

MERCE CUNNINGHAM DANCE COMPANY

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Experiments in the Studio: an MCDC new music series

David Behrman, Miguel Frasoni, Marina Rosenfeld, Richard Teitelbaum

Monday, May 5 at 8:30 PM, Merce Cunningham Studio

New York, NY—Merce Cunningham Dance Company (MCDC) presents the fifth concert of *Experiments in the Studio* on Monday, May 5 at 8:30 PM in the Merce Cunningham Studio. The concert unites experimental composer/performers **Richard Teitelbaum** (MCDC composer/performer in the 1970s), **Miguel Frasoni** (for his first MCDC-presented performance), **Marina Rosenfeld** (MCDC composer/performer 2004–05) and **David Behrman** (MCDC Music Committee Member, MCDC composer/performer since 1967). The program features **three world premieres**, Miguel Frasoni's *These Intertwined Portraits* (2008), Richard Teitelbaum's *Piano Tree* (2008), and Marina Rosenfeld's *mirror mirror* (2008), as well as David Behrman's *Freeze Dip* (2008). Additional performers include Hiroko Sakurazawa for *Piano Tree*, Robert Black for *Freeze Dip*, and J.G.Thirlwell for *mirror mirror*. All four composer/performers will come together again later in the month on Sunday, May 18 to perform for the third *Beacon Event*, part of MCDC's *Hudson Valley Project* residency at Dia:Beacon. They will also participate in an MCDC Musicians in Conversations program moderated by MCDC Sound Engineer and Music Coordinator Stephan Moore on Monday, May 12 at Dia:Beacon. For a separate press release regarding *Beacon Events* and additional *Hudson Valley Project* residency activities, please contact avianna@merce.org.

Notes from the composers:

In Richard Teitelbaum's *Piano Tree*, sounds made both on the keyboard and from inside the piano are processed and transformed by a laptop computer and played back in real time, as well as being stored and made available for further elaboration and replayed later in the course of the performance. The piano sounds are developed and extended by digital signal processing made possible by recent advances in high-speed laptops and newly developed musical software. Some of these more "untraditional" piano techniques have been inspired by the many pioneering innovations of Henry Cowell, John Cage and David Tudor. In that sense, this work can be thought of as just the most recent shoot or bud springing from that grand, now almost century old tree of American Experimental Music. Miguel Frasoni's *These Intertwined Portraits* is the first in a series of hybrid graphic/music notation scores in the form of "slideshows" to be viewed on a laptop. Crossfading images overlap conventional music graphics to suggest sounds and structures which are freely interpreted by the performer. Individual slideshows were specifically designed for each of the musicians involved, with the idea of creating abstract portraits based on Frasoni's experience of each individual and his or her music. Then, one "master score" slideshow was created that intertwined

the individual portraits. The four musicians will all “read” from the same score, but are free to create their own realization in the context of the ensemble. For Marina Rosenfeld's *mirror mirror* the composer is joined by legendary punk musician/poet J.G.Thirlwell (Foetus, Manorexia, Baby Zizanie), both performing on electronics and vocals. David Behrman's *Freeze Dip*, for glass bowls, bass, violin and laptops, makes use of foot pedals, touch pads and visual displays linked to software written especially for this situation. Pages of written notations provide guidelines for the musicians to consult, rather than scores for them to read. Sustained pitches played by acoustic instruments are recorded, overlaid and bent to form multi-voiced chordal textures. These are combined with computer-generated sounds of several kinds and set against phrases performed live by the musicians.

All concerts in the series are free and take place at the Merce Cunningham Studio at 55 Bethune Street, 11th floor. No reservations required, visit merce.org for directions and details. Recent concerts have been filled to capacity; to arrange a press seat in advance, please contact Avianna Perez at 212.255.8240 x14 or avianna@merce.org.

Richard Teitelbaum has been active as a composer and performer for more than forty years, both in this country and abroad. In the mid-sixties he brought the first Moog synthesizer to Europe and helped to found the early live electronic music group Musica Elettronica Viva in Rome with Frederic Rzewski, Alvin Curran and others. In 1970 he returned to the United States to found the World Band, one of the first intercultural improvisation groups, with traditional musicians in the World Music Program at Wesleyan University. Continuing this interest, in 1976-77 he spent a year studying traditional Japanese music in Tokyo, composing *Blends* for the shakuhachi, synthesizers and percussion for his teacher, the master player Katsuya Yokoyama. The CD of this piece on New Albion Records was named one of the ten best classical recordings of 2002 by *The Wire Magazine* of London. Among his many works are two operas dealing with Jewish mystical expressions of redemptive hopes: *Golem: An Interactive Opera* (1989), and his ongoing project *Z'vi* (2002–), based on the true story of the 17th Century “Jewish-Moslem” Messiah Sabbatai Z'vi, which has been performed at Bard College's Fisher Center, the Venice Biennale and the Center for Jewish History in New York. He has received numerous grants and awards, including the Prix Ars Electronica from the Austrian Radio and Television, two Fulbrights and a Guggenheim, and composed commissioned works for pianists Aki Takahashi, Ursula Oppens and others. He has also maintained long-standing collaborations with leading jazz musicians such as Steve Lacy, Anthony Braxton and George Lewis. Teitelbaum has performed his music at the Berlin Jazz Festival in Philharmonic Hall, the Pompidou Center in Paris, the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, the Tanglewood Music Center in Massachusetts, the Experimenta Festival in Buenos Aires, the VI International Festival of Electroacoustic Music in Havana, Super Deluxe in Tokyo and in many others venues throughout the world. Currently he is working on a new work commissioned by the Fromm Music Foundation, for instruments and computer to be premiered by the Da Capo Chamber Players next season in New York. His music has been recorded on New Albion, Tzadik, Hat Art, Silkheart, Music and Arts, Victo, Matchless and other labels. Teitelbaum is a professor of music at Bard College, where he has been teaching for twenty years.

