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Media Contact: John Hill

john@johnhillpr.com

510.435.7128

ODC THEATER ANNOUNCES ITS 12TH ANNUAL SUMMER DANCE FESTIVAL

STATE OF PLAY

AUDREY JOHNSON | BRENTON CHENG | BRIANNA ELYSE TORRES |
DAVID HARVEY & BABATUNJI | GUILLERMO GÓMEZ-PEÑA & LA POCHA NOSTRA
| HADAR AHUVIA | PAUFVE DANCE | PEILING KAO DANCES |
SFDANCEWORKS & BRYAN ARIAS | SIERRA SERBAN

August 1 – 4, 2024



Pei-Ling Kao. Photo by Franco Wang.

odc.dance/stateofplay

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, May 23, 2024 – ODC Theater is delighted to announce the complete program for its 12th annual summer dance festival, August 1 - 4. **STATE OF PLAY** invites audiences to join the creative process through a curated artistic exchange, presenting premieres alongside works-in-progress.

This year's festival will feature four days of activities across ODC's campus, including six world or West Coast premieres, an expanded version of a work which premiered at ODC Theater last year, three

works-in-progress and a host of ancillary activities. Single event tickets range from \$0 to \$80, and day and festival passes are \$80 and \$300 respectively. For reservations visit odc.dance/stateofplay.

This year's festival is co-presented with **CounterPulse**, which has generously contributed rehearsal space, artist housing, outreach, hospitality and programmatic support. Partnering with ODC Theater for a second year is **San Francisco Ballet**, which will provide additional studio space for the artists showing works-in-progress. "We believe that it is through deep collaboration and partnership that we can strengthen our Bay Area performing arts communities," said ODC Theater Creative Director **Chloë L. Zimberg**. "We invite the public to join us for discussions, performance and mixer opportunities throughout the festival."

ODC Theater's Resident Curator is **Maurya Kerr**. Kerr, a former ODC Theater Resident Artist, is the artistic director of **tinypistol**, a contemporary dance company. She is also a critically acclaimed poet. Over a span of 12 years earlier in her career she danced with Alonzo King **LINES Ballet**. Kerr joined Zimberg in curating the festival. She will also perform with **Paufve Dance** on August 1 and 2. Kerr and Zimberg will discuss their curation of the festival, moderated by CounterPulse Artistic and Executive Director **Julie Phelps**, during ODC Theater's Lobby Night event on Friday, August 2.

Three artists or companies have been chosen to present evening-length works. They are **Paufve Dance**, **Peiling Kao Dances** and **SFDanceworks** with choreographer **Bryan Arias**. Four additional projects were selected as part of a series of shorter finished works. Artists in this category include **Audrey Johnson**, returning after showing a work-in-progress last year, **David Harvey & Babatunji**, **hadar ahuvia** and **Guillermo Gómez-Peña & La Pocha Nostra**. Finally, three artists will show works-in-progress. They are **Brenton Cheng**, **Brianna Elyse Torres** and **Sierra Serban**.

Among the highlighted events surrounding the ten curated works is **Revelry!**, a party to benefit ODC Theater, free to patrons with a festival pass or a single day pass on August 3, and in the immediate run-up to the festival, July 29 – 31, the **State of Play Workshop**, a three-day dance- and movement-based workshop featuring a selection of artists from State of Play. The instructors this year are Cheng, Gómez-Peña, Johnson, Kao, Kerr, Paufve and Torres. Additional events include post-show discussions, a panel discussion with Kerr, Phelps and Zimberg, and a community mixer on Sunday.

"We have some incredible dance performances coming your way, and we can't wait to share them with you," said Zimberg. "We hope audiences will engage with us in the festival's spirit by taking risks on new artists, being curious about their process and experimenting within to access new pockets of love and kindness."

A description of each of the curated events follows below. All the evening-length and shorter works will take place in the B. Way Theater at ODC Theater. And each of the works-in-progress will take place in the Argyle Studio at ODC Dance Commons. For more information about these and other events taking place during the festival visit odc.dance/stateofplay.

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RISK-TAKERS

Evening-Length Works

PAUFVE DANCE | *Sisters* (world premiere)

Thursday, August 1 at 8 p.m.

Friday, August 2 at 7 p.m.

Over the last 30 years, **Randee Pauvfe** has established a reputation for detailed, precise, emotionally layered choreography. Among her honors are an Izzie Award for Outstanding Individual Performance, the inaugural Della Davidson Prize for Innovations in Dance Theater, a Fullbright-Nehru Excellence Award sponsoring research in Silambam and Tamil folk dance in the contemporary world, and many more.

