

AUGUST 7, 2015 / Q GUIDE: ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT / DANCE / LONG ISLAND CITY

Socrates Sculpture Park rolls out the dance floor



Photo courtesy 10HL and Norte Maar

Norte Maar's Dance at Socrates returns to the Long Island City sculpture park for three weeks of performances.

By Tammy Scileppi

Images of lithe dancers leaping or strutting swan-like by the water's edge – juxtaposed against a blue painted sky, with views of the Manhattan skyline in the distance – may appear better suited for a picture frame, but they actually exist. And you can watch these scenes play out during Dance at Socrates 2015 for the next three weeks.

Now in its third year, Dance at Socrates draws people to the Long Island City's sculpture park to experience cutting-edge dance and movement in the making.

Each week, a different New York-based choreographer will be in residence to create or further develop a new work. A full-blown performance of the work is then presented on Saturday of each week.

“One of the exciting aspects of the program is for us to highlight some of the dancers in Queens,” Julia K. Gleich, one of the program's organizers, said.

Gleich, who along with Jason Andrew is co-founder of Norte Maar, a Brooklyn-based non-profit arts organization that interconnects a range of disciplines, from dance to visual arts, has been working on the Dance at Socrates programs since its inception.

“Norte Maar's Dance at Socrates, now in its third year in collaboration with Socrates Sculpture Park, provides an incubator for new choreography and is a terrific way to enjoy Saturday afternoon dance performances in a fun and inspiring setting,” Gleich said. “With our stage nestled in the grove of Aspen trees, visitors will encounter live dance in creation during the week, just as they discover each of the unique structures currently on exhibit in the park.”

This year's New York-based choreographers include Randy James' 10 Hairy Legs Projects, Edisa Weeks' Delirious Dances, Christopher Rudd's RudduR Dance, Gierre Godley's Project 44 and Lara Gemmiti and Kate Morales' L & K Dance among others.

During its week, Gleich's other group, Gleich Dances, will rehearse a work in progress titled “Knight Moves.”

The piece is inspired by late-period paintings of Abstract Expressionist painter Jack Tworok (1900-1982). In the dance, performers mirror the movements of knights in chess, and flow from the abstract to the narrative and back, Gleich said.

Lara Gemmiti and Kate Morales live and rehearse in Ridgewood. The duo, who perform as L & K Dance, plan to present "I Hope It's Not Too Late" during their week, Aug. 10 - 15.

"The piece to be performed at Socrates is a reworking of a duet which focuses on a very specific memory we each have, extrapolated and overlapped, stopping and starting where one person's experience ends and another takes off," Morales said.

The process of this work calls for an extreme focus on a potent memory and to identify and extrapolate the gesture, sound, rhythm and structure of such and how it translates into movement.

This specific impetus results in solos that are highly individualistic in movement style.

Both dancers are equal parts choreographers, performers and directors of the work. Morales and Gemmiti formed L & K Dance in 2014, and have created and performed a series of duets together in Bushwick, Long Island City and on film. They rehearse out of a Ridgewood space called The Woods.

Gierre J. Godley's Project 44 is another Queens-based troupe slated for a week at the sculpture park.

"During that time we will start the development of our new work, 'No Strings Attached'," said Godley. "Because we are an emerging group we currently do not have our own space. We are fortunate enough to be able to rent studio space from great Queens organizations like Green Space Studios and Spaceworks in Long Island City."

Also this year, young choreographers, ages 13-18, will be paired with Norte Maar dancers to create their own pieces.

“First and foremost, Norte Maar’s Dance at Socrates is a residency program dedicated to the creation and presentation of dance; all kinds of dance, from classical to contemporary forms,” Andrew said.

If You Go

Dance at Socrates

When: Through Saturday, Aug. 22

Where: Socrates Sculpture Park, 32-01 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City

Cost: Free

Contact:

Website: www.socratessculpturepark.org

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