Miguel Frasconi uses glass objects, electronics, keyboards, and “de-evolved” instruments to create new exploratory music sounding from a uniquely imagined tradition. His instruments have been called “a beautiful menagerie of peeling contraptions” (*Time Out NY*) and his music has been called “lyrical and stormy” by the *New York Times*. He has worked with many of new music's most renowned composers, including John Cage, Brian Eno, Jon Hassell, and James Tenney, while his studies have ranged from the music of South India and Indonesia to the dada and Fluxus movements. His wide array of activities include collaborations with the Balinese composer I Dewa Berata on music for a large-scale shadowplay, with operatic tenor John Duykers on improvised music/theater events, and with the Tibetan songwriter Techung, with whom he has produced and performed concerts throughout India. Miguel has created over three-dozen dance scores including a work with choreographer Alonzo King for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and has performed with modern

dance pioneer Anna Halprin at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. His recent activities include a new dance score for Mr. King with the Shaolin Monks, performances with electronic music pioneer Morton Subotnick, a newly commissioned work for Gamelan Son of Lion, and concerts with the composers collective Ne (x)tworks. Miguel's early work includes ten years as a founding member of The Glass Orchestra, the internationally acclaimed new music ensemble featuring all glass instruments. A recording of his solo glass and ensemble music, *Song + Distance*, is available on New Albion Records.

Marina Rosenfeld is a composer and turntablist based in New York. Her work has employed both musical and visual media, including solo and large multi-player performances, installation, video projection, photography, and hybrid forms drawing on these. In recent years, her work has been commissioned by the Whitney Biennial 2008 and 2002, Creative Time, Tate Modern, The Kitchen, Artists Space, Contemporary Jewish Museum, Electronic Music Foundation, and festivals including Donaueschingen, Ars Electronica, Musikprotokoll/Steirische Herbst, Pro Musica Nova, Maerz Musik, Mutek, Wein Modern and The Wire's Adventures in Modern Music, among many others. She's performed with artists including Christian Marclay, Tony Conrad, Sonic Youth, Laurie Anderson, DJ Olive, George Lewis, Ikue Mori and Kaffe Matthews, among many others; and recorded on Charhizma, Softl Music (TomLab), and Room 40. In March 2008, she premiered *Teenage Lontano*, a work for 35-voice teenaged choir and "phonographic" speaker installation in the vast Drill Hall space of New York's Park Avenue Armory. Rosenfeld is a member of the faculty and co-chair of the department of Music/Sound at the Avery Graduate Arts Program at Bard College.

David Behrman has been active as a composer and artist since the 1960s. Over the years he has made sound and multimedia installations for gallery spaces as well as compositions for performance in concerts. He worked with John Cage, Christian Wolff and David Tudor in the 60's and 70's and has had a long association with Merce Cunningham and his company. Among Behrman's works for soloists and small ensembles are *Unforeseen Events*, *My Dear Siegfried*, *Leapday Night*, *On the Other Ocean*, *Interspecies Smalltalk*, *Homemade Synthesizer Music with Sliding Pitches*, *Useful Information* and *Protests 1917–2004*. Recordings of his works are published by XI, Lovely Music, Alga Marghen, Classic Masters and Ellipsis Arts; his recent piece *Long Throw* will be released soon as a video on Roulette TV. Among Behrman's sound and multimedia installations are *Cloud Music* (1977, a collaboration with Robert Watts and Bob Diamond), *Pen Light* (2002), and *View Finder*, most recently exhibited at Stanford University in 2005. He is currently collaborating with Veenfabriek in the Netherlands on music for a (revived) Futurists' Orchestra. He is a member of the faculty at the Avery Graduate Arts Program at Bard College.

Experiments in the Studio celebrates Merce Cunningham's commitment to commissioning more new music by American composers than any other single choreographer, and the historic relationship between Merce Cunningham and John Cage, Founding Music Director of MDCDC. The composer/performers in this series represent a vibrant history of avant-garde music and multiple generations of contemporary composers working and performing together, from the 1950s through today.

***Experiments in the Studio*, spring 2008:**

June 23 Newton Armstrong, David Linton, Maria Chavez, Stephan Moore

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