

SENTINEL



All photographs by Luke Ohlson

SENTINEL WORK SAMPLES

Please find enclosed images and descriptions of the selected sites and stories alongside personal quotes from each of the performers. This text is an excerpt of what will be included in an informational pamphlet that will be provided in each audience member's program at the final exhibition on September 14, 2018 at the Brooklyn Historical Society. This document concludes with artist biographies and an article in Dance Magazine where DRPP was featured alongside other artist-activists.

ABOUT DRPP

Danielle Russo Performance Project (DRPP) is a company of movement-based artists who design physically rigorous, conceptual performances for unconventional formats and spaces. Its mission is to provoke critical, politically potent dialogue between artists and the general public by providing free performances, creative workshops, and interactive programming.

Domestically, DRPP has been presented at the American Dance Festival, Detroit Institute of Arts, Governors Island, Jacob's Pillow, and The Yard; and internationally in Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Mexico, Panama, South Korea, Spain, and Sweden. Local highlights include the Ace Hotel, Armory Arts Week, Julian Schnabel's Casa del Popolo, Gowanus Art + Production, HERE Arts Center, La MaMa, Moynihan Station, SPRING/BREAK Art Show, and (un)Scene Art Show, to name a few.

With a commitment to audience and community engagement, DRPP produces a quarterly community dance jam called, Care to Dance. From this event, 100% of the proceeds are donated to non-profit organizations that care. Recipients have included the American Civil Liberties Union, Asylum Seeker Advocacy Project, Houston Food Bank, One Warm Coat, Planned Parenthood, Refugee and Immigrant Center for Educational and Legal Services, and the U.S. Caribbean Strong Relief Fund. Attendees are also encouraged to donate used coats for One Warm Coat in lieu of or in addition to admission.



9/15/2017 STATEN ISLAND CESAR BRODERMANN

César Brodermann performed in the residential streets outside of Port Richmond's CPL Thompson Park. A majority of arrests resultant of the January 25th Executive Order ICE Raids neglecting New York City's sanctuary status have occurred in Staten Island. ICE Raids in north shore neighborhoods such as Port Richmond specifically target Mexican immigrants. His solo is embedded in his experiences as a gay Mexican immigrant, most especially right now.

"This era of politics wants to separate us...I have been in New York City for almost 4 years now, but I remember feeling scared of people on the street and even feared being overlooked after the election results. Coming from a Mexican family where being gay was not an option, I have always been scared of being 'too gay' or 'too different.' New York City became a place where I could hold myself without the risk of judgement, but after last November I felt uncertain about behaving the way I did every day, if I could still hold my best friend's hand on the street..."

The color magenta has always held vulnerable meaning for me. They teach you when you are young that color can 'define' your gender. At the start of my performance in Staten Island, there was this little kid and he asked if I was gay. At this point in my life, I don't even think about my response. After I say yes, he goes, 'Ew, he's gay – let's go,' telling his friends. I felt so attacked but also speechless. What do you tell a 7-year-old kid that already hates? It's about discussion, education, and focusing on younger generations. At the end of the day, we are all human beings." (César)

César Brodermann is a dancer with DRPP, and company member of Gallim Dance. Originally from Mexico City, he graduated from the Certificate Program at Peridance Capezio Center with honors. Most recently, César was invited to join Batsheva – The Young Ensemble.



10/22/2017 BROOKLYN KAYLA FARRISH

Kayla Farrish performed at the intersection of Eastern Parkway and Classon Avenue. On September 7, 2017, a noose was found on a tree at said intersection. Exactly one week later, a second noose was found on a tree at a nearby division of the Brooklyn Public Library. The city made minimal efforts to publicly address and reconcile these incidents. The removal of the noose on Eastern Parkway was grossly negligent whereas a majority of the rope still remains tied to the tree. Her performance sought not to exploit nor sensationalize the disturbance. Rather, her dance was a call to action.

