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EMPAC ANNOUNCES RECIPIENTS OF THE DANCE MOVIES COMMISSION 2011-2012

Troy, NY — With the widest definition yet of what dance on screen can be, EMPAC—the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute—announces the three recipients of this year’s EMPAC DANCE MOVIES Commission. Chosen out of 93 proposals by a panel of dance artists, filmmakers, and curators, the projects range widely in format, style, and intent: **from a six-minute hand-drawn animation seen in a built theater set, to a 10-part visual meditation of a man in Rome, to a love story told through shadowy overlays.**

The newly commissioned projects will receive awards ranging from \$14,000 to \$40,000. **They will be created over the course of one year by two collaborative teams in the US and one in Argentina,** and will premiere in the fall of 2012 as part of the Filament festival at EMPAC.

The DANCE MOVIES Commission is a program launched by EMPAC to support the creation of new works in which dance meets the technologies of the moving image. Established in 2007, it is the first major commissioning program for dance film in the United States. It has already had a significant national and international impact, with **the creation of 17 new works to date**, many of which are winning awards and touring extensively. The four projects currently in post-production will premiere on November 5, 2011.

EMPAC DANCE MOVIES Commission 2011-2012 Recipients

(In alphabetical order of titles, with brief description by the selection panel)

Animated Dance Film (US)

Choreographer/Director/Set Designer: Sarah Michelson, Composer: Pete Drungle, Animator: Joanna Quinn

Sarah Michelson continues her willful collision of the elements of choreography and visual art, as she shifts her vision to animation in this new work developed with filmmaker Joanna Quinn. Presented in a built set environment, this hand-drawn dance cartoon created from an original live dance amplifies ideas of artifice in theater.

In the first place... (US)

Created and performed by Colin Gee, Composer: Erin Gee

Colin Gee's work hovers at the intersection of architecture, film, and performance, finding its expression through a restrained physical presence. Comprised of 10 short films shot in Rome, this new work reframes the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*, an Italian pastoral romance published in 1499, as a series of 10 decisive moments in which the protagonist uses landmarks to reorient himself while pursuing his beloved.

Overlay (Argentina)

Director: Cayetana Vidal, Choreographer/Dancer: Sofia Mazza, Dancer: Diego Poblete

Director Cayetana Vidal and choreographer Sofia Mazza come together once again to create a single-channel installation that explores the film technique of overlay as a narrative device. In an illusory world, two lovers living parallel lives, day for one and night for the other, with seasons inverted, only meet in the artful interlocking of image and sound.

The members of the selection panel were Judy Lieff, Tere O'Connor, Norah Zuniga Shaw, and Hélène Lesterlin, curator for dance at EMPAC. Biographies of the panelists are included below.

The DANCE MOVIES Commission is supported by EMPAC's Jaffe Fund for Experimental Media and the Performing Arts. It is open to dance artists based in North and South America who are making video, film, and installation work.

Statistics for DANCE MOVIES Commission 2011-2012

Selected from 93 applications, of which 24 were short-listed, the three funded projects represent the fifth round of awards given out through the EMPAC DANCE MOVIES Commission. In this year's pool, 78 initial proposals came from the US, 10 from Canada, 2 from Argentina, 2 from Mexico, and 1 from Brazil. See below for the short-listed projects.

Background on the DANCE MOVIES Commission

The works supported by the DANCE MOVIES Commission are experimental dance works for the screen which vary widely in content and form, yet are united by the fact that they are crafted by a choreographer or movement-based artist.

DANCE MOVIES Commissions may be narrative-based works, abstract works, or may use tools such as computer processing, motion capture, simulation, animation, image processing, and post-production technologies, and some may even extend the confines of

the single screen to multiple screens or projections.

The EMPAC DANCE MOVIES Commissions are awarded through a competitive open proposal process conducted annually. More information on the DANCE MOVIES Commission or EMPAC may be found on the EMPAC website: empac.rpi.edu.

Panelist Bios

Judy Lief, filmmaker and teacher, earned her MFA in dance and experimental film/video from the California Institute of the Arts following a career as a professional dancer. Upon graduation, Lief was awarded a Dance On Camera residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts. She has produced, directed, and edited many short dance films that have garnered awards and have been screened internationally. Lief has over eight years of experience working in the film industry in both production and post-production on commercials, industrials, shorts, and electronic press kits for feature films. She is the recipient of a National Dance/Media Fellowship from the Pew Charitable Trusts and has been documenting dance in New York City since 1999 (single and multi-camera productions). For the Dance On Camera 2002 festival, she produced and performed in a collaborative improvisational dance/video “happening” designed specifically for Remote, a new media art space equipped with more than 60 video cameras, broadcasting live within the location. Additionally, Lief has taught a movement design course she developed for animators and has functioned as a motion capture performer/choreographer, as animatronics characters, and as a stop-motion performer/choreographer for video games and feature films. She is currently in the final stages of post-production on her feature documentary film, *Deaf Jam*, a coming of age story about a deaf teen finding her identity through American Sign Language poetry. *Deaf Jam* will have its broadcast premiere in the 2012 season of the PBS series *Independent Lens*.

