

Erica Essner

Performance Co-Op



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eecop.org



EECOP Mission

The Erica Essner Performance Co-Op performs nationally and internationally, and provides free public programming, titled the *Dance Intersection*. Through the *Dance Intersection*, the company opens up its creative process in a series of ongoing forums and formats in an effort to invite new types of engagement with an emphasis on dance making.

The Erica Essner Performance Co-Op Youth Initiative provides Public Schools serving predominately low-income grades (K-12) students with subsidized dance residencies throughout the five boroughs of New York City. The NYC Department of Education Blueprint supports our dance residency program.



The Erica Essner Performance Co-Op was founded in 1990 in San Francisco and enjoyed a decade of performing, teaching and touring in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2000, Erica Essner moved to New York City and re-established the Company. The Company is still going strong in New York, and is proud to mark its twenty-fifth anniversary this year.

Recent performance achievements include: The Black Box International Festival in Plovdiv Bulgaria, the Brooklyn Children's Museum, the San Francisco International Arts Festival, Central Park SummerStage, Jacob's Pillow Inside/Out, Joyce SoHo, the Rio de Janeiro Choreographic Center, Alaska DanceTheater, the DanceNow Festival, and the Kaatsbaan International Dance Center.





EECOP Staff

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Erica Essner is a Teaching Artist, Choreographer, and Pilates Method instructor. Ms. Essner is currently teaching dance (K-12) in the public schools as a Teaching Artist for Arts Connection and Center for the Arts Education.

Originally from New York, Essner attended Bard College for Dance Composition and received her BA in Art & Social Change at New College in San Francisco. Ms. Essner has been the recipient of numerous residencies including The Rio de Janeiro Choreographic Center, The Bessie Schonberg Choreographers & Dancers Residency at the Yard, Artist-in-Residence at ODC Theater (San Francisco), the Kaatsbaan International Arts Center, and Union Street Dance. Erica Essner has been commissioned by San Jose State University, San Francisco State University, Alaska Dance Theatre and her work has been presented by Central Park SummerStage.

CONSULTANT

Ann Dunning

Principal Associate, ARTS Action Research team. She spent ten years with the Danny Grossman Dance Company in Toronto as administrative director. Among numerous arts leadership roles in Canada she was founding chair of the national council of the Canadian Dance Assembly and whip of The Creative Trust endowment campaign. She has served as Chair of the Board of Trustees of Dance/USA and sits on the George Cedric Metcalf Foundation's Strategic Initiatives Committee.

EECOP Current Work

Versailles Undone 2016



“What makes Erica Essner’s dances so exceptional is that they have all the drama of story and character while putting movement at center stage.”
—Apolliniare Scherr,
San Francisco Examiner

Versailles Undone 2016

references the French Revolution and the decline of the monarchy and is loosely based on the fictional novel *Farewell My Queen*, by Chantal Thomas. The gap between rich and poor and the social unrest around inequality both historically and in contemporary society form part of the exploration in the work. Performers hang, swing, and wrap rope, inspired by the Baroque Dance period. Hanging ropes are used throughout as a metaphor for merrymaking, execution and as a lifeline for the destitute. This work is still in progress and will be completed in the fall of 2015. (Running time: 50 minutes)

Versailles Undone work-in-progress

link: <http://vimeo.com/111811116>

EECOP CURRENT WORK

Reflex 2014

Six dancers are featured in this dance of chain reactions where touch is an analogy for the power of language. Competitive, compassionate, and aggressive physicality are played out in this game of communication. The push and pull of the muscles, manipulated joints, elbows and knees, and the articulation of the limbs together create a metaphor for speech.

(Running time:
30 Minutes)

Reflex was created as part of *Dance Intersection*, and premiered at the *Black Box International Festival* in May 2014, and was supported in part by the *American Embassy* in Plovdiv, Bulgaria

LINKS TO WORK SAMPLES:

Reflex 2014 Excerpt:

<https://vimeo.com/112025438>

Full Length:

<https://vimeo.com/104007457>



REFLEX 2014

WHAT THE CRITICS SAY



“There is a remarkable fluidity governing Essner's phrasing; her movement sequences connect so organically that one's eyes remain forever married to the seamless choreographic action.”

—Lisa Jo Sagolla, *Backstage Blog*



“...Choreographers who work in an expressionist vein tend to be overwhelmed by influence—by Martha Graham, with her heavy-handed symbolism, or preachy Alvin Ailey, or abject Pina Bausch. But Erica Essner, a recent transplant from San Francisco, takes up big and dark subjects without resorting to expressionisms' broad strokes.”

—Apollinaire Scherr, *The New Yorker*



...“Frequently powerful...striking display of stormy passions.”

—Jack Anderson, *The New York Times*

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VIDEO GALLERY Previous Work



BOOKING

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