

Across Oceans Arts

My Heart Is A Spoon

Artist Bios

Artistic Director-choreographer

Maxine Heppner choreographer, artistic director, designer: has been creating, producing and teaching since the early 70's. Since 1990 her career has included international collaborations particularly in the contemporary arts of Asia. Her intimate chamber creations and massive big-vision projects have gained recognition worldwide with performances across Canada, the USA, Asia, Australia and Europe. KRIMA for 140 performers in the lobby of the Young Centre was named in the top 10 dance shows of 2009 by NOW. Her chamber work "Moments in Time" was described as "exposing the very heart of the human condition" (Globe&Mail). Visual Media includes dancevideos screened in Toronto, Montreal, Melbourne, Singapore, Tokyo, Yokohama, Jakarta, Athens and photographic exhibits in Berkeley California, and Toronto. Recognitions of her work include most recently: two Dora Mavor Moore/TTA Awards for collaborative creations, and 3 Dora nominations; 2010 Artist-in-residence University College University of Toronto, an International Puppetry Association Citation for Excellence (co-creation and performer for InXanadu), a senior OAC-Chalmers Fellowship, "Audience Favorite" Guelph Dance Festival 2014, "Toronto Star Site-specific favorite" 2013 and "Audience Favorite" at the Jogjakarta Bienale 2006.

Maxine's creation, education and community service is characterized as collaborative in nature, with a deeply humanistic thrust. In 1996 she founded the arts group "Across Oceans Arts: international collaborations in contemporary arts" producing events that highlight connections between artists, individuals and communities in Canada and worldwide; in conventional theatres, galleries, fields, harbours; symposia, seminars, productions; for individuals or with many 100's. Of note: The AtHOME project (2001-3) brought over 200 artists to Toronto for research, production and public symposia to explore the nature of collaboration in dance and across disciplines. The Resources Online page, video-films and the book/dvd collection "writings on collaboration" showcase research in collaborative process. The Choreographic Marathon provides in-depth research environments for creators and interpreters. Maxine teaches her performance and training techniques regularly in Canada and abroad.

FROM JAPAN

Takako Segawa dancer: trained in traditional arts and contemporary Japanese movement styles in Kochi (youth) and Nippon Sports Science University, Tokyo, London Contemporary Dance School. Awards include the All Japan Kobe Dance Festival Award in 1994, 1998 and in 2005 recognized at the Stuttgart International Solo Dance Festival. From 1999 she danced with leading companies in England, Italy, Slovenia and Greece notably International Athens Dance Festival, Kalamata International Dance Festival, and Mediterranean Dance Festival. In Canada, working with Maxine Heppner, Takako has also danced with Hiroshi Miyamoto, Xing Ballet Theatre, Corpus, Cube3, Buyaku, Keiko

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Ninomiya, Nuit Blanche and independent projects. In Japan she performs and choreographs as guest artist and directing Sephanic Arts Dance Theater. Since 2005 Takako has trained and worked with Maxine as principle artist in Moments in time, and the Memory, Cycles, and Krima projects in Canada, Greece, Singapore, Japan, and Indonesia.

Fujimoto Takayuki light artist and media: has created a unique staging method using LED light systems and installations to manipulate all colours of the spectrum. His aim is to create new “circuits” to connect directly to the audience with no less strength than the connection created by the stage performer communicating directly to the audience in a live stage experience. He is principle designer for the Japanese performance group Dumb Type. Independently his work “True”, created with Tsuyoshi Shirai and Takao Kawaguchi has toured since 2007. He has worked with Ryoji Ikeda on the videomusic concert series “formula”, with Hong Kong choreographer Daniel Yeung, Vietnam-French choreographer Ea Sola, Singapore’s video artist Choy Ka Fai, on the installation/concert path with the guitarist Kazuhisa Uchihashi and singer UA, with Monochrome Circus and Kyoto Noh Theatre’s 2011 production.

An element of Sarah Shugarman’s sound design, the **Yoshida Brothers’** music is a fusion of the rapid percussive Tsugaru-shamisen style with Western and other regional influences, on the shamisen and also electro instruments, drums and synthesizers. The Yoshida brothers began to study from five years of age under Koka Adachi, from 1989 they studied the Tsugaru-jamisen style under Takashi Sasaki. They debuted in 1999. Their first album sold over 100,000 copies and made them celebrities in Japan, a fact that surprised the Yoshida Brothers themselves. They have since attracted a huge international audience.

