

National Dance Project 2008 Production Grant Recipients



Company: AXIS Dance Company (San Francisco, CA)

Project title: *Vessel*

Vessel, a multi-media collaboration with AXIS choreographer Alex Ketley and poet Carol Snow, begins with the premise that every cell of our bodies retains our memories, and that actual spoken language resides in this body memory. Ketley's idiosyncratic movement vocabulary, combined with the unique vocabulary of AXIS results in stunning solo, partnering and ensemble moments. The work is an exploration of the initial suspicion that the body is a landscape where our many histories reside.

Artist: Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, New York

Project title: *A Good Man!/ A Good Man?*

Recognized as a cultural trailblazer, Bill T. Jones has crafted his life, philosophy and art-making by asking questions and resisting definitive answers. In celebration of the Company's 25th Anniversary and the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, Jones will "lead with his own heart" as he creates a highly personal rumination on the life and legacy of a great American president. Crafted at a time when we still feel the distant resonance of Lincoln's assassination, *A Good Man!/A Good Man?* navigates the nebulous space where art, biography and history collide.

Company: Evidence, A Dance Company (Brooklyn, NY)

Project Title: *The Two Year Old Gentleman*

Evidence founder Ronald K. Brown's *Two Year Old Gentlemen* combines elements from the historical practice of war games by Mardi Gras Indians with initiation dances from West Africa. Brown creates a theatrical dance experience that emphasizes the importance of community and strong male relationships across generations. *Two Year Old Gentlemen* will feature music, costumes and lighting design by long-time Evidence collaborators Mamadouba Mohammed Camara (composer), Carolyn Mechka Cherry (costumes) and Dalilah Kee (lighting). An educational component will be developed to accompany the production on tour.

Company: John Jasperse Company (New York, NY)

Project title: *Truth, Revised Histories, Wishful Thinking, and Flat Out Lies* (working title)

Truth, Revised Histories, Wishful Thinking, and Flat Out Lies, is an evening-length work for six performers by John Jasperse with a commissioned score by Hahn Rowe for live string quartet and electronics; scenic and visual design by Jasperse, with Lighting Design by Jasperse in collaboration with Joe Levasseur. The project will premiere September 2009 at the Dresden Hellerau in the Festspielhaus (Germany) co-produced by The Forsythe Company and is a 25th Anniversary commission of the Joyce Theater (New York) with development support from The Walker Art Center (Minn.).

Company: koosil-ja/danceKUMIKO (New York, NY)

Project Title: *Blocks of Continuity/ Movement-Live Cinema*

Blocks of Continuity/Movement-Live Cinema is a dance and live cinema work that

tells three stories simultaneously. The project studies image and body, a domain of self, perceptions and politics. *koosil-ja/danceKUMIKO* overlays information onto real and virtual bodies and matters. The merging of real and virtual creates uncertainty and it opens up a chance to view the world from a different perspective. The stories will be told with movement, song, music and 3D space.

Artist: Liz Lerman Dance Exchange (Takoma Park, MD)

Project title: *Origins*

Pursuing the question of where we come from is an innate human activity. Art, science, and religion overlap as places where people address the unknown. If artist, scientist, and believer all arrive at different answers about the origins of existence, can those answers still occupy the same intellectual space? That is the central question of *Origins* (working title), Liz Lerman's latest choreographic exploration. Her artistic collaborators will include Darron West (soundscape), Logan Kibens (video), Michael Mazzola (scenic/lighting design) and others, in addition to ten dancers, aged 22 – 74.

Company: Lucy Guerin (Melbourne, Australia)

Project Title: *Corridor*

Corridor will use the spatial and emotional characteristics of the corridor to present human interior states and interactions which are known to us all, but which resonate with far greater complexity than their exterior manifestations. Japanese composer Haco will use a blend of electronic music, field recordings and Japanese pop to create the sound score. The dancers' dramatic abilities will be heightened by their close proximity to the audience. Premieres at the Melbourne International Arts Festival, October 2008.

Artist: Merce Cunningham Dance Company (New York, NY)

Project Title: *Untitled Merce Cunningham 90th Birthday Work*

Merce Cunningham's monumental new work, scheduled to premiere on its creator's 90th birthday, will be a spectacle of epic proportions. Exploding with energy and multimedia sensation, the piece crowns a lifetime of innovation by perhaps one of the world's greatest living choreographers. Renowned Barcelona-based architect Benedetta Tagliabue and Tony-award winning lighting designer Brian MacDevitt join forces on a multi-level décor featuring video projections and flying set pieces. Musicians as diverse as Sonic Youth, Takehisa Kosugi, and John Paul Jones collaborate on the score of this groundbreaking masterpiece.

Company: Morgan Thorson (Minneapolis, MN)

Project title: *Heaven*

Morgan Thorson's, *Heaven* (working title), evidences ecstatic perfection by synthesizing vocal and physical rapture (body) with omnipresent lighting design (spirit). In this evening-length, hybrid work, a roving chorus of seven performers sings richly harmonic pieces and disperses into durational choreography gleaned from religious forms and devotional practices. Light, movement and sound combine as equally expressive partners to create a vibrant onstage world of euphoria and paradise meant to rouse performers and audience into a communal, ecstatic experience.

