Who Do You Trust?

Dance Curation and Directography by Jane Hawley

November 17 - 7:30 P.M. November 18 - 9:30 P.M. November 19 - 1:30 P.M. & 7:30 P.M.

Who Do You Trust? is the 2016 - 2017 collaborative theme for engaging dialogue across disciplines within the liberal arts. This initiative is sponsored by the Luther College Religion department, Visual & Performing Arts department, and the Paideia Governing Board.
A sample section from the directography score, *You Are Not My Enemy*

- Embrace.
- Turn two times.
- Slide down the body of your partner.
- Arms rise and focus is directed out.
- Roll over to stand.
- Collapse to the earth.
- Walk around the feet of your partner and then stop to stand at their head.
- Struggle to stand and walk around partner two times and head dive into partner.

I experience dance as a binding, expressive, and ancient language—traversing the boundaries of verbal language and cultures, generating communication and connectivity via the explicit and nuanced moving body. As a dance artist, I notice that much of my inspiration comes from the moving bodies I choose to witness.

In February of 2002, I became intrigued by the dance-like brotherly interplay I observed between my two- and four-year old sons. Witnessing the brotherly interplay, I recognized “the dance” materializing before my eyes. Over time, I scribed the spontaneous and collaborative interactions between the brothers and, throughout 2005-2016, used this documented score in various situations as an experimental creative process for dance making. I titled the “brotherly” score, “You Are Not My Enemy” and titled the methodology, “directography” = written directives for choreography.

Employing the theme of trust within the creative process, I decided to act as dance “curator” rather than as choreographer or director. Therefore, I was inspired by the method of curating an art gallery exhibition and modeled this dance performance under such rubric. However, within this art gallery exhibition, the medium is the body: bone, sinew, skin.

My first initiative with dance curation was to invite anyone who had the interest and time to engage in the rehearsal process for the dance performance. Once these individuals self-selected, they each were directed to find their duet partner based upon the idea of “contrast” to their self, whether internally sensed or externally (visually, physically) apparent.

Humans are unique based on color, size, thoughts, religion, culture, and experiences, as evidenced by the performers. Yet, human DNA is 99.9% identical across the human population. What fills the void between our great similarity and our undeniable differences? Where do we learn about trust? When does trust go away? Why do we trust? How do we become trustworthy?

As a dance artist, teacher, and scholar, I am deeply curious in renovating dance training by exploring and researching the relationship of self to body. My research emphasizes understanding how the body is the realization of self through the continuous experimentation, practice, and development of *Movement Fundamentals*. Challenges within this research lie in negotiating the boundaries and interplay between movement | dance and art | life.
Becoming partners: Inga knew of this through her major & invited Moha. Thinking about the title, Who Do You Trust? she intentionally chose someone she trusted. She also asked Moha because of the intent to contrast. She’s from Amery, Wisconsin, & Moha’s from Hebron, Palestine. They contrast in physical appearance, interests, language, culture, etc. Over time she’s learned what an open-minded individual he is. Being well-acquainted with Luther’s dance program, she knew he’d find fulfillment here.

Choreographing: This process moved quickly; we didn’t have to learn the way the other person’s mind works. We avoided overthought. We took simple ideas & physically workshopped them to produce developed versions. We didn’t spend much time verbally brainstorming. Meaning, narrative, and aesthetic refinement were found during memorization. Trusting ourselves to simply produce expanded our creative range.

Trust?: Moha’s a direct thinker, & Inga uses an indirect way of thought to exist & experience the world. These contrast & compliment one another, creating diverse, dynamic choreography. This challenges trust within a dance by moving past the direction in which one concept would naturally travel to create new, authentic, confrontational ideas. To trust this is to be a willing creator. To distrust this is to limit the creative possibilities.
We have realized how deep our dance goes as far as meaning and metaphor. The choreography happened organically, and we did not intend for the meaning that we found. The entire process was a fun and interesting way to collaborate and share ideas which turned into meaningful topics and human experiences—it became an exploration of the human-ness expressed through dance. As our dance was forming we were also getting to know each other—to trust.

