



POUNDS PER SQUARE INCH PERFORMANCE

2021/2022 SEASON REPORT



DEAR POUNDS FAMILY

Looking back through my calendar where various projects are coloured to differentiate them, I see a wild and twisted patchwork. After a year that included four 14-day quarantines in 2020/2021 I promised I would move differently as things opened back up – if they did. I would schedule projects with space in between to rest and reflect and have greater singular focus for each creation or production project. I would decide priorities and learn to say ‘no’ when required. HA!

The year did open with less restrictions yet very little change in the uncertainty we were facing from our industry’s ongoing closures or postponements. We, without confidence that we would be able to gather in spaces with each other, patched a year together. It did feel like a quilt or bedspread of sorts made up from found fabrics - visions imagined in the past.

Wow, talk about colourful as my calendar sang an uncertain schedule weaved and layered as we tried to find space for past projects to be revisited and completed. I was at times able to push some further along but often, rich and textured patches “that were not to be missed” had to be stitched into my schedule right up against each other. Many of these projects offered me the unique opportunity to continue to deepen my understanding as a performer on stage or in film - to keep dancing in my 60’s. It was not possible for me to choose one over another. All seemed valuable.

Unable to be released, postponed projects looked for space and time... all at once. My calendar was filled with proposed projects overlapping and I and my colleagues have spent endless hours with help of administrators as brave as Adina to negotiate uncertain schedules. Let’s say that despite my best intent, rest or space between projects did not manifest in 2021/22. Maybe next year, HA!

In the end despite our trepidation it was a wonderfully successful year. The patchwork held together by a thread invited curiosity with surprises we might have never manifest otherwise. A reminder perhaps that very little is ever certain and that not knowing is not necessarily a bad thing.

On behalf of everyone at lbs/sq", I thank you deeply for your continued and ongoing support especially through such challenging (and perhaps enlightening) times.

- Gerry Trentham
Artistic Director

SOLOS IN THE DARK FILMS

We've been working to create a series of four films based on past company repertoire, entitled *Solos in the Dark*. Films in the series include:

MONUMENT

Monument, premiered in March 2021 and continues to be honoured with screenings and accolades from film festivals around the world.



THE STREET

The Street featuring performer Zac Running Coyote was filmed in November 2020 and premiered online in February 2022. It carries the legacy of early small team pandemic filmmaking as we navigated masks and travel restrictions. A queer team from Toronto, Calgary and Edmonton somehow through some miracle of time and space gathered in rural Alberta. It is a powerful film and a testament to Zac's unique presence as a performer.



Photos by KP Payette



GRAVITY OF DESCENT

Gravity of Descent/Buoyancy began creation and filming in the 2021/2022 season. With support from the CCA Digital Now program, we moved the work's vision forward as two interconnected dance films created with filmmaker William Yong, with rehearsals and initial filming in the current year, and an anticipated premiere in fall 2023.

In the first film, (***Gravity***) the two soloists cross without touch. Sylvie Bouchard dances in rural winter plunged into frozen ancient blue watery and womb-like landscapes, a startling image of a pregnant mother in a 22ft in diameter gown, while Learie Mc Nicolls begins in summer's heat – a masculine contemporary descent into sorrow. The two solos cross ending in each other's altered time and landscape.

We first gathered in March 2021 to test film of Sylvie Bouchard's Gravity Solo at past board member Brian Scott's farm north of Toronto (thank you Brian). In June 2022 we gathered with Sylvie and Learie Mc Nicolls after a short rehearsal at the eastern edge of Toronto's Beaches to film Learie alone and then Sylvie and Learie together. The footage with a fuller team of creators and assistants is remarkable including, for instance, the huge dress floating in the water as Learie and Sylvie solos finally meet. All this was captured while navigating dogs - who were wonderful, dog owner locals who were rather possessive of the "public space" (hence 'owners') yet seemed to care little for cleaning up after themselves, and of course stormy weather and cold water which Learie and Sylvie were brave enough to brave for sake of William's endless imagination and Gerry's epic aesthetic. By the way we were respectful, got the permits required and left the space cleaner than we found it. We even cleaned up a lot of other's dog poo – Toronto's new epidemic.

