



David Neumann (NY)

Returning Choreographic Fellow

January 12-24, 2015

Work in Development:
I Understand Everything Better

advancedbeginnergroupp.org • www.mancc.org/artists/david-neumann/

I Understand Everything Better is a multidisciplinary dance-based performance that explores the impulse to report on calamity, the consciousness of traumatic change, and one's proximity to dying. A union of theater and dance-making methodologies, *I Understand* incorporates innovative technology, weather reports, and personal narratives within a framework composed of elements drawn from classical Japanese dance and theater. Within the central metaphor in *I Understand...* of an oncoming storm, a comparison emerges between the individual and the species-wide in relation to experiencing the end of life. There are three main points of portrayal: a man on his deathbed, a meteorologist reporting from within a storm, and a great actor who might be performing a Kabuki play about a dying man in a great storm.

Neumann is working with two advisors on the project including, Dr. Pamela Barton (an end-of-life care physician) and Rick Davis, a lead scientist with the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in Ruskin, FL. Neumann has conducted interviews with local weather reporters and observed their local live weather reports. Observing them on the job allows for a highly detailed account of how these "in the field" reports are produced, adding to the specificity of the performance. Neumann has also interacted with the elder community and those who attend to their health care needs to gain a wider perspective on approaches to dying as well as the effects on our minds and bodies as we near our last breath. Neumann hopes to continue these conversations when he comes to MANCC.

Entrypoints

Entrypoints are unique opportunities for visiting artists to conduct research and collaborate with the FSU and Tallahassee communities as well as the national dance field.

1/21 Scholarly Engagement

A discussion about Noh Theatre with
Assistant Professor of Religion
Dr. Kristina Buhrman.

1/23 Work-In-Progress Showing

5:30pm
Black Box Theatre

For reservations:
mancc.org/artists/david-neumann

1/22 Big Bend Hospice's Death Cafe

An opportunity for individuals to gather
and discuss ideas surrounding death.

Please e-mail info@mancc.org
with questions.

Collaborators in Residence:

Performers

Tei Blow
Johnny Gasper
Jennifer Kidwell

Writer

Sybil Kempson

Lighting Designer

Chloe Brown

Set Design

Mimi Lien

Sound Design

Tei Blow

Lighting/Projection

Christine Shallenberg

Creative Producer

Meredith Boggia





David Neumann Biography:

David Neumann is the artistic director of Advanced Beginner Group. His work has been presented in New York City at PS122, New York Live Arts, The Whitney, MAD, Danspace, and The Kitchen, among others. Neumann performed in the works of Susan Marshall, Jane Comfort, Sally Silvers, Doug Varone, Annie-B Parson & Paul Lazar's Big Dance Theater, and club legend Willi Ninja. He was also an original member of the Doug Elkins Dance Company. He has worked with directors Hal Hartley, Jonathan Demme, Laurie Anderson, Robert Woodruff, Lee Breuer, JoAnn Akalaitis, and Sarah Benson in a range of works for the stage; more recently he choreographed *An Octoroon* at Soho Rep, and directed *The Object Lesson* at BAM this fall. Neumann is on faculty at Sarah Lawrence College and is an independent director and choreographer based in NY.

advanced beginner group

Believing there's always a valuable effort in bending our habitual gestures around new shapes, Advanced Beginner Group makes multidisciplinary dances from scratch, bringing to gesture, word and proximity a delighted embrace of our contradictory lives. In short, ABG constructs irrational responses to our perceived place in the universe.



Jeremy Olson, Neal Medlyn, Victoria Roberts-Wierzbowski and Kennis Hawkins in David Neumann's informal showing of *Restless Eye* (2011). (c) Al Hall



Jeremy Olson, Victoria Roberts-Wierzbowski and Kennis Hawkins in David Neumann's informal showing of *Restless Eye* (2011). (c) Al Hall



David Neumann working with FSU student trombonists in the development of *Feedforward* with composer Eve Beglarian. (2007). (c) MANCC



Tei Blow (Technical Director/Projectionist) is a Brooklyn-based artist and musician. Tei's recent projects include video and sound design for Mikhail Baryshnikov, The Laboratory of Dmitry Krymov, Deganit Shemy, Stacy Spence, interactive video for the music band Steve Burns and the Struggle, Plantitudes, a book of polygraph drawings by electrified plants, and the pyramid scheme-rock opera performance **everything one in the disc of the sun** at Kate Werble Gallery, NYC. He plays music in the bands Perfect Shapes and Frustrator! on Enemies List Recordings. www.sciencecompany.org

Meredith L Boggia (Creative Producer) has been working professionally in arts administration with institutions, festivals, tours, productions and management of Individual Performance Artists and Collectives as well as in Fine and Visual arts. She has worked on over 500+ individual productions in all stages of development at institutions such as MASS MoCA, Dance Theater Workshop / New York Live Arts and independently at venues throughout New York City. She has been professionally affiliated with Aunts, National Performance Network (NPN), APAP's Emerging Leaders institute and the Museum of Art and Design. Currently Meredith has focused on working as an Independent Creative Producer, bridging the needs of self-producing artists and under-resourced commissioning institutions to create exquisite and responsible works with performing and visual artists, and those working across disciplines. Meredith serves regularly as the line producer for WILCO's Solid Sound Festival (semi-annually). Meredith believes in intuition, humanism, distributing representation to those under-voiced in the public sphere, bold expressions of truth and equal access to the finest of contemporary, pluri-disciplinary work to ALL audiences. Meredith works in with a fastidious and infectious care on the behalf of her clients, with a continual focus on solution finding and democratic professionalism. www.meredithboggia.com

