

ART OF MOTION DANCE THEATRE



Dance Theatre

Artistic Director Lynn Needle

Artistic Associate Olivia Galgano



“...a force of nature—intense, extremely creative, committed to healing
...I love the range of personalities, ages and backgrounds in the company.”

-Dr. Nassim Assefi, Director of Stage Content for TedMed

“A gigantic success... Sensational!”

-Ralph Pucci

“Brilliant in timing... strict control”

-*The New York Times*

“Outstanding... remarkable... beyond our expectations!”

-Matko Tomicic, Longhouse Executive Director

“Absolutely fantastic”

-*Out and About*

“Acerbic lighting, props and costumes”

-*The Washington Post on Cool Wave*

“...gorgeously trained dancers. A wonderful piece. Nikolais on pointe.”

-Barbara Fox, *Princeton Comment*

“A flash of what is happening now... The choreographer is in
touch with the times in which we live”

-*Dance Magazine*



PRESENTING



SIX SOLOS

performed by Lynn Needle

**EXCERPTS PREMIERED IN COLIMA, MEXICO
AT THE BALLET FOLKLORICO DE LA UNIVERSIDAD DE COLIMA**

An hour-long one act in two sections, honoring passed legends and collaborators;
dedicated to creation, mysticism & rebirth.

Program includes complimentary master class taught by Lynn Needle
and meet the artist engagement/Q&A session.



The Art of Motion Dance Theatre is a Repertory Company performing original works by Artistic Director Lynn Needle, Artistic Associate Olivia Galgano, and Guest Artists. The Boutique Roster includes solos, duets, trios and small works touring with 2-5 dancers. The full Company Repertoire includes up to 12 dancers. AOMDT has toured theaters throughout the country and offers master classes as well as residences.

AOMDT offers several programs

Program I:
HEAVEN AND EARTH

The program, characterized as the epitome of organic beauty, pays homage to eastern and western aesthetics. The suite embodies the mysticism of the heavens and the glory of planet earth.

Program II:
POWER OF THE DANCE

An evening highlighting the art of street dance "from B-boy to Ballet" including original sound scores and collaborative projects with an emphasis on world music.
Live music optional

Program III:
LEGEND, MYTH and NATURE

A program exploring legendary composers and stories, Greek and Eastern mythology, and the intricacies of nature. Ideal for College and University settings. Featuring costumes by Annie Hickman.

Art of Motion Dance Theatre develops meaningful relationships between arts organizations, managers, presenters and audiences. We invest in customizing our programming to the specific needs of the demographic, theatre, university and festival themes.

Additional repertory pieces/audience & community engagement options available by request.



Mirror-Spectator

Michelle Ekizian Paints Emotional Portrait of Gorky in New Opera

FEBRUARY 7, 2019 BY CORBETT CHARLES MCCARTHY



...The dance of "The Exiled Heart" of the Sorrowful Intermezzo: So be It, The Spirit is Forever from "Gorky's Dream Garden," opened Saturday's five-hour Booking Dance Festival presented at Jazz of Lincoln Center's Appel Room which highlighted the week's 2019 conference of APAP (American Performing Arts Professionals). The segment featured solo dancer Lynn Needle (director and choreographer of Art of Motion Dancer Theatre). It was pure ecstasy. Needle singlehandedly entranced the audience with an incredible dramatic arc of emotion. Implying art in motion, the intensity and intricacy of the music and dance combined was remarkably in tune and in step with Gorky's art. The collaboration imparted the visceral impact of Gorky's fluid, biomorphic abstractions and his heartbreaking artist and his mother portraits.

