



Epiphany Dance Theater's Kim Ip, left, and Lydia Clinton are participants in San Francisco Trolley Dances; this weekend marks the 18th annual event. (Courtesy Amani Photography)

Trolley and aerial dance to hit SF streets this weekend

Flyaway Productions and Epiphany Dance Theater present free public works

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By Garth Grimball

Special to The Examiner

This weekend, two free public art events reveal The City through dance. “Meet Us Quickly With Your Mercy,” Thursday to Sunday from Flyaway Productions, and San Francisco Trolley Dances, Saturday and Sunday from Epiphany Dance Theater, call on San Franciscans to make racial, religious, political and dance movement connections.

“Meet Us Quickly” is a world premiere and the second piece in a planned trilogy of outdoor aerial public art performances addressing mass incarceration. Artistic Director Jo Kreiter is collaborating with Pulitzer Prize Finalist Rahsaan Thomas, who co-founded Prison Renaissance and has been incarcerated since 2000.

Kreiter uses aerial dance to ask “how Black and Jewish voices, including Jews of color, can amplify the call for racial justice via an end to mass incarceration. Gravity allows for a pendulum, or a swing,” said Kreiter. “Dancers swing in and out of cages. They swing into a state of Black joy. They swing toward alliance and partnership. And this is a central component of the piece — that Blacks and Jews have a long, complicated and at times beautiful history of partnership, and I would like to invoke that partnership more deeply in support of prison abolition.”

“Meet Us Quickly” is presented in partnership with Museum of African Diaspora and CounterPulse, with additional support from Prison Renaissance and Bend the Arc Jewish Action. The performances will take place on the exterior facades of CounterPulse and the Dahlia Hotel next door. The aerial dance is intended to reveal the power of the public in making public art.

Kim Epifano, director of Epiphany Dance Theater, knows what it means to make dance part of a neighborhood. This year marks the 18th annual San Francisco Trolley Dances. This signature public art event successfully pivoted to digital last year. Epifano and co-curator Jes DeVille are ready to bring dancers, audience members and physical sites back together.

“SFTD spotlights those corners and communities of San Francisco which have proudly retained their unique aesthetics and identities,” said DeVille. “At the same time, it showcases a city in flux.”

This year’s Trolley Dances explores the Castro and East Cut neighborhoods. In addition to work by Epiphany Dance Theater, audiences will see Babatunji & Charmaine, Joe Landini & Dancers, La Mezcla, Parangal Dance Company and Rising Rhythm engage with public spaces through dance.

For Epifano, each Trolley Dance is a new adventure into San Francisco. “When you try and get sites in neighborhoods, it’s about meeting the people. Who lives there? Who works there? What is the environment? You head down one path that doesn’t work and then magically another path opens up. Every year it’s amazing to me how generous people are to offer up their spaces.”

Salesforce Tower and Salesforce Transit Center dominate the architecture of the newly minted East Cut neighborhood, formerly known as Rincon Hill. Parangal Dance Company will perform in the grand hall of the Transit Center. According to Epifano, “The space transforms. Everywhere you turn there’s wedges and slices full of information. It’s like going on a treasure hunt — you may have walked by it a thousand times, but you see it brand new during the performances.”

IF YOU GO: Meet Us Quickly With Your Mercy

Presented by Flyaway Productions

Where: CounterPulse, 80 Turk St.

When: 7 and 8:30 p.m. Thursday and Friday; 5, 7 and 8:30 p.m. Saturday; 7 p.m. Sunday

Contact: counterpulse.org/mercy

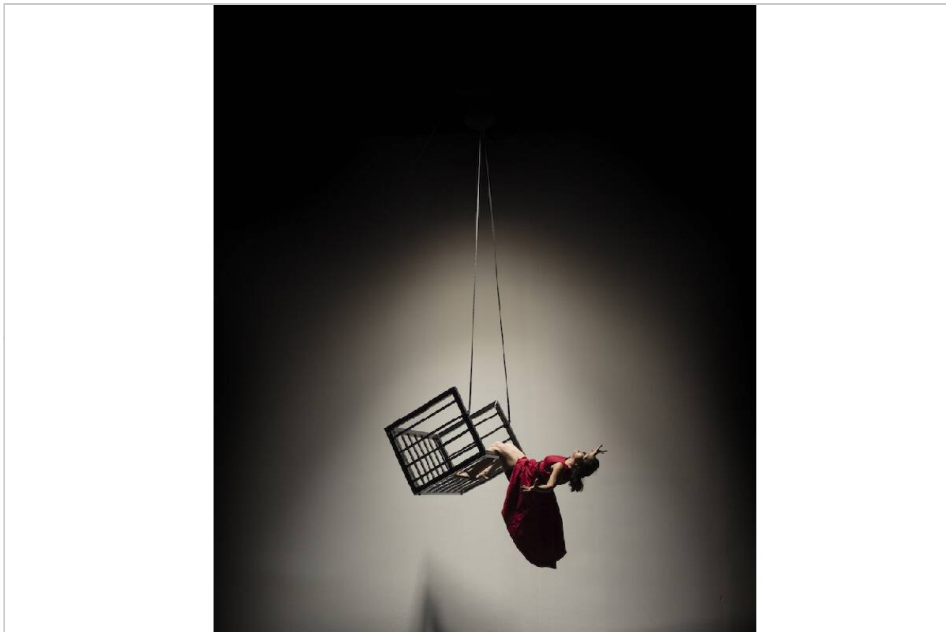
San Francisco Trolley Dances

Where: Tours start at Rikki Streicher Field, 19th and Diamond streets; or Natoma Cabana, 90 Natoma St.

When: 10:15, 11 and 11:45 a.m., 12:30 and 1:15 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Contact: epiphanydance.org/san-francisco-trolley-dances

DANCE



Megan Lowe appears in Flyaway Productions' premiere of "Meet Us Quickly With Your Mercy." (Courtesy RJ Muna)