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THE 18/19 SEASON
THE HEIGHTS OF IMAGINATION

World Premiere!
Liz Gerring Dance Company

Field



October 18-21, 2018
Alexander Kasser Theater

**Large
Print**

**Arts + Cultural
Programming**



**MONTCLAIR STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Dr. Susan A. Cole, President

Daniel Gurskis, Dean, College of the Arts

Jedediah Wheeler, Executive Director, Arts + Cultural Programming

World Premiere!

Liz Gerring Dance Company

Field

Choreographed by **Liz Gerring**

Original Music Composed by **Michael J. Schumacher**

Production Design by **Robert Wierzel**

Associate Lighting Designer/Company Production Manager

Amith A. Chandrashakar

Assistant Lighting Designer **Abigail Hoke-Brady**

Stage Manager **Stephanie Byrnes-Harrell**

Rehearsal Assistants **Brandon Collwes, Claire Westby**

Company Manager **Elizabeth DeMent**

Dancers **Brandon Collwes, Joseph Giordano, Forrest Hersey, Julia Jurgilewicz, Jamie Scott, Thomas Welsh-Huggins, Claire Westby**

Liz Gerring Dance Company is a program of TonalMotion Inc., a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. lizgerringdance.org

Co-produced by Peak Performances @ Montclair State (NJ). *Field* was developed in residence at the Alexander Kasser Theater, Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ.

Additional funding provided by Kirk Radke.

Duration: 1 hour, no intermission.

In consideration of both audiences and performers, please turn off all electronic devices. The taking of photographs or videos and the use of recording equipment are not permitted. No food or drink is permitted in the theater.

Program Notes

Field is the third work by Liz Gerring in the trilogy of large-scale proscenium works commissioned by Peak Performances at Montclair State University. The trilogy, featuring seven dancers and created in collaboration with composer Michael J. Schumacher and production designer Robert Wierzel, includes *glacier* (2013), *Horizon* (2015), and now *Field* (2018). The creation of *Field* is based on an extended quartet for male dancers. Together with Schumacher and Wierzel, Gerring works to create a field of multiple dimensions capturing the essence of human contemporary experience. Gerring makes use of her highly specified and unique movement vocabulary where effort and adherence to form emerge transcendent.

About the Company

Since its inception in 1998, Liz Gerring Dance Company has been exploring nonnarrative, abstract movement, often derived from natural gesture. Movement is evolved from cause and effect rather than storytelling and is framed by independent media elements. The company is noted for its close collaboration with contemporary visual artists and a longtime association with electronic music composer Michael J. Schumacher. In 2001, Gerring and Schumacher, with the support of Kirk Radke, founded the nonprofit organization TonalMotion Inc., dedicated to the creation and presentation of movement and sound art. The Company is currently made up of seven dancers and regularly presents performances at the Baryshnikov Arts Center, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, the Joyce Theater, Danspace Project, and the Centre National de la Danse and has performed in Lincoln Center's White Light Festival and New York City Center's Fall for Dance Festival.

Acknowledgments

Liz Gerring would like to thank her collaborators Michael J. Schumacher, Robert Wierzel, and Amith A. Chandrashaker; Jed Wheeler at Peak Performances for the opportunity to create *Field*; Ryan Graves, Jill Dombrowski and the entire team at Peak Performances for making these performances happen; and the dancers

Brandon Collwes, Forrest Hersey, Joseph Giordano, Julia Jurgilewicz, Jamie Scott, Thomas Welsh-Huggins, and Claire Westby for all of their hard work and commitment.

Special thanks to Philippe Cheng and Nancy Dalva. Gerring would also like to thank her family and most especially her husband, Kirk, without whose support this work would not be possible. The Company would like to thank, for their images, Miguel Anaya and Gus Reed. The Company gratefully acknowledges the following: Becky Banyasz, Aela Morgan, Barbara Dau, Lisa Kim, Michel and Caroline Zalesky, and the Dance NYC Dance Advancement Fund.

About the Artists

Liz Gerring (Choreographer/Executive Director) says, “For most of my life I have been engaged in the pursuit of movement for its own sake. Developing an early interest in abstraction as the primary means to expression, I have focused my work on the body and its presentation through space and time.” Gerring was born in San Francisco in 1965. She grew up in the Los Angeles area and began studying dance when she was thirteen. In high school she studied at the Cornish Institute in Seattle. In 1987, she was awarded a BFA from the Juilliard School. With Merce Cunningham and Trisha Brown having an ever-evolving and profound influence on her own frank aesthetic, she formed the Liz Gerring Dance Company in 1998 after a brief career detour in bicycle racing. Gerring was awarded the Jacob’s Pillow Prize in June 2015, and a Joyce Theater Residency and Creation award in the same year. She has been commissioned for three works at Peak Performances @ Montclair State in the Alexander Kasser Theater. In 2016–17 she was awarded a New York City Center Choreographic Fellowship. She is grateful for the work these grants and commissions make it possible to do. Gerring lives in New York City and upstate New York with her husband, Kirk Radke, and their three children, two dogs, and a cat. When not in the studio or the theater, she can often be found outdoors.

