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Friday, October 21, 2011

Dancer's Voice: Personalizing the Marketing Experience

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When: Monday, November 14, 2011, 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Where: Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer Street (between Prince Street and West Houston), New York, NY 10012

Join Dance/NYC and New York City Ballet's new Director of Media Projects, Ellen Bar, to discuss dancers' evolving public roles as industry advocates, commentators, business people and company ambassadors. What are the opportunities for NYC dancers in a shifting technological and media landscape? What's happening, and what are the best practices and challenges for dancer-generated content in marketing, merchandising, fundraising and growing audiences? How can we strengthen the individual and collective voice for dance? This *all-dancer* panel will open up to the field innovations and case stories, from Art Beyond Sight/Art Education for the Blind's New York Beyond Sight project to Fifty Years, Fifty Stories, New York City Arts Coalition's artist-led video campaign celebrating the 50th anniversary of the New York State Council on the Arts.

Featured Speakers:

Ellen Bar, Director of Media Projects, New York City Ballet (Moderator)

Misty Copeland, Soloist Dancer, American Ballet Theatre

Larry Keigwin, Artistic Director, Keigwin + Company

Megan Sprenger, Choreographer and Director of Marketing and Public Relations, New York Live Arts

Wendy Whelan, Principal Dancer, New York City Ballet

Ellen Bar attended the School of American Ballet from the age of eight and was asked to join the New York City Ballet as a corps member in 1998. She danced featured roles in classic works by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Peter Martins and Christopher Wheeldon, and was promoted to Soloist in 2006. As a child, Ellen danced as a Candy Cane in Emile Ardolino's *The Nutcracker* with New York City Ballet; as an adult she appeared in the feature film *Center Stage*, directed by Nicholas Hytner and created an animated character in *Barbie of Swan Lake*. With fellow soloist Sean Suozzi, Ellen co-created and executive produced *NY Export: Opus Jazz* (2010), a present-day scripted adaptation of the 1958 Jerome Robbins ballet of the same name, shot on location in New York City with an ensemble cast of New York City Ballet dancers. *NY Export: Opus Jazz* won an Audience Award when it premiered at South by Southwest and aired shortly afterwards on PBS' *Great Performances* series. Since then, the film has been broadcast on BBC4 in the UK and on national television in Norway, Sweden, and Australia. It has screened theatrically at 31 festivals and 19 nonprofit cinemas in 53 cities on 6 continents and is now available on iTunes and DVD. While dancing full-time, Ellen earned an Associate's Degree in Business from Penn State University and continues to pursue a Bachelor's Degree in English at Columbia University. In May of 2011, Ellen retired from her 13 year career as a professional dancer and is now Director of Media Projects at New York City Ballet.

Misty Copeland joined ABT's Studio Company in September 2000 and then joined American Ballet Theatre as a member of the corps de ballet in April 2001 and was appointed a Soloist in August 2007. Her roles with the Company include a Shade and the Lead D'Jampe in *La Bayadere*, Milkmaid in *The Bright Stream*, Blossom in *Cinderella*, the Mazurka Lady in *Copelia*, Gulnare and Odalisque in *Le Corsaire*, the lead gypsy and a flower girl in *Don Quixote*, Duo Concertant, the Masks in Christopher Wheeldon's *VIII*, the peasant pas de deux in *Giselle*, one of *The Nutcracker's* Sisters in Alexei Ratmansk's *The Nutcracker*, a Gypsy in *Petrouchka*, the Lead Polovtsian Girl in *Polovtsian Dances* from *Prince Igor*, the Saracen Dancer in *Raymonda*, a Harlot in *Romeo and Juliet*, the Fairy of Valor in *The Sleeping Beauty*, the pas de trois, a cygnet and the Hungarian Princess in *Swan Lake*, the Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux. Misty was a recipient of a 2008 Leonore Annenberg Fellowship in the Arts. See Misty on hulu.

Larry Keigwin is a native New Yorker and graduate from Hofstra University. He founded KEIGWIN + COMPANY in 2003, and as Artistic Director, has led the company as it has performed at theaters and dance festivals around the country. In addition to his work with K+C, recent commissions include *Works & Process* at the Guggenheim, *The Juilliard School*, *The New York Choreographic Institute*, and *The Martha Graham Dance Company*, among many others. In 2010, Keigwin was named the Vail International Dance Festival's first artist in residence, during which time he created and premiered a new work with four of ballet's most prominent stars. He recently staged the opening event of Fashion Week, "Fashion's Night Out: The Show," which was produced by Vogue and featured over 150 of the industry's top models. Keigwin recently choreographed the 2011 revival of the musical *RENT*. In 2004, *Dance Magazine* named Keigwin in their annual list of "25 To Watch." Keigwin's other choreographic credits include work with the band Fischerspooner, comedian Murray Hill, and as an associate choreographer for *The Radio City Rockettes* and the Off-Broadway musical *The Wild Party*.

Megan V. Sprenger is a choreographer, dancer and arts administrator. She worked in the marketing department at Dance Theater Workshop (DTW) from 2003 - 2011 and is currently the Director of Marketing and Public Relations at New York Live Arts. During her time at Dance Theater Workshop audiences grew more than 20% and the organization launched a highly successful audience engagement platform. Ms. Sprenger is the Artistic Director of *mwworks*, a New York City based dance company founded in 2005. *mwworks'* evening-length works, *No Where* (2007) and *.within us.* (2010) were commissioned by Performance Space 122 (PS122). The company has also been presented in NYC through PS122's COIL 2010 Festival, Fridays at Noon at the 92nd Street Y, *THROW* at The Chocolate Factory, and DTW's 40th Birthday Celebration. International engagements include the Mexico/US Contemporary Dance Festival in Coyoacan, Mexico. *mwworks* was a 2006

Abrons Art Center Drawing Board Series Artist in Residence. Nationally, company repertory has been set on students at Anderson University, Anderson, IN through their Guest Artist Program. This past February, Ms. Sprenger guest curated, Am I too Close? a Friday's at Noon program at the 92nd Street Y. She was recently seen guest performing with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. For more information visit: mwworks.org - newyorklivearts.org

Wendy Whelan was born and raised in Louisville, Kentucky, where at the age of three she began taking dance classes with Virginia Wooton, a local teacher. At age eight she performed as a mouse with the Louisville Ballet in its annual production of The Nutcracker. Joining the Louisville Ballet Academy that year, she began intense professional ballet training. In 1981 she received a scholarship to the summer course at the School of American Ballet (SAB), the official school of New York City Ballet, and a year later, became a full-time student there. In 1984, Ms. Whelan danced as an apprentice with New York City Ballet. Ms. Whelan became a member of New York City Ballet's corps de ballet in January 1986. She was promoted to the rank of soloist during the 1989 spring season and to the rank of principal dancer in the 1991 spring season. She is the recipient of the 2011 New York Dance and Performance Award (Bessie).

Dance/NYC's mission is to sustain and advance the professional dance field in New York City- serving as the voice, guide and infrastructure architect for all local dance artists and managers. The organization achieves this mission through: advocacy, research, audience engagement and convening. As a convener, Dance/NYC aims to connect and educate our constituency- strengthening the collective voice for dance. Visit www.dancenyc.org to learn more about our programs.

Dance/NYC is grateful to Dance Pulp for their media partnership and Joyce SoHo for hosting the event.



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