

## **Nancy Karp is back in the Bay with new questions and new choreography**

The venturesome Nancy Karp has been on a bit of a hiatus from living and making work here in the Bay Area. Having traveled and lived in Italy for the past several years, Karp is diving wholly and candidly back into her choreography for her 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season later this month at ODC Studio B Theatre.

But, for Karp, this is so much more than just another show. It is a sort of rite, both a memorialization of what she's done and a commencement of what's to come. She came back from her journeys with a personal provocation, inspired in part by a task Henry James set for himself late in life, to re-evaluate what she makes and how she makes it. She wondered, how could she approach her former body of works with a more seasoned eye? How could her work be more *accurately* what it is? This show is an offering of some of her latest findings, in direct conversation with an old repertory favorite.

The evening opens with the premiere of Karp's new piece, *time and the weather*, a quintet born of Karp's solo investigation of what she called "the forgotten parts of her body." Her exploration of the wrist, the lower ribcage, and the inside of the armpit propels forward with the dancers' individual elocutions of her phrases. There is a constant coming and going, a rolling exchange of shapes, and a clear intention to play with physical structure.

*a-motion-upo-nmotio-n*, the second new work, furthers Karp's ongoing study on how the coil of an arm or the contour of the spine converses with musical form. Here the music sweeps in to help command the dancers' pace and accent. And amid the constant flow, the piece finds surprising rest and resilience in the moments of stillness and proximity.

Karp closes the evening with a repertory piece, *il Mercato*, originally created in 2001. It observes and suggests the commotion of a marketplace, including the exciting navigation of successful trades and near misses.

To quote Henry James, the works could be designated as being "a small group that might have been described by a painter as compos[ed] well (*The Portrait of a Lady*)." They exalt the time-honored modality of creating modern dance with musical and visual composition devices in mind. Karp directs her dancers with terms like legato and staccato and the dancers peel off and on stage like instruments on sheet music, their pace and energy matching the lilt of a string or the percussiveness of claves. The dancers become the notes of Karp's choreographic refrains, layering and splicing basic movement motifs.

Notably, Karp doesn't need to hit you with a message. She hopes instead to whisk you away into a visually and musically pleasing, moving picture.

**Nancy Karp + Dancers 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season shows at ODC Studio B Theatre February 20 – 22 at 8:00pm.**