

New England Foundation for the Arts



New England
Foundation
for the Arts

**National Dance Project's
New England
Regional Dance Development Initiative**

Artist Biographies

January 2008

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About NEFA's Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI)

Background

The New England Foundation for the Arts' Regional Dance Development Initiative (RDDI) was created in 2004 as a pilot project. The initiative was designed through ongoing communication with colleagues in the field that revealed a need to improve vital regional networks to foster exchange and growth opportunities for emerging artists. Leading dance presenters, artists, funders and dance service organizations were asked to brainstorm new methods to support and ensure the longevity of dance beyond the traditional areas of creation, management, presentation and touring. RDDI was designed to maximize local and regional support for emerging artists by catalyzing existing resources and redefining the relationship between artist and presenter. To date, NEFA has hosted Regional Dance Development Initiatives to serve the communities of Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and New England.

The Pacific Northwest region was the first to pilot the RDDI in August 2004 in Seattle, WA. The second RDDI took place in the San Francisco Bay Area in February 2006, and the third was held in Portland, OR in June 2006. The most recent RDDI was held in New England in July/August 2007. Each lab followed a structure developed by the National Dance Project (NDP) and was supported by regional funders (foundations, corporate and individuals). For each RDDI, NDP worked with regional advisors and coordinators to tailor the initiative to meet the unique needs and concerns of the dance community in which it was held. Projects are continuing in each community from the relationships and networks started through RDDI. These include residency projects, regional touring, resource sharing and other collaborative initiatives within the regional dance communities.

Goals

Through the RDDI, NEFA engages local partners to develop and implement regional dance projects, each oriented around a community in which there is a concentration of dance activity. RDDI projects focus on providing professional development for choreographers and dancers. Artists work alongside mentors to assist them in articulating their work, improved stagecraft, marketing and contextual materials, as well as engage in critical discourse strategies.

NEFA seeks to better understand the needs and potential support systems for emerging contemporary dance artists and their communities, and to share this information with other communities in the region and nation. RDDI helps artists reach new markets by improving their ability to communicate with audiences about the meaning of and context for their work and by developing their relationships with dance presenters. RDDI strives to strengthen local and regional connections for dance and to help choreographers reach their individual professional goals.

RDDI: the process and structure

For each initiative, an advisory committee and coordinator from the region develop an application process and curriculum. This committee arranges a panel to select participating artists; chooses mentors from national presenters, senior artists and managers; and oversees the development of the core lab curriculum, workshops, presenter roundtable, and showings.

RDDIs have included these components:

- Intensive dance lab: A 5 to 10-day lab designed to offer the opportunity for core participants to share their work with peers and mentors; gain feedback that would result in stronger work; define market expectations and strengthen marketing tools; have the opportunity to show work; and engage in dialogue with regional and national presenters.
- Dance Community Workshops: These sessions cover topics including funding sources, marketing and networking, and are open to all interested artists, companies, board members, and supporters. The work

shops include speakers from the core faculty, performing arts presenters and marketing professionals.

- Artists/Presenters Exchanges and Presenter's Roundtables: A series of dialogues on strategies for presenting dance artists working in the region. These provide opportunities for artists and presenters to collaborate in a dialogue around topics of interest to both professions. Topic examples include developing new audiences for dance, instigating meaningful relationships between artists and presenters, and building new networks for the exchange of ideas, resources and opportunities. Presenters also have the opportunity to see and discuss the Dance Lab artists' work outside of a marketplace atmosphere.

New England's RDDI

New England's RDDI (also called the New England Dance Lab) took place at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut from July 27 to August 4, 2007. Twelve artists selected from throughout New England and seven mentors worked over the course of the ten-day lab on the articulation of their work and how to build relationships with presenters. Thirty-two presenters attended the final two days for an artist/presenter exchange. A series of regional artist/presenter exchanges will follow in each state in New England in 2008.

The New England Dance Lab faculty included: Barbara Ally, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT; Barbara Bryan, Movement Research, NY, NY; Donald Byrd, Spectrum Dance Company, Seattle, WA; Terry Creach, Bennington College, VT; Cathy Edwards, International Festival of Arts and Ideas, New Haven CT; Joan Gray, Muntu Dance Company, Chicago, IL; Peter DiMuro, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange.

