

for immediate release
list under dance/performance
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Mary Armentrout Dance Theater presents

WHAT: reveries and elegies Volume TWO

WHO: Mary Armentrout Dance Theater

WHERE and WHEN and HOW MUCH:

for all the information and tickets to the Brighton Fringe shows: www.brightonfringe.org

for all the information and tickets to the San Francisco International Arts Festival shows:

www.sfiarf.org

seating is **VERY** limited and shows will **sell out** – get your tickets early!

INFORMATION: 510 289 5188, maryarmentroutdancetheater.com

PHOTOS: available on request

ALSO, as this is a show that will happen outside at sunset, rain or shine, windy or calm, all of us wandering around the neighborhoods of the waterfront, please dress to enjoy it! – walking shoes, warm layers, hat, umbrellas if needed...

Mary Armentrout Dance Theater proudly presents *reveries and elegies Volume TWO*. *reveries and elegies Volume TWO (r+eV2)* is the next installment in MADT's long term, large scale, site specific installation about change, dislocation, and the ungraspableness of the present. *r+eV2* will be happening (almost simultaneously) at the water's edge on two continents this coming spring – come experience it where you can!

r+eV2 is an extension and development of themes explored in the first version of *reveries and elegies*: the conflation of fleetingness and loss, intention and presence, repetition and performance, and history and autobiography, within the context of the human mark upon the environment. *r+eV2* will occur during the Brighton Fringe Festival in Brighton UK on May 30th and 31st, and at the Firehouse at Ft. Mason Center during the San Francisco International Arts Festival on June 4th and 7th, 2015.

r+eV2 presents the question: is this a new project or just a continuation of an old project? - and that is exactly the excitement of this project. It is indeed a completely new project, all new sections, and yet it is also a deepening, or rather the next installment of MADT's long term project *reveries and elegies*, which so far has been installed at six different sites throughout the Bay Area, in Baton Rouge and London, had a sold out second run in the Bay Area, and recently won an Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Outstanding Achievement in Visual Design. Mary Armentrout's evolution as a site-specific dance theater performance installation artist is leading her farther down the path of exploring how site and performance meet to create site specific performance. The idea of repeatedly radically remapping fluid interconnected material to illuminate both the nature of performance itself and the role that site plays in the creation of site specific works seems like a rich, charged way to uncover the special problems and treasures of this unique artform, and is what *reveries and elegies* is doing as it continues to expand into a long form multi-year installation project.

This project attempts to embody the experience we have of life (as well as of performance) as a fragmentary thing, ungraspable, only partially here at any given time, ephemeral, always vanishing even as it is presenting itself as "the present." The work takes the form of an on-going looping cumulative piece, always repeating some elements as it moves to a new space, always changing and creating new components caused by the specific attributes of its new home, and so always remaining constant in its attempt to capture the flux of the present situation.

The core image that the work uses to explore this shifting meditation on change and dislocation is a solo figure in extreme landscapes. This exploration happens in several nested layers, all of which morph and mutate, and thereby embody the larger content of the constant changeableness of here-ness and now-ness that is the hallmark of presence, performance, and "the present." There are four different nested layers: the landscape during the sunset hour, the "solo" figure, the simple sound score, and the technology component.

The landscape during the sunset hour: we have incorporated using the changing effects of light during the sunset hour into this piece. At each site there is always at least one outdoor section that happens during the twilight hour – utilizing this especially changeable time of day. In *r+eV2* this component will happen on the beach at Brighton and at the water's edge of San Francisco Bay at the Firehouse at Fort Mason.

The "solo" figure: as she often does, Armentrout will use extra bodies, or body doubles, in some sections, both as metaphorical layers of self, and as tricky confusing figures in the landscape that make the audience look again and look closely at the whole extended field of vision to discern what is part of the show and what is not. She uses an extended range of ages and bodies, culled from the dance community and her company, tied together by identical costuming to fulfill this idea.

The simple sound score: many of the sections of this piece will have sound scores built up from the simple sentences: "life is so strange" and "I'm learning to see." Armentrout often works with text, and has two gifted composers who have composed for her on many of her projects: Pamela Z and Evelyn Ficarra. They are both adept at working with recorded text as a component of sonic compositions, and she will commission them to make different scores from the same basic material – a third way the same material will keep changing.

The technology component: each performance evening will be a mix of live dance performance sections, projected video sections, and sections that have both live and video elements. In keeping with the theme of dislocation, the live and video sections will be radically altered from one space to the next - for example, very large in a large space, very small in a tight closet in another space, and very small in a very large space. Additionally, for one section, the audience will have to choose between two viewing options, and will only get to see one of the two – another way in which they will be prevented from seeing the "whole" show/and or will have different experiences of the same show. Armentrout is collaborating with video and light designer Ian Winters on this aspect of the work, also an artist she has worked closely with on many past projects.

