

Walker Art Center presents

Choreographers' Evening

Curated by Chris Schlichting

Saturday, November 26, 7 and 9:30pm

McGuire Theater



Support for Choreographers' Evening is provided by The McKnight Foundation.

The Walker Art Center's Dance Season is sponsored by

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CHOREOGRAPHERS' EVENING 2011: Curated by Chris Schlichting

The One Obstruction

Samantha Johns and George McConnell

Meaning that, and some mo shit

Deja Stowers

Kyrie from the Missa de Beate Virgine

Patrick Scully

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES

SuperGroup

The Race

Jenny Pennaz

KATΣ AN ΘΥΤΣ

Basileus Ms. Kenna-Camara Cottman

Long Vanishing Spirals or something of that nature

Jessica Briggs

Picnic

Jaime Carrera

Cantare Pensieri Profundi en Italiano

Mad King Thomas

Yaw

Megan Mayer

Topics in Post-Colonial Collaboration: Visa/Mastercard... CORRECTION: Topics in Post-Colonial Collaboration: Sculptor/Drama

HIJACK

Debbie, Secretary

Debbie, Secretary



FROM THE CURATOR

Welcome to the Walker Art Center's 39th annual Choreographers' Evening! I get giddy about this tradition. It is such an honor and a privilege to be with you tonight, to share with you some dances that were inspiring and interesting and surprising to me.

If you have attended this event in the past I'm sure you hear a variation on this every year, but I'll say it again because it still impresses me: I watched over 60 pieces this summer. I visited studios, a church, I watched videos and sat through hours of auditions in this very theater. I thought it would get tedious and tiring, but it was a gift, energizing and illuminating. Tonight's program includes artists and voices from this community who are taking chances and writing new rules about making dance. I feel lucky to be a witness. I hope you enjoy.

To contribute to a constructive dialogue, I encourage you to visit the Walker Blog.

—Chris Schlichting

Chris Schlichting is a Minnesota-based choreographer and performer. His work has been presented by venues throughout Minnesota, including the Walker Art Center, the Southern Theater, and the Bryant Lake Bowl. Schlichting's work, *Public hair*, premiered in New York City this past February at Danspace Project as part of the Body Madness platform, curated by Judy Hussie-Taylor, and his work *Trimming Hairy Pockets* was part of Food for Thought curated by Tere O'Connor in 2009. His work has been presented at Velocity Center for Dance in Seattle; at ODC in San Francisco; and he has been a regular contributor to CATCH! performance series in Brooklyn, New York and at Fusebox Festival in Austin, Texas. He has enjoyed collaborations with many local artists, including, Hijack, Justin Jones, and Morgan Thorson, to name a few. By day he advises Architecture and Landscape Design Planning undergraduates at the U of MN.

GO ONLINE and LEARN MORE!

BLOGS

The Walker Art Center's website features ongoing performance writings and reviews by local artists, critical thinkers, and writers. Read and respond at blogs.walkerart.org.

WALKER CHANNEL

Watch and listen to Walker programs, such as the Talking Dance podcasts with Chris Schlichting and Patrick Scully hosted by Justin Jones. The Walker channel includes more podcasts, talks by contemporary artists from a variety of disciplines, panel discussions, and musical and literary performances by some of today's leading voices. Visit channel.walkerart.org.

CONVERSATIONS

After the show join a conversation about the performance online, where you'll also find articles and reviews about each event. Visit the Walker on Facebook.

FREE FOR YOU, EASY TOO.

Perhaps you'd dig the inside scoop? Ticket deals, advance notice on special artist events, or even a free ticket here and there? Oh yes, all this and more when you join our Performing Arts email list serve. Sign up online at: <http://calendar.walkerart.org/email.wac> to find yourself in the loop, wallet fatter.

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

Visit walkerart.org to learn more about upcoming events, performances, and workshops, purchase tickets, and learn more about performing arts at the Walker.

The One Obstruction

Choreography: Samantha Johns and George McConnell

Music: Henning Christiansen

Dancer: Billy Mullaney

Samantha Johns and **George McConnell** have been collaborating artistically for over three years. Johns holds her BA in Theatre from the University of Minnesota, where McConnell is finishing up his PhD in Theatre Historiography. Between them they have directed over thirty productions. Together they have produced/directed/choreographed their own independent full-length performance projects *The Thing* (2010) and *even if we never look forward* (2011). They met Billy Mullaney through the University of Minnesota. Mullaney worked as a creative collaborator/performer on *The Thing* and *even if we never look forward*. This piece, *The One Obstruction*, was collaboratively made by the three of them at the request of Mullaney who wanted Johns and McConnell to construct a solo movement portrait specific to him. They made one with him instead... No one is perfect.