Her latest project, *Sisters*, will be presented in its world premiere at State of Play. Featuring a cast of 11 women spanning three generations and multiple cultures, *Sisters* is an anthology of dances addressing an urgent contemporary political issue: a woman's right to choose. Drawing on the dancers' personal stories of gender expression, motherhood, birth and pregnancy, *Sisters* honors the whisper networks, emotional labor and sororal secrets that sustain us.

Sisters features costume design by Izzie Award-winning visual artist **Lauren Elder**, and performances by **Shruti Abhishek, Erin Coyne, Lily Summer Gee, Anna Greenberg Gold, Olivia Caldeira Holston, Irene Hsi, Maurya Kerr, Molly Levy, Juliana Monin, Laila Shabazz and Elizebeth Zepeda.**

PEI-LING KAO DANCES | *Palimpsest Corpus* (world premiere)

Saturday, August 3 at 5 p.m.

Sunday, August 4 at 8 p.m.

Pei-Ling Kao is an award-winning Taiwanese choreographer, dance educator and performer. Since moving to the U.S. in 2007, she has worked with choreographers from a wide range of aesthetic backgrounds, collaborating with interdisciplinary artists, performing and teaching nationally and internationally, as well as presenting original work via her company PEILING KAO DANCES. Kao is currently an Associate Professor of Dance at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa.

Palimpsest Corpus represents the outcome of Kao's project *The Dancing Body Through The Lens of Postcolonialism*, in which ten well-known choreographers, five women and five men, each set a short solo for Kao between 2018 and 2022. The work suggests that the movement of the dancer's body reveals their history. The various styles of dance training Kao has inhabited, together with the influences of the individual choreographers have all left traces on her movement. The superimposed layers of each of these dance lineages are now fused within her Taiwanese body.

"For *Palimpsest Corpus* I am not showcasing the choreography of the artists I commissioned for *The Dancing Body*; I am responding to it," said Kao. *Palimpsest Corpus* features new electronic music performed live by **Jorge Bachman**.

SFDANCEWORKS with BRYAN ARIAS | *The Broken Glass*

Friday, August 2, 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 3, 8 p.m.

Bryan Arias has created original works for internationally renowned companies including Netherlands Dance Theater, Zurich Ballet, The Bolshoi Ballet, Paul Taylor Company, Gibney and the Scottish Ballet, among many others. His awards include the prestigious German Der Faust Award, a Jacobs Pillow Fellowship Award and the Princess Grace Choreography Fellowship Award. Last year, SFDanceworks

commissioned a new work by Arias, and ODC Theater is proud to present the company in an expanded version of it as part of State of Play.

Inspired by the rhythms of his Puerto Rican heritage – from the music of bomba and plena, boleros and other musical styles – Arias conceived *The Broken Glass* as a complex tapestry of narrative threads.

SFDanceworks is a contemporary dance company that has presented one weekend of performances per year since 2016. The organization was founded by James Sofranko and has been led by **Dana Genshaft** since 2021. Its mixed repertory format invests in new works by leading and emerging choreographers, placing them alongside masterpieces that stand the test of time.

CURIOUS CREATORS

Short-Form Performances

DAVID HARVEY & BABATUNJI | *Chimera* (world premiere)

Thursday, August 2 at 6 p.m.

Saturday, August 3 at 7 p.m.

Dance artists David Harvey and Babatunji are longtime friends and collaborators. They began working together while dancing for Alonzo King LINES Ballet, and have maintained a meaningful relationship based on playfulness, honesty, commitment, risk-taking, vulnerability and process – even as their careers have landed them in different places, Babatunji in the Bay Area, Harvey in Seattle. Tending to this companionship is their primary creative goal together. This way of working leads to insightful and frank examinations of each other, of self and of the worlds they belong to. *Chimera*, presented in its world premiere, is their first major duet made for a public audience.

Chimera explores the many identities within one body. Together with video design by Harvey, the work explores how relationships can often reveal hidden aspects of one's own identity. *Chimera* contemplates the outlines of the self in all its mutability and permeability.

AUDREY JOHNSON | *For A Moment/No Longer* (world premiere)

Thursday, August 1 at 7 p.m.

Sunday, August 4 at 4 p.m.

