


# POUNDS PER SQUARE INCH PERFORMANCE

2020/2021  
SEASON REPORT



# DEAR POUNDS FAMILY

A vertical photograph on the left side of the page shows a person standing in shallow water, possibly a beach at low tide. The person is wearing dark clothing and has their right arm extended forward, hand flat, reaching towards the horizon. The water is calm, reflecting the person and the sky. The sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

How do we sum up a year of such tumult? At Pounds, our weaved tapestry, 25 years of engaging artists and community in live interactions, was pulled like a rug from beneath us. Little of our previous experience seemed to count as venues, travel, and live rehearsal spaces closed, and income ceased. And... as we know... the impact was not unique to us, or to our milieu, or our community or even to our nation but was a global recalibration. It is still hard to get my mind around how some were forced to isolate while others were tossed in peril as first responders into the fray. A global pandemic with dramatically varied individual impacts that gave, in ways I still don't understand, a new urgency and dynamics to a cultural shift that has been calling for generations.

After almost six months of deep reflection we leaped into a transformed 25th anniversary season with a direct intent to keep artists working and engaged to promote the shift from systems of white supremacy and oppressive colonial structures. We also worked to uncover new means to weather the loss of major parts of our programming income. We transformed our year to virtual content and online presentation. When I say we leaped it was literally the way we approached our new world. With each project we leaped into the air not having a clue where we would land or if there would be ground to land upon. With each new challenge we just kept leaping and ended the year far beyond our expectations. Although we are still in the air we are beginning to see brave and safe new places to land.

We are deeply grateful to our artistic, administrative and community collaborators for the faith, trust, bravery and openness with which they proceeded. We also deeply thank our audience for adapting so quickly along-side us as we found new ways to see, hear and learn about art.

Below is a little of what we accomplished.

With Deep Gratitude,  
Gerry

playing a part

# POUNDS ART CHANNEL

Coming out of the summer we launched our online PoundsART Channel. Cole Alvis (Michif) joined us as our host and what we coined "Holder of the Heart" to ensure we as an organization and as individuals were moving forward accountably by deepening the urgent, endless journey to decolonize our processes and presentations. From September to December 2020, we presented monthly creation talks with collaborating 'films in progress' teams, and workshops with guests Michael Caldwell, Learie Mc Nicolls and Kevin Ormsby.

## SOLOS IN THE DARK MONUMENT

In September we filmed the first of four 25th anniversary solo remounts/recreations as part of Solos in the Dark. 'Monument' with performer Michael Caldwell was filmed on locations around southern Ontario by filmmaker William Yong. An excerpt of the work premiered at Dusk Dances' online edition in October 2020 followed by a premiere online presentation in March 2021. Monument has since garnered the following accolades:





# THE STREET

In November 2020, Trentham and Alvis traveled to Alberta and BC to film the next solo, "The Street" with performer Zach Running Coyote and a team of Alberta collaborators.

*"My favorite memory was eating sushi in a little restaurant in the small town where I grew up, Drumheller. Now, however, with an incredible queer team of trans, gay, non-binary, two spirited, donning masks around the table. Although they each grew up in small towns in Alberta thirty years after me things haven't seemed to change much. Racism and homophobia seemed weaved into our experiences in various ways. As we edit the film from a vast landscape of images shot in BC and Alberta we are deeply grateful to the original caretakers – the Akisqnuk and Shuswap Nations near the headwaters of the Columbia river and to the Treaty 6 Plains Cree and the Treaty 7 Blackfoot Confederacy (Sik Sika, North Piikani, Kanai, T'suut'ina) and the Metis Nation. We are excited about this complete re-interpretation of the 2001 solo work as film that embodies the sensations as we each, together, return to a small prairie town in an extraordinary time."* – Gerry

We are currently editing the film and will present it online in fall 2021.



Photos left to right, top to bottom: Zach Running Coyote and Gerry Trentham, Zach Running Coyote, Alex Boldt, Cole Alvis, Gerry Trentham, Alex Boldt and Zach Running Coyote  
Photos by KP Payette

# YELLOW SCALE & GRAVITY OF DESCENT

The last two works as part of Solos in the Dark began filming in early 2021.

Yellow Scale, from the Dora nominated Four Mad Humours (2011), performed by Trentham was captured by filmmakers Jesse Deganis Librera and Kanchalee Wijakpaisarn in various locations including outdoors in Buffalo, NY during a snow storm. This film is set for editing later in fall 2021.