The gripping music with the magnificent Lynn Needle held center stage. It is an attribute to Ekizian's and Needle's mastery that the audience felt the emotional pull without knowing of the

story line and the scene's pivotal turning point. It did not matter that the audience did not know of the opera's gender, boundary crossing avatar "The Black Monk" hailing from Anton Chekhov and the 10th-century Armenian Saint Gregory of Narek of Gorky's ancestral lands cast to sing the Sorrowful Intermezzo as a Prayer for Peace. It did not matter that the presentation's lighting did not flood the Appel Room stage in blood red light recalling the two defining opening and closing paintings for this scene which Ekizian has noted in her script to align with the themes of Genocide and loss ("Charred Beloved I," 1946, of the David Geffen Collection and "Agony," 1947, at MoMA). Was it planned or of profound coincidence that the performance's blue lighting forecasted Ekizian's script notes for the opera's "Rainbow Dawn" Finale — posed to take place in the blue hour before sunrise? In any event, the segment was illuminating and transcendent.

NEW JERSEY Stage

AOMDT Performs in NYC at DIG DANCE Series And At DANCE FEST LES

May 14, 2017



(NEW YORK, NY) -- AOMDT Artistic Director, Lynn Needle will be featured as part of the 92nd Street Y DIG DANCE Series curated by Catherine Tharin honoring 30 years of Friday's at Noon (FAN) 1987-2017. Needle was one of the first choreographers to be featured in the FAN Series in 1987. The three day festival will launch on Friday, May 19th at 8:00pm in the historic Buttenweiser Hall at the 92nd Street Y on Lexington Avenue, NYC.

The evening will honor Doris Humphrey's famous quote "All dances are too long." Needle will feature excerpts from her collaborative one act HEAVEN and EARTH, including the opening *SWAN* pas de deux, *Forest*, *Monarch* solo performed by Francis Lawrence from the Australian Ballet and DTH and *SHAKTI* which received global recognition at the TEDMED Conference at the Kennedy Center. Dr. Nassim Assefi, TEDMED Curator of Stage Content has said "Lynn is a force of nature - intense, extremely creative, committed to healing, a wonderful teacher and a wonderful dancer." The evening will include performances by Principals of the AOMDT, Janette Dishuk, Courtney Karam and Needle and features costume design by Annie Hickman and live percussion by Scott Simpson.

DANCE FEST LES 2017 is the first of an annual three-day summer dance Festival, June 2,3,4th, 2017 in El Jardin del Paraiso, located in the gardens between 4th and 5th Streets and Avenues C and D. The Festival features theater, dance and film. The AOMDT will be performing *SHAKTI* on Sunday, June 4th at 6:30PM. Curated by Martha Tornay and Victoria Roberts-Wierzbowski, the evening will include RAVENSWING Native American Dancers, Lynn Needle/Art of Motion Dance Theatre, Sarazina Joy Stein, Billy Blanken / Sheep Meadow Dance Theatre and Shaina Branfman and Bryan Strimpel/BS Movement.

The Art of Motion Dance Theatre is committed to a unique artistic vision honoring legacies, celebrating collaboration and expanding creative boundaries. Lynn Needle, former soloist with Nikolais Dance Theatre and Olivia Galgano, former principal with Ballet Russe have created original work on the company that has developed into a vast array of repertory honoring the complexities of dance as an art form. Their work is continually evolving, has a clear aesthetic base in the classical ballet and modern dance legacies with repertory featuring contemporary street dance. The synthesis of movement is unpredictable, theatrical and accessible; highly sophisticated yet street savvy. Needle and Galgano continue the vision and commitment to mixing genres, multimedia and theatricality by collaborating with costume designer, Annie Hickman, lighting designer, Ruth Grauert, and various musicians and composers who have created original scores for their work. AOMDT has been featured at the GLOBAL TEDMED Conference at the Kennedy Center, at Jacob's Pillow, Lincoln Center, numerous colleges and universities and the LongHouse Reserve annual gala as well as in Colima, Mexico where Lynn was a guest artist and performer. The company thrives on extensive and individualized collaboration with colleges, universities, conservatories, conductors, opera companies and museums.