"As a black woman and artist, I have felt and experienced more and more aspects and facets of society's standards for race, class, and gender. Seeing power at both high levels in major events such as unjust police brutality and mass incarceration, on towards a smaller day-to-day sense of accommodating and making my presence non-threatening to move forward. We discussed a great deal about requiring society's accountability. I absolutely believe in this. And while performing this solo next to the noose, I could feel waves of keeping my power and truth and requiring this accountability looking forward into the eyes of people walking by. And then I would experience this desire to shrink or to soften to make others feel comfortable. To look down so that they could look at me...

I often wonder what happens to the voice of the black woman. I see and hear all this violence against black men. I see archetypes of black women, but I hear less of their voices and experiences. We are generous, giving, compassionate, malleable, and strong. Our rights to our bodies are governed, as our bodies continue to be objectified and politicized. It is my body that has this powerful capability for choice and for life. It was a huge decision to perform this work topless. However, I felt strong in the form of my body. I felt empowered and capable, and my dance honored women and all people of color." (Kayla)

Kayla Farrish is a dancer with DRPP, and a company member of Kyle Abraham/Abraham.In.Motion, Helen Simoneau Danse, Kate Weare Company, and Punchdrunk's Sleep No More. She has also had the pleasure of performing in the companies of Azure Barton & Artists and Gallim Dance. BFA in Dance from the University of Arizona.



12/12/2017 BROOKLYN/MANHATTAN JASON COLLINS

Jason Collins performed on the Manhattan-bound A/C Subway Line. There were numerous incidents of reported harassment and assault specifically targeting gay men on the A/C trains in 2017. As early as April of 2017, reports showed the number of hate crimes already doubled and the total number of hate crimes regarding sexual orientation surpassing city records for 2016. As a gay man living on the C Line, and having experienced profiled aggressions firsthand, his performance addressed the reality of his everyday commute.

"I am inherently a person that likes to blend in. It might be a response to being bullied while growing up or just generally feeling 'other' most of my life, but it is no coincidence that I live in New York City because I am addicted to how anonymous I can be here. So, it should come as no surprise that being painted magenta and dancing in public was out of my comfort zone. But, thinking back on my experience while being made magenta in public, I find it difficult to separate this exaggerated experience from my own daily experience...

Since Trump's election, it has become more and more apparent to me that people feel not only an ability but an obligation to openly hate. I have experienced it myself and I have witnessed it happen to others. Was I more vulnerable painted magenta and dancing on a subway platform than any other person in that station? No. To my surprise, our only difference was that I was an abstraction. I felt just as vulnerable when painted magenta as I do every day."

Jason Collins is a dancer with DRPP, and company member of Pam Tanowitz Dance and Dylan Crossman Dans(c)e. He has also had the pleasure of working with The Bang Group, Wally Cardona & Jennifer Lacey, Ryan McNamara, Christopher Williams, and The Metropolitan Opera. BFA in Dance from The Juilliard School.



3/4/2018 QUEENS ROYA CARRERAS

Roya Carreras performed outside Terminal 4 at John F. Kennedy Airport. On January 28, 2017, nearly 2,000 people gathered there in protest of Executive Order 13769, commonly known as the Muslim ban, whereas several individuals were already detained. As an Iranian-Hispanic woman raised in a Muslim home, her dance confronts the crisis and complexity of identity, heritage, and profiling on a most personal level.

"I felt a lot of fear and deep disappointment when Iran was declared on Trump's travel ban. My father was supposed to fly to Iran to visit family only a week after the ban was first implemented. When things like this happen, you immediately think of the worst-case scenario. Will he be okay? Will he be bullied? Will he lose his citizenship? Will my grandmother, cousins, and nephews be safe in Iran?..."

I was born and raised in this country, and yet, I am not allowed to feel American. I do not 'belong.' I am not protected. On 9/11, I remember crying over breakfast with my family and debating about whether to go to school or work that day. This was not because we were afraid. Rather, we were heartbroken. And in that moment, I could not fathom what was to come. So vividly, I remember walking into my math class. The teacher turned off the television as soon as everyone was seated. Once the class got quiet, he looked at me and said, 'How do you feel about what your people did to us?' I couldn't believe it! I sank into my chair. Most of the class went quiet but some laughed. I left for the bathroom, balling. I never went back into that classroom. I left all my things. Called my father from the school office. Switched classes and forever avoided that man. I truly didn't realize I was an outsider until then."

