

# LIZZ ROMAN & DANCERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**LIZZ ROMAN & DANCERS Inhabit Civicorps Job Training Center, Enlivening The Architecture  
With Performance and an Original Musical Score Performed Live by WATERSAW**

## **This Beautiful Space "DANCING@CIVICORPS"**

**SEPTEMBER 11- 26, 2015**

Fridays & Saturdays, at 8:00pm

### **CIVICORPS Job Training Center**

1425 5th Street in Oakland, 94607  
(across from the West Oakland BART)

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Roman weaves the dancers through a series of solos, duos and ensemble dances inspired by each site. This Beautiful Space "DANCING@CIVICORPS" features dancers Chris Black, Colin Epstein, Sonsherée Giles, Megan Lowe, Jenny McAllister, Linda Phung, Caleb Rhodes, Alicia Ruth, and Jordan Stout. The music is performed live by the band WaterSaw, with Chris Evans on Cello; Mark Fassett on Upright Bass and iPad; Nicole Laby with Vocal Textures and Percussion; and Michael Tornatore on Drums. Lighting is by Jennyb of shadyladylighting, with costumes by Christine Crook. In This Beautiful Space "DANCING@CIVICORPS," audience (of a limited size) will be led through this unique building to witness what Lizz Roman, the performers, designers, and the space have to offer.

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**TICKETS:** in advance \$25.00 at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/lizz-roman-dancers-present-this-beautiful-space-dancingcivicorps-tickets-17120514921>

**PHOTOS:** downloadable in hi-res jpeg format from <http://lizzromananddancers.com/press.html>

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*"As I create the dance, the dance tells me what I need to do. It is a conversation between myself, the building and the dancers..."* states Roman. *"My job is to direct by watching, a form of architectural listening that defines the style of dance we use to embrace a building. Audiences experience the dance happening next to them: a dance where form and function are one."*

## **BACKGROUND:**

Lizz Roman, Artistic Director of LIZZ ROMAN & DANCERS (LR&D) has been a dancer and choreographer in San Francisco since 1984. "The dance is the sum of the journey we take through a site," states Roman. "In the words of LeCorbusier, 'To create architecture is to put in order. Put what in order? Function and objects.' I seek guidance from each building I collaborate with," continues Roman. "I create a visual history of our physical journey through that space that becomes a dance. It is driven mainly by the architecture of the space."

Roman and her company have been making dances in San Francisco's dance spaces, local theaters, and outdoor festivals since 1995. The work has been described by critics as "Eloquent", "Breathhtaking", "Provocative", and "Captivating." LR&D are best known for their trademark expansive dances that spring, roll, and fly through buildings, resulting in an Isadora Duncan Dance Award (IZZIE) for outstanding choreography in 2013 for "DEEPER: Architectural Meditation at CounterPulse" (2012), and a IZZIE nomination for Best Company Performance for CELLGROUND (2005). The company has developed innovative site-specific techniques to work in unique and commonplace locations with a variety of multimedia collaborators and scenic elements. WaterSaw, Roman's most recent music collaborators received an IZZIE Award for Original Music score for 2012's "DEEPER." The SF Butoh Festival and Yerba Buena Gardens Festival commissioned Roman to create a site-specific dance, which premiered at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in 2005, and was remounted again for the 2006 festival season. In 1998, Roman and filmmaker Kevin Cunningham received the SF WEEKLY Black Box Award for Cross-Genre Performance for "IN HER DREAMS."

LR&D's most recent project "FIFTY FIVE SIX", created for and performed at the electricians union building at the corner of Fillmore and Hermann in SF, was commissioned by SF Trolley Dances and performed as part of their 10th Year Anniversary Season in October 2013. Roman has also created site dances for Theater Artaud (Z SPACE), ODC Theater, ODC Commons Rooftop, Dance Mission Theater, CELLspace, The Jewish Community Center of Palo Alto, Danzhaus, and CounterPulse. Roman currently teaches modern dance technique in SF at ODC Dance Commons, where she is also a choreographic mentor for ODC's emerging artists program, PILOT. Other teaching credits include SF Dance Center and the University of California, Berkeley.