Chloë Z Brown (Lighting Designer) is a Brooklyn based lighting designer, production manager and stage manager. She was the Director of Production at New York Live Arts and Dance Theater Workshop from 2002 - 2013. She is currently the Production Manager for Young Jean Lee's Theater Company. In her work as a designer she collaborates with many NY based directors and choreographers, including: Ivy Baldwin, Laurie Berg, Andrew Dinwiddie, Jeanine Durning, Juliana May, Sarah Maxfield, David Neumann, Heather Olson, Brian Rogers, Vicky Shick, Chris Yon and many more. In 2005, she was honored with a New York Dance and Performance "Bessie" Award for her lighting of Amanda Loulaki's *La la la la, Resistance (The Island of Breezes)* at DTW. Prior to her work at DTW, she toured nationally and internationally with Susan Marshall and Company, David Dorfman Dance, Liz Lerman Dance Exchange and many others. She loves her work.

Johnny Gasper (Performer) is an actor, musician, designer, and playwright. He is a founding member of St. Fortune, a theater collective determined to challenge the boundaries of hierarchy, convention, and taste. With St. Fortune he has created works such as "Whiskey Jack" (NYFringt, JACK), "Wood Music" (Great Plains Theater Conference), "Engagement" (Dixon Place) and a revival of Tom Murrin's "Cock-Strong" (La Mama). Most recently, he created his first dance piece, "COMING SOON DANCE SHOW," which was part of The Brick's inaugural Tiny Dance Festival, and he is working on its sequel "YOU JUST MISSED IT DANCE SHOW," which might've already happened...He is also a member of JV Squad and Trusty Sidekick Theater Company, and he also plays saxophone and clarinet in Czech Neck, an ever-evolving free improv nprise collective. This is his first appearance with Advanced Beginner Group, and he is extremely grateful to share this experience with you.



Sibyl Kempson (Writer) has had her plays presented in NYC, Austin, Omaha, Minneapolis, Bonn, and Baltimore. Current collaborators, along with David Neumann/Advanced Beginner Group (also RESTLESS EYE, 2012) include Elevator Repair Service (FONDLY, COLLETTE RICHLAND opening at New York Theatre Workshop Fall 2015). She is a 2015 Artist-in-Residence at Abrons Arts Center, where her fledgling 7 Daughters of Eve Thtr & Perf Co. will present its first production LET US NOW PRAISE SUSAN SON-TAG, continuing collaboration with Messrs. Neumann, Blow, and Gasper in April 2015. MFA Brooklyn College. Her plays are published by 53rd State Press, PAJ, and PLAY: A Journal of Plays.



Jennifer Kidwell (Performer) is a performing artist. Most recently she's had the opportunity to work with Robert Wilson/Toshi Reagon/Bernice Johnson Reagon (Zinnias), Pig Iron Theatre Co. (*Live Faster, 99 Break-Ups*) and visual artist Joe Scanlan as Donelle Woolford (*Dick's Last Stand, Whitney Biennial 2014*). With Scott Sheppard, she has created the original duet *Underground Railroad Game* (FringeArts 2015, ANT Fest 2014), and is currently at work on an original quartet, *Those With Two Clocks* with Jess Conda and Melissa Krodman. She is a proud co-founder of JACK (Brooklyn) and the current TCG Fox Fellowship Resident Actor with Pig Iron.



Mimi Lien (Set Designer) is a designer of sets and environments for theater, dance, and opera. Having arrived at set design from a background in architecture, her work often focuses on the interaction between audience/environment and object/performer. She is an artistic associate with Pig Iron Theatre Company and The Civilians. For Soho Rep: We Are Proud to Present a Presentation...and born bad. Other recent work includes: *The Dance and the Railroad* (Signature); *Luck of the Irish* (Lincoln Center); *Zero Cost House* (Pig Iron); *Natasha, Pierre, & The Great Comet of 1812* (Ars Nova); and *The Whale* (Playwrights Horizons). Regionally, her work has been presented at Berkeley Rep, A.R.T., Wilma Theater, Long-wharf Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Portland Center Stage, Alliance Theatre, and Playmakers Rep, among others. Lien's designs for dance have been presented in the Netherlands and Russia, and she was a semifinalist in the Ring Award competition for opera design in Graz, Austria. Her work has been recognized by an OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence, a Barrymore Award, four Barrymore nominations, a Hewes Design Award nomination, and Bay Area Critics Circle nomination. She was a recipient of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program, a MacDowell Colony fellow, and her sculptures were featured in the exhibition, LANDSCAPES OF QUARANTINE, at the Storefront for Art and Architecture.



Christine Shallenberg (Lighting/Projection) is a multimedia artist whose work spans installation, research, performance, and community engagement. Shallenberg's diverse body of work, which ranges in scale from performative physical encounters to mediated light and sound installations to choreography for audience investigates issues of intimacy, perception, identity, and transformation. Christine also worked as the Lighting Director for the Merce Cunningham Dance Company for whom she designed *Second Hand*, *Antic Meet*, *Nearly 902* and more than 30 unique Event performances seen around the world. She is currently choreographing a dance about grounding from three perspectives: spiritual, electrical and locational, and is also currently teaching Wearable Technology and Soft Computing at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.