

PEARSONWIDRIG DANCETHEATER

July 2006



Amitava Sarkar

Katrina, Katrina: Love Letters to New Orleans

A LIVE DOCUMENTARY

PERFORMANCE RESIDENCIES

Tulane University
New Orleans
March 10-12, 2006

University of Texas
Austin
March 18, 2006

Kaatsbaan International Center
Tivoli, NY
May 6, 2006

Kennedy Center
Washington DC
Millennium Stage
Thursday • May 18

Open House / Gulf Coast Festival
Saturday • September 16

'62 Center
Williamstown, MA
February 9+10, 2007

Skidmore College
Saratoga Springs, NY
February 16+17, 2007

Contemporary Arts Center
New Orleans
March 2007

Seven Stages / Several Dancers Core
Atlanta
September 2007

Dance Place
Washington, DC
September 2007

Greetings All,

Immediately after our performance at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC with our magnificent dance artists Lindsay Gilmour, Matthew Rogers, Tzveta Kassabova, and the remarkable student cast from Tulane University, we were invited back to perform *Katrina, Katrina: Love Letters to New Orleans* again for the Kennedy Center's Open House/Gulf Coast Festival on September 16. Amtrak is sponsoring an "artists' train" that will originate in New Orleans and make whistle stop performances enroute to Washington, DC. Please join us - and the Blind Boys of Alabama! - for this most joyous event.

Since our last newsletter, we've premiered *Thaw* at The Duke on 42nd Street, toured from South Carolina to India, were invited back to Japan, and our original New Orleans project that was two years in the making was washed away with the hurricanes. As many of you know, we are immersed in the re-envisioned project, *KK:LL2NO*. A "live documentary" of spoken word, dance, video, and water bottles, the pilot project was created with Tulane University students and faculty in February and March, previewed with three sold out performances in New Orleans, and then toured to Austin, TX, and the Kennedy Center as part of the regional and national American College Dance Festivals.

*"Heart-wrenching and wryly comic...
A love story for a waterlogged city."*

The Washington Post



Lower Ninth Ward • Patrik Widrig

These are some email responses we've received from audience members:

"You have woven all elements together to such a beautiful, powerful piece of art. I am hoping that you will be able to tour not just the United States, but the world with it."

Christine Washington, Cultural Attaché,
Swiss Embassy, Washington, DC

"Six months of watching the news didn't come close to showing me what you did in one incredible hour onstage. Now—I get it!"

Austin Shirley, graduate student at UT Austin

"The highlight [of the festival] for me was 'Love Letters to New Orleans.' At the end of the day, it is truly our art that can heal the world and make a difference, and I think everyone should have the opportunity to see this work. I don't know when I have been so moved and so touched by a performance."

J. Jacobson, regional representative, ACDF

"I was moved to tears by the piece and I feel it is an elegant and important effort using artistic practice to reclaim the devastated soul of New Orleans."

Ray Eliot Schwartz, dancer, choreographer,
somatic movement educator, and arts activist

"I was privileged to see your show this year at the ACDF conference in Washington DC...it was so fantastic - I haven't stopped talking about it yet..."

Sharon H. Goldstein,
Managing Director, '62 Center, Williamstown, MA

Internationally renowned poet/essayist **Andrei Codrescu** has been a primary collaborating artist from the beginning of the project. As we sat stunned with grief in our East Village apartment throughout the ensuing days and weeks post Katrina, it was his essay that we heard on NPR that profoundly affected us. His words, his voice - to be met in such a previously private place of such loss with so much love - it is extremely rare when in life there's a moment that one wouldn't want to change in any way. And that was such a moment.

Check out his marvelous new book *New Orleans, Mon Amour* (Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill).



"Follow Them."

The Village Voice

"My 9-year old is still very distraught over the experience of the hurricane. Please come back to our schools with your piece - we need it."

Audience member, New Orleans

Watch

the entire performance of
Love Letters at

www.kennedy-center.org



Jason Akira Somma



With support from the NEA, NYSCA, the National College Choreography Initiative, Tulane University, the American College Dance Festival Association, the National Performance Network and Tulane University's Center for Bioenvironmental Research secured, we were able to create the pilot project.

We are now looking for financial support to complete the work and help produce the community outreach components of the touring residencies.

We are also looking for a personal connection for access to major corporations like Home Depot, Target, Fannie Mae, and Wal-Mart. Can you help us?

Our vision for this project is to tour it throughout the US to cities with significant populations of New Orleans evacuees, inviting them to participate in movement/writing workshops, video portraits, as well as in the live performances.

We are deeply in love and in grief with New Orleans and are trying to figure out a future that can give us the possibility of staying actively connected with the city and its residents, wherever they may be. We love each street, each tree, each house, each hand painted sign, each person who tells us their story. We want to listen and listen and listen. We want to be there, breathing in its internal music, feeling its rhythm, its color, its sorrow, its huge heart.

Something extraordinary is happening in New Orleans now. There is so much devastation, so much suffering, so much love, so much deep beauty. People whose lives have been affected by Katrina want to, need to be heard. We want to listen, and to make a live work of art that will cause people who have had little or no previous connection to New Orleans to passionately care, to want to help, to visit there, to vote. It needs to be happening now.

New videos need to be shot and edited, dances choreographed, project coordinators hired, returned trips to New Orleans organized and financed. The need for this work has been proven. While we have already received invitations from six arts centers to present the work in 07, we urgently request your support to help us complete it.

Please join us, as Eruch Jessawala would say, in making the impossible, possible. Your contribution this year will count more and reach further than ever. In Rumi's words: "There are many ways to kneel and kiss the ground."

Gratefully yours,

Sara + Patrik

Art for Life's Sake!

www.pearsonwidrig.org



Thaw

photos by Tom Caravaglia, unless otherwise noted



"Carries enough everyday magic for several productions."

Eva Yaa Asantewaa,
Exclusive Online Reviews



"While Thaw reveals nothing literal, it suggests, most of all, the choreographers' desire to shatter surfaces and release the vital reality trapped within."

Eva Yaa Asantewaa,
Exclusive Online Reviews

"An ingenious meld of movies and movement, motion and stillness, glassy white and tender green, silly props and serious ideas."

Metroland, Albany, NY



Daily Gazette, Schenectady, NY

"Fierce and unpredictable."

Dance Magazine



"It feels like we're all trapped under the ice."



Bearnstow Maine
August 20-26

In the Body, On the Land
Site choreography workshop
with Sara + Patrik

www.bearnstow.org

Eletheria Deko



Tom Brazil

- Support Us

**“Magical...
mystical...
elemental...
funny...
agonizing...
beautiful...”**

Metroland, Albany, NY

**Your Support is Crucial to the
Continued Success of our Work!**

ART FOR LIFE'S SAKE

Please include us in your circle of giving - we will accept your contributions with deep gratitude. Any amount will be greatly appreciated and is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

- Brass Level \$ 10 - 99
- Bronze Level \$ 100 - 199
- Silver Level \$ 200 - 499
- Gold Level \$ 500 - 999
- Platinum Level \$ 1,000 - 9,999

Please make checks out to:

New Life Dance, Inc.

PO Box 834 • New York, NY 10009