Meaning that, and some mo shit

Choreography: Deja Stowers

Music: Lauryn Hill, Musiq Soulchild, Erykah Badu, mix by DJ DRUMMABOI

Dancers: Deja Stowers, Kenna Cottman, Patricia Dawa, Jasmine Harris, and Ashley Akpaka

This group is a mix of sistas in the dance community who came together to be involved in the process and making sure our process is represented on the Walker stage.

Kyrie from the Missa de Beate Virgine

Choreography: Patrick Scully

Music: Palestrina

Dancers: Kevin Kortan, Justin Leaf, and Robert Skafte

Kevin Kortan, a native Minnesotan, has danced in Zenon, Concert Dance Co. of Boston, and numerous New York companies. In Boston he performed in works by Mark Morris, Wendy Perron, Mark Dendy, Mark Taylor, Laura Dean, Merce Cunningham, Kei Takei, David Gordon, Charlie Moulton, and others. In New York, he performed in the companies of Mark Taylor, Mark Dendy, Wendy Perron, Nina Wiener, and Victoria Marks. In 1990 he joined the Trisha Brown Dance Company and was a member into 1996. He has collaborated with Jaime Ortega, Patrick Scully, and has shown his own work in the U.S. and France. Kortan has taught dance and yoga around the world. He is a Yoga Therapist & Teacher, Integrative Somatic Movement Therapist & Educator, Feldenkrais® Practitioner, Yoga Teacher Trainer, as well as the founder and creator of Evolutionary Yoga™, Evolutionary Touch™, and Bodystorming™. His website is www.evolutionaryyoga.com.

Justin Leaf is a performance artist, choreographer, dance teacher, and yoga teacher based in Minneapolis. He received his BFA in Dance Performance from the Juilliard School in 2001 and has been a company member of James Sewell Ballet (2002 – 2008) and Minnesota Dance Theatre (2008 – present). In 2009, Leaf founded Junkyard Theater to produce his own work, bringing a blend of dance, music, and theater to the cabaret stage. Justin received a 2009 McKnight Fellowship for Dancers. He teaches beginning ballet for adults and hatha yoga for everyone at the Fixx Workout Studio. www.justinleaf.com

Patrick Scully is the founder of Patrick's Cabaret, a Minneapolis performance space. Openly gay and HIV+, Scully has been an outspoken cultural activist for over three decades. His work as a performance artist and choreographer has taken him around the world. His most recent projects were choreographing a ballet for over 40 boats on the Havel River in Potsdam, Germany and creating and performing *Thrive!* a one man

show marking 25 years of living with HIV. In the decade before the start of Patrick's Cabaret, Scully was a member and co-founder of Contactworks Dance Collective. There he first choreographed tonight's *Kyrie*, as a part of *Mass*, with music by Palestrina. It was his first choreographed work. He left Contactworks in 1980 to pursue an independent performing path. Contact improvisation, Ruth Zaporah and Remy Charlip have been major influences in his artistic life. His professional papers and other materials have been donated to the Tretter Collection, a glbt section of the special collections of the University of Minnesota library. He first performed at Walker Art Center in June of 1972. He received his BA with a double major in German and biology in 1976, and his MA in teaching English as a second language in 2011, both from the U of MN. His website is www.patrickscully.org. Scully would be happily married to Kevin Kortan if Minnesota and US law were that progressive.

Robert Skafte is a long time company member with Ballet of the Dolls and has also worked with Kansas City and Los Angeles Ballet. Locally he has worked or collaborated with several choreographers as well as Children's Theater and Zorongo Flamenco. As a gardener and urban food grower he created a small farmer's market now in it's fourth year in the Steven's Square neighborhood.

PLEASE TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONES

Choreography: SuperGroup
Dancers: Jeffrey Wells, Sam Johnson, and Erin Search-Wells

We bout to cross this stage. —*SuperGroup*



The Race

Choreography: Jenny Pennaz
Music: Kenji Bunch
Dancers: Jenny Pennaz
Musicians: Greg Nelson (cello),
Kale Baglyos Reed (violin), Jeff Bina (piano)

Kenji Bunch's *Night Flight from Swing Shift* speaks to me in the most profound ways. I titled the dance *The Race* because I often come to this music at times when I feel my life in a perpetual race. It speaks to the struggle and perseverance of the human spirit. When I dance it is a pure outpouring of emotion and an unwavering determination to charge forward. —*Jenny Pennaz*