The New England Dance Lab partners and planning committee included: Ruth Birnberg, Boston Dance Alliance; Sandra Burton, Williams College; Sara Coffey, Vermont Performance Lab; Ranjanaa Devi, UMASS Amherst; David Dorfman, Connecticut College; Mary Chapin Durling, Fitchburg State College; Cathy Edwards, International Festival of Arts and Ideas, New Haven; Ford Evans, Dartmouth College; Laura Faure, Bates Dance Festival; Mark Fleisher, Festival Ballet Providence; Dante Del Guidice, Rhode Island College; Donna McNeil, Maine Arts Commission; and Robert Richter, Connecticut College.

Mary Chapin Durling, Project Coordinator
Jane Forde Manager, National Dance Project

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NEFA creatively supports the movement of people, ideas and resources in the arts within New England and beyond, makes vital connections between artists and audiences, and builds the strength, knowledge, and leadership of the region's creative sector. NEFA is a 501(c)3 that operates with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England state arts agencies, and from corporations, foundations and individuals. For more information please visit www.nefa.org or call (617) 951-0010.

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NEW ENGLAND LAB ARTISTS

Adele Myers and Dancers is a Connecticut-based contemporary dance company. Combining robust athleticism with theatricality and at times pure movement investigation, the choreography explores dynamics of relationships among women. The mission of the company is to transform any theater into an intimate and accessible space for the audience and the dancers into familiar individuals. Adele Myers and Dancers has been presented throughout the United States including Seattle, Miami, St. Louis and most recently at The New Haven International Festival of Arts and Ideas and the Dance New Amsterdam Theater in New York City. The repertoire has been performed in a variety of venues ranging from intimate art galleries and black box theaters to larger outdoor venues and proscenium stages. In addition to performing, Adele Myers and Dancers offer customized "Community in Motion" workshops designed primarily for adolescent females. Our goal is to encourage these young women to experience their bodies as vessels of strength and support through dance.

Myers enthusiastically joined the Connecticut College dance department as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the fall of 2006. Her choreography has been presented throughout the United States and in Honduras and England. In addition to receiving a Jacob's Pillow honorarium for a collaboration with the Tanglewood Music Center, Myers' dance company has been awarded support from the State of Connecticut, and from the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography. Prior to embarking on a career in choreography and teaching, Myers performed in NYC with Joy Kellman/Co. for several years and was a guest artist with many companies including Momix. She was also a choreographic assistant for Jawole Zollar for several projects, including a residency with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Myers received a BA from Sarah Lawrence College, and MFA from Florida State University, and is currently a Ph.D candidate in Performance Studies at New York University.



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Adele Myers and Dancers

Aparna Sindhoor is a choreographer and dancer who has toured extensively in North America, Germany and India. She has been invited to perform at numerous venues and festivals, including the Jacob's Pillow, New Haven Festival of Arts and Ideas, World Social Forum, New World Theater (Amherst, MA) and Teesri Duniya Theatre (Montreal, Canada). Critics have hailed Aparna Sindhoor as a powerful new voice for creating contemporary works of extraordinary artistry - works which challenge the boundaries of traditional Indian dance, yet contribute to strengthen that tradition. Aparna Sindhoor trained in Bharatanatyam for more than fifteen years. She also trained as a vocalist and actor for more than a decade. Her current work has amalgamated all these distinct art forms into a unified whole. She is one of the choreographers for Santhosh Sivan's film, *Anandabhadram*, and is currently a doctoral student enrolled in the University Professors program at Boston University.

