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An Evening of Dance and Discussion at the Laband Art Gallery



***Laband Art Gallery and LMU's Dance Department Host
Three Dance Performances in Conjunction with
The Presence of Absence: The Photographs of Richard Ehrlich***

Oct. 1, 2009, 7pm

LOS ANGELES, Sept. 16, 2009 – Choreographer Kristen Smiarowski presents “The Key Game,” a dance-theater work created in collaboration with composer Douglas C. Wadle and performed by Rebecca Pappas. LMU student dancers Amanda Copple and Alex Crow will also perform original pieces in response to Richard Ehrlich’s photographs. Dr. Paul Harris of LMU’s English Department will lead a discussion with Dr. Ronald Marasco of LMU’s Theater Arts Program and writer Dr. Kathleen B. Jones responding to the performances and their relationship to the photographs.

ABOUT "THE KEY GAME"

Kristen Smiarowski's "The Key Game" is a choreographic response to Polish writer and Holocaust survivor Ida Fink's short fictional story by the same name. This solo dance-theater piece is a concentrated glimpse at human suffering. Through the vehicle of the characters in the story, the dancer repetitively performs a game of survival that serves the function of rehearsing imminent death. The piece was created in 2008 on commission from Choreographing Coalitions: Dancing the Other in the Self (Links Hall and Dance Center of Columbia College, Chicago). It features an original sound score by composer Douglas C. Wadle.

Smiarowski explains, "As an artist I am concerned with the question of how to make art in response to historical events with which I did not have direct experience. How do I 'remember' what I don't know? For "The Key Game," the composer and I interpreted and fragmented Fink's story to create an abstract memorial. In the performance the audience encounters traces of the original short story just as in life we encounter only traces of historical events at which we were not present: out of context and out of their original order in time."



ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

Richard Ehrlich does not photograph people, yet their existence is keenly felt in the ordinary objects and structures he depicts. His haunting, color-saturated images evoke lives lived and remind us of the vulnerability we all share. **The Presence of Absence: The Photographs of Richard Ehrlich** will include selected images from five series: abandoned diamond mines in Namibia; graffiti from the now-demolished Belmont Park, Los Angeles; a deserted, decaying Cook County Hospital in Chicago; a defunct sugar mill in Maui; and German archival documents that echo the individual lives consumed by the Holocaust.

MORE ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Amanda Copple (LMU Student Dancer) is a sophomore business and dance double major at Loyola Marymount University. Since coming to LMU, she has choreographed her own work for the Student Dance Concert and also danced in a piece by Sophie Monat, and for Damon Rago's company, Palindrome Performance Group.

Alex Crow (LMU Student Dancer) is from Toledo, Ohio, where she started her dance training at the age of 3. She has performed and collaborated with many respected artists both in and out of the L.A. area, including Mike Esperanza and Damon Rago, and hopes to continue to pursue her dancing career long after her time at Loyola Marymount University.

Richard Ehrlich (Photographer) was born in New York City in 1938. He graduated from Cornell University and Medical College and has lived in Los Angeles since 1971. He fell in love with photography as a child, but put it aside to pursue his medical career. He returned to photography in earnest eight years ago. His work has been shown in galleries across the country and at museums including the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, The University of Buffalo Art Gallery and the Tennessee State Museum in Nashville. His work has been collected by museums such as the Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts at the Hammer Museum, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., and the Denver Art Museum.

Rebecca Pappas (Performer) moved to California in 2001 where she began making dances under the name Pappas and Dancers. She has created 14 original works for the company and has been presented at venues including The Yerba Buena Gardens, ODC Theater, Cowell Theater, Saint Joseph Ballet, Highways Performance Space and Movement Research at Judson Church. Her work has been supported by the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the Clorox Company Foundation, and the Mellon Committee for Research on the Holocaust. She has taught dance at UC Berkeley, UCLA, and the ODC School in San Francisco, and has performed for Alma Esperanza Cunningham, Erika Shuch, Christine Suarez and Rachael Lincoln.

Kristen Smiarowski's (Choreographer) dances for the stage and public sites have been presented nationally and internationally, with recent performances in Berlin, Chicago and Los Angeles. In the past two years, Smiarowski has received

commissions from the New Dance Program at Saint Joseph Ballet ["Indexical Permutations" (after "The Key Game") 2009] as well as Links Hall and the Dance Center of Columbia College, Chicago ("The Key Game," 2008). Other recent credits include choreographer Arianne Hoffmann's "doing by undoing" (performer), dance theater director Mira Kingsley's "Oh My Tiger" (performer), and dance artist Simone Forti's "To Borrow Salt" (dramaturge/performer). Smiarowski holds an M.F.A. in choreography from UCLA, and is on faculty in the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance at Loyola Marymount University. She is currently a 2009 artist-in-residence in UCLA's Hothouse Residency Program.

