

Elevate: A Triple Bill of Female Choreographers *Fearless. Femme. The Future.*



Cambridge, MA - December 4, 2018- In *Elevate: A Triple Bill of Female Choreographers* three seasoned choreographers from NYC, NJ/NYC, and Pittsburgh come together to explore female empowerment in a compelling evening-length triple bill performance presented as part of a 3-city tour. In this production, three distinct powerhouses, Heather Bryce (Bryce Dance Company, NYC), Erin Carlisle Norton (The Moving Architects, NJ/NYC), and Shana Simmons (Shana Simmons Dance, PA) elevate each other and their collective voices by bringing the strength, individuality, and power of the female voice into the spotlight. This triple bill is a unique opportunity to see how three unique voices interpret fearless femininity. The Dance Complex is thrilled to present *Elevate: A Triple Bill of Female Choreographers* April 19 & 20, 2019 at 8PM.

In the first half of the production, each choreographer presents existing repertory, revealing their distinctive movement signatures and choreographic stylings. Bryce Dance Company's *Moving Memory* is an excerpt of an evening length production that explores how identity, internal narrative, and relationships inevitably change as memory becomes fragmented, altered, or lost. Through intimate choreography, story fragments, and original music, the work evokes the inner turmoil, fear and confusion, as well as moments of deep connection and meaning that are inherently beautiful. The development of *Moving Memory* was supported in part by a residency at Mount Tremper Arts and a Gibney POP performance. The Moving Architects' work *PLUCK* is about Power – who has it, what it looks like, how it feels, and why we live in reaction or agreement with its subliminal and prominent presence. Tenaciously performed by the all-female company, individual and complex relationships are constructed and fall apart with emotional and physical extremes, and finding a fair and balanced body amidst interruptions is taxing. Shana Simmons Dance brings *Grounded in the Soil*, which demonstrates powerful movement, upbeat sequencing, and expresses the emotion, play, and passion of soul music. Set to a montage of Otis Redding songs, the company taps into Redding's ability to play with the audience, express emotion, and physically interpret his impressive power as a powerhouse performer.

In the second act, Bryce, Carlisle Norton, and Simmons bring their voices and dancers together in order to create *Elevate*, a groundbreaking new work that they have collaboratively woven, intently investigating self-imposed boundaries, metaphorical walls they encounter as female artists, and personal experiences that have a collective and universal weight. This work began with each choreographer creating an individual dance around these themes and then considerately intertwining, intersecting,

and layering together their individual voices into a powerful, thoughtful, multi-sensory, collaborative performance experience. *Elevate* shines a spotlight on the resilience and power of three distinct female voices speaking together through one work.

Says Bryce of the project: "As we come together and empower each other we begin to elevate our collective voices and bring light to stories that have gone unheard or unseen. As movers we break down walls and bring our full selves to the table, providing opportunities for others to do the same. Through our vulnerability we share our strength. Through our choreography we lift each other up."

Tickets and more information are available at dancecomplex.org.

Elevate: A Triple Bill of Female Choreographers has additional performances April 17-18, 2019 at Actors Fund Arts Center in Brooklyn, NY, and May 4, 2019 at Point Park University, George Rowland White Performance Center in Pittsburgh, PA.

Photo by Derrick Senior

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Choreographer Bios

Heather Bryce (Artistic Director, Bryce Dance Company) started the company in 2006 in Boston, MA. As a choreographer Bryce is interested in collaboration, community engagement, and creating dance that opens dialogue. Bryce explores timely and relevant themes through intricate choreography, sound, music, and interdisciplinary collaborations. In order to bring the work to new and underserved audiences the company creates public performances, site specific events, professional works for the stage, performances with alternative populations, and community focused workshops. Bryce's work has been presented at venues including: Ailey Citigroup Theater, Mark Morris Dance Center, Gibney, The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, The Dance Complex, and Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center. Bryce is a Teaching Artist for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Lincoln Center Education. She holds her MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College.

www.brycedancecompany.com

Erin Carlisle Norton (Artistic Director, The Moving Architects) Founded in 2007 in Chicago by Norton, The Moving Architects (TMA) is a nonprofit dance company currently based in NJ/NYC. As a female-centric dance company, TMA creates and performs dance works that combine charged movement and feminine strength to channel the authentic complexity of both the current and historically lived female experience. The resulting dance works reveal intense female performances that make connections between bodies in motion, location and space, as well as historical and physical experience. Collaboration is a key component of the work, transgressing borders between dance, art, cinematography, and sound. TMA has performed extensively regionally, nationally, and internationally, presented recently at NYC's BAM Fisher, Bryant Park Dance Festival, Triskelion Arts, Gibney Dance, and Wilson College Artistic Residency (PA). TMA produces the dance interview podcast "Movers & Shapers: A Dance Podcast" and runs the pay-what-you-can movement program Community Movement Project in Northern NJ. Norton received a 2014 NJ State Council on the Arts Choreographic Fellowship and holds a BFA and MFA in Dance from Ohio State University. www.themovingarchitects.org

Shana Simmons (Artistic Director, Shana Simmons Dance) Shana Simmons Dance (SSD) was founded in 2009 Simmons to create unique and engaging contemporary dance. SSD projects aim to draw audiences into modern dance in new and creative ways, highlight current societal topics, express the need for intimate connections to others, and provide the viewer a unique perspective, if not participatory action. These projects forward communities by creating thoughtful performances and inspiring lives through dance, artistic vision, and unexpected performance settings. SSD firmly believes in supporting artistic growth within its company members by encouraged development of their own voices. Simmons has presented works in New York City, Belgium, London, Chicago, and regionally around Pittsburgh, PA. Performances include: Gibney Dance, The Reverie Festival, New Moves Dance Festival, Ruth Page Center for the Arts, Bricolage Theater. Simmons was nominated for the Carol R Brown Award in 2017 and holds an MA from LABAN in London, England. www.shanasimmonsdance.com