Art Of Motion Dance Theatre To Perform With Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra



(RIDGEWOOD, NJ) -- Art of Motion Dance Theatre (AOMDT) Artistic Directors, Lynn Needle and Olivia Galgano are collaborating with Artistic Director/Conductor, Diane Wittry and the Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra on an evening entitled SYPHMONIC DANCES celebrating 76 Years of the RSO on May 6. The concert will begin at 8:00pm, and will take place at West Side Presbyterian Church at 6 South Monroe Street in Ridgewood, NJ. Tickets for adults, seniors, and students cost \$25, \$20, and \$10 in advance; \$28, \$23, and \$13 at the door.

The evening features 85 musicians and Principals from the AOMDT will perform excerpts from Respighi's *La Boutique Fantasque* and Leonard Bernstein's *West Side Story*, *Symphonic Dances*. AOMDT Artistic Directors, Lynn Needle and Olivia Galgano who performed with *Ballet Russe* in *La Boutique* collaborated on the choreography. Featured dancers include Ms. Needle, Janette Dishuk, M.A. Taylor, Francis Lawrence, Courtney Karam, Patricia McTique, Laura Rime, Romainson Romain and Katy Marshall. The Ridgewood Symphony Orchestra completes its 76th season, featuring the Art of Motion Dance Theatre and virtuoso pianist Yoonie Han. The program will also include Peter Warlock's *Capriol Suite* for Orchestra as well as Louis Moreau Gottschalk's *Grande Tarantelle* for Piano and Orchestra.

The Art of Motion Dance Theatre is a Ridgewood-based repertory company, directed by Lynn Needle and Olivia Galgano. The company specializes in creating original work that reflects the complexities of dance as a 21st- Century art form. The AOMDT is committed to a unique artistic vision honoring legacies, celebrating collaboration and expanding creative boundaries. Lynn Needle, former soloist with *Nikolais Dance Theatre* and Olivia Galgano, former principal with *Ballet Russe* have created original work on the company that has developed into a vast array of repertory honoring the complexities of dance as an art form. Their work is continually evolving, has a clear aesthetic base in the classical ballet and modern dance legacies with repertory featuring contemporary street dance. The synthesis of movement is unpredictable, theatrical and accessible; highly sophisticated yet street savvy.

AOMDT has been featured at the GLOBAL TEDMED Conference at the Kennedy Center, at Jacob's Pillow, Lincoln Center, and the LongHouse Reserve annual gala as well as in Colima, Mexico where Lynn was a guest artist and performer. The company thrives on extensive and individualized collaboration with artists, colleges, universities, conservatories and museums. The Ridgewood Symphony attracts players from 48 different municipalities in Bergen, Passaic and Rockland counties. As one of the largest volunteer symphonies in the country, the RSO brings a wide variety of classical music to the region's children, youth and their families. Each year the Orchestra sponsors "Festival Strings," a middle school winter youth orchestra that is widely recognized as an outstanding music education event.

The Ridgewood Symphony is led by Diane Wittry, who is in her second season as RSO Artistic Director international competitions, and has performed to great acclaim with major orchestras in celebrated concert halls all over the United States and the world. This program is made possible in part by a grant administered by the Bergen County Division of Cultural & Historic Affairs from funds granted by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. For more information on programs, subscriptions, or advance ticket sales, call (201) 612-0118, or visit the RSO website at www.ridgewoodsymphony.org, or www.aomdt.org.

The New York Times

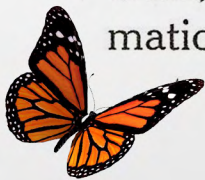
THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 2014

Metropolitan



LOIS GREENFIELD

HACKETTSTOWN The Art of Motion Dance Theater presents "Legend, Myth and Nature" on April 5 at 8 p.m. as part of "Dance Fest," at the Sitnik Theater of the Lackland Performing Arts Center, 715 Grand Avenue, through April 11. Tickets are \$10 to \$20. Information: (908) 979-0900; centenarystageco.org.