Jenny Pennaz, a Minnesota native, studied at the U of MN, receiving Bachelor degrees in dance and biology. She went on to study at the Federal University of Bahia in Brazil where she received a post-baccalaureate certificate in Contemporary Studies in Dance. Her choreographic work has been presented for Works-in-Progress at the Red Eye Theater, Minnesota Dance Film Project at the Southern Theater, No One Knows at the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia, and the Paniel Performatico at the Federal University of Bahia. Pennaz currently dances for Contempo Physical Dance, directed by Marciano Silva dos Santos, and the Threads Dance Project, led by Karen Charles. Pennaz is also a licensed K-12 dance teacher and has been teaching 4th-8th graders at the FAIR School in Crystal since 2007.

A native of Portland, Oregon, **Kenji Bunch** studied at the Juilliard School, receiving his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in viola with Toby Appel, and in composition with Robert Beaser. Hailed by the *New York Times* as "A Composer To Watch" and cited by Alex Ross in his seminal book *The Rest Is Noise*, Bunch's unique blend of wit, exuberance, lyricism, unpredictable stylistic infusions, and exquisite craftsmanship has brought acclaim from audiences, performers, and critics alike. His symphonic music has been performed by over forty orchestras, and his genre-defying

chamber works have been performed in premiere venues on six continents. His music is regularly broadcast on national radio, including NPR, BBC, and NHK, and has been recorded on labels including Sony/BMG, EMI Classics, Koch, Kleos Classics, RCA, Naxos, Pony Canyon, GENUIN, Capstone, MSR Classics, Innova, ARS, and Crystal.

KATΣ AN ΘYΤΣ

Choreography: Basileus Ms. Kenna-Camara Cottman

Music: Mix by LumbaGack aka Schutini G

Dancers: Nutbush E-Lane, Boogie B, Mouafasa, Kap.Fumvuti, Mighty Wealthy, and The Finisher

Production Assistant: NoMiLu aka Nayomie

Do you know the “Divine Nine?” Nine Black Greek organizations that boast members like Martin Luther King, Jr, Star Jones, Montell Jordan, and Roberta Flack. Starting in 1906 with Alpha Phi Alpha at Cornell University, African American Fraternities and Sororities are an essential part of the Black American experience. Brother/Sisterhood, support, and networking are all words used to describe the reality of being in a Frat or Sorority. These organizations are now found across college campuses all over the US and the world, and boast legacies of African American greatness.

While Kap.Fumvuti blazed her way out of bondage, creating a legacy of socialist networks challenging oligarchy, Nutbush E-Lane was blowing up the Crew Rastilla on Iglehart. Say VoC! RIP DJ Nex. The War Machine is battling tonight, while Optimistic retreats to fight another day. Goat moans to Schutini G! In 1973, the Universal Zulu Nation formed out east, 20 years later the Looney Tunes blazed the Midwest. Now we all come together to form Kαθ, which should be a lifelong association. Well, starting from now...
—Kenna-Camara Cottman

Long Vanishing Spirals or something of that nature

Choreography: Jessica Briggs

Music: Caput & Snorri Sigfus Birgisson, John Cage, and Philip Glass

Dancers: Stephanie Shirek, Dustin Maxwell, Renee Copeland, and Lindsay Bullock

Jessica Briggs received her B.F.A. in Dance from the U of MN in 2008. She has presented her work, both choreography and dance theory, at Patrick’s Cabaret, the Lowry Lab Theater, 2008 CORD Conference at Hollins University, 9x22 Dance Lab, 2009 UCLA Dance Under Construction Conference, 2009 Zenon Scholarship Program, 2010 Foot in the Door 4, Red Eye Theater in 2010, and Bryant Lake Bowl Theater in 2011.

This is **Stephanie Shirek’s** fifth performance with choreographer, Jessica Briggs. Her hometown is Junction City, WI. She received a Bachelor’s in Dance from the U of MN. She currently works at Hopkins Health & Wellness as a physical therapist’s aide doing mostly massage therapy. She would like to thank Jess and Co., Mum, Pops and Bro-yos, Pete and Lilly, and Em.

Dustin Maxwell is a movement artist and visual artist. In addition to creating his own performance work, he works with Aniccha Arts and has had the honor of working with artists such as Catherine Wright, Jessica Briggs, and Time Track Productions. He studies Subbody Butoh with Kats D Fukasawa and spends much of his time studying and teaching yoga.

Renée Copeland writes songs, poems and short stories, paints, plays music and choreographs, and performs around Minneapolis. She dances with Ananya Dance Theatre, Arturo Miles, and other talented friends.

