

NEWS

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WALKER ART CENTER PRESENTS EXHIBITION OF TRISHA BROWN'S DRAWINGS, THE CENTERPIECE OF FESTIVITIES HONORING THIS CONTEMPORARY DANCE ICON'S 40-YEAR CAREER

YEAR OF TRISHA FEATURES EXHIBITION, DANCE COMPANY PERFORMANCES OF NEW AND RARELY SEEN EARLY WORK, CLASSES, AND WORKSHOPS



Trisha Brown, *Untitled*, 2007
 charcoal, pastel on paper
 52 x 58 in.
 Collection Trisha Brown

Minneapolis, March 21, 2008—The exhibition *Trisha Brown: So That the Audience Does Not Know Whether I Have Stopped Dancing*, the centerpiece of a spectrum of programs honoring the 40-year career of this contemporary dance icon, will be on view at the Walker Art Center April 18–July 20. Providing an in-depth look at the visual arts practice of an artist recognized primarily for her work in dance and opera, the exhibition anchors the **Year of Trisha** festivities. The celebration also includes presentations of several early site-specific performance works as part of the Walker's July Free First Saturday event and an evening of dance on April 25 at Northrop. The Walker, Northrop Dance at the University of Minnesota, and the University of Minnesota Dance Program come together in a unique partnership to present this tribute to honor the work of Trisha Brown (b.1936), one of the founding innovators of postmodern dance. *Trisha Brown: So That the Audience Does Not Know Whether I Have Stopped Dancing* features a survey of Brown's drawings, a live early performance work in the gallery, a large improvisational drawing to be performed by Brown at the exhibition preview, and videos of seminal early performances. On Thursday, April 17, prior to an exhibition preview and reception, Brown makes a rare solo appearance in the gallery to create a work on paper that synthesizes drawing and dance. The Year of Trisha also includes lectures, classes, workshops, and a residency.

While Trisha Brown is best known for her innovative choreographies that revolutionized modern dance, she has for many years made drawings and other works beyond the stage that integrate the performing and visual arts. *Trisha Brown* presents a particular occasion to consider the

lesser-known visual arts practice of one of the most acclaimed contemporary choreographers at a moment of increasing interest in the broad sweep of her work and its influence. Drawing has long featured prominently in Brown's maverick practice, shifting from a tool for schematic composition into a fully realized component of her broader investigation into the limits of her own body.



Trisha Brown, *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building*, 1970
video (color, sound), 2 min. 47 sec.
Courtesy Trisha Brown
ARTPIX 2004

Early in her career, Brown created works in which performers walked on the walls of a gallery or down the exterior façade of a building—rather than on the floor. The exhibition takes inspiration in its structure from Brown's interest in reorienting the performer and audience, with a performance installation that places live dancers on the wall of the gallery, and a participatory audio work that invites visitors to lie on the gallery floor and contemplate the ceiling. The former work, *Planes* (1968), is a major early performance that includes a film by Jud Yalkut and soundtrack by Simone Forti; the latter, *Skymap* (1969), was Brown's one attempt to engage the ceiling as a performative surface.

The exhibition centers on a broad survey of Brown's drawings going back more than three decades, concluding with a large drawing to be performed by the artist at the opening for inclusion in the show. To a significant degree, the arc of Brown's work in drawing parallels her developments in dance, and footage of seminal performances is present throughout the exhibition. Turning to video to help compose dances freed Brown to make her drawings more "private and experimental," says exhibition curator Peter Eleey. "Looking at 35 years of Trisha's drawings, you watch her discover and embrace ways in which the line she draws can have bigger and more direct connections to her body and its movements." Whether she is working within the frame of a sheet of paper, on the wall, or on the stage, Brown delights in the play between structure and improvisation, between repetition and invention, and between choice and chance. "I get involved in the mystery of space," she says. "I have the same adrenaline and heartbeat going as I enter the paper as I do going on stage."



Trisha Brown, *Planes*, 1968
Performance installation with Jud Yalkut film and Simone Forti score
88 x 118 x 112 in.
Photo: Wayne Hollingsworth
Courtesy Trisha Brown Dance Company

An icon of contemporary dance, Trisha Brown is regularly seen in the world's great opera houses and festivals. She has consistently pushed the limits of choreography, creating some of the most compelling and visually powerful work of the past four decades—from her roots in the experimental Judson Dance Theater to her early site-specific dances that took place on rooftops and walls to the fluid, precise movement of her 30 years of staged pieces.