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THE RIDGEWOOD NEWS

FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2015

northjersey.com/ridgewood

THE RIDGEWOOD NEWS

ARTS & LEISURE

DANCING IN TRIBUTE

D 5



THE RIDGEWOOD NEWS
JUNE 26, 2015

PHOTO COURTESY OF LYNN NEEDLE

From left: Lynn Needle, Donna Scro and Trista ReDavid DeFilippis dance in Nikolais' Girl's Trio. NIK: A tribute to the legacy of Alwin Nikolais, was held at the Abrons Arts Center Henry Street Settlement Playhouse Centennial 1915-2015, on June 12 and 13.

The Star-Ledger

Dance Fest returns to Hackettstown *By Robert Johnson/The Star-Ledger*

March 28, 2014



Art of Motion Dance Theatre will appear at Centenary College
Lois Greenfield

Wearing a business suit makes a person look tame and civilized. You don't expect a fellow in a dark wool blend to go crawling about on all fours. He shouldn't stick his nose up close and sniff you all over. He shouldn't growl menacingly.

And while that crease in his trousers doesn't mean he's honest, he certainly shouldn't bare his teeth and pull back coiled for a spring as if — oh, my — he intended to eat you.

Try telling that to the characters in "Jangala," the dramatization of Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book" that **Lustig Dance Theatre** of New Brunswick brings to Hackettstown on Sunday. Accessorizing the uniform of corporate America with bits of fur or haberdashery, and borrowing some of his dance vocabulary from India, Lustig tells the story of the child Mowgli, who is raised by wolves, befriended by bears and kidnapped by monkeys, and whose life is seriously threatened by the angry tiger Shere Khan.

"It's a really cool piece. It's fast-paced and exciting," says Lea Antolini, an assistant professor of theater and dance at Centenary College, where Lustig's "Jangala" is scheduled to open this year's **Dance Fest**.

Antolini, who helps curate the series, adds that she hopes "Jangala" will attract families to the Lackland Center for the Performing Arts, where the Centenary Stage Company has developed an audience for theater. Sponsored by the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Dance Fest is in its third year of presenting works by local choreographers. The series will continue with performances by the **Art of Motion Dance Theatre** of Ridgewood on April 5, and **Moe-tion Dance Theater** of Frenchtown on April 11.

The series is meant to be educational. Free dance workshops are also included, and Antolini says her dance students have grown more sophisticated since the series began. "I've seen immense changes in their ability to understand modern dance," she says.

"I try to make this festival communal, too," she adds, explaining that both Art of Motion and Moe-tion Dance Theater will incorporate non-professionals in their performances.

Antolini helped prepare the breast cancer survivors and other volunteers who will take part in "BRCA1/Genome," a dance choreographed by Art of Motion's director, Lynn Needle. The musical score composed by Linda Marcel is based in a pattern of genetic mutations that indicate susceptibility to illness.

While the volunteers did not require dance experience, the Art of Motion dancers are highly skilled, Antolini hastens to point out. "The ballet training is very apparent," she says.

Yoga is another influence on Needle's work, and the April 5 program will also include "Heaven and Earth," a piece tinged with eastern mysticism.

Maureen Glennon, who directs Moe-tion Dance Theater, includes a mix of students and community participants in "Greater Than Zero," a premiere inspired by the "See No Evil" proverb.

"I love her style. It's very theatrical," Antolini says.

In addition to works by Glennon, the evening will offer opportunities for guest choreographers Lisa Peluso and Hannah Rolfes to present dances with feminist themes. The company's ambitious program also features "Passages To," a work-in-progress in which the performers interact with grand, sculptural designs.

TEDMED

TEDMED Friday: Natural Inspirations, Surreal Designs

Posted on September 13, 2014 by TEDMED Staff

TEDMED Blog TEDMED 2014

The third and final day at TEDMED 2014 touched on grand influences: The vast impact of our life events, lifestyles and external environment on our minds and bodies.