Company: Nora Chipaumire (New York, NY)

Project title: *lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will break: gukurahundi* (or The Thomas Mapfumo Project working title)

lions will roar, swans will fly, angels will wrestle heaven, rains will break:
gukurahundi is an hour-long multimedia performance featuring contemporary/African solo dance artist Nora Chipaumire and legendary Zimbabwean musicians Thomas Mapfumo & The Blacks Unlimited, with video animation by artist Joelle Dietrick. *gukurahundi* explores the migrant experience within and outside of Africa and examines how Africa is portrayed to a western, globalized world. This collaboration is a representation of a collective self, a depiction of the Zimbabwean immigrant body, and explores what it means to be an African in the Diaspora.

Company: olive Dance Theatre (Philadelphia, PA)

Project title: *Brotherly Love*

olive Dance Theatre's *Brotherly Love* is a multimedia dance theatre work inspired by the historical events of the MOVE tragedy in Philadelphia, 1978-1985. This story is an integral part of both Philadelphia's and America's collective conscience.

Considering the issues of race, class and equal protection exposed recently in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, it is a reminder that the present is always a reflection of our understanding of our past. The subject matter of this work lends itself to community dialogue and is especially relevant to communities that may not be usually engaged through live performances—minority populations, immigrants and displaced citizens.

Artist: Ralph Lemon/ Cross Performances Inc. (New York, NY)

Project title: *How Can You Stay in the House All Day and Not Go Anywhere?*

How Can You Stay in the House All Day and Not Go Anywhere? is a three-part, multimedia performance choreographed and directed by Ralph Lemon. Described as a "speculative fiction epic," the project bridges the personal and the universal in an exploration of the possibilities of intercultural collaboration, the allegiances of race, and the power and unreliability of memory. Each of the three parts—*Sunshine Room*, *Wall/Hole* and *No Room*—will live as complete performances while also being constructed to come together in one evening-length work.

Company: Shen Wei Dance Arts (New York, NY)

Project title: *RE- Triptych Part III: The New Silk Road*

In 2009, SWDA unveils the crown jewel of Shen Wei's *Re- Triptych Part III: The New Silk Road*, following on the international triumph of parts I (Tibet) and II (Angkor Wat). Using the prefix "Re-" to invoke concepts such as "renew", "rediscover", and "repair", the Triptych is at once a reconciliation of life split between two hemispheres, a generous spiritual offering, and a hopeful plea for intercultural understanding. In Shen Wei's utterly original style—blending dance, theater, visual art, and Chinese opera—Part III integrates the old Silk Road with a hyper-modern, present-day Beijing, a bracing vision of the "new" China encountered during his time there choreographing the 2008 Olympic Opening Ceremonies.

Company: Stephen Petronio Dance Company (New York, NY)

Project Title: *I Drink the Air Before Me*

I Drink the Air Before Me, a meditation on the power and speed of extreme weather in all its awesome transience, is an evening-length work for 12 dancers. Petronio will collaborate with composer Nico Muhly, who will write for chamber ensemble, electronics and voice. They will create a cycle of storm, both environmental and internal/emotional - sweeping forces working together and against each other. Also collaborating are lighting designer Ken Tabachnick and fashion designer Benjamin Cho. The work can feature local youth choirs when possible.

Artists: Trey McIntyre Project (Boise, ID)

Project title: *Ephemeral Composition*

Ephemeral Composition explores the intersection between the various elements of the idea of impermanence, particularly as it relates to the time of life when one transitions into young adulthood and leaves behind the sometimes magical/sometimes disastrous years of childhood and adolescence. The work will incorporate McIntyre's filmmaking abilities in a series of podcasts that can be used leading up to the performance by being made available to presenters for use in audience development and marketing of the piece, creating a "virtualogue" on the process from creation to performance.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL DANCE PROJECT

Since 1996, the National Dance Project, one of nine grant-making programs of the New England Foundation for the Arts, has awarded over \$5.9 million in Production Grants and over \$15 million of funding in total. Projects that receive NDP Production Grants are added to a roster of selected projects available to performing arts presenters, who can then apply for NDP Touring Grants to help defray the cost of presenting these works.

Other activities of the National Dance Project are supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation, the Aliad Fund at the Boston Foundation and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

International partnerships of the National Dance Project are supported by the Australia Council for the Arts, and the Cultural Services of the French Embassy.

ABOUT THE NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS

The New England Foundation for the Arts 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.

NEFA administers nine grant-making programs that support the performing arts, public art, and Native American artists. NEFA also leads projects and initiatives that range from the analysis of the impact of the creative economy to the creation of online tools which link and advance the regional, national, and international cultural community. For more information, please visit www.nefa.org or call [617] 951-0010.