Michael J. Schumacher (Composer) has worked with spatialized sound, computers, and electronics since the 1980s, creating multichannel, generative “Room Pieces” presented in galleries, museums, concert halls, and public and private spaces. XI records has published a DVD set of five sound installations as computer

applications, playable on up to eight speakers, which may be installed on a computer to create sound environments in the home. Schumacher's most recent project is the Portable Multichannel Sound System, a 12-channel sound system that fits in a suitcase. *Variations*, a set of pieces created for the system, is available online through Richard Garet's Contour Editions label. Schumacher's interest in the relationship of musical form and architecture led to the founding of Diapason, a gallery devoted to the presentation of multichannel sound installations, long-duration performances, and intermedia artworks. In its 15 years of existence, made possible by the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Kirk Radke, Diapason presented more than 300 artists at a time when sound art was emerging as a distinct practice in the United States. Schumacher is the music director of the Liz Gerring Dance Company, with whom he has worked since the 1980s.

Robert Wierzel (Production Designer) has worked with artists from diverse disciplines and backgrounds in opera, theater, dance, and contemporary music on stages throughout the country and abroad. Dance work includes 33 years with choreographer Bill T. Jones and the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company. Other dance collaborations include works with choreographers Elizabeth Streb, Alexei Ratmansky/American Ballet Theatre, Andrea Miller/Gallim Dance, Doug Varone, Seán Curran, Heidi Latsky, Lawrence Goldhuber, Molissa Fenley, Donna Uchizono, Alonzo King, Charles Moulton, Michael Tracy/Pilobolus Dance Theatre, Arthur Aviles, and Margo Sappington. Wierzel's extensive work has been seen on and off Broadway. Broadway credits include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill* starring Audra McDonald, the musical *FELA!*, and David Copperfield's Broadway debut, *Dreams and Nightmares*. Off-Broadway work includes productions with the Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, the Signature Theatre, and Playwrights Horizons, among others. His international work includes productions at the Royal National Theatre of London; Lyon Opera Ballet; Berlin Opera Ballet; *Walking the Line* at the Louvre Museum, Paris; as well as productions with the opera companies of Paris-Garnier, Tokyo, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver, Bergen and Norway, and Folk Opera, Sweden. Wierzel has done numerous productions with American opera companies including the Glimmerglass Festival, LA Opera, Chicago Lyric, Opera Theatre of Chicago, New York City Opera, Seattle, Boston Lyric, Minnesota, San Francisco, Houston, Virginia, Portland, Wolf Trap, San Diego,

and Florida Grand. An abridged list of his awards includes the Merritt Award for Excellence in Design and Collaboration, 2015; a 2010 Tony Award nomination for Best Lighting in a Musical for *FELA!*, directed and choreographed by Bill T. Jones; the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Best Lighting in a Musical for *The Tosca Project*, A.C.T., Cary Perloff, director; and the Connecticut Critics Circle Award, 2009, for Outstanding Lighting Design for *Of Mice and Men*, Westport Country Playhouse, Mark Lamos, director. Currently, Wierzel is a creative partner at Spark Design Collaborative and is on the faculty of New York University Tisch School of the Arts.

Amith A. Chandrashaker (Associate Lighting Designer/Company Production Manager) has worked with Liz Gerring Dance Co. on *(T)here to (T)here* (Lighting Design), *glacier*, and *Horizon* (Production Manager/Associate Designer). Other dance credits include premieres by Alexander Ekman, Aszure Barton, Kate Weare, Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Rennie Harris Puremovement, Aalto Ballet Theater Essen, Staatstheater Nürnberg, the National Dance Company of Wales, and the Royal New Zealand Ballet. Theater credits include *The Lucky Ones* (Drama Desk nomination, Ars Nova), *Cardinal* (2econd Stage Theater), *Twelfth Night* and *Fire in Dreamland* (Public Theater), *Fairview* (Soho Rep.), *Her Requiem* (LCT3), *Time's Journey Through a Room* (The Play Company), *This Is Reading* (Reading Train Station), *Stuffed* (the Westside Theatre), *FADE* (Primary Stages), *[PORTO]* (The Bushwick Starr/The Women's Project), *Alligator* (New Georges/Sol Project), *Seven Spots on the Sun* (Rattlestick), *The Convent of Pleasure* (Cherry Lane), *Ike at Night* (Under the Radar/The Public), *Baal* and *Quiet, Comfort* (Hoi Polloi), *Take Care* (The Flea), *Platonov* (The Kitchen/Jay Scheib), *The Hatmaker's Wife* (Playwrights Realm), *Book of Disquiet* (Peak Performances), *Stoop Stories* (Weston Playhouse), and *Carnival Kids* (Lesser America). Opera credits include *The Flying Dutchman* (Houston Grand Opera), *Falstaff* (Opera Omaha), *The Scarlet Letter* (Opera Colorado), *Abduction from the Seraglio* (Atlanta Opera), *Cato in Utica* (Opera Lafayette), and *L'Elisir d'amour* (The Curtis Institute).