This long term, multi-year, multiple site project is MADT's most ambitious project to date, illuminating some of the most fundamental aspects of performance in immediate and powerful ways, both through its structure and through its audience interactivity. "*r+eV2*" continues Armentrout's trajectory of creating a new model for experiencing live dance theater work – one that involves the audience in an intimate, embodied way. As with many of her projects, the audience will have to be limited in each space, as we will be taking them outside and moving them around the spaces in different ways during the shows. The small size and active role of the audience gives them a sense of ownership and participation in the performance without resorting to confrontational means of engagement. This rich new structure for exploring the interface of performers and audience, and together experiencing the ever wondrous moment of the now, is what Armentrout's site specific work is all about. Brighton Fringe shows supported in part by the Nightingale Theatre. SFIAF shows are part of the Fort Mason Center Presents series, and are partially underwritten by the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation. MADT fiscally sponsored by Dancers' Group.

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more about Mary Armentrout Dance Theater

Mary Armentrout is a dance artist who works primarily with repetition and duration to uncover aspects of intentionality and presence. Influenced by contemporary philosophical concerns as well as the ongoing critical investigations started by the Judson Church dance deconstructions, she makes works that embody the contradictions of contemporary life, both our conflicted, fractured sense of self, and our discontinuous, collage sense of being-in-the-world. She grounds her work in her ongoing investigations of the Feldenkrais mind-body practice, drawing on the rich ways its awareness practice embodies and problematizes issues of intentionality and presence. From the confusions and dislocations she finds there, her work spills out to build odd and compelling structures exhibiting contradictory aspects of our self-awareness and being-in-the-world. Her choreography consists of small fragments of everyday movement, words, and environments that are distilled, distorted, polished, and stripped down to reveal the layers of ambiguity, pathos, and absurdity underneath the surface. Repetitive and deconstructed gestures, utterances, and objects/pieces of the outside world are layered and allowed to build and morph, crumble and change, creating compelling, unstable environments which allow deeper truths covered over in the everyday to surface, come into focus, and, paradoxically, display their contradictions. Her works are puzzles, designed to imperfectly capture fragments of presence-in-performance and human intentionality.

Armentrout calls her works performance installations. Drawing both raves and interested puzzlement from the critics - "a performance artist of tremendous range" (Christopher Correa, *Dance View Times*), "a quirky idiosyncratic choreographer who assembles works that appear illogical on the surface, but somehow her twisted humor, comic timing, and odd use of furniture and bodies coalesce into meaningful dance" (Rita Felciano, *The East Bay Monthly*) - she is engaged in "inventing a new kind of dance theater right before our eyes" (*Dance View Times*).

She received her BA from Sarah Lawrence College, concentrating particularly on dance and philosophy. After many years of making and performing work on the East and West Coasts and in Europe, she formed the Mary Armentrout Dance Theater in the Bay Area in 2000. The company is, as it has been since its inception, a fluid blend of dancers, actors, and sound and media artists. Armentrout also maintains on-going collaborative relationships with sound artists Pamela Z, Evelyn Ficarra, and Merlin Coleman, and media artists Ian Winters and Bulkfoodveyor (Phil Bonner).

She installs work in both conventional and site-specific venues, and the Mary Armentrout Dance Theater has been presented at numerous venues all over the San Francisco Bay Area, including ODC Theater, The LAB, and Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, as well as in less proscenium-oriented spaces including a bathroom, the beach, and a car. Her current project, "reveries and elegies" won an Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Outstanding Achievement in Visual Design, and has toured to Baton Rouge and London. Her work has also been presented at such venues as Movement Research at the Judson Church and Danspace Project in New York City, Highways in Los Angeles, the Dance Place in Washington D.C., le Centre Americain in Paris, and Tanzfabrik in Berlin, as well as in festivals including Dadafest, the Tenderloin "Festival In The Street," the Retail Dance Festival, the DUMBO (NY) Dance Festival, the SF Fringe Festival, the "Women on the Edge" Series, and the Hunter Mountain (NY) Performing Series. She recently co-curated a Movement Research (NY) Studies Project on new work from the Bay Area with Trajal Harrel, and assisted Jonah Bokaer in a "Food for Thought" project on contemporary Bay Area dance at Danspace Project (NY).