Grounded in a lineage of queer Black feminist artists, Audrey Johnson experiments with improvisation and embodied time travel. Since she moved to the Bay Area from Detroit, Michigan, her performances have been presented by CounterPulse, Gravity, the FRESH Festival, Queering Dance Festival and 2727 California Street. Among the artists she's collaborated with are Gerald Casel, Detour Productions, Jennifer Harge, Biba Bell and Stephanie Hewett.

For A Moment/No Longer is a dance about letting go and staying, breaking open and re-assembling, the necessity of heartbreak and trusting the pulse as a rhythm to follow home. Conceived as a quartet, the work draws inspiration from queer Black feminist praxis, Black American spiritual jazz artists, and a "Love Ethic" as theorized by bell hooks.

HADAR AHUVIA | *nefesh* (West Coast premiere)

Saturday, August 3 at 4 p.m.

Sunday, August 4 at 7 p.m.

Hadar ahuvia centers the body in explorations of Jewish political and cultural lineages. Her essay “Joy Vey” on choreographing a diasporic identity beyond Zionism is featured in the *Oxford Handbook of Jewishness and Dance*. She was nominated for a Bessie Award for Outstanding Breakout Choreographer; *Dance Magazine* named her to its 2019 list of 25 Artists to Watch; and she is also the subject of a forthcoming documentary by Tatyana Tenenbaum, *Everything You Have Is Yours*. She is currently a rabbinical student at Hebrew College, an organizer with Rabbis for Ceasefire, a service leader at Kolot Chayeinu in Brooklyn and an artist in residence at RUAH Community Health where she teaches contemporary approaches to Yiddish dance.

For State of Play, ahuvia will present *nefesh*, a solo performance bridging the worlds of contemporary performance, dance, Eastern European Jewish music and feminist mysticism. The work reclaims millennia old diasporic traditions and cultures almost destroyed by antisemitism and Zionism to imagine Jewish futures. *Nefesh* invites audiences to inhabit the very fleshy experience of being, and at times the breath and vitality of being itself, as ahuvia corporealizes Ashkenazi chant and wordless melodies, and considers the power of each utterance to create material reality.

GUILLERMO GÓMEZ-PEÑA & LA POCHA NOSTRA | *Spoken Choreographies* (world premiere)

Friday, August 2 at 6 p.m.

Sunday, August 4 at 5 p.m.

Guillermo Gómez-Peña is an internationally touring performance artist, writer, activist, radical pedagogue and the artistic director of La Pocha Nostra. His performance works and 21 books have contributed to timely debates about gender diversity, border culture and North-South relations. As a MacArthur Fellow, USA Artists Fellow, and a Bessie, Guggenheim and American Book Award recipient, he is a regular contributor to newspapers and magazines in the U.S., Mexico and Europe, and a contributing editor to *The Drama Review*, the *Venice Performance Art Week Journal* and *emisférica*, the publication of the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics at New York University. Gómez-Peña is currently a Patron for the London-based Live Art Development Agency, and a Senior Fellow in the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics.

For State of Play, Gómez-Peña continues his longstanding series of “conversations across borders,” featuring cultural luminaries from North and South America. The latest in this series is a collaborative duet with Mexican choreographer and dancer **Pita Zapot.**

EXPERIMENTERS

Works-in-Progress

BRENTON CHENG | *A Story of Tides*

Saturday, August 3 at 6 p.m.

Brenton Cheng is a movement explorer who has performed with companies including Contraband, Zaccho, Epiphany Dance Theater, Flyaway Productions and Megan Lowe Dances, among many others – from Jacob's Pillow and Bates Dance Festivals to the Festival d'Avignon in France. He teaches Laban/Bartenieff Movement Analysis, contact improvisation and somatically-based performance skills to professional and non-professional movers alike. He currently teaches at the University of San Francisco.

SIERRA SERBAN | *As Long as Love is Near*
Sunday, August 4 at 6 p.m.

Sierra Serban began her dance studies at Project Ballet in Fort Wayne, Indiana and has since trained with Dance Italia, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Milwaukee Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet and IU Ballet. In recent years, Sierra has directed and performed in Bay Area dance films and created choreographic works for the LINES BFA Program, Just Dance Academy and Fort Wayne Dance Collective. She currently serves full-time on the faculty at Just Dance Academy in San Rafael.

For State of Play, Serban is developing a work titled *As Long as Love is Near*, an exploration of transcendental love and nurturing.

BRIANNA ELYSE TORRES | *Allí O Allá (There O There)*
Friday, August 2 at 5 p.m.

Brianna Elyse Torres is a self-described “Boricua movement artist, child of the diaspora, healer, platano (plantain) lover and birthworker currently rooted on Lisjan Ohlone lands.” An alum of Laguardia Performing Arts High School and the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, she is a deep believer in movement as a way to heal, grieve and access collective joy.

