



Bates Dance Festival

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<http://www.batesdancefestival.org/about/press-room/> (password: press)

Directed and choreographed by Stephan Koplowitz, 'Mill Town' shifts Bates Dance Festival focus to Bates Mill Complex

LEWISTON, Maine -- The final weekend of the 2017 Bates Dance Festival begins with two performances of an immersive event featuring 60 dancers with live music, video and installations in and around the Bates Mill Complex in downtown Lewiston.

Internationally renowned site choreographer Stephan Koplowitz's "Mill Town" takes place at 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday, Aug. 3 and 4, in the mill at 130 Mill St.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$12 for students. Online tickets are available at batestickets.com. For more information, please visit the festival website, at batesdancefestival.org, or call the box office at 207-786-6161.

The week prior to the "Mill Town" performances, Koplowitz and other members of the creative team offer "Making 'Mill Town': A Collaborator's Conversation" at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 26, at the historical Museum L-A Gallery at 35 Canal St. Admission is free.

The festival concludes on Saturday, Aug. 5, with Young Choreographers / New Works at 1 p.m. in Schaeffer Theatre, 329 College St. (free admission) and the Festival Finale at 7:30 p.m. in Alumni Gymnasium, 130 Central Ave. (\$6 cash admission at the door).

'Mill Town'

Inspired by the geography, industry and culture of Lewiston-Auburn, once a major center for textile and shoe production, Koplowitz has designed "Mill Town" for a multigenerational cast of professional and local dancers.

The initial spark for the work grew out of conversations with Museum L-A who serve as a key partner in the project.

The piece features original music by award-winning composer Todd Reynolds, scenic and media design by Shawn Hove, video by Ellen Maynard and costumes by Melody Eggen.

Three years in the making, "Mill Town" is structured as a promenade for the audience through the mill, with evocative scenic and media installations, video footage shot throughout the city and artifacts from Museum L-A, a historical museum that occupies part of the complex.

The July 26 "Making 'Mill Town' " conversation includes Koplowitz, Reynolds, Hove and festival director Laura Faure, who is serving as producer of the piece. They will share insights on the inception and evolution of "Mill Town." Attendees will also enjoy Museum L-A's current exhibition, "Structures & Patterns -The Remnants of our Work!" featuring paintings by Janice Moore and photographs by Mark Marchesi that were inspired by the mills.

Koplowitz is an award-winning director, choreographer, media artist and educator. His honors include a 2003 Guggenheim Fellowship in Choreography, six National Endowment for the Arts Choreography Fellowships and Time Out Magazine's Award for Best Dance Production of 1996 for the piece "Genius Canyon."

"Koplowitz is a master of the monumental," says Lena Corner, a writer for the Big Issue in London. "His one-of-a-kind, site-specific pieces, which assemble hoards of dancers within unusual urban locations, [put] a unique slant on both architecture and dance."

Dance writer Debra Cash affords insight into Koplowitz and his work with a 7 p.m. Inside Dance lecture preceding Friday's show.

Saturday events

Young Choreographers / New Works is an informal adjudicated showing of 20 new works of choreography by festival students from 1 to 5 p.m. at Schaeffer Theatre. Audience members are invited to come and go throughout the afternoon.

The Festival Finale presents student dancers of all ages performing jazz, contemporary, hip hop and Caribbean-inspired works by David Dorfman, Danny Buraczeski, Claudia Lavista and Omar Carrum, Shakia Johnson and Tania Isaac. This culmination of the festival's three-week intensive training program also showcases an original production by talented local youth, ages 7-16, enrolled in our Youth Arts Program.

About the Bates Dance Festival

The Bates Dance Festival's 35th anniversary season features spectacular public events from July 7 through Aug. 5, including a special gala program and a site-specific multimedia performance at a downtown mill building.

The 2017 season is also the 30th and last for director Laura Faure, under whose guidance the Bates Dance Festival has become a leading American dance center, celebrated as a laboratory for important contributors to contemporary dance.

In November, Shoshona Currier takes over for Faure. A Maine native, Currier comes to the festival from Chicago, where she has served for five years as the city's director of performing arts.

Founded in 1982 at Bates College, the Bates Dance Festival brings together an international community of contemporary choreographers, performers, educators and students in a cooperative community to study, perform and create new work.

The festival serves as an annual destination for artists, students and audiences to engage in activities and performances that foster a creative exchange of ideas, encourage exploration of new ground and provide access to a wide spectrum of dance and movement disciplines.

At press time, support for the 2017 season has been provided by Bates College, the National Endowment for the Arts, the New England Foundation for the Arts, National Performance Network, the Sequoia Foundation, the Onion Foundation, New Music USA, Morton-Kelly Charitable Trust, the Shapiro Family Foundation, Norway Savings Bank, Eagle Point Donor Fund, Platz Associates, L.L. Bean, Maple Way Dental Care, Bob Crewe Foundation, I.Dres and generous individual donors.

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