

Friday, November 17, 2023

## The New York Society for Ethical Culture and Time Lapse Dance present the World Premiere of Arbor and Other Works

Company: Time Lapse Dance

Venue: The New York Society for Ethical Culture, Adler Hall

Location: New York, NY

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The New York Society for Ethical Culture presents the world premiere of *Arbor*, a FREE evening of stunning ecologically themed works by its Eco-Artist-in-Residence, dancer-choreographer Jody Sperling, and her Time Lapse Dance ensemble. The ongoing residency is a unique and timely collaboration between the Society—whose mission is to encourage respect for humanity and nature and to create a better world—and Sperling's company, whose mission is to deploy dance toward envisioning a more embodied, sustainable, and equitable future. For more info, visit <https://www.timelapsedance.com/events/arbor-2023>, and RSVP for the event here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/arbor-world-premiere-with-jody-sperling-and-time-lapse-dance-tickets-727865785157>.

*Arbor* is a meditation on the nature of trees. The work, which culminates two years of investigation, is the latest outgrowth of the long climate-engaged collaboration between Sperling as choreographer and environmental composer Matthew Burtner. The music will be performed live for this one-night-only event by the composer and a string quartet of musicians from The MET Orchestra. In voluminous costumes meticulously painted with tree limbs (by textile artist Gina Nagy Burns and costume designer Mary Jo Mecca), the dancers spiral, billow, and encircle one another in gusts of action resembling timelapses of tree motion. Lighting is by Bessie-Award-winning designer David Ferri.

*Arbor* has been described as "breathtaking," by Tom Phillips, Dance Enthusiast, and according to Karen Hildebrand, Fjord Review, "Sperling was a master of stage presence as she evoked the deep-rooted majesty of the tree."

The evening also features performances of other eco-themed Sperling-Burtner collaborations that are visually and sonically stunning. *Wind Rose*, which renders changing atmospheric patterns palpable to sight, sound, and touch, has been described as "a stunning, spinning white cloud that both moves and is moved by wind" (Karen Hildebrand, Fjord Review). *Plastic Harvest* creates a surreal spectacle of plastic pollution while provoking contemplation about the beauty of what—and who—society throws away. Concluding the program, Sperling offers her whirling solo *Piece for a Northern Sky*, a meditation on planetary motion which Jerry Hochman (Critical Dance) calls "a compelling piece, brilliantly executed. Collectively these dances stir the senses to awaken a deeper ecological consciousness."

Prior to its world premiere as *Arbor*, the work will be shown as a part of *Communi-tree*: dances about nature, an educational dance program offering a creative experience of nature for students of all ages. The program features highlights from *Arbor*, a dance cultivating kinship between trees and people, and *Plastic Harvest*, a romp about plastic pollution that provokes conversations about what—and who—society throws away. Sperling offers enlightening commentary between pieces and, with composer Matthew Burtner, a participatory movement/music-making experience. This program is hosted by Ethical NYC's Young Ethical Explorers.

The performance will be followed by an artist talkback.

Time Lapse Dance performers

Jody Sperling, choreographer

Frances Barker

Anika Hunter

Maki Kitahara

Nicole Lemelin

Sarah Tracy

Rathi Varma

MET Orchestra String Quartet

Bruno Eicher, violin

Sarah Vonsattel, violin

Mary Hammann, viola

Kari Jane Docter, cello

#### About Jody Sperling

Jody Sperling is a dancer-choreographer and Founder/Artistic Director of Time Lapse Dance. She has created more than 45 works including many furthering the legacy of performance technology innovator Loie Fuller (1862-1928). Considered the preeminent Fuller stylist, Sperling has expanded the genre into 21st-century environmentally-focused performance. She has toured nationally and internationally and taught at many colleges and universities. In 2014, Sperling participated in a polar science mission and danced on Arctic sea ice, creating the dancefilm "Ice Floe," which was honored by the Creative Climate Awards. She earned a World Choreography Award nomination for her work on the French feature "The Dancer" (premiere Cannes Film Festival). Sperling is developing ecokinetics, a practice cultivating the relationship between the moving body and ecological systems and throughout the pandemic, has been focusing on programming street festivals and producing dance media. Sperling holds a BA in Dance & Italian Studies from Wesleyan University, an MA in Performance Studies from New York University, and an MFA in Dance from Montclair State University.

#### About Matthew Burtner

Matthew Burtner (Composer) ([matthewburtner.com](http://matthewburtner.com)) is an Alaskan-born composer and sound artist who creates music from materials and data of climate change, particularly related to the Arctic. Burtner spent his childhood in the far north of Alaska and this profoundly shaped his musical language. He is a pioneer in the field of eco-acoustics and has worked extensively with systems of climatology applied to music. His work has recently been featured by NASA, National Geographic, the US State Department, Earther, and the Ringling Museum. First Prize Winner of the Musica Nova International competition, and an NEA Art Works and IDEA Award winner, Burtner's music has received honors and prizes from Bourges (France), Gaudeamus (Netherlands), Darmstadt (Germany) and The Russolo (Italy) international competitions. He teaches composition and computer music at the University of Virginia, and directs the environmental arts non-profit organization, EcoSono ([ecosono.org](http://ecosono.org)).

#### About Time Lapse Dance

Time Lapse Dance (TLD) is an all-women 501(c)3 dance company founded by Sperling in 2000. TLD envisions dance as a powerful force that can help move us toward a more embodied, sustainable and equitable future. The work aims to investigate the relationship of the moving body to the ecologies we inhabit through performance, media, education, and activism.

#### About The New York Society for Ethical Culture

The New York Society for Ethical Culture is a Humanist community dedicated to ethical relationships, social justice, and democracy since 1876. The Society's members put deed before creed and ethics in action to educate, advocate, organize, and build coalitions to end racism, poverty, and war; abolish the death penalty and mass incarceration; guarantee reproductive freedom; welcome refugees and immigrants; fight climate change and pollution, and more. Visit the Society online at [ethical.nyc](http://ethical.nyc).

#### About the Met Orchestra String Quartet

Brought together by their love of music, dance, art, and the earth, this string quartet made up of musicians from the MET Orchestra strives to make connections with other artists in the context of climate change. Where can music intersect with the desire and motivation for change on this earth? "We are thrilled to be joining Time Lapse Dance for this performance."

#### Connect on Instagram

@jody\_sperling

@time\_lapse\_dance

@EthicalNYC

@matthewburtner

#### Dancers:

@maki\_k\_01

@anikahunter

@wannabee8

@sarahtracy

@nicole\_lemelin

@rathivarma

Costume:

@maryjomecca

Arbor is made possible in part by an ongoing eco-artist-residency at The New York Society for Ethical Culture and with the generous support of the Peck Stacpoole Foundation.

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Time Lapse Dance  
2 W 64th St, New York, NY 10023  
New York, NY, 10023  
6467654773

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/arbor-world-premiere-with-jody-sperling-and-time-lapse-dance-tickets-727865785157>

Schedule

November 17, 2023: 7:00pm

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