For State of Play, Torres will show a work-in-progress titled *Allí O Allá (There O There)*. Through the poetic language of movement, evocative soundscapes and immersive theatrics, this performance embarks on a narrative journey, moving from the notion of “no man is an island” to “I am an island” to the powerful declaration of “every woman is an island.” Collaborators on this project include **Natalya Shoaf, Chinchin Hsu and Bria Monet Barfield.**

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ABOUT ODC THEATER

ODC Theater participates in the creation of new works through commissioning, presenting, mentorship and space access; it develops informed, engaged and committed audiences; and it advocates for the performing arts as an essential component to the region’s economic and cultural development. The Theater is the site of over 120 performances a year involving nearly 1,000 local, regional, national and international artists.

Since 1976, ODC Theater has been the mobilizing force behind countless San Francisco artists and the foothold for national and international touring artists seeking debut in the Bay Area. The Theater, founded by Brenda Way and currently under the creative direction of Chloë L. Zimberg, has earned its place as a cultural incubator by dedicating itself to creative change-makers, those leaders who give the Bay Area its unmistakable definition and flare. Nationally known artists Spaulding Gray, Diamanda Galas, Bill T. Jones, Eiko & Koma, Ronald K. Brown/EVIDENCE, Karole Armitage, Sarah Michelson, Brian Brooks and John Heginbotham are among those whose first San Francisco appearance occurred at ODC Theater. For more information about ODC Theater and all its programs visit www.odc.dance/theater.

ODC Theater is generously supported by the Phyllis Wattis Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Fleishhacker Foundation, San Francisco Grants for the Arts, Andrew Mellon Foundation and our many individual donors.

FACT SHEET

WHAT:

ODC Theater presents its 12th annual summer dance festival, **STATE OF PLAY**, featuring four days of activities across ODC's campus, including six world or West Coast premieres, an expanded version of a work which premiered at ODC Theater last year, three works-in-progress and a host of ancillary activities.

Evening-Length Works:

- I. *Sisters* (world premiere) by **Paufve Dance**
- II. *Palimpsest Corpus* (world premiere) by **PEILING KAO DANCES**
- III. *The Broken Glass* by **SFDanceworks & Bryan Arias**

Short-Form Works:

- I. *Chimera* (world premiere) by **David Harvey and Babatunji**
- II. *For A Moment/No Longer* (world premiere) by **Audrey Johnson**
- III. *nefesh* (West Coast premiere) by **hadar ahuvia**
- IV. *Spoken Choreographies* (world premiere) by **Guillermo Gómez-Peña & La Pocha Nostra**

Works-in-Progress:

- I. *A Story of Tides* by **Brenton Cheng**
- II. *As Long as Love is Near* by **Sierra Serban**
- III. *Allí O Allá (There O There)* by **Brianna Torres**

WHEN:

August 1 – 4, 2024

Thursday, August 1

6 p.m.: David Harvey & Babatunji
7 p.m.: Audrey Johnson
8 p.m.: Paufve Dance

Friday, August 2

5 p.m.: Brianna Torres
6 p.m.: Guillermo Gómez-Peña & La Pocha Nostra
7 p.m.: Paufve Dance
8:30 p.m.: SFDanceworks & Bryan Arias

Saturday, August 3

4 p.m.: hadar ahuvia
5 p.m.: PEILING KAO DANCES
6 p.m.: Brenton Cheng
7 p.m.: David Harvey and Babatunji
8 p.m.: SFDanceworks & Bryan Arias
9 p.m.: Revelry!

Sunday, August 4

4 p.m.: Audrey Johnson

5 p.m.: Guillermo Gómez-Peña & La Pocha Nostra

6 p.m.: Sierra Serban

7 p.m.: hadar ahuvia

8 p.m.: PEILING KAO DANCES

For a schedule of additional events including post-show discussions, a panel discussion with the festival curators and more, visit odc.dance/stateofplay.

WHERE:**ODC Theater**

3153 17th Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

ODC Dance Commons

351 Shotwell Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

TICKETS:

Day Pass: **\$80**

Festival Pass: **\$300**

Single Tickets: **\$0 - \$80**. For reservations call **415-863-9834**, or online visit odc.dance/stateofplay.

For information about accessibility, including ASL translation and wheelchair seating, visit odc.dance/stateofplay.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

odc.dance/theater

For all press inquiries please contact John Hill at john@johnhillpr.com.