



PEGGY BAKER DANCE PROJECTS

residency performance event - *move*

In the fall of 2009 I premiered a dance called *move* for Nuit Blanche in a quietly lit studio at Canada's National Ballet School. The audience response to the piece was ecstatic, and I was immediately inspired to imagine other situations in which the work could be presented. An ideal performance project for a residency, the work can be situated beautifully in a wide variety of non conventional performance spaces and performed by members of the local dance/performance community.

move is as an event for between 16 - 24 dancers, who enter the space one at a time and pair up during a simple walking sequence. Moving down onto the floor together, they continue across the expanse of the space crawling and rolling in slow motion through a clockwise, serpentine floor pattern. One dancer of each pair molds the body of their partner, who spirals through a constantly twisting crescent, eventually lifting one another to embrace and roll with their bodies entwined. The complete cycle of the work takes 80 minutes.

I think of *move* as a dance installation, which does not require the audience to watch it from beginning to end, but which may draw in observers who choose to stay because of the pleasure they are taking. The performance calls up a multitude of ancient and timeless images; earth being plowed, the molding of clay, the kneading of bread, a midwife at work, a storm gathering, the swell of an ocean, the movement of a glacier, the heaving of a continent, the passing of time...

The sonic environment for *move* is an electro-acoustic score by Toronto musician and composer, Debashis Sinha. Although it would also be possible to have a soundscape performed by one or more local musicians. *move* can be staged in just 8 hours of rehearsal, broken up into either 2 or 3 sessions. It may be performed by dancers, actors, or even martial arts or yoga practitioners.

To give you some idea of the impact of *move* on the audience, here are a few messages I received following the Toronto performances:

I often struggle to appreciate modern dance, but Saturday night was an exception. The sound and movement meshed wonderfully. The piece was serene and joyful and full of love. I found it very comforting and peaceful. Thank you. - Shirley Stashko

I just wanted to write to say that I had a chance to see 'move' the other night and found it really breathtaking: a sort of softly spoken, carefully paced argument for the notion that meditative and sensual (almost sentimental) states are not necessarily mutually exclusive - if that makes any sense. I would have loved to have stayed to see it a second time through. - Howie Shia

I went to the Nuit Blanche performance by the students and others at the NBS studio. I found your choreography to be profound and moving—as if the centuries since Noah's Ark were rolling in, amidst waves of earth, air, fire and water, and the cultures which evolved - nomadic, then cultivated /agricultural, and human relations along with them. The dancers seemed to submerge themselves into the choreography, not being a lot of individuals but as if human evolution itself. Well, I found it powerful and far-reaching. - Jocelyn Allen

Performance History: a community presentation of *move* was presented by Brock Centre for the Arts in downtown St. Catharines in their Market Square building in 2011, and at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery with the Fredericton Playhouse in March 2014.