We're all "swimming in an ocean of light" but, like fish in water, are generally unaware of and pay little attention to our environment, said **Mariana Figueiro** of the Lighting Research Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Yet light is the conductor of our internal symphony, influencing when we sleep and wake, our cognitive abilities, how well our medicine works, even how much we eat. Minding your light might include shutting out blue daylight with rose-colored glasses (literally) to ward off jet leg, and avoiding bright artificial light for a couple of hours before sleep.

Jeffrey Karp, co-director of the Center for Regenerative Therapeutics at the Brigham and Women's Hospital, has invented slug-inspired tissue glues, parasitic worm-inspired micro-needles, jellyfish-inspired cell-sorting chips, and a gecko-inspired medical tape. His advice to other medical technology designers who aspire to co-opt nature's best designs? Take a trip to the zoo. We know that our brain influences our actions, but science increasingly points to the crucial role our gut plays in our feelings. **John Cryan**, neurobiologist at University College Cork, explains how metabolic activity in our gut microbiota can play a role in how our brain functions, particularly in regulating emotions. Research has just begun into how administering helpful probiotics – called psychobiotics – may help improve mental health.



Art of Motion Dance Theatre performs at TEDMED 2014 at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER



Dancers dressed in gold perform at furniture gallerist Ralph Pucci's party.



At the end of New York's first design week, Flatiron furniture gallerist Ralph Pucci threw an opening to introduce two lines from artists in his internationally acclaimed stable.

Art of Motion Dance Theatre dancers painted gold moved around expressing an art form as modern as the furniture that surrounded them. More exotic, a man sat cross-legged on a dining room table, playing a Bansuri bamboo flute.

The event feted the work of glass artisan Lianne Gold and woodworker Chris Lehrecke, who presented in unison with his wife, jewelry



PUCCI PARTY

Flatiron furniture gallery lights up with the work of three artisan

maker Gabriella Kiss. Both made an impression on the stylish crowd and Pucci, who sells to the best interior designers in the world and A-list furniture lovers like Kanye West.

Gold presented her first collection of lighting. As the night drew near and Pucci's 15,000-square-foot loft grew dark, her collection took on new meaning. Large chandeliers in the entryway showed solid blocks of glass formed by sculpted wax molds. One of the pieces glowed like a burning bush made of bricks. It cost \$86,000.

"For a first show, I have never seen an artist come so far," said Pucci. "This will lead the next generation of handcrafted luxury lighting."

Gold, who lives blocks from the beach in Venice, Calif., anxiously walked guests from sconce to chandelier to standing lamp, showing off pieces with names like Big Sky and Ice.

"Thick, beautiful glass from Italian designs of the 1940s were my inspiration," she said. "But then you add something that hasn't been done before, like

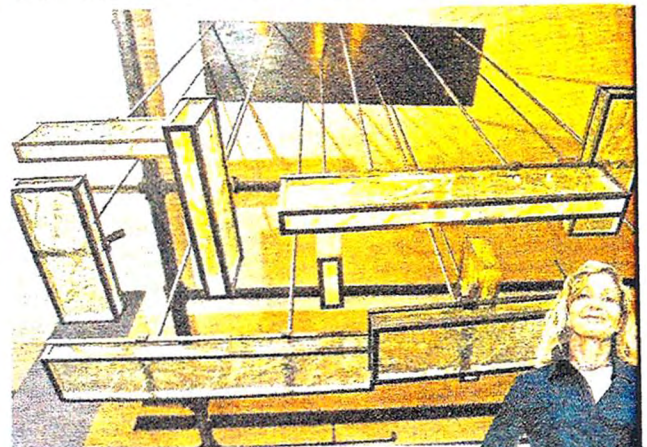
glass 2-by-4s, and you have something strong, elegant and simple."

Downstairs in the ninth-floor loft, photographer Deborah Turbeville (she shot fashion models in Versailles) held court on a Jens Risom couch in front of her work. There, Lehrecke and Kiss mingled among their pieces.

