

BESSIE LAB 2014 with JOHN JASPERSE

Details about this year's Bessie Lab from John Jasperse:

There are as many ways to make dances as there are dances to be made. Different pathways and processes lead to different results; the methods that we employ in making leave indelible traces on the aesthetics of the works that emerge from these methods. Acknowledging that as a group we will exemplify a spectrum of aesthetics and practices in our work, we will start from the notion that our commitment to making art that we intend to share with others binds us together. We therefore have something to gain from coming together and looking at how we individually approach this broad common goal, whatever the media or aesthetics that we engage in.

This workshop will endeavor to further explore our individual processes of making work by stepping back to examine fundamental components of form and how they function within our individual work. We will do this through a daily practice of making things and talking about them. While honoring the sometimes ambiguous and often ineffable nature of art in general and dance in particular, critical analysis of our work is paramount in allowing us to deepen our practice as art makers. Unquestioned accumulated knowledge, both personal and historical, transforms into sclerotic habits that can undermine our work as we repeat methods and tools that may no longer be useful or applicable to our evolving desires and goals. Critical analysis is key to ascertaining when a choreographic process is useful and when it has become a habit that impedes our growth as an artist. Since we are artist practitioners rather than theorists, we will privilege doing over speaking about doing, but we will engage in both in an effort to open up further space for possibility in our practices.

Our actions as cultural producers are defined, in part, by our intentions for our role within the social context(s) in which our work exists. What do we care about, and why do those concerns compel us to address them through the making of art? Where do we as individual artists start, and as makers how do we intend our work to function in the context of its interaction with a public? Are we able and/or interested to be fully cognizant of how our own work functions in its social context? These and other questions will be posed in an effort to better understand both how we can deepen what we do and what we want to accomplish in doing it.

Who is John Jasperse?

John Jasperse is a dance artist living and working in New York City since graduating from Sarah Lawrence College in 1985. Jasperse's work has been presented by festivals and presenting organizations in the U.S. including The American Dance Festival, Durham, NC; Diverseworks, Houston, TX; The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts, Burlington, VT; Museum of Contemporary Arts, Chicago, IL; On the Boards, Seattle, WA; Philadelphia Live Arts, PA; Summer Stages, Concord, MA; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH; Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA; and internationally in Brazil, Chile, Israel, Japan, and throughout Europe including La Biennale di Venezia; Cannes International Dance Festival; Dance Umbrella, London; EuroKaz, Zagreb; Kampnagel, Hamburg; Montpellier Danse, Tanz im August, Berlin; TanzQuartier Wein, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Frankfurt; and the VEO Festival, Valencia. In New York, the Company has been presented at numerous venues including The Brooklyn Academy of Music's Harvey Theater, Dance Theater Workshop, Danspace Project, The Joyce Theater, The Kitchen, and Performance Space 122.

Jasperse has created several shorter works, and fifteen evening-length works including, most recently, *Fort Blossom revisited (2000/2012)* and *Canyon (2011)*. Jasperse has created commissioned works for other companies including Baryshnikov Dance Foundation's White Oak's Dance Project, Batsheva Dance Company in Tel Aviv, Israel, and Lyon Opéra Ballet, France among others.

Jasperse's work has received several prestigious awards both in the United States and abroad, including a New York Dance and Performance ("Bessie") Award in 2001 in recognition of his body of choreographic work.

Jasperse was a 2011 US Artists Brooks Hopkins Fellow and has received fellowships from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts (2003), the Tides Foundation's Lambert Fellowship in the Arts (2004-2007), John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation (1998), the National Endowment for the Arts (1992, 1994, 1995-96) and the New York Foundation for the Arts (1988, 1994, 2000 and 2010).

Jasperse is a co-founder of CPR - Center for Performance Research, Inc., located in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.

For more information and to register, visit:

<http://www.newyorklivearts.org/programs/engage/workshops.php>