A Milwaukee Native, **Lindsay Michelle Bullock** discovered the art of dance making at the crisp age of 14, and has been generating movement ever since. Currently, she enjoys

co-directing and choreographing for Rainy Day Cabaret in partnership with Joanie Mix. She's got a beautiful husband and a cat the size of a Buick which keep her endlessly inspired and entertained.

Picnic

Choreography: Jaime Carrera

Music: John Linnell and John Flansburgh

Dancers: Jaime Carrera and Kimberly Lesik

I've often described Picnic as "my tiny heteronormative dance piece with vulgar gestures." —*Jaime Carrera*

Jaime Carrera is a self-taught, independent, multi-disciplinary artist from Ciudad Juárez, México. He currently lives & works in Minneapolis. His work has been exhibited, performed and screened at various spaces, both nationally and internationally. Carrera self-funds his work through back-breaking labor and has garnered a loving and devoted following due to his unpretentious and accessible approach to modern art. This is his fourth appearance in Choreographers' Evening. View more of his work at www.vimeo.com/jaimecarrera.

Since receiving her B.F.A. in dance from Milwaukee, **Kimberly Lesik** has been part of the Minneapolis performing arts community for the past 3 years. She has had the pleasure of doing several dances for film projects with Jaime Carrera, Tyler Jensen, and Vanessa Voskuil. In addition to the 2010 Fringe Festival, Lesik has performed with Body Cartography (NYC & Mpls) and Taja Will's *Sabotage & Awaken Absurdity*. Most recently she made her choreographic debut in collaboration with spoken word artist, Khary Jackson. She is excited to make future work. You can follow her process at gingersnapdance.tumblr.com

Cantare Pensieri Profundi en Italiano

Choreography: Mad King Thomas

Dancers: Ashley Akpaka, Heather Arntson, Emma Barber, Jessica Briggs, Charles Campbell, Nick LeMere, Renee Lepreau, Tom Lloyd, Megan Mayer, Crystal Meisinger, Susan Scalf, Liz Schoenborn, and Stephanie Stoumbelis.

Mad King Thomas is the choreographic collaboration of Tara King, Theresa Madaus and Monica Thomas. Since 2004, the Minneapolis-based trio has made dances that people often don't think of as dance. Known for their irreverent sense of humor, they are invested in live performance as cultural vivisection and as a revolutionary tool to subvert the status-quo. Mad King Thomas is the recipient of a 2008 SAGE Award for Outstanding Performance for *Premium White Morsels*. Their show *Love Me, Love My Questionable Art* was named the 2009 City Pages' Best Dance Show, and they were included on the 2010 Metro 100 List. Their past work has been supported by Naked Stages (2007), Red Eye Works-in-Progress (2008), Red Eye Isolated Acts (2009), the Walker Choreographers' Evening (2007, 2009), the Southern's New Breed (2010), the Blacklock Artist Fellowship (2010) and Momentum: New Dance Works, a Walker/Southern co-commission (2011). They can be found on the web at www.madkingthomas.com.

Ashley Akpaka lives in north-side Minneapolis and attends the U of MN. She is in her sophomore year as a dance major. She is also a member of the U of MN Marching Band. Akpaka performs locally around the Twin Cities with Kenna Cottman and VOC (Voice of Culture Drum & Dance). She enjoys meeting new people, laughing and being on stage.

Heather Arntson's dance education is a mix of studio and competition dance with a dash of competitive cheerleading. She has a B.A. and M.A. in strategic communication from the U of MN. When not dancing on stage, she is dancing and cart-wheeling around her office.

Emma Barber began dancing among the cows of rural Minnesota and is really thrilled to now dance in her underwear in Minneapolis, via the fabulous Mad King Thomas. She is currently studying dance at the U of MN.

Jessica Briggs (see Jessica Briggs)

Charles Campbell is an interdisciplinary artist and co-founder of Skewed Visions. He has created multiple original performance pieces with Skewed Visions since 1997 including a collaborative piece under development with Iguan Dance Theater of St Petersburg, Russia. His latest work, *Black Water*, will debut spring 2012.

Tom Lloyd is an actor, dancer, performer, director, theatre maker, educator, and Minneapolis native. He graduated with a B.A. in Theatre Arts from the U of MN (2009) and has since been involved in numerous performance adventures with Bedlam Theatre and its associated artists, most notably Sam Johns and George McConnell.