Taking wood to a new level, Lehrecke found remnants from a fallen tree on a bicycle trek through the Hudson Valley, where they live. He used every element of the elm to combine fine woodworking with the harsh reality of nature. The result is a new sensibility that furniture made of wood has never approached — they are American frontier and American Indian at once, refined yet still raw.

His wife took the pieces further. Kiss designed bronze insects, placing each in specific locations on objects. It takes the outside in, adding frolic to science.

"We wanted to step into a more exaggerated direction," said Lehrecke of the first time he and Kiss worked together in a formal way. "There is nothing normal about these pieces."



That's how Pucci likes it. "You push artists to hit new levels. It's what you hope for," said Pucci. "When it happens, everyone feels it."

Glass artisan Lianne Gold and her creation "Ice From Above."

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

The Hamptons Art Scene in an Eggshell

BY MARSHALL HEYMAN

EAST HAMPTON—In comparison to the seriousness with which everyone takes themselves and their blue-chip real estate around town, the art scene in the Hamptons can be pretty kooky.

Take, for instance, the exhibit that's up at the moment at the Fireplace Project, a gallery that tends to attract a relatively stylish crowd. Last summer, the former fashion designer and local resident Helmut Lang showed his sculptures, made of melted, shredded clothing his company, when it was in existence, had made and manufactured.

Until Aug. 12, the Fireplace Project is showing "yes pleased," a solo exhibition by Terence Koh, a Chinese-Canadian artist who often gallivants around town with people like Marina Abramović and Lady Gaga. Mr. Koh made a piano for Lady Gaga to perform on at the Grammys and she has appeared on his YouTube show. He usually wears white and you see him quite regularly in the party pages of Interview, Paper and W.

"Yes pleased" features five sculptures: One is of a rooster made of neon tubing and wires with a purposely dirty title. The rest are eggs. Yes, eggs. Two are gilded in 22-karat gold. One that is not lies on a slab of snow-white Thassos marble, which is apparently very, very rare and expensive. This piece is called "my family ate my son knot knowing about truth."

There is clearly a pun here—somewhere probably closer to the surface than anyone would like to admit—about the laying of eggs. Needless to say, there is no doubt that a few Hamptons residents will buy Mr. Koh's new sculptures. They will be displayed in their fancy, fancy beach houses. Both the house and the art will go up in value, and the proverbial egg, as they say, will be on our face.

Mr. Koh's new work is something of an amuse-bouche for the whole frittata that is Robert Wilson's big Watermill Center benefit next weekend. This is where you see some of the most entertaining, avant garde, some might even say absurd performance art in the Hamptons or pretty much anywhere else. People still talk about the two artists who buried themselves in the ground for last year's fundraiser.

Somewhere in between—perhaps an hors d'oeuvre, perhaps a small pasta course—is the annual LongHouse Reserve summer benefit. This year's, coincidentally, honored Mr. Wilson, a regular supporter of the stunning institution and its impresario, Jack Lenor Larsen, a textile designer and weaver by trade.

Mr. Larsen happened to be celebrating his own 85th birthday on Saturday. "I feel much better than I expected," he said. There is always a theme, and this year's was "Composition." Besides Mr. Wilson, the evening also honored Dorothy Lichtenstein, the widow of Roy. That may have explained the instructions to "Compose yourself in black, white and yellow." "I just wanted black and white," said Mr. Larsen.



Pearl Gabel for The Wall Street Journal Dancers at LongHouse Reserve Summer Gala



Pearl Gabel for The Wall Street Journal Dancers at LongHouse Reserve Summer Gala

"Next year we're going to do shades of white, which makes sense because we're honoring [architect] Richard Meier," said Peter Olsen, a member of the board of trustees. But then, there would be no ladies wearing crazy yellow clown wigs, or men wearing bright yellow Crocs. Or yellow capes, like the one Mr. Larsen had on. Or yellow cocktails made from starfruit. Or tents made of yellow flags and sunflowers. Or liypads assembled from yellow flowers in one of the several pools of water that line the property.

