

This Week in Dance

BAC PRESENTS NEW YORK
DIGITAL PREMIERE OF PEGGY
BAKER'S "HER BODY AS
WORDS"

Posted by Jeff Slayton | Feb 9, 2022

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In 2005, Mikhail Baryshnikov's dream of having a New York City based arts complex for all disciplines became a reality with the opening the [Baryshnikov Arts Center](#) (BAC) which acts as both a "creative laboratory and performance space for artists from around the world". One of BAC's upcoming performances is the New York digital premiere of Canadian choreographer Peggy Baker's work titled *her body as words* running

online February 28 – March 14, 2022
at 5pm (ET) at bacnyc.org.

Based in Toronto **Peggy Baker** is one of Canada's most celebrated and influential contemporary dance artists who has maintained a powerful creative presence since appearing on the dance scene in 1973. Baker has performed internationally with numerous prominent American choreographers including Lar Lubovitch, Mark Morris and Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project, Doug Varone, Tere O'Connor, Molissa Fenley, and Charles Moulton (NYC). Internationally, she has performed with Fortier Danse-Creation (Montreal); and James Kudelka, Dancemakers, and Toronto Dance Theatre (Toronto).



Peggy Baker – Photo by Jeremy Mimmagh

Peggy Baker Dance Projects was established in 1990, working primarily as a solo performer. Since 2010 her choreography has focused on works for small ensemble, and throughout that time, Peggy Baker Dance Projects has performed across Canada, the US, in Asia, and in Europe. She has premiered five all-night choreographic events for Toronto's Nuit Blanche, and situated three choreographic installations—*move*, *interior with moving figures*, and *land | body | breath*—in public spaces and galleries. To read Ms. Baker's full bio, please visit her company's [website](#).

Created in 2021, *her body as words* is described as "is a sound and film installation that fragments and explodes notions of female identity as expressed by nine Canadian dance artists". The work was inspired by a 2009 translation of Simone de Beauvoir's "The Second Sex" and is the result of a collaboration between Baker and the performers - "Dancing the complexities of their lived identities in a series of movement portraits, the artists offer gestural renderings touching on themes of race, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, miscarriage, motherhood, disability, physical labor, and aging." - Janet Stapleton PR press release.



Syreeta Hector – Peggy Baker Dance Projects –
Photo by Jeremy Mimmagh

The concept, choreographic composition, and direction of her body as words was by Peggy Baker. The performers include: Sze-Yang Ade-Lam, Nicole Rose Bond, Aria Evans, Syreeta Hector, Kate Holden, Tia Ashley Kushniruk, Alison Neuman, Anisa Tejpar, and Peggy Baker. (To download a PDF copy of the collaborator biographies, please click [here](#).) The work was filmed by Jeremy Mimmagh; sound designer was Debashis Sinha; and the film's run time is 51 minutes.

To learn more about the Baryshnikov Arts Center (BAC), please visit the [website](#).

To learn more about Peggy Baker Dance Projects, please visit the [website](#).

Written by Jeff Slayton for LA Dance Chronicle.

Featured image: Aria Evans – Peggy Baker Dance Projects – Photo by Jeremy Mimmagh

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jeff Slayton

Jeff has had a long and influential career as a dancer, choreographer, and educator. Born in Virginia in 1945, Slayton

began dancing as a child in order to correct his condition of hip dysplasia. He enjoyed a performance career in New York dancing for Merce Cunningham, Viola Farber and others. In 1978 he moved to Long Beach, CA. where began teaching at California State University, Long Beach as a part time faculty member. He became a full time faculty member in 1986 and continued to teach at CSULB until 1999. Jeff Slayton was one of the faculty members that helped design the Dance Center at CSULB as well as develop and implement the BFA, MFA and MA degree programs. While in Long Beach, he formed his own company, Jeff Slayton & Dancers, that operated from 1978 to 1983. He is also the author of two books, "The Prickly Rose: A Biography of Viola Farber" and "Dancing Toward Sanity". For more information on Jeff Slayton please visit jeffslayton.org

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