Roya Carreras is a dancer with DRPP. She has also had the pleasure of working for BodyTraffic, Bryan Arias, Pussy Riot, and Lux Boreal Danza Contemporanea of Mexico. BFA in Dance from the University of California at Irvine, The Ailey School.



7/19/2018 MANHATTAN/BROOKLYN MOLLY GRIFFIN

Molly Griffin performed on a Brooklyn-bound Q train crossing the Manhattan Bridge. On May 20, 2017, a 24-year old lesbian woman was beaten unconscious in an anti-LGBTQ attack on the same Q train route. Homophobic slurs over a seat that she and her partner occupied escalated to a violent assault resulting in a concussion and broken eye socket when finally pulling into DeKalb Station. Molly's performance sought to honor the strength and dignity of the survivor while simultaneously addressing her own experiences living off the Q Line where she and her partner have been combatively targeted.

"This last year and a half in the Age of Trump has added a new level of stress that is hard to fully express. I cannot imagine what people of color, immigrants, and other minorities are experiencing. My relationship with New York City and its inhabitants has changed. I feel much more alert and on guard. Reading and firsthand experiencing this sort of violence has caused me to be much more aware of when I hold hands with my girlfriend; where and when we can act like a couple...

What felt most important to me was the act of claiming and taking space. As a queer woman, I often feel that I do not have the right to physical space. So many people actively looked away when we were filming. People can be very quick to disengage with things happening around them in the city; the 'bystander effect.' No one intervened when this woman was knocked unconscious, left with a broken eye socket and stitches. When my girlfriend and I were chased down the street by a man screaming physical threats at us, no one stepped in to try and help. And, she and I ride the Q train every day to get home. Here was a woman beaten unconscious because she was gay and taking up space. We were rattled."

Molly Griffin is a dancer with DRPP, and a company member of the Liz Gerring Dance Company and Punchdrunk's Sleep No More. She has also had the pleasure of performing for Company XIV, Keigwin + Company, Pussy Riot, and The Metropolitan Opera where she danced works by Itzik Galili and Hofesh Schechter. BFA in Dance from The Julliard School.

ARTIST STATEMENT (DANIELLE RUSSO)

I craft sensoriums; stages that extend their arms and hug the audience in such a way that the dance contains them. I create magnified, interactive environments that feed off sensory stimulation and its awakening of the familiar: parlors flooded by 450,000 white roses, cement pillars suspending bodies with industrial cellophane, foyers carpeted in inexhaustible bubble wrap, the spoon-feeding of German chocolate cake to a string of strangers, and mostly recently, a vacant pool with over 10,000 pounds of dry soil and the ravaging of a ripe nectarine. These productions primarily occupy public spaces, intending to engage the local public, demystify contemporary dance/performance, and inspire new audiences. I choose 'stages' that have political, psychological, historical, and social significance in the surrounding community. At a time when voyeurism and virtual consumption are at the forefront of our social behavior, I create as a reminder of the invaluable vulnerability of real time and real space. I approach my work as reparative social action.

WRITINGS FROM BEHIND THE SCENES OF SENTINEL

The five site-specific *SENTINEL* performances were not advertised and an invitation was not made to the viewer to engage. The team did not want to sensationalize the seriousness of the stories being told. Rather, we aimed to deposit the work in the everyday setting of each site and to engage with its immediate community. Our intention was slightly experimental: We did not know how the work would be received. This curiosity was a part of our research process. What we learned was that the camera caused the vast majority of the public to shy away from its vantage point. New Yorkers are intuitive and “trained” not to look nor stand in the direction of a camera. There were many individuals who watched from behind the camera, where the creative team stood behind the filmmaker, and engaged in conversation from there after the dance completed. Many people feared stepping into our shot, and many times we told – and encouraged– them to walk through and by.