"It's sort of like Watermill light," said Bonnie Comely, the wife of the theater producer Stewart Lane. They had come to the party for the first time as big supporters of Mr. Wilson and his cabinet of wonders.

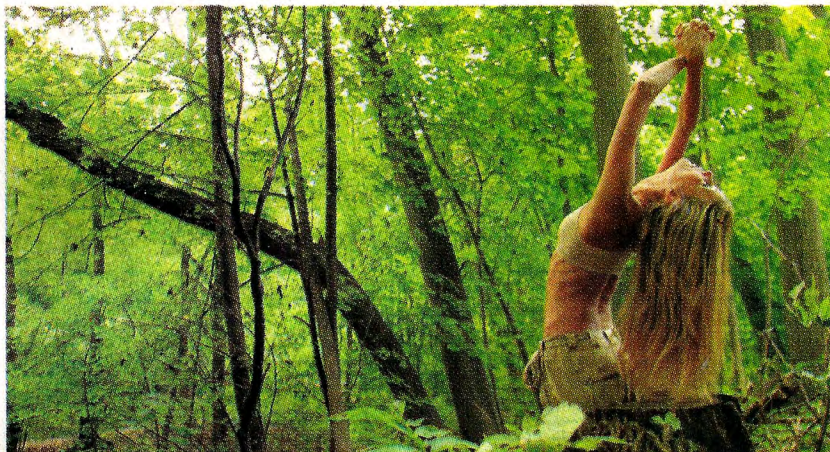
"Unless Karen Finley is going to show up over there and do something strange with chocolate and yams," she added, referring to the outré performance artist whose grant from the National Endowment of the Arts was famously vetoed. No, nothing of that sort, though the party is certainly getting curiously more Watermill-ish. This year there were trapeze artists dangling from high structures, and "A Midsummer Night's Dream"-inspired dance piece with a group of women dressed like Nefertiti.

But perhaps everything can be encapsulated—in a nutshell, or an eggshell—by a group of sculptures that currently line the LongHouse entrance by Yue Minjun. They are of Mr. Minjun covering his ears, drowning out all the noise from outside. And there is really nothing like coming to this pristine, lovely property and doing just that.

Student Life

the independent newspaper
of Washington University in
St. Louis since 1878

International dancer Lynn Needle comes to WU



COURTESY OF DEBORAH MICHAELS

Lynn Needle begins her appointment as a guest professor in the Dance department on Oct. 22. She will offer a multiple modern dance classes and a Luigi Jazz class.

KATHLEEN HEIST SCENE REPORTER

Mary-Jean Cowell, Coordinator of Washington University's Dance program, is bringing professional dancer Lynn Needle to campus in hopes that students will learn from her versatile talents. Needle will be a guest professor in the Dance department starting Oct. 22.

Throughout her dance career, Needle has performed on six continents as a principal soloist with the Nikolais Dance Theatre. She is currently the founder and artistic director of Art of Motion, a nonprofit performing arts organization in Ridgewood, N.J.

Her husband, Mark Needle, and son, sophomore Max Needle, are former and current students of Wash. U. Needle has also performed once at Edison Theatre and taught as a guest lecturer during Parents and Family Weekend last year. Her presence promises to be rewarding for both students and faculty of the Dance department.

"[Needle's] enthusiasm is boundless," Cowell said. "Dancers can be sure to expect a high-energy class."

Needle will be teaching a variety of levels of modern classes and a Luigi Jazz class.

Needle entered the dance scene with a bang—a London-punk-infused modern dance, to be exact. At just 20-years old, Needle had her choreography performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. Her carefully choreographed piece started with dancers smoking on stage, and soon the dancers, who were wearing black leather jackets, were putting what looked like an album cover into motion. Needle said

that her choreography was selected for the performance because it captured the essence of her generation.

Needle's enthusiasm for teaching is apparent.

"I love the range of teaching—from the 3-year-olds to the 80-year-olds," Needle said. But teaching in the arts—especially dance—can be an uphill batter.