Trust starts with realizing connection and the interconnections between us—us being a collective humanity. Through the creative process of choreographing from the directography, we experienced a visceral interconnection that we didn’t even know was there—we were using our bodies and our lived experiences to have an empathetic attachment to the movement, the experience, our partner, and our characters. The story, the characters, and the meaning came out of the process naturally rather than us intentionally creating the story, the characters, the meaning, and the emotions. There is so much empathy when humans physically communicate and connect.

*Both performers were tentative of one another at the beginning of the process. There was skepticism of how it was going to work—how do you trust?*
Tanner & Madeline

Chapters
2016
Bone, sinew, skin, styrofoam

Who Do You Trust? has given me the confidence in my own body that I did not have prior to this experience. Having a larger body has always made me self conscious because I thought I would bring harm to others. This piece and my partner have taught me that even though I am bigger, I can still rely on her and others to support me in my everyday life and that I do not always have to be the “base” carrying the world’s weight on my shoulders.

Tanner and I were friends going into this production; however, participating in Who Do You Trust? made us grow closer and made trusting myself and others easier than it had been before. It takes trust to carry someone or be carried, and I think the weight sharing that we do in our dance piece, along with our circular, revolving motifs, physically demonstrates the constant give and take and reestablishment of equilibrium needed for trust. We used gravity and our bodies to physically support each other, and through that, we were also able to find more emotional support in each other. In doing this dance, I found I could support weight in ways I didn’t know I was capable of and through that, gained a certainty in my physical ability that I didn’t have before. Given the current amount of fear and resentment that seems to dominate much of our society, I hope the viewers of our dance piece see the importance of cooperation, trust, and tolerance in creating assurances and a sustainable dynamic.
Vulnerability. Trust. Interconnectedness. These themes were manifested throughout our process and choreography. From the beginning of the rehearsal process, we felt the pressure and intimidation of creating work in front of others. In our past dance experiences, continual movements were pre-choreographed for us; our bodies were used to focusing on how we present each move, instead of creating each move. This, we believe, was the source of our insecurities. As time went on, we experimented with this uncertainty, which became the foundation of our piece. We experienced a change of perspective. Originally, we were too focused on the final product, and how each move should be executed. However, our switch in artistry came when we realized the power of finding inspiration within ourselves.

Vulnerability was necessary to diminish our insecurities. They were formed through our preconceived choreographic constraints. To begin to tear apart these constraints, we needed more trust in our abilities and trust in one another. Once trust was an active element in the process, our vulnerability was unstoppable. A change of perspective was all we needed.

This change of perspective is directly seen through the comparison of both our physical bodies and their silhouettes. By witnessing the movement through the shadows, one cannot experience the true emotion, meaning, and connection exhibited throughout the movements. However, as one continues throughout the space, our physical bodies are exposed, and all aspects of our movement are presented as one. Thus, a changing perspective.
The relationship of trust that exists between individuals is fluid, with incredible potential for fluctuation and development. It isn’t a straight progression, more so the pathway of a spiral that twists and turns upon itself, continually progressing and yet often returning to previous locations. Trusting is having a heightened belief in the possibility of ideas and courage to venture into the unknown.

This piece pushes the boundaries of trust by re-introducing trepidation into a partnership that has an established rapport of trust. Physical and emotional vulnerability between partners allows for investigation into the perils of trusting self and others. Communication is integral to having mutual trust and this piece explores the ways in which communication can occur, vocally, physically, and spatially.

“I trust you to take care of me when I cannot take care of myself
Turning and turning in the widening gyre
I trust myself to take care of me when you cannot
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold
I trust you because I trust myself
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
I trust myself because I trust you
The best lack all conviction, while the worst are full of passionate intensity”

William Butler Yeats; The Second Coming
Deveny Miles
For improvising musicians, active mutual trust is what makes a collaboration a success. Improvised music is a dialogue, in which the performers use a shared language to communicate and construct a spontaneous musical event. Without trust, the music can be incongruous and insensitive. Through compassionate listening, we aim to support one another’s musical choices, and in this way find something captivating and immediate for the listener to enjoy.

The compositions, written by Jon Ailabouni and developed collaboratively with James J. Kaufmann, are a direct response to Jane Hawley’s directography. After perusing the directives and imagining the movement, themes emerged around the topic of trust. The titles of the musical sections explore these ideas and offer questions to ponder as you listen.

