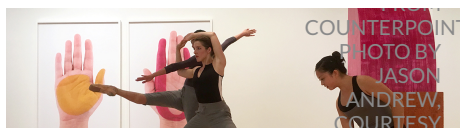


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FEATURE ARTICLES

Norte Maar CounterPo presents a female collaborat



These
days
especially,
it
seems
even
more
important
to
make
sure
women

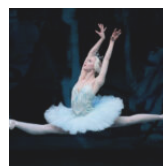
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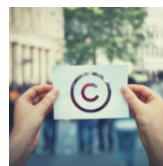
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have
a
voice.
For
its
fifth
installment
of
choreographic
showcase
CounterPointe
this
April
7-
9,
non-
profit
arts
organization
Norte
Maar
will
feature
the
work
of
all
women
–
seven
choreographers
paired
with
seven
visual
artists.
Together,
these
women
have

Choreographers

Dance Companies

Dance Jobs


TO TOP

produced
work
that
is
physical,
visual
and
important,
that
explores
the
process
of
creation,
inspiration
and
development.

CounterPointe5
will
be
presented
in
partnership
with
Brooklyn
Ballet
at
The
Actors
Fund
Arts
Center
in
Brooklyn,
New
York.
Collaborators
include
CounterPointe
Producer



and
Co-
Founder
of
Norte
Maar
Julia
K.
Gleich
with
artist
Elana
Herzog,
konverjdans
with
artist
Nancy
Baker,
Brandi
Marsh
with
artist
Emily
Noelle
Lambert,
Lynn
Parkerson
with
artist
Cornelia
Thomsen,
Ursula
Verduzco
with
artist
Lizzie
Scott,
Margaret
Wiss
with



artist
Noël
Hennelly,
and
Erin
Renee
Young
with
artist
Leslie
Kirby.

“This
project
is
all
about
creating
opportunity,”
Gleich
tells
Dance
Informa.
“I
never
wanted
to
highlight
the
work
of
women
as
separate
artistic
genre;
there
is
no
such
thing.



But
certainly
there
are
fewer
women
represented
in
roles
of
creative
leadership
in
large
ballet
institutions.

This
is
not
about
singling
women
out
but
rather
including
them
in,
creating
networks
and
support
channels
and
more
risk-
taking.

In
2015,
I



felt
that
the
project
didn't
need
to
exist
solely
as
an
all-
female
kind
of
event.
We
brought
in
the
collaborative
element,
which
is
truly
at
the
heart
of
the
mission
of
Norte
Maar.
And
perhaps
we
will
open
up



this
project
further
in
the
future.”



Verduzco,
who
Verduzco's
will
'Let
show
Me
ber
Work
in-
Bi-
collaboration
Polaris,
with
about
Sarah
Bednarek,
and
for
its
CounterPointe4.
percussions,
believes
Lucas
it
Chilczuk.
is
crucial,
and
perhaps
overdue,
to
hear
and
experience
the
work
of
female
voices.
“Female
artists
have
a
different

point
of
view
about
the
world
and
the
experience
of
living
in
it
than
male
artists,
just
by
being
that
–
female,”
she
explains.
“Not
better,
not
worse,
just
different.
It
has
taken
long
for
female
representation
in
the
world



to
be
accepted,
valued
and
empowered,
and
there
is
no
exception
in
the
dance
world,
especially
in
roles
of
leadership.
Being
part
of
this
project
of
all
female
voices
allows
us
the
opportunity
to
enjoy
the
point
of
view
of



us
women.
So
we
can
all
enjoy,
learn,
discuss,
value
and
empower
a
different
point
of
view.”

The
visual
artists,
too,
are
eager
to
be
a
part
of
CounterPointe’s
discussion.
Scott,
whose
beanbag
sculptural
work
will
accompany
Verduzco’s
dance,
comments



that
the
art
world
doesn't
always
pass
the
Bechdel
test
–
an
indicator
for
the
presence
of
women
that
is
not
only
in
relation
to
men.

“It's
nice
here
to
have
a
situation
with
a
group
of
women
artists
in



dialogue
with
each
other
about
our
work,”
Scott
says.
“It’s
important
to
have
the
chance
to
have
these
artistic
conversations.
Different
things
can
surface
when
it’s
all
women.”

Marsh,
whose
work
Freedom
aims
to
raise
awareness
about
the
issue
of



human
trafficking,
says,
“Unfortunately,
the
ballet
world
still
has
quite
a
ways
to
go
regarding
equality.
I
am
so
grateful
for
Julia
leading
the
charge
in
giving
women
a
voice
in
this
genre.”

Not
only
does
CounterPointe
serve
as
a



platform
for
female
artists,
but
it
also
uses
the
aspect
of
collaboration
for
inspiration.

“I
am
so
very
proud
of
this
project,”
Gleich
says.

“To
hear
some
of
the
artists
who
have
been
involved
talk
about
the
experience
of
collaborating



is
very
satisfying.
Many
have
continued
to
work
together
on
newer
projects.
Audiences
have
commented
on
finding
delight
in
observing
the
artistic
relationships
that
occur
in
the
performances.
Artists
need
spaces
to
try
new
ideas,
and
I
think
we
are



making
this
possible.”



