saxophones; Roxie Maisel, voice; Kyle Motl, acoustic bass; and Daniel Prim, drums.

The Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble is a contemporary dance company featuring all new choreography, live original music, and the integration of all our musicians into the visual imagery, so that dancers and musicians break the boundaries of traditional ensemble interaction. In 21 years, every performance has included live music and the musicians as integral parts of the visual stage imagery. We believe that the artist's role in society is to communicate, to challenge, to open a dialogue that can both unite us and inspire meaningful change. We function like a jazz band, and along with sections of choreographed movements and written music, we use improvisation that comes out of the form, concept, and emotional life of the work. The Michele Brangwen Dance Ensemble is based in New York City & Houston. www.brangwendance.org

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