Before moving to SF in 1984, Roman lived in Chicago where she studied theater at the Goodman School of Drama. She attributes much of her choreographic style to her years as a student and performer of improvisational theater and dance in Chicago and St. Louis. Roman is also a certified Pilates instructor and currently is co-owner of PARKSIDE PILATES LLC in SF.

**WaterSaw** is a 4-piece band that makes music specifically composed for modern dance and film soundtracks. Winner of the 2013 Izzy Awards for Outstanding Achievement in Music/Sound/Text,

WaterSaw hails from the San Francisco Bay Area. By creating layers of sound through loopers (recording devices), their live music is rich with texture and subtle complexity. The musicians use their instruments in both conventional and experiential ways, facilitating an array of sounds. Composition varies according to choreography and ranges from eerily sparse to intensely rhythmic. The balance of fluidity and dissonance create the movement and resonance of WaterSaw. **WaterSaw features Chris Evans on Cello; Mark Fassett on Upright Bass and iPad; Nicole Laby with Vocal Textures and Percussion; and Michael Tornatore on Drums.**

**Jennyb of shadyladylighting** has designed lighting for scores of unusual events, plays, and concerts, ranging from Lizz Roman & Dancers, to Lypisinka, International Hip Hop Festival (7 years), the Grand Re-opening of the De Young Museum's 36 hour party event, World Tour with Morcheeba (included the Royal Albert Hall), the United States Tour of Dj Shadow & Blackalicious, as well as being the resident lighting designer for Glide Memorial Church special events.

### The Company

**The company includes Chris Black, Colin Epstein, Sonsheree Giles, Megan Lowe, Jenny McAllister, Linda Phung, Caleb Rhodes, Alicia Ruth, and Jordan Stout.**

**Chris Black** has been choreographing and performing in the SF Bay Area since 1992. She has won an Isadora Duncan Dance Award and two Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for Best Choreography. She has been a resident artist at ODC Theatre, the Djerassi Resident Artists Program, Marshall Elementary School, and the California Academy of Sciences—the first performing artist so named. Her critically acclaimed one-woman show "TOUGH," inspired by the last heavyweight bare knuckle boxing champion, is being revived this fall.

**Colin Epstein** is a dancer, acrobat, clown, and wears many other hats in his pursuit of movement. He spends some of this pursuit in the company of his inspiring students/ compatriots at Athletic Playground and Kinetic Arts Center, and in the curation and production of "Constants & Variables," an annual showcase of the SF Bay Area's performative talent. He has appeared onstage with many Bay Area dancers and choreographers, including Palanza Dance, 13th Floor Dance Theater, Epiphany Productions, detour dance, and number9; and choreographs and directs Twisted Oak Dance Theater. Colin is thrilled and delighted to dance with the incredible artists of Lizz Roman & Dancers.

**Sonsheree Giles** is a dancer, choreographer, teacher, and costume designer, who received her MFA in performance/ choreography from Mills College. She has spent the past ten years developing her skills in physically integrated dance. From 2005-2015 she was a performer, teacher, and Associate Director with AXIS Dance Company. Sonsheree has received an Isadora Duncan Award for ensemble performance of To Color Me Different, by Alex Ketley; in 2010 she received a Homer Avila Award for Excellence in integrated dance. She formed this sweet nothing as a container for her dance art and has been supported by Zellerbach Family Foundation, CLOROX Company Foundation, CA\$H grant, and East Bay Fund for Artists. She has taught dance in schools, universities, institutions, and festivals and has toured/performed throughout the world. Sonsheree enjoys making dances based on observations of animals, landscapes, art history, and life experiences.