Elizabeth DeMent (Company Manager) received her BFA from the Juilliard School. She currently performs with Big Dance Theater and received a 2018 Bessie Award for Outstanding Performer. She has worked as associate choreographer to Liz Gerring, Annie-B Parson, and Susan Stroman. Recent projects include *Here Lies Love*,

David Byrne's American Utopia tour, *Love This Giant* world tour with David Byrne and St. Vincent, and St. Vincent's *Digital Witness* tour.

Dancers

Brandon Collwes trained at the Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera in musical theater and jazz dance; at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre when he studied George Balanchine technique; the Creative and Performing Arts High School of Pittsburgh, where he started making his own choreography; and the Juilliard School and SUNY Purchase for some college. He became a member of the CDF Repertory Understudy Group in 2003, where he worked closely and was trained by Merce Cunningham and Robert Swinston. He joined the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in January 2006, where he danced up until the close of the company in 2011 in the finale *Legacy World Tour*. He is currently a dancer and rehearsal assistant of the Liz Gerring Dance Company, performs for Sally Silvers and Dancers, and continues to teach for the Merce Cunningham Trust across the globe while developing and performing his own work. Collwes is also a self-taught abstract painter inspired by natural movement and the street, working mostly with acrylic paint, canvas, and salt. brandoncollwes.com

Joseph Giordano began his formal training at the pre-professional program at Steps on Broadway and graduated from New York University Tisch School of the Arts in 2015 with a bachelor of fine arts. He has performed works by Merce Cunningham, Rashaun Mitchell, Patrick Corbin, Cora Bos-Kroese, and Chris Gattelli. He has also trained under and performed the repertory works of Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and Complexions Contemporary Ballet. Giordano joined Liz Gerring Dance Company in 2015 and would like to thank his family and friends for their love and support.

Forrest Hersey was raised in Ghent, KY, and trained at the University of Louisville Dance Academy and the Youth Performing Arts School. While earning his BFA from the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College, he performed repertory by Ohad Naharin, Azsure Barton, Gregory Dolbashian, Ori Flomin, and Shannon Gillen. Hersey has since freelanced for the likes of Rashaun Mitchell + Silas Riener, Nelly van Bommel, ZviDance, and Gabrielle Lamb's Pigeonwing Dance. In 2016, he represented the Merce Cunningham Trust at the MacArthur Fellowship's 35th Annual

Genius Award Ceremony dancing excerpts from the duet *Springweather and People*. In the winter of 2018, he could be seen at the Whitney Museum of American Art in *Transmissions*, an exhibit by artist Nick Mauss. Hersey made his Liz Gerring Dance Company premiere in 2017 with the presentation of *Horizon* at the Joyce Theater in New York City.

Thomas Welsh-Huggins was born in Bloomington, IN, and grew up in Columbus, OH, and is now a choreographer, dancer, and bike mechanic based out of New York City. He currently dances for Liz Gerring Dance Company and RoseAnne Spradlin.

Julia Jurgilewicz is a native of Massachusetts, where she trained at the Gold School. She earned a BFA in Dance from Tisch School of the Arts, New York University and has since performed in New York City, nationally, and abroad. She has worked with Third Rail Projects in the immersive theater productions *The Grand Paradise* and, currently, *Then She Fell* as the White Queen. She has performed in *Cendrillon*, *Parsifal*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Aida* at the Metropolitan Opera as well as in works by Mark Dendy, Johannes Wieland, Jillian Peña, LEVYdance, Erica Essner Performance Co-op, Suzanne Beahrs Dance, Dishman + Co., and The Anata Project, to name a few. Jurgilewicz joined Liz Gerring Dance Company in 2015 performing *glacier*, *Horizon*, *(T)here to (T)here*, and *Field*. In addition to dancing, Jurgilewicz is a certified personal trainer and coach.

Jamie Scott lives and works in New York. After graduating from Barnard College, she joined the Merce Cunningham Repertory Understudy Group in 2007 and went on to join the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 2009 through its closure in 2011. She joined the Trisha Brown Dance Company in 2012 and continues to teach and set work for both companies. She has also worked with Kimberly Bartosik, Bill Young, and Daniel Gwartzman. Scott joined the Liz Gerring Dance Company in 2016. She is a Merce Cunningham Fellow 2014 and 2016 as well as the recipient of a 2014–15 Princess Grace Award.

Claire Westby is originally from Minnesota and now resides in Brooklyn. She holds a BFA in Dance from Tisch School of the Arts, New York University and also studied at Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance. She has taught dance at Tisch School of the Arts NYU, Columbia College Chicago, Gibney Dance, Mark Morris Dance

Center, St. Paul Ballet, Steps on Broadway, and Jacob's Pillow. Westby has been a part of the Liz Gerring Dance Company for seven years and is a rehearsal assistant. She has also performed and helped create original roles in works by Gwen Welliver, Benjamin Kimitch, Russell Stuart Lillie, John Jasperse, Cherylyn Lavagnino, Hollis Bartlett, Helen Simoneau, and RoseAnne Spradlin.

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