Norte
Maar’s
fifth
anniversary
season
of
CounterPointe
will
be
presented
April
7-
9,
at
The
Actors
Fund
Arts
Center
in
Brooklyn,
New
York.
For
tickets,
click
here,
and
for
more
information
on
Norte
Maar,
visit
nortemaar.org.

By
Laura
Di
Orio
of
Dance
Informa.

TO TOP

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ERIN
RENEE
YOUNG,
JULIA
K.
GLEICH,
KONVERJDANS,
LESLIE
KIRBY,
LIZZIE
SCOTT,
LYNN
PARKERSON,
MARGARET
WISS,
NANCY
BAKER,
NOËL
HENNELLY,
NORTE
MAAR,
THE
ACTORS
FUND
ARTS
CENTER,
URSULA
VERDUZCO

FEATURE ARTICLES

**Trisha
Brown:**

Dancemakers and dance shaper

↑
TO TOP



BROWN.
PHOTO BY
LOURDES
DELGADO.

The simplest definition of an artist may be one who shapes a certain material – be it clay, paint, music or the human body. Yet what might we call artists who shape the nature of the art of their time itself? Broadly speaking, artists most often follow the general artistic trends of their generation, and what the surrounding society will recognize enough to support. Some artists, however, put forth the cunning and courage to alter the direction of the art of their time – and thus also change its future course.



Trisha Brown, who passed away on March 18, was one such artist. She had been in treatment for vascular dementia since 2011. She obtained her undergraduate degree in dance at Mills College in 1958. Key influences at this early stage of her career were Simone Forti and Anna Halprin, from whom she learned methods for forming improvisation into a (somewhat) repeatable performance. These include “task-based improvisation” (movement driven by the process of accomplishing a certain task) and “rule games” (seeing what might transpire from having one to a few rules shape one’s movement). She transplanted to New York City in 1961. The following year, she helped found Judson Dance Theater with fellow post-modern dance pioneers such as Steve Paxton and Yvonne Rainer.

Like dances of those colleagues, her works “eliminated bravura, academic technique, acting and musicality” – fundamentals of concert dance (both ballet *and* modern dance), explains

Alastair Macaulay, chief dance critic for *The New York Times*.



In her treatise on “Pure Movement”, Brown stated that she does not “promote the next movement with a preceding transition and therefore, I do not build up to something.” This is an unapologetic departure from the convention of building dramatic arc, whether in overarching narrative or in the body, that is so key to plot or theme-based dance. For Brown, and for post-modern dancers of decades after, the possibilities of the body can provide drama or “message” enough. “Pure movement is movement that has no other connotations,” she asserted.

TBDC in ‘L’amour au théâtre’. Photo by Julieta Cervantes.

Brown’s early works also revealed her penchant for seeing, and subsequently engaging with, spaces in wholly original ways. In 1970’s *Walking on the Wall*, for instance, dancers walked on walls, and audience

positioning granted the optical illusion of looking down on the performers from above.

Wendy Perron, *Dance Magazine* editor-in-chief and former dancer for Brown, recounts how “[Brown] said she felt sorry for places that weren’t center stage – the corners, the walls and wing space....she caused a revolution by simply, sweetly turning to spaces that other dance-makers don’t.”

And post-modern dancers have danced in unexpected spaces ever since – in trees, in swimming pools, nearly anywhere that will hold bodies moving in time. Brown also engaged with the space of the body in a revolutionary way. She had no qualms with seeing audiences in a yet-unseen way as well; she stated in her treatise that she “may perform an everyday gesture so that the audience does not know whether I have stopped dancing or not.” She was in no way beholden to the presumed tastes or understandings of her audience members. “I...use quirky, personal gesture, things that have specific meaning to me but probably appear abstract to others,” she explained. No more to it than that.



Trisha Brown. Photo by Marc Ginot.

Despite this attitude to audience mentality, Brown's approaches began to gain recognition and admiration, in earnest, with 1983's *Set and Reset*. She gained a following in France in particular, and in 1988 the French government named her *Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Arts et Lettres* – a unique honor granted to artists, writers and the like who are highly admired in France.

In later years, Brown returned to the proscenium stage. She also more frequently used a method called accumulation, a repeated movement then layered on with another movement, and so on to build phrases. This was in line with her tendency to challenge audience members, claims Joan Acocella in *The New Yorker*, to “deflect their focus”. Brown asserted that when “moving to the right, I will stick something out to the left...to set up some sort of

reverberation between the two.”

Brown also transitioned from using silence to classical music scores because she was tired of hearing the audience coughing, she claimed.

Tongue-in-cheek, yes, but she could also roar like a lioness.

When asked, earlier in her career, why she didn’t use music for her dances, for example, she responded, “Do you walk around a sculpture and ask why there is no music?”



TBDC at Museo Universidad Navarra in Pamplona. Photo by Alexandre Moyrand.

She was called generous and caring toward her dancers, and she clearly “invited people to think, move and see differently”, Perron asserts.

Brown describes herself best – perhaps accidentally – in her treatise, stating that she “[made] radical changes in a

mundane way”. She was not the only seminal dancemaker of her generation, of her circle of post-modern dance pioneers, but she was uniquely influential. May dancers, choreographers and all who experience some part of her legacy come away thinking, moving and seeing – in some small way – differently, newly and daringly.



By Kathryn Boland of **Dance Informa**.

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