

CounterPointe 2013:

a new performance series presented in collaboration with The Broadway Theatre and Norte Maar

curated by Julia K. Gleich

The Broadway Theatre, Barking, London

Tues, June 18 at 8pm

Weds, June 19 at 8pm

Featuring choreography by:

Briar Adams / Hack Ballet

Sophie Adams & Aisling Cook / Ballet Ensemble London

Carys Applebee

Deborah Kate Norris

Jennifer Jackson

Julia K. Gleich



Post-Performance talk with Susie Crow moderating the discussion on Tues 18 June.

Do I think women choreograph better than men? No. Do I think they choreograph worse? No. I wonder what our success rate would be if we saw two world premieres, one by a man and one by a woman, and then tried to decide who did what based on gender. But why there aren't more women creating. In 19 years of dancing professionally, I only danced in one ballet on a main stage by a woman, Lisa de Ribere's The Mighty Casey. That statistic is hard to accept. There are certainly many immensely talented female artists dancing, why are they not creating? Programs like this one help to galvanize that conversation, and for that I am thankful.-Amy Seiwert, choreographer, Imagery

I think what you are doing is fantastic for the continuation of the exploration of choreography on pointe.

-Susan Jaffe, former Principal Dancer, American Ballet Theatre
Dean, School of Dance, University of North Carolina School of the Arts

CounterPointe is dedicated to presenting new choreography in ballet by women dance makers working with the pointe shoe. This is the first season of *CounterPointe* presented in London. Investigating new and old territory the series highlights new work, opening up discussion, and creating a forum for women, young or old, emerging or established, to take risks. *CounterPointe* was created in Brooklyn in 2012, conceived, organised and curated by Julia K. Gleich, the programme was produced in collaboration with Norte Maar and Brooklyn Ballet.

Programme:

'Discotheque'

Choreography: Sophie Adams and Aisling Cook/Ballet Ensemble London

Music: D.A.N.C.E.(remix) by Justice

Dancers: Aisling Cook, Sophie Adams, Jed Perez

Discotheque is a piece of work in which the central theme is inspired by the title of the music - D.A.N.C.E. by Justice. We decided to use the literal meaning of the music and explore this idea further, specifically dancing socially and the effect these surroundings have on an individual's mood and movements. We want to focus on the unique experience of going out at night and dancing for hours and hours; the relationship people have with themselves and also with other people. The usual social etiquette is forgotten, and people are turned into a more honest version of themselves, without feeling restrained or self-conscious. There is also a sense of time being forgotten, as the music's rhythm is ever constant and this current of energy throbs throughout the piece.

Encounter

Choreography: Carys Applebee

Music: 'All your dreams' by Minimalistic Instrumental Music Academy

Dancers: Laura Boulter and Nina Mettraux

To The Edge

Choreography: Briar Adams/Hack Ballet

Music: Massive Attack - P is for Piano; Jonny Greenwood, Thom Yorke & Nazareth Orchestra - Arpeggi / Weird Fishes

Costume Design: Briar Adams

Dancers: Briar Adams, Shardae-Rose Angel, Cherese Binedell, Akiyo Ishihashi, Thomas McCann, Kindall Payne, Arianna Pisano (Wednesday only), Joshua Royal, Natasha Usmar

"I'd be crazy not to follow
Follow where you lead
I'd follow to the edge of the earth
And fall off..."

A lyrical and touching contemporary ballet, *To The Edge* observes its ensemble cast push and pull within the safety of supportive connections, longing to spread their wings.

Thanks to: Sue Goodman, Miranda Peake, Cathy Plummer, Zara Rush, Step Into Dance, the Royal Academy of Dance, the Jack Petchey Foundation, Louise Dryden, Bacons College, Anne-Marie Smalldon, Florencia Iocca, Alice Gaspari, Elizabeth Peck, Enrico Poli, Maik Kleinschmidt and Gerrard Martin

-Pause-

Retrieving the Sylph

Choreography: Jennifer Jackson

Music: Urmak Sisask-7 Musical Moments on the Pleiades from 'Northern Sky' cycle (1980-1987) for piano

Dancer: Zoe Arshamian

This solo reaches back to an historical moment in ballet – women rising on to pointe to evoke the world of the 'other', the imagination, the Sylph. It re-invents material first performed in Gotland, Sweden in 2005. The choreographic research explored geographical and historical co-ordinates: being under a northern sky, Swedish-born ballerina Marie Taglioni, the first 'Sylphide'; Sisask's music which might also reference the 'constellation' of seven C19 ballerinas known as the Pleiades.