**Megan Lowe** (Company Manager) is a performance artist with degrees in Theater, Dance & Performance Studies (TDPS) and Psychology from UC Berkeley. In addition to performing with Lizz Roman & Dancers (LR&D), some other artists Lowe is performing/has performed with are Flyaway Productions, Dance Brigade, Epiphany Productions, Marit Brook-Kothlow, Christine Cali, Beth Fein, Karl Frost, Scott Wells, and Tino Sehgal. After a residency at The Finnish Brotherhood Hall, which resulted in the performance and filming of "Never Finished: Explorations at the Finnish," her film was accepted into the Twelfth Annual Sans Souci Festival of Dance Cinema. She is a teaching artist for Joe Goode Performance Group and is the Office

Manager for TDPS, where she also teaches contact improvisation workshops. Lowe is incredibly grateful to be dancing with LR&D since 2012.

**Jenny McAllister** has been dancing and choreographing in SF for over 15 years, and is the Artistic Director of 13th Floor Dance Theater. Her early training includes Oakland Ballet, ACT, and the Limon Company based in NYC. She has studied release and partnering extensively in SF with Joe Goode, Lizz Roman, Scott Wells, and Eric Kupers. Local performance credits include Lizz Roman & Dancers, EmSpace Dance, detour dance, Chris Black, Keith Hennesey, and Fellow Travelers. Jenny has been the recipient of numerous grants and awards, as well as choreographic commissions, and she has taught contemporary dance at Lines/SFDC and ODC School. She is thrilled to be dancing for Lizz again, after a break to birth two children.

**Linda Phung** is a native of Houston, Texas, who trained at the Houston Ballet Academy and West University Dance Center before heading to the Bay Area for college. She studied Human Biology and Public Policy at Stanford University, where she also became very involved in the dance community on campus. Following graduation, she worked on an organic farm and in the health policy field before refocusing on a career in dance. In the past, Linda has had the pleasure of working with Adrianna Thompson, Kat Roman, Meegan Hertensteiner, Cherie Hill, Robert Moses, Elizabeth Streb, and Diane Frank. Linda is incredibly excited to be working with Lizz Roman & Dancers!

**Caleb Rhodes** is a native to SF Bay Area. A son of the SF dance scene, he received his earliest dance education from luminaries such as: Richard Gibson (Academy of Ballet), Augusta Moore (SFDC and ODC), Kathleen Hermesdorff (ODC), and of course Lizz Roman. Performance credits include work with Eclipse Dance Theater, Michelle Stortz and Dancers, Ebb And Flow Arts, Maui Song and Dance, Maui On Stage, ProArts Maui and several other productions in both San Francisco, California and Maui, Hawaii. In addition to dance, Caleb is a certified Pilates Teacher and has been teaching since 1999. A distinguished professional, he is a featured model in several Pilates manuals, educational videos, and product catalogs for Balanced Body Inc. He is thrilled to be a part of Lizz Roman & Dancers!

**Alicia Ruth** is a San Francisco dance artist and strength athlete. She has performed locally with Epiphany Productions, AXIS Dance Company, Lenora Lee Dance and others. Her artistic collaborations beyond the Bay Area range from site-specific works with photographers and painters, puppet theatre, to classical cello performance. She is an alumna of the University of Iowa and The French Culinary Institute. A former pastry chef, she now brings her love of movement and food together in her work as a pregnancy fitness trainer, vegan nutrition expert, and food activist. This is her second project with Lizz Roman & Dancers.

**Jordan Stout** earned a dual degree in contemporary dance and physics from the UMass, Amherst, and since then she has studied muscle myosin as a research fellow, lived with a woman recovering from mental illness, worked on an iPhone app to help people have more creative social lives, and spent a summer with children who have had open heart surgery. There are those pursuits. And then there is the hunger for physical exploration. In the past few years, Jordan dove back into physical practice and performance. In the Bay Area, she has worked with Bandaloop, Mid to West Dance Collective, Bianca Cabrera, Body Research, Kim Epifano, and Risa Jaroslow. Always on the hunt for something new, beautiful, and challenging, she finds herself here with Lizz Roman.

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### **CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:**

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