In the second film (***Buoyancy***), three powerhouse, next generation artists Aria Evans, Calder White and Tia Kushniruk bound through urban landscapes as a next era of change, buoyant offspring of this unprecedented time where the descent has reversed, and a new ascent begins.

Each of these unique performers have busy schedules but the team did meet in December of 2021 to test out some ideas and create processes to co-create dance vocabulary. Gerry also began directing each performer in a monologue he had written specific to each individual. *"I would like this film to be dedicated to text and dance interweaved as a kind of call from high above - new roof top gardens of queerness."* We are so excited to begin filming in spring 2023.

RAY

In 2021/2022 we continued to edit the fourth film, **RAY**. Although RAY was initially set to be a short film, filmmaker Jesse Deganis Librera gathered remarkable images, directed text and captured environmental sound with his partner, filmmaker Kanchalee Wijakpaisarn. He then interlaced the film with composer John Sherlock's trance- like music score. The film now runs a substantial 36 minutes. This has not only challenged our editing budget but postponed our premiere.

As Jesse finishes last details we are excited to announce that **RAY** will premiere on a shared program with BouchardDanse's film **Woman in Blue** a film by William Yong on **October 17, 2022 at the Citadel Theatre in Toronto. We hope you can join us!**

ART OF PEACE ARRIVAL:2

Adapted as a result of COVID-19 this national project continued into the fall of 2021 with shared online live feed premiere on December 15, 2021. Directed and choreographed by Diane Roberts and Trentham within a visual landscape by visual artist Colvin-Woodruff, performers Lilion Quarmyne (Halifax), Olivia Davies (Vancouver), Carlos Rivera (Ottawa), Michael Caldwell (Toronto), and Sylvie Bouchard (Toronto) first met in numerous online gatherings. The gatherings reviewed the past process, began visioning/creating and then gathered in residency to implement a unique presentation of danced and spoken film and live feed performance.

The work was profoundly challenging and set a rich landscape for our difficult questions. We are now completing the complicated edits of the short films made from the process and presentation including extraordinary images and sound with in-depth interviews with all artists captured by Pablo Cardoba and Ella Cooper.

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch a video of Art of Peace: Arrival 2 by Ella Cooper.



Photos by Gerry Trentham



VALLEY OF SHADOWS

Gerry is honoured to be chosen as one of three artists that Fujiwara Dance Inventions will support within its Solo Legacy Project to co-choreograph a new solo work for film. **Valley of Shadows** unravels the layers of growing up gay in rural Alberta in the eerie landscape of the Drumheller badlands.

Denise Fujiwara joined by Mayumi Lashbrook arrived in Alberta to meet up with Gerry to scout locations, edit the script, evolve the dance vocabulary within site-specific locations, gather crew and prepare for William Yong to arrive at the week's end to begin filming.

"It was a roller coaster with so much planned but so much unknown. It was both terrifying and honouring to have Denise Fujiwara whom has been a colleague, guide, mentor and friend for over twelve years to arrive in my home town and hear details of my trials growing up gay in rural Alberta. I was grateful to Pounds board member and friend Troy Emery Twigg for touring with me the summer before to understand more deeply how this land had shaped me and how my settler and colonial heritage had misappropriated and distorted many of those sensations."

An exceptional time and some exceptional footage is thanks to Denise, William, Mayumi (who proved invaluable to the project) and our glorious Rosebud team - Rachel Leung for her dedicated camera work, Jordan Cutbill's drone operation and equipment expertise, Aaron Krogman for his cameo as the truck driver, Nathan Schmidt whose son took a role in the film, Paul Muir for all his organizational help and Valerie Given for her generosity as we filmed at the East Coulee School Museum. THANK YOU!