Tere O'Connor has been making dances since 1982, creating over 30 works for his company, which has performed throughout the US, Europe, South America, and Canada. O'Connor has also created numerous commissioned works for dance companies around the world, including solo work for Mikhail Baryshnikov and works for the Lyons Opera Ballet and White Oak Dance Project, among others. He is a 2009 United States Artist Rockefeller Fellow and the recipient of numerous grants from many funding organizations, including a 1993 Guggenheim Fellowship. O'Connor has received three New York Dance and Performance Awards (Bessies), most recently for his work *Frozen Mommy* (2005). He is a professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign, where he is residing for the spring semester. He teaches both nationally and internationally in various settings and is an active participant in the New York dance community, mentoring young artists, teaching, writing, curating, and volunteering in various capacities.

Norah Zuniga Shaw is an artist and researcher whose work centers on choreographic knowledge as a locus for interdisciplinary and intercultural creativity. Her most recent project with William Forsythe and Maria Palazzi, *Synchronous Objects*, has received

numerous honors including features in *The New York Times* and *Communication Arts* magazine. Shaw frequently lectures and teaches workshops at such venues as SIGGRAPH, SPRINGDANCE Netherlands, Chicago Humanities Festival, Fangjia Hutong Red Theater and Black Cube Beijing, Sadler's Wells London, Hebbel Theater Berlin, PACT Zollverein Essen, Goethe-Institute Tokyo, Harvestworks NYC, and many others. Based in the US, Shaw is currently touring widely, working on a book about *Synchronous Objects*, and starting a new project with Brazilian choreographer Bruno Beltrão, funded by The Forsythe Company's Motion Bank initiative. Since 2004, she has been director for dance & technology at Ohio State University's Advanced Computing Center for the Arts and Design (ACCAD) and associate professor in the Department of Dance, where she teaches courses in interdisciplinary research and creativity.

About EMPAC

The Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC), founded by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, is an international hub for art, performance, science, and technology—offering adventurous interdisciplinary public events, support for artists and scholars engaged in creative research, and the resources of a state-of-the-art facility for digital media production, research, and performance situated on a college campus.

EMPAC's building is a showcase work of architecture that spans the physical and digital worlds. With a 1,200-seat concert hall, a 400-seat theater, two flexible black box studios, audio and video production rooms, and residency studios, EMPAC is a unique environment where digital technology and human experience can meet.

About Rensselaer

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, founded in 1824, is the nation's oldest technological university. The school offers degrees in engineering, the sciences, information technology, architecture, management, and the humanities and social sciences. Institute programs serve undergraduates, graduate students, and working professionals around the world. Rensselaer faculty are known for pre-eminence in research conducted in a wide range of research centers that are characterized by strong industry partnerships. The Institute is especially well known for its success in the transfer of technology from the laboratory to the marketplace so that new discoveries and inventions benefit human life, protect the environment, and strengthen economic development.

DANCE MOVIES COMMISSION 2011-2012 Short-listed Proposals

(in alphabetical order of titles)

<i>A Phantom Gesture</i>	Ixchel Mendoza, Eric Goethals, Erwin Neumaier (Mexico)
<i>ballet digitallique</i>	Ricardo Palmieri, Roger Sodr�, Angelo Benetti (Brazil)
<i>Chart of Landing</i>	Oguri, Morleigh Steinberg, Tom Krueger, Paul Chavez, The Edge (US)
<i>Climbing the Moon. Attempt 1826</i>	Gilberto Gonz�lez, Juan Ram�rez, Ram�n Soriano, Ricardo Cort�s, Alejandro Valle, Julio Ordo�ez (Mexico)
<i>Continuous</i>	Adriene Hughes, Summer Jones, Joachim Gossmann (US)
<i>Dangerous Water</i>	Deganit Shemy, Jim Dawson, Kate Freer (US)
<i>Headdress</i>	Yvonne Ng, Peter Mettler, Kathleen Smith (Canada)
<i>Home/Body</i>	Katherine Helen Fisher, Arielle Greenberg (US)
<i>I am going to break your heart</i>	Tiffany Rhynard, Matthew Tarr, Philippe Bronchtein (US)
<i>Meet Gabrielle and Her Friends</i>	Gabrielle Revlock, Alex Tyson, Craig Van Hise (US)
<i>Steadicam Quartet</i>	Andrew Forster, Rainer Wiens, Malcolm Goldstein, Suzanne Miller (Canada)
<i>Study in Falling</i>	Marianne M. Kim, Will Bond, Brian H. Scott (US)
<i>The Foley Artist</i>	Peter Stavrum Nielsen + Sune S. Vraa from Body Rhythm Factory (Denmark), Candice Schnurr (US, Denmark)
<i>The Journey</i>	Barry G. Walker, Shauna Walker, Jacob Pinger (US)
<i>The Physics of Theory</i>	Lea Fulton, Greg King, Lia Chavez (US)
<i>The Shift</i>	Joseph Johnson-Cami, Ayelen Liberona, Margie Gillis (Canada)
<i>Zephyr</i>	Gabrielle Lamb, Rosie Langabeer (US)
<i>Tumbleweed</i>	Cari Ann Shim Sham, Rachael Lincoln, T.K. Broderick (US)
<i>Villa Epecu�n</i>	Pedro Riveros, Miguel Rausch, Natalia Canillas (Argentina)
<i>We Added It Up</i>	Jennifer McQuiston Lott, Shara Worden, Murat Eyuboglu (US)

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