That being said, the videos should not be viewed as performance footage. Rather, they are a part of the creative process –the making of in-the-field dances– which will be edited in their full-lengths for the final exhibition on September 14, 2018 at the Brooklyn Historical Society. Additionally, the purpose of these films is to ignite an awareness and conversation about the stories being shared, and how they relate to so many ongoing stories which are a product of our current culture and political climate. Not only will these films be screened at the Brooklyn Historical Society, but they will be a part of an online campaign leading up to the exhibition in an effort to reach a broader audience. This official start to this campaign will be August 14, 2018, though we have already begun to release some footage in short videos to galvanize a social awareness in response to similar stories and incidents occurring in the news, locally and nationally. Thus far, we have already reached over 7k views on our video shorts. We anticipate the official campaign leading up to the exhibition to more than triple our online audience, and by default, campaign for an audience to attend the exhibition of the full-length works at the Brooklyn Historical Society.

We chose the color magenta because it is not a primary color; it can only exist through the integration and coalescing of more than one color. Up until the mid-twentieth century, pink was regarded as a strong, assertive, and virulent color oftentimes affiliated with young boys. Whereas red was affiliated with notions of hyper-masculinity, pink was seen as its descendent. However, at this point, two things changed: Nazi Germany began labeling individuals accused of homosexuality with pink triangles (a symbol later reclaimed by the gay rights movement of the 1980s and 1990s, particularly by ACT-UP); this shift towards

associating the color with sexuality –particularly the effeminate– caused a shift in marketing amongst Western consumers. Gender-specific clothing –and color– took hold particularly amongst the Baby Boomers. It became a very lucrative marketing ploy in which consumers who wanted to be a part of the new trend were forced to purchase new gender-specific [and color-specific] items for their children. And, in doing so, perpetuating a rigid gender binary laden with significant prejudices.

Today, pink is still regarded as a passive, vulnerable color. It is also within the family of red, a color that is a trigger or target. It is our intention to reclaim this sense of vulnerability; to reveal strength and resilience. The bodies are intended to “pop out” from the mundane, everyday scene of a neighborhood or subway car in an effort to show the day-to-day, enduring presence of those who carry the burden of the stories shared.

The magenta clay aims to show congruity between social stereotypes oftentimes subjected to great divide. It attempts to equalize and give a sense of sameness despite the imposition of social divide. Also, the clay dually abstracts the body –making it seemingly alien– while in fact exposing its very true, naked measure. How strange when the pure human form can seem so abstract.

We worked together on the creation of a skirt that would accumulate in pieces with each wear, and with each dancer. We researched various waves of immigration in 19th and 20th century United States. We took time to thoroughly research images and texts of various diasporic communities, and consistencies in the wardrobes amongst particular waves of migrants. We wished to emphasize the layering of one’s valuables, the layers of fabrics and memories, and the wear of said fabrics during journey and settlement. We deliberately chose specific fabrics that were particular to these time periods and fashions. We sought to create a garment that was in reverence to many bodies, cultures, and voices throughout time.

DANIELLE RUSSO CHOREOGRAPHER | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Danielle Russo has been presented nationally at the American Dance Festival, Detroit Institute of Arts, Jacob's Pillow, PARISH, The Forge, and The Yard; and internationally in Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Mexico, Panama, South Korea, Spain, and Sweden. She is a grant recipient of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts and Brooklyn Arts Council. Artist residencies have included C.N.N. - Ballet de Lorraine (Nancy, France), Danscentrum Jette (Brussels, Belgium), Nadine Laboratory for the Contemporary Arts (Brussels, Belgium), Performing Arts Forum (St. Erme, France), Independent Artists Initiative WUK (Vienna, Austria), Mana Contemporary (New Jersey), and Springboard Danse Montréal (Canada), among others. In 2015 – 2016, Russo was selected as a LEIMAY Fellow and cultivated work at its affiliate space, CAVE (New York City). In 2016, her commission for the Los Angeles-based No)one. Art House caught the attention of Solange Knowles and prompted a reprisal of the evening-length work with its affiliate arts organization, Saint Heron.