- Contact | Suspended
  For the moment of initial contact. Is trust earned? Why?

- Beguile | Imps
  Mischief. Here we improvise collectively, engaging in a constant, multi-layered dialogue.

- Needing | Trust
  A human imperative.

- People | Indivisible
  What are the implications of mass, mutual connectivity?

- Trusting | Oneself
  What is needed to trust oneself? What is possible when that trust is won?

- Lullaby | Goodnight
  The way an infant trusts a parent.

- Doubt | Choice
  Doubting the other. Choosing a path towards wholeness or wounding.

Each composition offers a melodic and harmonic landscape with form and meter that the improver is invited to explore. What happens in this improvised context, as the performers delve into the unknown in real time, is the product of communication, intuition, and trust.
I am interested not only in dismantling my prejudices, stereotypes, and subconscious judgments of other people, but of all the presences in my life—those “objects” with whom I interact and by whom I am served.

What fills the vastness of difference between us? Your strength. My commitment. Your forgiveness. My request, my prayer. Your captivity. My decisive action. Your size. My detailed attention. Our difference. I trust you to hold me up, I trust you to be different than I am, I trust you to take up space, I trust you to be consistent, I trust you to only move when you’re bidden.

Do we make the earth into her own enemy by using her own body (mined metals, petroleum) to dismember her further? Am I grateful for the work of destructive machines that allow me to fly and drive to see my family from whom I live so far? Am I always destroying or consuming some “thing” else that in order than I can live? Can I be ok with that? Can I be more graceful in my part of destruction, consumption?

I experienced in this duet the grand occurrence that seems inevitable when one being simply pays attention with respect and curiosity to another I came into a relationship with some of the realities of this backhoe rather than my ideas about a backhoe. It was necessary to adapt the directography to the needs, aesthetics, and realities of my partner.

My hearty gratitude to the excellent people at United Rentals in Santa Fe, NM, for their generosity, patience, and support of the arts.
You are not my enemy.
I am not my enemy.
My current situation is not my enemy.

This work was created in the midst of broken knees, babies, and post-birth bodies. What came out of this experience was the remembering of our individual and collective potential when we simply stop and do. When we make the space for movement in our lives, something unexpected and often magical happens.

Big Rig Dance Collective would like to thank baby Nolan and baby Rowan for sleeping for the entire duration of this filming process.
Lisa Lantz
Costume Designer

What physical factors apparent in another person affect your judgement of them? I had to ask that of myself over and over as I considered the costume design for this production. If we are asking the viewer to make a judgement on who they trust or how they trust, how can I facilitate those questions through my design?

The design evolved many times throughout the production process. Each production meeting slightly shifted my ideas as I collaborated with my colleagues in stage design, technical direction, musical intention, and overall devised performance from the directography score. However, throughout the collaborative dialogue, I kept my initial question, “What physical factors affect judgement?” I finally settled on a pedestrian costume with a color palette of black and white. Color evokes a visceral response, and I wanted to avoid swaying judgement by assigning specific colors to certain performers. From my perspective as the costume designer, the black and white palette represents the theme of the piece and is aesthetically striking on the bodies of the movers.

As I witnessed the movement of the performers during rehearsal, I was struck by the intensity of the movement and the tension that existed alongside the tenderness. I experienced this by mentally visualizing intricate, invisible lines that emerged from watching their movement. I wanted to find a way to incorporate that tension into my design. I eventually realized that what I was imagining was being done digitally in the collaboration between Richard Merritt and Jane Hawley with their haptic device that records dancers’ movements. I used these digital line drawings as a screen print on the clothing, literally applying movement to their costume.

The resulting design represents the question “Who do you trust?” allowing you, the viewer, to consider this question within the constantly shifting orientation among the duet partners.