FROM CANADA

Gerry Trentham dancer: synthesizes dance, scripted text, visual art, video and media design, and live commissioned music. His *Four Mad Humours* (2012) simultaneously premiered in Toronto, Montreal, Buffalo, and Chicago, connected by internet2 technology. Other creations include *Apology* (2017), *Autobiography: Chapters One through Five* (2003) and *Cathedral* (1998), listed in Toronto’s Globe and Mail and Now Magazine as one of the top ten best new works of that year. Gerry has performed extensively throughout North America and Europe, in works of many of Canada’s prominent contemporary choreographers including seven years with Serge Bennathan’s Dancemakers and Denise Fujiwara, and Claudia Moore. Six works in which he has originated roles have been nominated for and/or received Toronto Dora Awards. Gerry was acclaimed for performance in Bennathan’s *Chronicles of a Simple Life*. New York Times dance critic Anna Kisselgoff called his performance “remarkably lyrical” and Clive Barnes of the New York Post wrote “...powerfully acted by the outstanding Gerry Trentham”.

Sarah Shugarman composer/sound designer: has performed and created for performance and award-winning films in Canada, China, Japan, and the U.S with dance artists of the Ailey, Graham, Cunningham, and Limon companies, the Toronto Dance

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Theatre, Cirque du Soleil, Pro Arte Danza, Sapporo Ballet Seminar, Peggy Baker, Tapestry Dance Co., Andrea Nann, Dancemakers. Commissions include works for Hari Krishnan, Allan Kaeja, Toru Shimazaki, Naoko Murakoshi, Reiko Matusuoka Ballet, Yuichiro Inoue, Tasha Lawson, Ryerson Dance Department, Colin Connor, Deborah Lundmark and Maxine Heppner. Collaborative installations have been presented at the Diane Farris Gallery, BC Festival of the Arts and CBC. Teaching includes community settings in Cambodia, Costa Rica, Pacific Northwest, Department of Music and Dance at Kobe Jogakuin University (Japan), Shadbolt Center for the Arts, Canada's National Ballet School, Canadian Children's Dance Theatre, and University of Toronto Schools.

En Lai Mah choreo-assistant: graduate of the UC Drama Program at University of Toronto, he is an actor, physical performer, and Ontario champion of traditional Northern Shaolin Tai Mantis Kung Fu. *En Lai* represented *New Harlem Productions*, "a most-promising emerging artist" in the "Toronto Five 2014" program, Stratford Festival, Ontario, studying with Janine Pearson. He is also active at *Pressgang Theatre's* storytelling at the *Handlebar*, as well as performing spoken word on stages throughout Toronto. Theatre and Dance Performances include: "Tough" (directed by Ken Gass with the Canadian Rep Youth Ensemble: 2016), Toronto Fringe hits "Silk Bath"(2016) & "Served" (2015) , "10/10/10 (Dancemakers 2015) "They say he fell" (Pandemic-Cahoots) Theatre Passe Muraille 2015, "You Can Sleep When Your Dead" (Theatre Lab at Campbell House Museum 2013), "I Am Very Far" (Pressgang Theatre in Summerworks 2013), and "Vangroovy" (Theatre Ocean).

Jérôme de la Pierre visual artist and interactive designer: studied Computation Arts and Interactive Design at Concordia University and Contemporary Arts and New Media at IMUS University in France. He is artistic director of Active media inc and Anartistic, and a freelance visual designer and researcher at Topological Media Lab, Montreal. He has collaborated with artists and researchers, like Pk langshaw, Sha Xin Wei, Michael Montanaro and Jean Derome, at festivals and events worldwide. His research is based on relationships between human and technology and non-linear interactivity, focusing on experiences of urban social behavior. Jérôme works in graphic and web design, responsive video, interactive installations, performance and scenography.

Arun Srinivasan technical production manager: has worked extensively in performing arts for the last 17 years. Dance collaborators include Robert Desrosiers , Peter Chin, Danny Grossman, inDance, COBA and Tiger Princess Dance Projects. Theatre credits include The Canadian Stage Co., The Globe Theatre, The New World Stage, fu-GEN, Cahoots Theatre Projects, k'Now Theatre & Buddies In Bad Times Theatre. He has received two Dora Mavor Moore Award nominations for Outstanding Lighting Design. Recently, Arun has had the privilege of teaching lighting design at both York and Ryerson Universities. For Maxine, Arun has designed *Nine Bronze Pieces*, *North of Java* and *Krima* and is pleased to be production managing "my heart is a spoon". Productions have taken him to Ukraine, Malaysia, Singapore, India and across North America. When not working in the dark, he can be found at the park on the monkey bars with his wife and kids. Arun is a member of the Associated Designers of Canada.