Preliminary film experiments began on Gravity of Descent which will capture the remarkable Sylvie Bouchard and Learie Mc Nicolls on film. A small team including filmmaker William Yong made a field trip to past board member Brian Scott's wonderful farm north of Toronto. Again, in snow up past the knees, the team filmed Sylvie as she braved her winter landscape in her enormous fabric dress.



Photos left to right: William Yong and Sylvie Bouchard, Sylvie Bouchard

## GARDENER & THE HORSE

A new duet with Michael Caldwell and Gerry Trentham to be filmed by William Yong began its first process of creation in a divided studio during the pandemic. The work is driven by the duo's drive to inhabit an open queer space and more deeply understand transformation through their gay life. A life that began 'natural' then has lived through suppressed desire, appearances and imagination in homophobic environments to this present artistic inception. They continued the work online and have presented some "showings" to individual virtual guests. Who knows, you may soon be asked to join them virtually in their "open" space. The work is envisioned to also be live with an audience and test what parts of performance are impactful as film.





Photos left to right, top to bottom: Diane Roberts, Michael Caldwell, Kaersten Colvin-Woodruff, Carlos Rivera, Sylvie Bouchard, Olivia C. Davies, Gerry Trentham, Liliona Quarmyne

Building on the success of *The Art of Peace: Part One* (2016) Trentham and Pounds Artistic Associate Diane Roberts, visual artist Kaersten Colvin-Woodruff and performers Carlos Rivera, Liliona Quarmyne, Michael Caldwell, Sylvie Bouchard and Olivia C. Davies continued their collaboration through a research/creation process on the new mobile visual art/film/performance/dialogue. Inspired by a broadening process of what Claudia Rankin describes as the “racial imagination” which entreats us to go beyond the traditions of western/white aesthetics and processes, *Arrival* digs deeper into the main question that arose in part one - When do we make the other, “other”?

We had planned to undertake the next phase of this work with the artists and collaborators in spring 2020, but this was cancelled due to COVID-19. We instead met for online creation through April, May and June 2021. Kaersten made art objects specific to each performer that first navigated the US/CAN boarder during COVID (you can imagine the challenge) to be mailed from inside Canada to the various artists that spanned the country. Each gift (art object) arrived to each team member and were opened on camera during the eclipse. Then each of the artists worked with movement and text around the art object's (artifact's) meaning in relation to their ancestor stories, stories unearthed during Diane Robert's earlier *Arrivals* Legacy Process. We look forward to sharing the work virtually in the fall of 2021.

## OTHER PERFORMANCES

Gerry's performance with other companies seems to be blooming in this, his sixth decade. This past season Gerry worked with:

- BoucharDanse, a duet with Sylvie Bouchard choreographed by the extraordinary Tedd Robinson
- Fujiwara Dance Inventions newest works *BeLonging* and *Moving Parts*
- Upcoming: a new solo co-created with Denise Fujiwara and performing in Zab Maboungou's new work at Agora de la Danse in Montreal in fall 2022

# WORKSHOPS

As education is a vital part of our programming, this year we presented virtually:

- Practicing through Change with Gerry Trentham – September 29, 2020
- Solo Practice with Trentham and Michael Caldwell – October 20, 2020
- Practicing through Change with Learie Mc Nicolls – November 20, 2020
- Grounding Body and Voice Presence with Kevin Ormsby – December 15, 2020
- Moving Voice to Text with Ausar Stewart and Gary Logan, January 26 and 28, 2021

In place of our MVI annual spring intensive we set our sights on further diversifying and decolonizing the foundation of our training program. The Moving Voice Institute, Diane Robert's Arrivals Legacy Project and Pounds gathered forces to present an online intensive on five Saturdays in May 2021.

It brought together renowned teachers and artists Denise Fujiwara, Ausar Stewart, David Smukler, Diane Roberts, Matthew Rossoff, Cindy Block, Lisa C Ravensbergen, Gary Logan, Lisa Beley, Lopa Sicar and Gerry Trentham with 8 associate teachers in training and 200 participants.



## Awakening the Body's Voice

# TEACHER TRAINING

Gerry is very deeply dedicated to advancing performance teacher training. He leads a team of 8 MVI Alumni in the research and development of an MVI educational hub for performance teachers. Each associate assisted in the planning and operation of the spring workshops. This year many of the MVI faculty have spent time mentoring these teachers, some who have established their teaching and some who are on the cusp of their careers.

# THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS



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