"Sindhoor's choreography ... grounds her work in the form's [Bharatanatyam] basic vocabulary and style – But she also embraces Indian martial arts, yoga moves, theatrical gesture, and a modern dancer's eye for space to create dances that seem both old and new." - Boston Globe, Jul, 2007

"Aparna Sindhoor's choreography is honest and exquisite." Le Soleil (Quebec City), Sep 2005

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Aparna Sindhoor

Candice Salyers



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Candice Salyers is a choreographer, performer and teacher currently based in Massachusetts. She has choreographed group and solo works, which have been produced by dance companies, universities and independently. She holds a B.L.S. in Interdisciplinary Arts from the University of Memphis and an M.F.A. in Dance from Smith College. As a guest artist, she has choreographed and taught at Amherst College, Keene State College, Hampshire College and Eastern Connecticut University. Her interest in connecting dance to her community led her to found pARTners, a volunteer organization of artists dedicated to sharing their art form with a variety of people, for which she won the Alma Bucovaz Award for Urban Service in 2001.

As a solo performer, she builds layers of stage images and movement which invite the viewer's own imagination to explore the work. Her solo commissioning projects combine her own choreography with solos created for her by other artists. These works [*Belief (is a persistent angel)*; *A History of Levitation*], weave five to six separate solos together as a cohesive evening-length work around a central theme and approach the topic through a variety of perspectives and physicalities.

Dahlia Nayar is a dancer, dance teacher and contemporary choreographer. She is first generation American born to immigrant parents from India and the Philippines. She has trained in western and non western dance forms since childhood. Her work is inspired by specific images, memories and experiences of her heritages. She creates meditative pieces linking these impressions to her present context.

Her most recent project, *Homeland(s)* debuted in Northampton, Massachusetts in September 2007. The 50-minute show draws from intimate conversations with 5 individuals who have vastly different connections to India. Weaving video and sound clips with live dance, *Homeland(s)* contemplates moments in our lives- hardships, successes, dreams, chance meetings- that ultimately have an impact on our concept of "home."

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Percussive dance artist, producer, director, educator, performer and choreographer Drika Overton is the creator and director of the internationally recognized Portsmouth Percussive Dance Festival. She performs and creates original work with jazz musician and composer Paul Arslanian, with whom she has been commissioned by New England Presenters and Arts Presenters of Northern New England to create a full length touring jazz and tap touring production in 2008-2009. Drika also performs with TnT, a tap and Taiko drum collaboration and with the Classical Tap Trio, set to music ranging from Gershwin to the Goldberg Variations.

Drika has performed with Savion Glover, Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown, Brenda Bufalino, and Keith Terry, and has been featured at the New York City Tap Festival; the Southeastern TapExplosion in Atlanta; the Bates Dance Festival; the New England Artist's Congress; The Liz Lerman Dance Exchange Shipyard Project; on Public Television; and at numerous jazz clubs, concerts, and festivals. Awards include four Spotlight on the Arts Awards from the Seacoast Newspapers as Best Dancer and one for Best Dance Production for *Clara's Dream a jazz nutcracker*, which she created. She has received an Artist Fellowship from New Hampshire State Council on the Arts and multiple grants from the Greater Piscataqua Community Foundation. Drika created the critically acclaimed productions: *Music Hall Follies: A Vaudeville in 9 Acts*, which featured Tony award winning actor Bill Irwin and tap legend Fayard Nicholas. *The Follies* took place during her Portsmouth Vaudeville Project, supported in part by the Lila Wallace Readers' Digest Fund. Drika and video producer, Robert Pierce jointly produced the documentary *4 Theatres: Remembering Portsmouth in the Age of Vaudeville*, which has aired on Public Television and at numerous film festivals. She is also the founder and director of the Space for Performing Arts & Cultural Exchange (the SPACE) in Kittery, Maine.

Kinodance Company (Boston, MA) is an interdisciplinary artist collective making stage performances, installations and films. Called “a breathtaking synthesis of live and filmed dance” by the Boston Globe, *DENIZEN* their second evening length work, premiered with the Bank of America Celebrity Series in May 2007. Their first intermedia performance *Secret Streams* was described as “a true multimedia synthesis” by Marcia Siegel and “soothing and cohesive” by Dance on Camera Journal. It premiered at the St. Petersburg International Dance Film Festival in Russia and toured to Armenia in October 2006. Recently chosen as one of Dance Magazine’s “25 to Watch” companies for 2008, they have been produced by Monaco Dance Forum, Boston Cyberarts Festival, HIGH Fest (Armenia), the Berkshire Fringe, Thornes A.P.E., and supported by LEF Foundation, Trust for Mutual Understanding, NEFA & Open Society Institute among others. Kinodance has been commissioned by World Music CrashARTS to present new work in April 2008 at ICA Boston. The company was founded by Alissa Cardone (dancer/choreographer), Alla Kovgan (film), Dedalus Wainwright (set design) and core members include Ingrid Schatz (dancer/choreographer) and Kathy Couch (lights). Kinodance has Artist Representation thru Pentacle: www.pentacle.org. (www.kinodance.org)

