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December, 1-18, 2022

Underneath the Skin

Company: John Kelly
Venue: La MaMa
Location: New York, NY

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Albie Mitchell

UNDERNEATH THE SKIN is based on the fantastical life of Samuel Steward (1909-1993), a gay novelist, tattoo artist, author of erotic fiction, and unabashed carnal adventurer who lived a bold life pursuing his physical and erotic desires through his art. A promising novelist and gifted scholar, Steward left the world of academia to reinvent himself as one of the 20th century's most influential tattoo artists (aka Philip Sparrow), and as a writer of gay erotic fiction (aka Phil Andros). He attracted the friendships of Gertrude Stein and Andre Gide, was lovers with Thornton Wilder, and had trysts with Rudolph Valentino, Lord Alfred Douglas, and Roy Fitzgerald (aka Rock Hudson). An obsessive self-chronicler, he meticulously recorded his intimate encounters in his "Stud File," and became an unofficial collaborator at The Kinsey Institute in the 1950s.

With this work for 4 performers, Kelly virtuosically combines Steward's actual words (culled from his letters, publications, and manuscripts) in tandem with extensive video projections (including digital animations of Steward's tattoo designs and erotic illustrations) and ensemble movement into a kaleidoscopic series of dramatic vignettes that salute a queer rebel.

John Kelly is a performance and visual artist. His character driven dance theatre works stem from autobiographical, cultural, and political issues, the challenges faced by social outsiders, and the nature of creative genius. Hisl works have been performed at MET Live Arts, The Kitchen, La MaMa, Lincoln Center, the Warhol Museum, the Whitney Biennial, NY Live Arts, BAM's Next Wave Festival, REDCAT, and London's Tate Modern. Kelly's works have received 2 Bessie Awards, 2 Obie Awards, 2 NEA Awards American Masterpieces: Three Centuries of Artistic Genius Awards, a CalArts/ Alpert Award in Dance/Performance, a Visual AIDS Vanguard Award, the Ethyl Eichelberger Award, and a Mabou Mines 'Ruthie' Award.

John Kelly
66 East 4th Street
New York, NY, 10003
<https://www.lamama.org/shows/underneath-the-skin-2022>

Schedule
December 1, 2022: 7:00pm
December 2, 2022: 7:00pm
December 3, 2022: 7:00pm
December 4, 2022: 2:00pm
December 8, 2022: 7:00pm
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