Nick LeMere graduated from the U of MN with a B.A. in Dance in 2007. He has worked with Karen Sherman, Morgan Thorson, BodyCartography Project, Paula Mann, MKT and others. LeMere has produced his own work at 9x22 Dance Lab and The Works Writers Salon. He is a co-producer of Stone Arch Bridge Improv, a promoter of SweatShop performance based parties, a stylist for Voltage Fashion, and a server extraordinaire.

Renee Lepreau is thrilled to have recently begun a homebirth midwifery apprenticeship. She will dance if you let her.

Megan Mayer (see Megan Mayer)

C. L. Meisinger is the stunt double for Alilia Z, who irregularly stars on the interweb. She also works as a performance artist and choreographer for The Default Project and The Lungless Ladies. Meisinger treasures her role in Mad King Thomas' latest choreographic sensation.

Susan Scalf is delighted to be right here, right now.

Liz Schoenborn is a 2010 graduate of Hamline University and life-long dancer. She recently produced a show for the 2011 Minnesota Fringe Festival, titled *A Good-Natured Gut*. When not in rehearsals, Schoenborn can be found geeking out over graphic novels and eating unappetizing amounts of cheese.

Stephanie Stoumbelis couldn't hack it as a four-year-old ballerina but returned after a 17-year hiatus to perform at Macalester College. She currently studies at the Zenon Dance School and disgraces the stage with the rapsallions of Dykes Do Drag whenever she is not watching reality TV or playing with puppies.

Yaw

Choreography: Megan Mayer

Music: Gary Wright, Anita O'Day, and Carlos Di Sarli

Dancers: Charles Campbell, Angharad Davies, and Elliott Durko Lynch

Yaw is one of the building blocks for *Soft Fences*, a new work which will be researched as an artist-in-residence at MANCC in February 2012, with this trio as well as artists Greg Waletski and Kevin Obsatz. Yaw investigates themes of orbit, space travel, displacement and obsolete equipment. At this point in time where job security for both artists and astronauts is in question, constant reassessment and adaptation is required. Thanks to Charles, Angharad and Elliott for lending their crisp flavors and colorful imaginations to this work, and to Chris for his curation and support. —Megan Mayer

Charles Campbell (see Mad King Thomas)

Angharad Davies has performed with Drastic Action (NYC), Gibney Dance (NYC), Hanna Hegenscheidt (Berlin), Mariano Pensotti (Buenos Aires/Berlin) and Chris Yon (MPLS), among several other companies. Her

choreography has been presented throughout the U.S. and Germany, and she is currently on faculty at SPCPA and teaches at the U of MN.

Elliott Durko Lynch is an independent performance maker, a theater technician at the Bryant Lake Bowl Theater, and a Sage Award for Dance nominated performer, producer, and sound and media artist. He has collaborated or worked in various capacities with Charles Campbell, Kevin Obsatz, Morgan Thorson, Justin Jones, Skewed Visions, Interact Theater, Chris Schlichting, Laurie Van Wieren, and just recently sound scored Savage Umbrella's *The Ravagers*. Contact elliottdurkolynch@gmail.com.

Megan Mayer is a choreographer, performing artist and photographer based in Minneapolis. She is a recipient of a 2010 McKnight Artist Fellowship for Choreographers and a 2010 Travel/Study Grant from The Jerome Foundation. She looks forward to a choreographic residency at the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography (MANCC) in Tallahassee, Florida in February 2012. Her current obsession is anything related to the story and film 2001: A Space Odyssey. <http://vimeo.com/user4257386>

Topics in Post-Colonial Collaboration: Visa/Mastercard... CORRECTION: Topics in Post-Colonial Collaboration: Sculptor/Drama

Choreography: HIJACK

Music: Kristin Van Loon, sources: John, Taupin, and Barber

Dancers: Kristin Van Loon, Arwen Wilder

In 1990, Van Loon and Wilder met in a Dance Composition class at Colorado College. Upon graduation in 1993 they moved to Minneapolis and began co-creating dances under the name HIJACK. Their first gig in Minneapolis was at the Minnesota Dance Alliance/Walker Art Center Choreographers' Evening that year. In 2005, their duet *Fetish* helped inaugurate this theater.

Debbie, Secretary

Choreography: Debbie, Secretary

Music: Hall & Oates, Barry Manilow

Dancers: Debbie, Secretary

Debbie, Secretary is work, art, and love. Debbie gets your job done her way. You think you are in control but she is in control. She likes her job. You don't know anything about her personal life but she makes yours happen. Is she serious? Is she spontaneous? Does she like being in her band when they play South by Southwest® and obscure clubs in Berlin? You don't know anything about obscure clubs in Berlin. She is not an activist. She is temporary. She doesn't care for the long haul but will exalt you in the short-term. She will make you look good.



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