Alissa Cardone, co-founder/choreographer for Kinodance Company, trained with Min Tanaka (Body Weather Farm), has collaborated and performed with Paula Josa-Jones/Performance Works, Nora Chipaumire (Urban Bush Women), Elaine Summers and continues to study and perform for “Nijinsky of Butoh” Akira Kasai. In Japan she was featured in Kasai’s *Nobody Eve* (Tokyo & Kyoto, 2003) and a year later received a fellowship from Asian Cultural Council to study butoh with Kasai, Nihon Buyo with Minosuke Nishikawa and to collaborate with Yoshito Ohno and contemporary dancer Naoka Uemura on the multi-media production *Wonder Girl* (Tokyo, 2004). In 2007 she will perform in Kasai’s *Butoh America*, a feature production of the New York Butoh Festival. Cardone is a two time Massachusetts Cultural Council Choreography Grant Finalist and is on faculty at Longy School of Music, Dalcroze Eurythmics Program.



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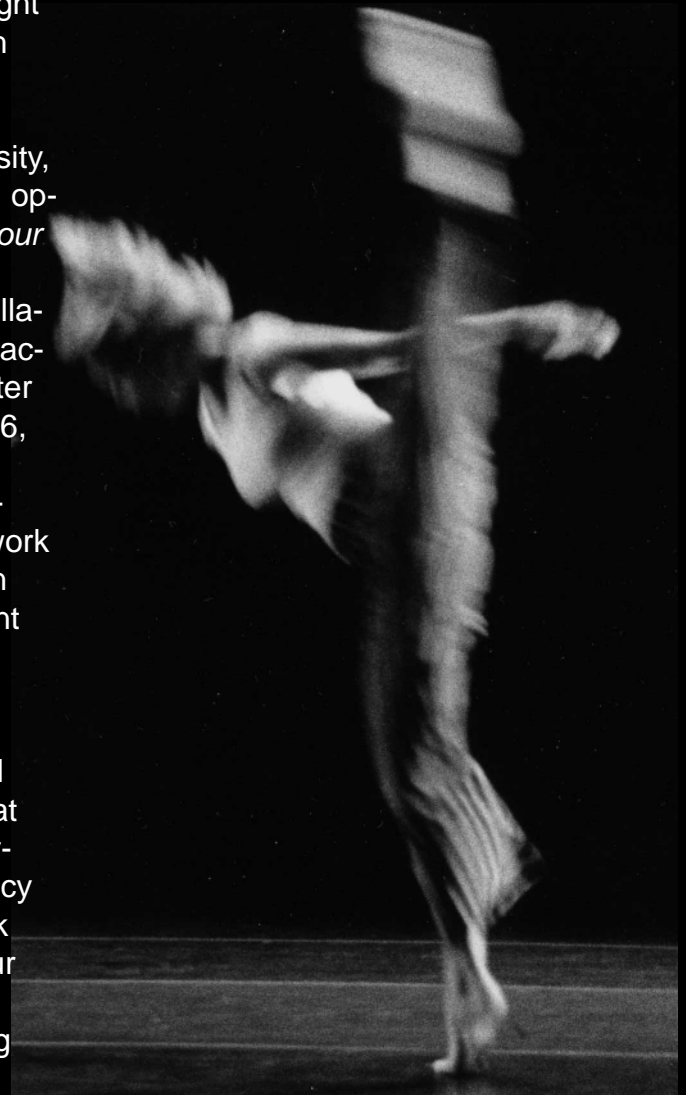
Lorraine Chapman has danced with Eliot Feld Ballets/NY and Ballet British Columbia as well as for several Boston-based choreographers including Amy Spencer, Richard Colton, Diane Arvanites-Noya, Jose Mateo, and Marcus Schulkind. She received her training at the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School and L'Ecole Superieure De Danse Du Quebec as well as from Boston veterans Francis Kotelly and Samuel Kurkjian. As an independent choreographer Lorraine has created works for the Northwest New Works Festival in Seattle at On The Boards-Behnke Center and the Bessie Schonberg Residency at The Yard. Ms. Chapman has received commissions from the Alberta Ballet, Festival Ballet of Providence, and was awarded a Choreographer's Project Fellowship for Summer Stages Dance 2005. She is currently dancing in her own work, with Marcus Schulkind, and in David Parker's Nut/Cracked.