Brown first performed at the Walker in 1971 as part of the pioneering performance/dance collective Grand Union (which also included David Gordon, Yvonne Rainer, Steve Paxton and other luminaries from the Judson Dance Theater era) during an extensive residency which included stage performances, site specific pieces, and teaching. She was invited back to the Walker to create and present site-specific works in the early 1970s, and returned numerous times with her full company. Some works

that are considered her signature pieces (such as *Foray Forêt*) were commissioned by the Walker. The Year of Trisha celebration has special historic importance for both the Walker and for Brown and her company. Increasingly the Walker is interested in identifying artists who naturally blur lines between artistic disciplines and/or cross over between them.



Trisha Brown, *Set and Reset: Version I*, 1985
video (color, sound), 20 min.
Walker Art Center Archives

Trisha Brown's work has been shown in group and solo exhibitions, most recently *Documenta 12*, and she has directed numerous operas. She is the first woman choreographer to receive the MacArthur Foundation Fellowship and has been awarded many other honors, including the National Medal of Arts in 2003. She was named Chevalier dans l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the government of France in 1988; was elevated to Officier in 2000; and then to the level of Commandeur in 2004. Brown's *Set and Reset* is included in the baccalaureate curriculum for French students pursuing dance studies. At the invitation of President Bill Clinton, Brown served on the National Council on the Arts from 1994 to 1997.

In the Walker Shop

The exhibition is accompanied by a 96-page catalogue that includes approximately 45 drawings, essays by exhibition curator Peter Eleey and Walker performing arts senior curator Philip Bither, and a specially commissioned survey of Brown's drawing vocabulary contributed by the artist. Hardcover: \$29.95 (\$26.95 Walker members).

YEAR OF TRISHA RELATED EVENTS

Target Free Thursday Nights



Trisha Brown creating a performative drawing,
Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2003
Photo: Kelly & Massa Studio
Courtesy Trisha Brown Dance Company

Exhibition Preview, Performance, and Reception

Thursday, April 17, 7 pm

Cinema and Bazinet Garden Lobby

Free tickets available from 6 pm at the Bazinet Garden Lobby desk

At the preview party immediately prior to the opening of the exhibition, visitors can watch a live feed in the Cinema or a simulcast on the Walker Channel (channel.walkerart.org) as Brown makes a rare solo appearance in the gallery to create a work on paper that synthesizes drawing and dance. A reception follows, and the exhibition opens at 8 pm.

Walker After Hours sponsored by Target.



Lecture



Trisha Brown
Photo courtesy the artist

Trisha Brown: Talking Art and Dance

Tuesday, April 22, 7 pm, Free

McGuire Theater

Free tickets available from 6 pm at the Hennepin Lobby desk

Join modern dance legend Trisha Brown for a candid discussion about her remarkable career as both a dance innovator and a visual artist. Performing arts senior curator Philip Bither and visual arts curator Peter Eley add their insights on Brown's contributions to contemporary art and moderate audience questions.

This lecture is made possible by generous support from Aaron and Carol Mack.

The Gertrude Lippincott Talking Dance series is made possible by Judith Brin Ingber.

Performance



Trisha Brown Dance Company, *Present Tense*
Photo: Nan Melville, 2005
Courtesy Trisha Brown Dance Company

Trisha Brown Dance Company

Present Tense, Foray Forêt, and I love my robots

Friday, April 25, 8 pm

\$42, \$36, \$31 (\$35, \$29, \$25 members)

Northrop, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis

"Brown has defined the cutting edge of American dance since her first experiments at the Judson Dance Theater in the '60s."