Locally, Russo has been presented by the Ace Hotel, Armory Arts Weeks, ArtHelix, Julian Schnabel's Casa del Popolo, Center for Performance Research, Governors Island, Gowanus Art + Production, HERE Arts Center, La MaMa, Moynihan Station, SPRING/BREAK Art Show, The Flea, The Tank, and (un)Scene Art Show, to name a few. Notable international productions have included Anita Villalaz Teatro Nacional (Panama City, Panama), Quartier des Spectacles (Montréal, Canada), Stockholm Kulturhuset (Stockholm, Sweden), Usine C (Montréal, Canada), and Werkstätten und Kulturhaus Im_flieger (Vienna, Austria). Her work has been sponsored by the American Dance Guild and World Dance Alliance.

In 2012, Russo was a grant recipient of the Foundation for Contemporary Arts to present at the 80th Anniversary Season of Jacob's Pillow and selected to represent the United States alongside John Jasperse at the inaugural PRISMA Festival de Danza Contemporánea in Panama. Also in 2012, she was selected as one of five international emerging choreographers for the Springboard Danse Montréal Professional Project, creating two new large-scale site-specific performances during its three-week engagement. In 2013, she was invited to present her multimedia solo work with artist Jin-Wen Yu at the World Dance Alliance Assembly in Canada. In 2015, she was invited as a featured speaker for the Emerging Artist panel at the Dance/NYC Symposium.

She and her work have been featured in *The Creators Project*, as well as in *Cultured Magazine*, *Dance Magazine*, and *The Village Voice*. As an educator, Russo is a faculty member at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts where she teaches dance composition, as well as lectures on dance history and politics. Her work has been commissioned by universities such as Florida State College, Mercyhurst University, Middlebury College, Universidad de las Américas (Puebla, Mexico), and University of Wisconsin-Madison. Russo holds a BFA in Dance and a BA in Anthropology from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and a MFA in Dance from Hollins University/American Dance Festival where she attended on fellowship. Outside of her own creative endeavors, she performs with The Metropolitan Opera.

JENNY TIBBELS PRODUCER

Jenny Tibbels is a live arts producer and theater director dedicated to the development of evocative works that promote intercultural exchange. Producing credits include *On the Faultlines* at Galapagos Art Space, Scott Ramsey's *Dance with the Sun* for the Fresh Fruit Festival at The Wild Project, *South African Play Festival* at Baltimore's Theatre Project, *Turn Your Head* and *Kafka* at Baltimore Playwright's Festival, and the premiere of Ursula Rucker's *My Father's Daughter* at the Annenberg Center, *Plays and Players*, and *Freedom Theatre* in Philadelphia. Associate and assistant producing includes *EXO-Tech* at Pioneer Works, Palestine's *The Freedom Theatre's The Siege* at NYU Skirball, and multiple events at the Segal Theatre Center including the annual *Prelude Festival* and public talks with artists such as Robert Lepage and Romeo Castellucci. Additional production credits include projects with Brooklyn Academy of Music, The Chocolate Factory, Creative Time's *Doomocracy*, SITI Company Lab, The Ride New York, and The Shed.

Tibbels earned her MFA in Theatre at Columbia University and has additional performance training from the American Conservatory Theater, SITI Company, Theatre Without Borders at La MaMa, and the School for International Training in South Africa where she spent a semester abroad studying art and social change post-apartheid. She is a faculty member at St. John's University and a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, League of Professional Theatre Women, APAP's Emerging Leadership Institute, and Creative Capital's Summer Institute where she met and became enamored of Danielle Russo and her work!

JOANNA DEFELICE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Joanna DeFelice mainly works in the medium of industrial art. She has worked with 13 designs, a studio that produces events for clients such as Travel and Leisure and Target, among others. Her *Tire Chair* has been sold at ABC Carpet and Home and used for multiple press events nationwide. Originally a professional dancer, her career in technical direction embraces live performance. She designs and directs dance, theater, and music events for both independent artists and companies throughout New York City. In 2016, Joanna collaborated with DRPP in its production of *Salome, and the anatomy of invisible corners*, designing its set involving 10,000 pounds of soil and custom-made shower installations for an abandoned pool.