Needle expressed frustration at the lack of funding given to dance programs across the country. Her hope is that philanthropists will turn their attention to the arts, and to dance in particular. In order to raise awareness about the importance of dance, Needle has committed herself to promoting the value of artistic expression through movement, hoping that eventually programs will be awarded more funding.

Although Needle started her dancing career as a ballerina at four years old, she fell in love with modern dance during her undergraduate years at Connecticut College. To Needle, modern dance is about "the freedom of choice and expression—the search for unique expression," which is exactly what appealed to her. While somewhat wild and free-spirited in her youth, Needle worked diligently at developing her technique and mastering the art of dance.

This diligence is what has enabled Needle to stay optimistic and to continue actively dancing and performing.

"I credit my health to my commitment to technique," Needle said. While working with Nikolais, Needle developed a sense of resilience, a virtue that has proven useful in every endeavor she has taken on.

Write to Kathleen Heist at
KATHLEEN.HEIST@STUDLIFE.COM

LYNN LESNIAK NEEDLE RYT/500 earned her B.A. in Dance *Cum Laude* from Connecticut College where she was the recipient of the ACDFAs *Dance Magazine* National Award for Choreography. Her work *COOL WAVE*, featured in *Dance Magazine* was performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and hailed as, "a flash of what is happening now...Lesniak has a great theatrical sense...the choreographer is in touch with the times in which we live." Lynn is a former soloist with the Nikolais Dance Theatre where she toured internationally, traveling to six out of seven continents and more than 40 United States. She has been influenced by many, including Martha Graham, Twyla Tharp, Luigi, Ann Reinking, and B.K.S. Iyengar, but studied intensely with her mentors Alwin Nikolais and Murray Louis at the Nikolais/Louis Dance Lab in New York City. Nik created seminal works on Lynn during her tenure with the company and she began teaching and assisting Hanya Holm. While on tour she was later asked to direct the Nikolais and Louis Dance Lab, a professional studio school of dance in Soho where she arranged for dancers from around the world to study, choreograph, and perform. During this time, Lynn pioneered classes in Pilates-based exercises, training with thera-bands, trampolines, and fitness balls. Her students included many dancers who have gone on to perform with professional companies and tour throughout the world. Lynn has been featured in the PBS documentary *Nik and Murray*, been photographed by Lois Greenfield, Lizzie Himmel and Tom Caravaglia and has enjoyed collaborating with lighting and costume designers, composers, and poets. She has choreographed hundreds of works including for MTV, corporate videos for Verizon, Global TEDMED, and premiered her work at the Boston Conservatory, Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C, the Westbeth Theater Center in the West Village, and the JOYCE SOHO, The Hatch, American Dance Guild, MMAC, the 92nd Street Y, as well as NYU, Hunter College, Rutgers University, Montclair State University, Ramapo College, Rider University, Bergen Community College, and for international residences. In many of these venues, Lynn has choreographed for the *Art of Motion Dance Theatre*, a company established after she founded the non-profit studio, Art of Motion, Inc, with Olivia Galgano, her Artistic Associate. Lynn has also worked as an artist in residence in the public schools as a staff developer, and is currently an adjunct Professor of Modern Dance at Bergen Community College. She has dedicated her life to preserving the Nikolais legacy and training future generations of professional dancers. Her most recent collaborations with performance artist and costume designer Annie Hickman, centenarian lighting designer, Dr. Ruth Grauert, a multitude of composers, and former Pilobolus Principal Dancer, Kent Lindemer have led to the creation of new work exploring body mechanics, the physics of partnering, sculptural shape and complex relationships. Needle has been a featured speaker and presenter at APAP, ICIA, NDEO, Global TEDMED and is the recipient of numerous awards including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the College of Southern Nevada "Dance in the Desert" Festival as well as an Andrew W. Mellon Cultural Exchange Grant for international teaching in Colima, Mexico at the Universidad de Colima and recipient of repeat grants from the Bergen County Division of Cultural and Historic Affairs, a division of the NJSCA.



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