Photos by Mayumi Lashbrook and Gerry Trentham



GARDENER & THE HORSE

Michael Caldwell and Trentham have been researching and presenting online via zoom to one audience member at a time. Their provocative, irreverent and intimate queer space is delicately held within a creation phase in March 2022 in Montreal included the camera work of artist Pablo Cordoba. The trio are set to create live interactions from their various perspectives in preparation next season for the eye of William Yong who will join to develop the live/virtual landscape performance 'where just about anything may happen' in ways that dare each performer and each audience to care more deeply.

FIELDS OF PRACTICE

Gerry has been finding bit of time in between other projects to continue what he calls his Book Project. An interdisciplinary interactive “artist’s way” that gathers his 40 years of teaching into modules of learning – recorded and written materials that encourage a deepening of artistic practice. His team including Joanne Roberts, Phedra L’Abbé, Miriam Cummings, Martina Payette and Wendy King began beta testing new modules this year. “Now it is back to the writing to refine and edit the over 300 pages of interweaved philosophy, autobiography, anatomy, science and arts practice.

THE NEXT GENERATION

As always Gerry has been mentoring a number of artists as they find their artistic voice. He is excited to have Calder White, one of the performers in the new film Buoyancy, with the company over the beginning of next season to focus on new marketing and publicity but also share a legacy of company direction. Gerry is looking ahead for opportunities that lead to a smooth succession of artistic direction to the next generation over the next number of years.

“The impact of the many younger artists in our projects deeply influence the artistic work in creation and production. These relationships are central to my practice that values long term intergenerational engagement where art evolves through a dynamic relationship between wisdom that can be gained only through extensive practice and experience and insight that is sourced from the innocence of a beginning unfettered. I have known Calder for over 15 years when he first performed in my work as a young teenager. Now already a successful and powerful dancer and choreographer within a new generation of dance exploration our conversations are rich and moving. I am so excited to have this time together.” - Gerry

OTHER PROJECTS

For Fujiwara Dance Invention's – a Valley of Shadows Solo Legacy Project, A Solo Lab, and The Belonging Project where Gerry completed a short solo film called **Wound** and then worked with the rest of the team to begin creating a group work that was shown to invited guests, a Moving Parts film called Love Learn and Listen shot in Toronto, and a new Butoh Voice Workshop and a Eunoia Tour that were both scheduled and later postponed.

Teaching at Stratford with Diane Robert's Legacy Voice Workshop that began on line and finished as a first gathering of the Stratford conservatory post pandemic.

A prototype of a new photo and poetry collection called Gesture II was produced by long-time collaborator, visual artists Lorraine Parow. "I am so honoured to be asked to be a part of Lorraine's Gesture Project as a testament to our isolation through the pandemic."

MoonHorse's 20 over 50 project, a Zab Maboungou project and a new film by Nora Rosenthal were all scheduled but were each eventually postponed to 2022/23.

A new Tedd Robinson duet for Sylvie Bouchard and Gerry completed a process just as the year began and then although scheduled and rescheduled many time our next gathering and the performance at the Citadel in Toronto is planned for May 2023.

Moving Voice Intensive workshops were planned and then postponed as the fatigue and limitations of online voice and movement training or live training in studio with masks were too great. Voice is about breathing together and moving with real sense of each other.

And in Buffalo Gerry remounted his intricate choreography for the Shea's production Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime that was unfortunately closed down on March 11, 2022 two hours before opening night.

These projects were all weaved within our busy Pound's schedule.



THANK YOU!

"I thank the community at pounds, the board, the staff, the donors and our audience for continuing to work towards our world transformed. Much modern and contemporary dance in this past century has been at the for-ground of beginning to place women in the centre and in power, beginning to expose queer expression, beginning a fight for greater racial equity, beginning negotiation of religious and non-religious respect, and beginning the long journey to establish new equitable relationships with indigenous communities. With all the current back lash from those who don't approve of our progress, our inclusions and freedoms it is vital for me to continue to make art that does not shy from the tough questions on this path we have begun.

Cheers to 2022/23. Here we go!"

- Gerry

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