Douglas C. Wadle (Composer) is a composer, writer and performer whose work flows out of the American experimental music tradition, particularly the perception-based work of James Tenney, with whom he studied. He holds degrees from New York University (comparative literature), UCLA (ethnomusicology), and the California Institute of the Arts (music composition) and is currently adjunct faculty of music theory and analysis at the California Institute of the Arts. He is a contributing editor to *The Open Space Magazine*, an interdisciplinary, artist-run journal published by Open Space Press. For more information visit Plainsound Music Edition (www.plainsound.org).

ABOUT THE DISCUSSANTS

Paul Harris, Ph.D. Professor of English at Loyola Marymount University, specializes in interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching, offering courses on themes such as Nothing, Wonder, Chaos, Time, and Wisdom. He is President of the International Society for the Study of Time and Co-Editor of *SubStance*, a journal of Theory and French Literature.

Kathleen B. Jones, Ph.D. taught Women's Studies for 24 years at San Diego State University. She is the author and editor of numerous academic publications and was co-editor of the International Feminist Journal of Politics from 1997-2005. Her creative nonfiction includes *Living Between Danger and Love*, (Rutgers University Press, 2000), a memoir exploring the difficult choices we make in the face of violence, and *Occupying Hannah: A Thinking Journey with Hannah Arendt* (unpublished), a memoir about a late midlife dialogue with the life and work of the philosopher Hannah Arendt. Jones is managing director of Laterthanever Productions, a nonprofit regional theater in San Diego. In addition to numerous awards, she has received multiple grants from the National Endowment of the Humanities and two writers' grants to the Vermont Studio Center.

Ron Marasco, Ph.D. is professor of theater arts. He earned his B.A. from Fordham University at Lincoln Center, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from UCLA. He has appeared on "The X-Files," "Angel," "Judging Amy," "Star Trek: Enterprise," and "West Wing." He appeared in a movie in which he plays a lead role opposite the legendary Kirk Douglas. As an actor, he has won a Drama-Logue Award and the National Irene Ryan Award at the Kennedy Center. He performed and directed his adaptation (with Theresia de Vroom) of the medieval play, "Lancelot," in Italy and England. Together they published articles in the journals *European Medieval Drama* and *Aspects of Medieval Drama*. He won the LA Weekly Award for Best Director, and the production of *Modigliani* that he directed won for Best Revival. At LMU, Marasco has directed many shows. He is also the author of *Notes to an Actor* (Ivan R. Dee, 2007).

OTHER PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Gallery Walkthrough with Richard Ehrlich

Thursday, Oct. 8, 2009, 12:30–1:30 p.m.

The artist Richard Ehrlich will lead a discussion of his works and artistic process in the gallery.

Bellarmino Forum Artist's Speak and Reception

Saturday, Oct. 31, 2009, 2-4 p.m. (Presentation) 4-6 p.m. (Reception)

In conjunction with LMU's 2009 Bellarmino Forum, the Laband will host a reception following Artist's Speak, a presentation on the subject of human vulnerability by LMU students in creative writing, dance, theater arts, music, film, and visual arts in Murphy Recital Hall.

EVENT ORGANIZERS AND SUPPORT

This evening was organized by Carolyn Peter, director and curator of the Laband Art Gallery, Judith Scalin, co-chair of LMU's Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, and Kristen Smiarowski, faculty member in LMU's Dance Program.

EXHIBITION ORGANIZERS AND SUPPORT

The exhibition was curated by Carolyn Peter, director and curator of the Laband Art Gallery. The exhibition's related events were supported in part by the Bellarmino Forum 2009, LMU's Dance Program and the Jewish Studies Program.

ABOUT THE LABAND

The Laband Art Gallery opened in 1984 as part of the Fritz B. Burns Fine Arts Center with a generous gift from Walter and Francine Laband.

LABAND ART GALLERY INFORMATION

For current program and exhibition information, call 310.338.2880 or visit <http://cfa.lmu.edu/laband>.

Hours: Wednesday through Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.; closed Mondays and Tuesdays.

Admission: Admission and parking are free.

Location/Parking: The gallery is located in the Fritz B. Burns Fine Arts Center on Loyola Marymount University's campus. Please enter the campus at Lincoln and LMU Drive. An attendant at the kiosk will direct you to parking and the gallery. For a map of the school, visit: www.lmu.edu/maps.

Image Caption:

The Key Game

Choreographed and Performed by Kristen Smiarowski

Performed at TanzTangente in Berlin, Germany, Aug. 23-24, 2008,

Photo by Kevin Gralewski

Richard Ehrlich

#14 from the Holocaust Archives series, 2007

Inkjet print

Courtesy of the artist and Craig Krull Gallery, Santa Monica