With thanks to Roger Tully and Suzie Holland.

Marian's Lament

Choreography: Deborah Kate Norris

Music: Jonathan Clarke

Dancers: Christina Gibbs, Gabrielle Orr and Melissa Higham

Marian's Lament is an excerpt from a new full-length ballet *Project Outlaw* (working title), a new collaboration between choreographer Deborah Norris and composer Jonathan Clarke. From the English folklore legend of Robin Hood as a stimulus Clarke created a score using traditional English folk songs, and haunting melodies. The dominant character from the legend is purposely omitted from the ballet in order to emphasise the importance of the cameo roles and to build a strong sense of community through the corps de ballet. This excerpt is a trio between Marian and the maidens in their struggle against the poverty that was left in the wake of King John's taxes. Marian and her friends lament the loss of their men; their movement is forlorn and heaves against the dissonant strings. There is an integration of folk steps that challenge the pointe work. The emotion of the piece changes throughout and anger builds as the women realise their frustration at the departure of the men.

Speak Easy Secrets* (excerpts): *Nobody's Using It* and *Charleston

Choreography: Julia K. Gleich (curator)

Dancers: Miyako Asano and Michelle Buckley

Music: Marion Harris and Paul Whiteman

Costumes: Jocelyn Köning

These excerpts are part of a full programme presented this weekend at The Broadway, 21-23 June.

Choreographers:

Briar Adams / Hack Ballet is an Australian/British choreographer who received her early ballet training in Melbourne, studying the Cecchetti method with Jan Turner, Rhyl Kennell and Anne Butler before entering the National Theatre Ballet School under Beverly Jane Fry. She graduated in 2003 and worked with Melbourne based choreographers Elissa Meyer Thomas and Resit Kortel, before relocating to the UK in 2005. Briar has performed with Tees Valley Dance (Kristine Sommerlade), DansConnect (Merville Jones) and Ballet Soul (Ben Love). She has worked extensively on collaborative projects with UK choreographers including Catherine Bell, Tanya Sleeman, Katia Lom, Yuyu Rau, Elizabeth Peck and Arlene Phillips. Joining Combination Dance Company (Anne-Marie Smalldon) in 2010, Briar has danced with the company in various productions including the recently commissioned 'Lucia' for Opera Holland Park. Combination was recently commissioned to produce work for Sky3D, and Briar facilitated the Company's collaboration with Wayne MacGregor Random Dance for Big Dance 2012. In addition to her performance work, Briar choreographs for events, galas and music videos (recently including Seasfire & MrFogg). She regularly teaches workshops for Step Into Dance, and directs the MASSK Youth Dance Company. Briar's company, Hack Ballet, was launched in 2012, performing at RichMix, Bermondsey Street Festival, Battersea Park and The Place. The company blends modern ballet technique with other influences including contact improvisation and contemporary dance to create accessible, inspirational performances. In addition to theatrical venues, Hack Ballet performs in unusual spaces including outdoor festivals and clubs (Proud Camden, The Black Heart, New Empowering Church Hackney) taking contemporary ballet to new audiences.

Sophie Adams and Aisling Cook founded **Ballet Ensemble London** in 2010 with a passion for incorporating fashion, art and pop culture into their choreographic performances. Utilising a classical ballet base, they hope to bring the art form to a new audience by creating dance theatre which the audience can enjoy and relate to. Ballet Ensemble London have previously collaborated with artists from different mediums to create original choreographic works through film and live performance; each highly stylised and unique. From starting out by choreographing for music videos, dancing for live music acts at London's top music venues and creating bespoke performances for events all over London and Europe; they are now fusing ideas and experience together to create new and original works. Ballet Ensemble London has created works and performed them at some of the UK's most prestigious venues, including Somerset House, The Foreign Office, The V&A Museum and Kensington Palace. They have also performed at top music venues such as Koko, festivals such as The Secret Garden Party, and many private parties and functions both in the UK and Europe, creating a unique work or adaptation for each event. www.ballet-ensemble-london.com

Carys Applebee is currently in her 3rd year at Central School of Ballet before which she trained at a local dance school in Chichester. Applebee was introduced to choreography during her first year of Central and choreographed her first piece for Design for Dance project in January 2012. Applebee drew inspiration from the project and was especially taken by those works presented by the Rombert School and London Studio Center. She pursued her choreographic interests and entered Design for Dance again last year with the intention to explore the movement and push her dancers, who are classically trained to use their bodies in a different way. Despite using pointe work nearly every day at Central, she has not created a full piece on pointe. She will present her first full piece on pointe for CounterPointe.