JENNY LAI COSTUME DESIGNER

Under the label "NOT," designer Jenny Lai creates custom performance wear for musicians and dancers that push the boundaries of interdisciplinary performance. Her work has been seen around the world including her collaboration with South African photographer Chris Saunders that culminated in exhibitions at the Museum of African Design in Johannesburg and Design Indaba in Capetown in 2014. Recent performance projects include Shen Wei Dance Arts (Brooklyn Academy of Music), DRPP (Governors Island), and producing a Butoh performance at the concept gallery, The Community (Paris, France). Additionally, she has created custom performance wear for violinist Leila Josefowicz and pianist Conor Hanick. In 2016, Lai co-founded Flying Solo, a designer-collective store in SoHo. She is a graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design.

LUKE OHLSON FILMMAKER

Luke Ohlson is a filmmaker and community organizer working in New York City. He creates narrative, documentary, and experimental films using both film and digital platforms. His collaboration with Danielle Russo in the making of *Salome, and the anatomy of invisible corners* (2016) was featured in *The Creators Project*. His background in cinema studies and activism at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts continues to influence the content, social relevance, and cooperative process of his work. His services have been commissioned by local venues and organizations such as Governors Island, Hollaback!, Joe's Pub, Knockdown Center, National Sawdust, Neighbors Allied for Good Growth, New York Asian Women's Center, Riders Alliance, SPRING/BREAK Art Show, Summer Streets NYC, The People's Supper, Transportation Alternatives, and Woodhaven BRT; and local artists such as Alexandra Albrecht, Craig Martinson, DRPP, Def.GRLS, GP Stripes, Ikechukwu Ufomadu, Neon Caviar, PEP!, Sigrid Lauren/FlucT, Spiegelworld, and The Dance Cartel, to name a few.

MARC WITMER MAKEUP DESIGNER

Marc Witmer studied fashion and photography at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where received numerous awards in design. He has since worked for designers Betsey Johnson, Nicole Miller, Calvin Klein, and Carolina Herrera, to name a few. His professional services range to include wardrobe and makeup design for both fashion and performance.

THE NEW NORMAL

HOW DANCEMAKERS RESPONDED TO THE FIRST YEAR OF THE TRUMP PRESIDENCY

Nicole Loeffler-Gladstone – January 19, 2018

From coast to coast, choreographers have spent the first year of Donald Trump's presidency responding to the impact of his election and what it means for them as artists. New York City's Dante Brown used rubber Trump masks in his work *Package* (revamped), which examines the monstrosities of power. A video titled "Dancers vs. Trump Quotes" went viral last summer, showing dancers taking Trump's "locker-room" talk to task. Alexis Convento, lead curator of the New York City-based *Current Sessions*, dedicated a whole program to the concept of resistance, while educator and interdisciplinary artist Jill Sigman has initiated a workshop called "Body Politic, Somatic Selves," as a space for movement research around questions of support, activism and solidarity. In San Francisco, choreographer Margaret Jenkins facilitated a panel of artists about the role of activism within their work.

Dance has long been a haven for transgressive bodies, ideas and aesthetics. So, it's no surprise that many artists feel the Trump administration's platform stands in direct opposition to their values. "The election was absolutely horrifying for me," says Spectrum Dance Theater artistic director Donald Byrd. "Trump annihilated my beliefs about basic human characteristics, like kindness." Filmmaker and choreographer Celia Rowson-Hall adds, "I'd thought our moral arc was bending toward good. I feel distraught that the country I call mine is dominated by values rooted in fear and racism and hatred."

Some of the administration's proposals, like eliminating the National Endowment for the Arts, have yet to be realized, but that doesn't make them any less frightening. Nor does it blunt the impact of those that have been implemented—and which directly affect dancers—like rolling back protections for trans people, changing the tax code in a way that will likely reduce charitable giving and complicating access to health care. In response, dancemakers are reconsidering how their work and their process can better reflect the state of today's politics.

Counter-Narrative and Solidarity

For some, dance is a way to give a voice to those who may otherwise go unheard. During a 2016 road trip, Minneapolis-based choreographer April Sellers began to consider how politicians use campaigning to collect and disperse versions of what it means to be an American.

