Dance

This set gives a picture of dance, 2 texts, and an interview with Trisha Brown.

Walker Art Center/Judson Dance Theater Chronology

The Judson Dance Theater artists are of foundational importance to the Performing Arts Program of the Walker Art Center--chronologically and philosophically. Given their unstoppable drive to create something new, their irreverent joy in upending the rules, and their profound and influential redefinition of the art form of dance, they are seminal artists of their time and of our time as well. While the Judson Dance Theater (1962-1967) never actually performed at the Walker (despite active correspondence and interest), the primary artists of the collective and the innovations they helped spawn have been actively supported by the Walker for more than 30 years. In fact, the Walker's first director of performing arts, Suzanne Weil, invited Grand Union, a collective that grew directly out of Judson and included many of the same members, for an extensive residency to help open the new Walker building in 1971. This and later Grand Union residencies both empowered the artists and radically impacted the Twin Cities dance and performance communities.

Walker Art Center/Judson Dance Theater Chronology 1962

The Judson Dance Theater

The postmodern era of modern dance is commonly marked by the formation of the Judson Dance Theater in what was originally the Judson Memorial Church in New York City. In this small community space, visual artists, musicians, writers, filmmakers, theater directors, and choreographers came together as a group of individuals committed to "democratizing" theatrical dance. On July 6, 1962, the theater company gave its first performance, Concert of Dance #1, at the Judson Church. For the next 20 years, the Judson Dance Theater's influence would dominate postmodern dance.

Although the group's many members had diverse goals, they nevertheless shared some common ideas. They rejected the dramatic narratives of traditional dance and instead emphasized physicality over style. Seeking to rid dance of all that was superfluous, they rejected mastery of technique, sometimes using untrained performers who would simply walk or run in complex patterns. Taking gestures from everyday life, they sought to remove the barriers of what could be considered dance and non-dance.

The Grand Union

A landmark dance/theater collective devoted to expanding the definitions of improvisation. Formed after the Judson Dance Theater disbanded.

1965-1966
Steve Paxton and Jill Johnston with the Judson Dance Theater begin correspondence with Walker Art Center Performing Arts Coordinator John Ludwig. Paxton visits in 1966.

1967
The Judson Dance Theater in residence scheduled, but canceled due to illness of Johnston and Rainer.

The Judson Dance Theater breaks up (1962-1967).

1968
John Ludwig leaves the Walker Art Center; Sue Weil becomes Coordinator of Performing Arts.

1969
Merce Cunningham and dancers in residence.

The Walker Art Center building torn down in March 1969. Performances held at the Guthrie Theater and other venues in the Twin Cities.

1971
The new Walker Art Center, designed by Edward Larrabee Barnes, opens on May 15. The Grand Union in residence. First residency in the new Walker building.

1973
Valda Setterfield, David Gordon, Sara Rudner, Douglas Dunn in residence.

1974
Robert Whitman performs *Music*, presented as part of the exhibition *Projected Images*. Trisha Brown in residence.

1975

Yvonne Rainer in residence. Performance with John Erdman in multimedia theater work *Kristina*, and as part of Visiting Filmmakers series with Babette Mangolte's *Film about a Woman Who* (1974).

The Grand Union in residence.

David Gordon and Valda Setterfield perform seminal works *Chair* and *One Act Play* in conjunction with the exhibition *Herman Miller*.

1976
Sue Weil leaves the Walker Art Center; Nigel Reddin becomes Performing Arts Director. Trisha Brown in residence.

1977
Lucinda Childs and Robert Wilson perform *I Was Sitting on My Patio This Man Came up I Thought I Was Hallucinating*.

1978
Lucinda Childs premieres *Collaboration* with Philip Glass.

1979
Trisha Brown lecture/demonstration at Coffman Union and premiere of *Glacial Decoy*. Yvonne Rainer presents her work-in-progress *Journeys from Berlin/1971* as part of the series' Filmmakers' Filming and Meanings of Modernism.

1980
David Gordon in residence.

Steve Paxton and Jeff Slayton performance with Viola Farber canceled.

1981
New Dance USA, the largest dance festival of its kind ever produced in the United States from October 3-11. Catalogue published as part of Meanings of Modernism series includes essays by Sally Banes ("Icon and Image in New Dance"), Jill Johnston ("Judson: The Sixties"), and Allen Robertson ("The Postmodern Movement"). Choreographers include Trisha

Brown, Deborah Hay, David Gordon, and Lucinda Childs.

1982
Nigel Reddin leaves the Walker to become NEA Dance Director; Robert Stearns becomes new Performing Arts Director.

Trisha Brown Dance Company in residence. Performance at University of Minnesota-Duluth cosponsored by Benedicta Arts Center, St. Cloud State University.

1983
David Gordon in residence.

1984
Pauline Oliveros and Deborah Hay perform *The Well*.

Trisha Brown Dance Company; various works.

1985
Trisha Brown in residence. World premiere of *Lateral Pass* by Trisha Brown and Nancy Graves.

1987
David Gordon with the Pick-Up Company premieres Walker-commissioned *United States*.

1988
Robert Sterns leaves the Walker; John Killacky becomes Performing Arts Director. Lucinda Childs Dance Company; various works.

1990
Robert Whitman performs *Black Dirt*.

1991
Trisha Brown 20th-anniversary retrospective, part of the Discover Series.

1996
John Killacky leaves the Walker; Philip Bither becomes Performing Arts Curator.

1998
Chris Aiken and Steve Paxton in residence; performance of Walker-commissioned work.

2002
Trisha Brown Dance Company with Dave Douglas performs *The Trilogy*, part of the Discover Series, on February 9.

Museum: Background Information

Choreographer-dancer Jawole Willa Jo Zollar's childhood was steeped in African-American popular culture, both its sacred and secular aspects. A native of Kansas City, Missouri, she moved to New York City in 1980 to study dance with Dianne McIntyre at Sounds in Motion. Zollar founded the Urban Bush Women ensemble in 1984. The group's performances explore cross-cultural diversity through contemporary dance and interdisciplinary forms. The company presents dance/theater works rooted in the folklore and religious traditions of the African *diaspora*. Through live music, spoken word, a cappella vocalizations based on field hollers and chants, and the force and spirit of movement, the company delves into the struggles, growth, and transformation of the human spirit. *Praise House* (1990), an evening-length performance in two acts, is one of 19 works Zollar has created for Urban Bush Women. It was inspired by many visionary artists, but particularly by the life, words, drawings, and paintings of Minnie Evans. Zollar often collaborates with artists from other disciplines. *Praise House* was developed with co-choreographer Pat Hati-Smith, composer Carl Riley, writer Angelyn DeBord, and visual artist Leni Schwendinger.

Presented here are video clips from two main sections of the performance at Brooklyn Academy of Music, 1991

Dance
by jbberg

Trisha Brown: Talking Art and Dance

Artist: Walker Channel
Date: April 22, 2008
Medium: Artist Talk
Institution: Walker Art Center