—*The Village Voice*

An icon of contemporary dance, Trisha Brown has consistently pushed the limits of choreography, creating some of the most compelling and visually powerful work of the past four decades—from her roots in the experimental Judson Dance Theater Collective to her early site-specific dances that took place on rooftops and down walls to the fluid, precise movement of her more recent work. This evening of new and classic dances includes *Foray Forêt*, a signature work by the company originally commissioned by the Walker in 1991 (featuring the sounds of an invisible marching band), and *Present Tense*, a new work set to the music of John Cage. Brown's latest, *I love my robots*, is "a work of irresistible charm and silliness" (*New York Times*) with a sweet and subtle score by Laurie Anderson. Copresented with Northrop Dance at the University of Minnesota.

The Walker Art Center's Dance Season is sponsored by Gray Plant Mooty. This performance is supported with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, with additional support provided by Sage and John Cowles.



Kairos Dance Theatre
Photo: Rich Ryan

Free First Saturdays Are for Families! It's About Time!

Saturday, May 3, 10 am–3 pm, Free

Don't miss the minute-to-minute fun in this series of time-inspired activities. Travel through the ages, and create a portrait of yourself in the distant past or a faraway future. Then get your whole body moving as you make a timed drawing using techniques borrowed from Trisha Brown. Among the day's events are performances by the Kairos Dance Theatre, a 19-member company spanning four generations.



Trisha Brown, *Spanish Dance (Line Up)*, 1979
video (color, sound), 14 min.
Walker Art Center Archives

Free First Saturdays Are for Families! A Moving Spectacle

Saturday, July 5, 10 am–3 pm, Free
Minneapolis Sculpture Garden

Highlighting July's Free First Saturday event and in conjunction with the exhibition and the Walker's summerlong celebration of the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden's 20th anniversary, Trisha Brown Dance Company members re-mount four important site-based dance works from the 1970s. In their exploration of space and gravity, these early movement experiments are now viewed as both highly influential and remarkably inventive. For the first time in the U.S. since its original performance in SoHo in 1970, the spectacular *Man Walking Down the Side of a Building* will be staged on the exterior facade of the Walker's seven-story Barnes building. Company members will also restage *Spiral* (1974) on trees in Loring Park and *Group Primary Accumulation on Rafts* on Loring Park Pond, the location of the original premiere during a Walker-sponsored Trisha Brown residency in 1974. Finally, five of the company's leading female dancers will perform one of Brown's most popular early works, the witty and sensual *Spanish Dance (Line Up)*, 1976 in the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. For performance times and details, visit calendar.walkerart.org/year_of_trisha.

Free First Saturday is sponsored by Ameriprise Financial.

Program support by Medtronic Foundation.

Media partner WCCO-TV.

As part of the Walker Art Center's Raising Creative Kids Initiative, additional support is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Arty Pants: Your Tuesday Playdate

For kids ages 3–5 and adults

Tuesdays May 13 and 27; June 10 and 24, 11 am–1 pm

Free with gallery admission, members and kids under 12 are always free

What do hip kids and their (possibly) cooler parents do to spark creativity? In May and June, minds and bodies work together to find the intersection between dance and visual art. Emulating the practices of visual artist and performer Trisha Brown, participants will create art, learn dances, and even try doing both at the same time! Join in with other families for films, stories, fun, and more.

The Walker Art Center’s Raising Creative Kids Initiative is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Gallery Tours

All tours free with gallery admission; Thursday night tours are free.



Trisha Brown, *Incident #1*, 2007
charcoal, pastel on paper
7-1/8 x 8-1/4 in.
Collection Trisha Brown

- Saturday, April 26, 12 noon
- Saturday, May 10, 12 noon
- Thursday, May 22, 6 pm
- Friday, May 23, 6 pm
- Friday, May 30, 1 pm
- Saturday, May 31, 12 noon
- Friday, June 13, 1 pm
- Thursday, June 19, 1 pm
- Saturday, June 21, 12 noon
- Thursday, June 26, 6 pm
- Saturday, June 28, 12 noon and 6 pm

The Year of Trisha is made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts American Masterpiece: Dance Initiative, administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts.

Walker Art Center programming is made possible by its Premier Partners: Best Buy, General Mills, Piper Jaffray, Target, Star Tribune, and WCCO-TV.

The Walker Art Center is located at 1750 Hennepin Avenue—where Hennepin meets Lyndale—one block off Highways I-94 and I-394, in Minneapolis.

For public information, call 612.375.7600, or visit walkerart.org.