"They're potential creators of our history and future," she says. So, for her project *Gay Patriot*, Sellers felt that it was imperative for her dancers to speak for themselves onstage as a way to take control of their own stories. She adds that in the wake of the election, she and several of her dancers have disconnected from their biological families because of political tension. The experience has raised questions about who the work is for. "Do we only perform in theaters where people love us, or do we dance at family reunions?" she asks.



Danielle Russo working with Kayla Farrish for *SENTINEL*
Photograph by Nir Arieli

To avoid preaching to the choir, choreographer Danielle Russo is taking her work *SENTINEL*, which responds to surveillance and social profiling, to public sites across the five boroughs of New York City. Russo is interested in seeing what happens as unsuspecting passersby encounter the dancers. She hopes the heightened visibility of a public performance on a city street in daylight—a space that seems safe, but can be dangerous for marginalized people—will help her emphasize what she calls "the lived experiences of a targeted body."

Education and Community

Artists like San Francisco choreographer Keith Hennessy, who are deeply rooted as educators as well as creators, are developing specific teaching devices in response to the election. "Right now, the escalation toward the right has forced us to rethink the role of dance class, performance and how we're using choreography," he says. How might the patience and willingness to experiment and fail, so necessary in dance improvisation, function in politics or social justice organizing? The workshop Hennessy teaches most frequently is called "Social Dancing (aka Negotiations)". "I have a few exercises that reduce all touch to either pushing or pulling," he says. "The dancers create precarious and interdependent structures that become metaphors of community economics, power, failure, hierarchy and collaboration."

Though Dante Brown has long made work with social justice commentary, the aftermath of the election inspired him to create the kind of community he wanted to see, a space where people could come together in a commitment to movement and activism. "The election made me care less about myself as an artist and more about platforms and programs for others," he says. For example, he organized a successful workshop series to raise money and awareness for Black Lives Matter.

The power to make change, according to New York dancer and choreographer Okwui Okpokwasili, is in the persistence. "The folks I know have been working to accommodate artistic practices that are generous, collaborative and non-authoritarian—a direct rebuke to the patriarchal violence, toxic masculinity and winner-take-all ethos that defines the Trumpian way," she says. But, she adds, these practices have stretched for decades, and have long challenged the worldview that made Trump's election possible in the first place. Committing to those values takes real work, especially in a world that, as Bill T. Jones points out, is experiencing a crisis of truth. He is astounded by the Trump administration's opportunistic relationship with facts, and worries that cynicism will replace skepticism. "Now, everything is suspect," he says, "and this is frustrating to artists who believe in ambiguity."

Reverberations Within the Audience

Fans of Spectrum Dance Theater know to expect what Byrd calls "social/civic engagement" from the company, and he has long choreographed straight from the most difficult headlines. However, even in the firmly progressive city of Seattle, Byrd finds that his audience isn't always receptive to political content. "You want someone there to receive your work," he says. "I'm grappling with that fear and whether it will push me away from work that I feel is important." Lately, Byrd has considered how the audience might become active, rather than passive, spectators, and how the work itself can instigate political engagement. "I wonder, though," he says, "if that desire might drive my audience away from participation because they feel alienated."

BalletX choreographer Matthew Neenan recently created *Let mortal tongues awake*, a contemporary ballet that uses images of silencing, control and bureaucratic power to hint at our political climate. It was a thematic departure for him, and Philadelphia audience members had strong reactions—not all of them positive. "People found it shocking, but I told them I wouldn't apologize," he says. "Some people only want to see dance as beautiful and elite, and I truly believe you need to entertain your audience. Right now, though, we have no choice but to make work that responds to what's going on." Love your audience, he suggests, but also challenge them.

Rowlson-Hall, whose first commission after the election was a short film investigating paranoia, isolation and nuclear fallout, sees dance as a way to unlock empathy in others. "I can't convince a white supremacist to change their views," she says. "But maybe they can see a performance or a film that will affect their heart. It's a little less locked than the mind."