Danica Kafton
Stage Manager

While watching the performers at rehearsal, I noticed that there are certain things that each duet shares. The most prominent of these things was a sense of groundedness. Each pair seemed to be grounded both through the Earth and also through each other, which seemed to make the concept of trust visible to the eye of an onlooker. A bit less prominently, I could see where the directography is more specific by certain movements and actions that each pair performed in similar ways. On the other hand, I could also see where the directography was more free to interpretation which produced movements that ranged widely in quality and intent, creating individuality in the choreography. I found myself applying relationships between the partners; some seemed like siblings, good friends, romantic partners, strangers, or an alternating mix. I asked myself who I would trust if I were to choose only one partner in the duets, and I found that I lean toward trusting the people who provide a base in lifts or a stable structure. Considering that I saw nearly everyone play that role at some point or another, I ended up trusting everyone at some point in time while I was observing. I feel that asking who I trust reveals more about myself than the people I am trusting or distrusting. Maybe trusting others is up to me instead of it being the job of others to earn my trust.

Jeff Dintaman
Scenic & Lighting Desiger

As the curator in charge of planning how you, the viewer, visually engage with the artworks, I encourage you to not only examine each piece individually, but consider the visual pairings of the works. How you move through the space as you view the works will create a visual narrative by which you can interpret the theme of the production. Some of the works can only be viewed from defined vantage points, others must be viewed in close proximity, others from great distances. Do the ways in which you can engage a work change your perception of how the theme of trust is expressed by the works? Does being able to rest while viewing a work vs. being forced to stand change your connection to the work, and thus alter your level of trust with a given duet?
Production Team
Directographer: Jane Hawley
Lighting Designer: Jeff Dintaman
Assistant Lighting Designer "Willing Limit": Emma Brashear
Assistant Lighting Designer “Spiraling Into the Phantom Center”: Meghan Gaffney
Assistant Lighting Designer “Chapters”: Kaela Reth
Assistant Lighting Designer “O”: Barb Stier
Scenic Designer: Jeff Dintaman
Assistant Scenic Designer “O”: Matthew Espey
Assistant Scenic Designer “A Changing Perspective”: Tanner Huppert
Technical Director: Tom Berger
Costume Designer: Lisa Lantz
Composer: Jon Ailabouni
Stage Manager: Danica Kafon
Production Manager: Laila Sahir
House Manager: Laila Sahir
Web Content Liaison: Elaena Hoekstra
Graphic Designer: Patrick Finnegan

Special Thanks
Brittany Todd
Will Heller
Michelle M. Burns ‘07, Forensic Scientist
Big Rig Dance Collective
Sophia Rog
Birte Heinecke
Paul Rude
Dr. Kate Elliott
David Kamm
Robert Marston
Avery Jamison
Dr. Jill Leet-Otley
Richard Merritt
You Are Not My Enemy Directography credit: Winter, Rye, Willem & Beau

Tech Crew
Light Board Operator/Stage Crew: Jonathan Kuehner

Dance & Theater Faculty and Staff
Tom Berger
Lisa Lantz
Jeff Dintaman
Jane Hawley
Andrea Vazquez-Aguirre
Paul Rude
Dr. Bobby Vrtis

Dance & Theatre 2016-2017 Season
Stained Glass
By P.M. Strain
October 1, 2016

Twelfth Night
By William Shakespeare
October 6-8, 2016

Who Do You Trust?
Conceived and Choreographed by Jane Hawley
November 17-19, 2016

The Nether
By Jennifer Haley
March 2-4, 2017

Trust Me
Devised by Andrea Vazquez-Aguirre
March 30-April 1, 2017

Becky Shaw
By Gina Gionfriddo
April 28-May 6, 2017

Set Construction Crew
Nathan Baldwin
Collin Boyle
Emma Brashear
Jorge Chavez
Gunnar Ehlers
Morgan Fanning
Meghan Gaffney
Madeline Geier
Winter Hawley-Bourcier
Tanner Huppert
Diamond Jenkins
Jonathan Kuehner
Isaac Logeman
Ryan Pierce
Jenna Reimann
Rebecca Rye
Emma Schlabach
Stephen Ster
Barbara Ster
Andrew Tiede
Josh Weisenburger

Costume Crew
Anna Becker
Elizabeth Bolthouse
Emma Brashear
Tiwonge Chirwa
Emily Chlapik
Emily Garst
Eva Gemlo
Genevieve Heimer-Lang
Tanner Huppert
Mary Iralu
Emma Knoch
Alice McNamara
Andrew Tiede