Lorraine Chapman, The Company Inc. is currently in its fifth year. Since its official inception in November 2002, LCTC has been chosen for several exciting productions including Tens The Limit 2003 and 2005, Dance Straight Up! 2004 and 2006, Dancing Nor'easters' 8th International Festival of Arts & Ideas New Haven, and Soaking Wet 6 produced in NYC by David Parker. LCTC received the LEF Foundation New England's Contemporary Work Fund grant '07' and is also the recipient of the Massachusetts Cultural Council's Artist Grant for Choreography '04-05'. Look for Lorraine in the January 2008 issue of Dance Magazine, where she will be featured in the Top 25 To Watch!

MacArthur Dance Project

Bronwen MacArthur received her dance training at the North Carolina School of the Arts and has performed in New York City with the companies of Robin Becker, Gina Gibney, Bill Young, and Donna Uchizono. With these companies, and those of Copenhagen-based choreographers Tim Feldmann and Sara Gebran, she has taught and performed throughout Europe, the U.S. and South America. Since 1999, MacArthur's choreography has been shown in New York, Chelyabinsk, Russia, Paris, France, and throughout New England. At Yale University, she has choreographed for student dance companies, operas, plays, and other multi-media events, including *Four Saints in Three Acts*, an opera by Virgil Thomson and Gertrude Stein, and *Zang Tumb Tuum!*, a futurist installation at Yale's Beinecke Rare Book Library. In 2006, MacArthur co-founded, with Emily Coates, the dance theater lab Motion in Dialogue (MIND) which, in the fall of 2006, presented a production of the first week of Suzan-Lori Parks' play cycle 365 Days/365 Plays. This past summer, MacArthur and Coates presented MIND's 2005 work Memory Suite at the CORD (Congress on Research in Dance)/SDHS (Society of Dance History Scholars) joint conference in Paris, France.

MacArthur Dance Project (MDP) was formed in January 2007 and made its debut in May at ACES Arts Hall in New Haven, CT. MDP was then presented in May at New Haven's Shubert Theater and in June at the International Festival of Arts and Ideas. A summer residency also reunited MacArthur with Olga Pona's Chelyabinsk Theater of Contemporary Dance. Currently, MacArthur is collaborating again with Yale School of Drama composer Matthew Suttor and Beinecke curator Tim Young on a production of Blaise Cendrars's memory poem *La Prose du Transsiberien*. In addition, MDP will be inhabiting the rooms of a former New Haven hardware store in a performance event in December and co-producing, with Adele Myers, in spring 2008 a multi-media performance event at a former arms manufacturing facility. MacArthur is currently a guest on the dance faculty at Connecticut College, guest teaches at Wesleyan University and, in the spring, will co-teach, with Joseph Roach and Emily Coates, a seminar in the Theater Studies program in Yale College.



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NELL BREYER is a Research Affiliate at MIT's Center for Advanced Visual Studies. Nell was a digital ARM Fellow at Dance Theater Workshop (2003-2004). Breyer's work has been performed in New York (The Joyce Soho, Judson Church, St. Mark's, The Williamsburg Art Nexus); Canada, the UK (The Place, Sadlers Wells Peacock Theater, Her Majesty's Haymarket Theater), Bangladesh (The Bangladesh National Museum Auditorium, The Liberation War Museum); and Slovenia (Cankarajev Dom, TRNFEST). Breyer's commissioned public art and video installation works have been shown at the MIT Media Lab (2003), World Financial Center Arts & Events, (2005), The Museum of Contemporary Art in Rovereto and Trento, Italy, (2006), Boston City Hall (2006) as well as in Gallery Exhibits (The National Academy of Arts & Sciences, Ethan Cohen Fine Arts, Art Interactive, Photo NY) and dance venues such as Dance Theater Workshop (2004) and Dance New Amsterdam (2007).