Jennifer Jackson is a Senior Lecturer in dance at the University of Surrey and also teaches choreography at the Royal Ballet School. A former dancer and choreographer with the Royal Ballet and Sadlers Wells Royal Ballet, her research into ballet pedagogy and somatics draws on embodied dance and teaching practice as well as on-going study with Roger Tully. She has led workshops and presented papers on creative strategies in ballet in Korea, Japan, Australia, Sweden, UK and USA and regularly collaborates with Susie Crow on writing and Ballet Independents Group (BIG) activities. Her current research into mature dance practice, *Dancing the Invisible* (2012), is funded by the National Lottery through Arts Council England and develops improvisational practice alongside work begun in 2010 with *From Here to Maturity* dance company at the South Bank Centre, London. Other practice as research includes choreography for English National Ballet: *Time Chant* (2011) and *Other Diamonds* (2010); dancing: *No time Ago* (2009) and writing in *Dancing Times* and *Research in Dance Education*.

Deborah Norris completed her vocational training at Elmhurst Ballet School. After gaining a BA Hons and MA in Dance Studies she continued her training at the Jose Limon Dance Institute, New York, studying with Carla Maxwell, Risa Steinberg, and Alan Danielson. Deborah is on the faculty at Edge Hill University, lecturing in Classical Ballet, Limon Technique and Western Theatre Dance and has recently choreographed *Overture*, *Applause*, *Concerto* for 3rd Edge Dance Company. She also teaches at Centre Pointe Vocational College, Manchester teaching contemporary, rhythm tap and choreographing for annual showcases and competition work. Having choreographed work for international competitions and platforms including the International Dance Grand Prix, Barcelona, and the World Ballet Championships in Florida, Deborah's contemporary work has also been performed at the Cunningham Studios, and Peridance, NYC and at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, she has recently finished assisting David Needham on the National Tour of 'The King and I'. Current projects include a new play, *Hearts Core*, which is being commissioned by Community Arts Northwest, and *Project Outlaw*, a new ballet, working in collaboration with composer Jonathon Clarke.

About the Curator:

Julia K. Gleich is a critically acclaimed choreographer, teacher, scholar, and mathematics aficionado interested in recontextualizing ballet: creating new environments for traditional works and illuminating the relationships between the traditional and the contemporary. Her company, **Gleich Dances** has performed throughout the UK and US with seasons at NYC's Joyce SoHo ('01, '03) and Centre for Performance Research ('11, '12) receiving critical notice in The New York Times, Village Voice, The New Criterion and Brooklyn Rail. Ms. Gleich is on faculty at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance (London, UK) and is Head of Choreography at London Studio Centre. www.gleichdances.org

Post-Performance Talk:**Tues, June 18:**

Susie Crow danced for 12 years with the Royal Ballet and Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet companies, becoming a soloist. She has made ballets for Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet, Dance Advance, National Youth Dance and Ballet Companies among others, and has twice been a finalist in the Madrid Choreographic Competition. Now based in Oxford she choreographs and teaches for both students and professionals under the name of Ballet in Small Spaces (BiSS). BiSS projects have included two editions of The Solos Project, works inspired by Dante in Cambridge and Oxford, and a tour of Inside Out and Commedia in 2011; recent work has included cross art improvisation and collaboration with musicians, poets and visual artists as a member of the DEC group, and performance in Jennifer Jackson's Dancing the Invisible project. She has enjoyed doing movement for musical theatre productions and has developed skills in creating dance narratives. She has worked in partnership with Jennifer Jackson on Ballet Independents' Group projects including choreographic courses and experiment, and the BIG Discussion Forum, and holds an MA in Dance Studies and a Cert TLHPE. To find out more, visit: <http://balletinsmallspaces.wordpress.com>

Production Team:

Lighting Design: Fay Patterson
Stage Manager: Genevieve Giron

Special thanks:

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