She has received support from the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the CA\$H Grant program, the Clorox Company Foundation, the Lighting Artists in Dance Award, and the New Stages for Dance Award, and has had residencies at Djerassi, The LAB, The Garage, and CounterPULSE. She teaches on-going technique, composition, and Feldenkrais classes at Danspace and Shawi-Anderson Dance Center, and has also taught at Sarah Lawrence

College, Cal State East Bay (Hayward), Mills College, USF, LSU, the University of Sussex (UK), the University of Roehampton (UK), Beijing Normal University (China), Daijing Sports University (China) and the Fresh Festival. She is the organizer of the Dance Discourse Project, an on-going series of artist-curated discussions of the Bay Area dance scene, co-presented by Dancers' Group and CounterPULSE, and co-curates the mixed performance salon "The Milk Bar" at The Biscuit Factory in Oakland, along with Merlin Coleman and Ian Winters. She is proud to be the president of the board of Dancers' Group, considered the most important dance service organization in the Bay Area, and is also a Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner. See more at maryarmentroutdancetheater.com

Collaborating Artists' Biographies

Evelyn Ficarra is a composer and sound artist. She studied composition at the University of Sussex in the U.K. and at the University of California, Berkeley. Her work finds expression across a range of forms including music theatre, multi media, installation, dance, film and the concert hall. Throughout her career she has enjoyed collaborative work with choreographers, directors, filmmakers, and visual artists. Her work has received support from the Arts Council of England, the London Arts Board, the Sonic Arts Network, the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust, the Hinrichsen Foundation, the Djerassi Resident Artist Program, Meet the Composer and Poems on the Underground. Her music has been heard in concert halls, theaters, music festivals, film festivals, on television and in radio broadcasts in the UK, Europe, the Americas, Australia and the Far East. Her solo CD Frantic Mid-Atlantic is available on the Sargasso Label www.sargasso.com. Current projects include a 'laptop' improvisation duo with composer Heather Frasch, and Dissonant Futures, an interarts collaboration with Myra Melford (composer / pianist) and Ian Winters (video artist). Evelyn is also a Lecturer in Music Theatre at the University of Sussex, where she is Assistant Director of the Centre for Research in Opera and Music Theatre. www.evelynficarra.net

Ian Winters is a San Francisco Bay Area based photographer, video artist and performer working at the intersection of architectural form, frozen image and time-based media in solo work and collaborations with composers, directors, and choreographers to create open-ended environments through performance, photographic/video/film media, and sonic environments. Winters trained in photography, film and performance at SMFA-Boston and Tufts University, and post-graduate training in architecture and live performance. He also co-curates the Milkbar salon series in Oakland. Recent collaborators and media projects include projects with Francis Ford Coppola (designing the custom Isadora playback system for his new film), Robert Moses Kin, elaine buckholtz, ODC Dance, Alice Arts, Pamela Z, Evelyn Ficarra, paige starling sorvillo, /blindsight, Sara Kraft, Mary Armentrout Dance Theater, and others. Recent work screenings, performances and video / media design projects include venues such as London City University, the Port of Oakland, The Luggage Store, Sergei Kuryokhin Modern Art Center, Moscow Conservatory Electro-acoustic Center, I-Park Artist's Enclave, Journées de l'électroacoustique, Paris, YBCA, ODC, Z-Space/Theater Artaud, The Asian Art Museum SF, The Kitchen, POTO Arts Festival, EMPAC, MIT New Media Center, Mass art, London Cutting Edge Festival, Oxford & Corsham music festivals, Moving Baltic Sea Festival and OPEN Cinema Festival in St. Petersburg, CounterPULSE, CNMAT, Highways, The Parkway Theaters, Hertz Hall at UC Berkeley, LA Freewaves Festival, 21 Grand, Dance Mission and more. www.ianwinters.com

Pamela Z is a San Francisco-based composer/performer and media artist who works primarily with voice, live electronic processing, sampling technology, and video. A pioneer of live digital looping techniques, she creates solo works combining experimental extended vocal techniques, operatic bel canto, found objects, text, digital processing, and MIDI

controllers that allow her to manipulate sound with physical gestures. In addition to her solo work, she has composed and recorded scores for dance, theatre, film, and new music chamber ensembles. Her large-scale multi-media works have been presented at venues including Theater Artaud and ODC in San Francisco, and The Kitchen in New York, and her media works have been presented in exhibitions at the Whitney Museum (NY), the Diözesanmuseum (Cologne), and the Krannert Art Museum (IL). Her multi-media opera **Wunderkabinet** – inspired by the Museum of Jurassic Technology (co-composed with Matthew Brubeck) has been presented at The LAB Gallery (San Francisco), REDCAT (Disney Hall, Los Angeles), and Open Ears Festival, Toronto. Pamela Z has toured extensively throughout the US, Europe, and Japan. She has performed in numerous festivals including Bang on a Can at Lincoln Center (New York), Interlink (Japan), Other Minds (San Francisco), La Biennale di Venezia (Italy), and Pina Bausch Tanztheater Festival (Wuppertal, Germany). She is the recipient of numerous awards including a Guggenheim Fellowship, the Creative Capital Fund, the CalArts Alpert Award in the Arts, The MAP Fund, the ASCAP Music Award, an Ars Electronica honorable mention, and the NEA and Japan/US Friendship Commission Fellowship. She holds a music degree from the University of Colorado at Boulder.
www.pamelaz.com.