Breyer has collaborated with numerous international and US-based artists and scientists including: Jonathan Bachrach, Aszure Barton, Goran Bogdanovski, Stefanie Nelson, Rumana Omar, Dejan Shroj and others. Her performance and public art works explore how we perceive motion. The works engage viewers through interaction with actions and images, encouraging passers-by to observe the character and cycles of pedestrian movement routinely activating highly trafficked spaces.

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Nell Breyer



Polly Motley was born in Nacogdoches, Texas. She began dance training in classical and contemporary forms at age four. She began performing and choreographing professionally in 1972 with companies in Houston and Austin, Texas. She was Associate Director of James Clouser's Space/Dance/Theater in Houston, and served as his choreographic assistant for the Houston Ballet Company, the Pittsburgh Ballet, and the Dallas Ballet. After moving to Colorado in 1981, she was a guest artist at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado where she studied dance ethnology with Allegra Fuller Snyder and worked with Barbara Dilley in improvisation, creative process, and contemplative dance. Her M.F.A. is from the University of Colorado with a thesis on the interactive relationships of video and performance.

Her collaborations have included work with dancers Steve Paxton, Dana Reitz, Simone Forti, and James Clouser, with composers Charles Amirkhanian, Takehisa Kosugi, Fred Frith, and DJ M. Singe, and with poets Anne Carson and Jack Collom. Her work has been presented in New York by the Asia Society, Danspace Project, The Kitchen, Dance Theatre Workshop, Movement Research, The New York Improvisation Festival, the Jack Tilton Gallery and Zone Chelsea. It has also been presented at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Colorado Dance Festival, The Indonesian Dance Festival, Morishita Studios/Tokyo, Ballet Freiburg/Pretty Ugly, Mouson Turm Frankfurt, the Flynn Theatre in Burlington, Vermont, Bates College Museum of Art, the Edge Festival San Francisco, the Contemporary Arts Museum/Houston, and DIVA/Paris. Motley was on the faculties of the University of Houston, Loretto Heights College and Regis University in Denver, and Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado. She teaches performance-making and improvisation in North and South America, Europe and Asia. She lives in Stowe, Vermont.



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Selene Colburn



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Selene Colburn is a choreographer, writer, and librarian living in northern Vermont. Her work has appeared at venues such as the International Festival of Arts and Ideas, the Bay Area Dance Series, Movement Research at Judson Church, the Scope Art Fair, and the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts. Colburn studied dance at Bennington College and formed the San Francisco-based Zeltzman and Colburn, with fellow Bennington alumna Dominique Zeltzman. Since relocating to the east coast, she has created interdisciplinary performance works that investigate universal conditions of vulnerability and the politics of proscribed behaviors, through filters as varied as The Rolling Stones, the writings of Homer, and the chambermaid industry.

She is currently completing */The History of the Future/*, a work of dance, video, and text that relies on detailed research in fields such as psychology, sociology, and genetics to investigate how individuals imagine and arrive at future scenarios. Colburn's work has been supported by the Vermont Arts Council, the Vermont Community Foundation, the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, and private individuals.



Talya Epstein

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Talya Epstein is a dance and performance artist from Massachusetts. Her work *Fresh cut flowers depress me, but I still like to wear them in my hair* was performed through World Music/CRASHarts' "Ten's the Limit" at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston. She has spent the past two summers at the American Dance Festival participating in the composition classes of David Dorfman, Miguel Gutierrez, Sarah Skaggs and Antonietta Vicario. Talya will be graduating from The Boston Conservatory in May 2008 with a BFA in modern dance.

Talya is currently interested in exploring impulses, raw states of being, connecting with and disconnecting from others, connecting with and disconnecting from oneself, and the space between people where human interactions occur. She also likes to read books.



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