

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Kaeja d'Dance Presents 12th Annual *Porch View Dances:* *'Real People Dancing In Real Spaces'*

A Team of Racialized and Indigenous creators intentionally and joyfully blur the lines between 'Art' and daily life in revered and award-winning community dance event

Toronto, ON – Kaeja d'Dance's revered and award-winning *Porch View Dances (PVD): 'Real People Dancing In Real Spaces'* returns to the tree-lined intimacy and multiple outdoor spaces of Toronto's historic Seaton Village from August 9 to 13, 2023. Now in its 12th year, the beloved site-specific community dance event offers audiences and participants an extraordinary mingling of everyday lives and artistic expression through dance – intentionally and joyfully blurring the lines between 'Art' and daily life.

"We believe wholeheartedly that art is for everyone, anywhere, and everywhere," says Karen Kaeja, Co-Artistic Director of Kaeja d'Dance and Founder of PVD. "*Porch View Dances* takes dance out of the theatre and literally into the streets, offering brave new works by brilliant choreographers performed by everyday people with their powerful, personal stories at the forefront."

The idea for *Porch View Dances* came to Kaeja as she mused about the lives and stories behind closed doors in neighbouring houses. She envisioned these stories flowing out of homes onto front porches, lawns, and into the streets in a celebration of movement and community. Kaeja then considered how Toronto choreographers could bring their artistic visions and care to the project by collaborating with residents and participants to craft and share their unique life narratives through dance. This vision was further refined with Co-Artistic Director and partner Allen Kaeja, and the festival was launched in 2012.

PVD has since grown into a highly anticipated recurring event in Seaton Village and is considered "a poster child for site-specific dance done right" (*The Globe & Mail*). The festival "gives a beautiful glimpse inside different Toronto households, full of diversity, strength, and love, showcased through contemporary movement in a way only site-specific dance works can" (*The Dance Debrief*). The City of Toronto recently honoured PVD and its contribution to the social fabric of the neighbourhood by renaming a Seaton Village laneway – Porch View Dances Lane.

"This year we're thrilled to welcome Co-Curator and Artistic Producer Sofi Gudiño and Co-Curator Sid Ryan Eilers to the PVD team. They join us as part of a pilot project created expressly to widen our PVD communities, perspectives, and artistic offerings," says Allen Kaeja, Co-Artistic Director of Kaeja d'Dance. "Sid and Sofi have focused on works that feel connective and essential, purposefully centring on underrepresented voices in dance and voices from previous iterations of our festival."

Bringing back the spirit of Porch View Dances in its full 'in-person' glory, this immersive festival showcases a captivating lineup of Racialized and Indigenous creators. Among them, Jim and Owen Adams, an Indigenous father and son team, have been dedicated resident performers at PVD for the past six years. In their upcoming performance, they will explore the concept of relationship, erasure and resilience, through honouring traditional teachings, stories and ceremonies. The duo have been dedicated resident performers at PVD for the past six years.

Drag queen Mary Moonshine (Jake Runeckles) leads the 90-minute walking/wheeling tour through streets and lanes to experience four new dance works created by choreographers Victoria Mata and Irma Villafuerte, Heryka Miranda, Ashima Suri, and KINAJ - Kin Nguien and AJ Velasco. These works will be performed on porches and front yards by families and friends, many who have never danced before. Along the way, audiences will also discover three dance vignettes in unexpected places choreographed by and danced by Matthew "Snoopy" Cuff. The event culminates with the always popular Flock Landing, a participatory, site-specific activation at Vermont Square Park. Audience members of all ages and mobility levels are invited to join the inclusive group movement ensemble, led by Mio Sakamoto, together with dancers Kiah Francis, Yui Ugai, and Rajvi Dedhia. Bikes, strollers, and wheelchairs are welcome at this pay-what-you-wish event.

Since its inception in 2012, PVD has taken place in-person across Ontario with events in Ottawa, Kitchener, and with Lakeshore Arts in Long Branch, New Toronto, and Mimico in South Etobicoke. During the pandemic, Porch View Dances went online for two consecutive years and reached people across Canada and internationally. Kaeja d'Dance continues in its commitment to prioritize working with performers and collaborators with racialized identities who are underrepresented in the dance community on this project. PVD engages 'real people dancing in real spaces' and in this way sends the strong and powerful message that art is for everyone.

For tickets and further information, visit: kaeja.org

About Kaeja d'Dance (kaeja.org)

Kaeja d'Dance is driven by a commitment to innovation in the performing arts through the expression of dance and gesture. They explore identity, personal stories and the complexity of the human experience by integrating the interconnected mediums of live performance, dance film, and community engagement. Kaeja provides platforms for and fosters the creation of new Canadian professional dance works which are featured locally and internationally that inspire connections between professional artists and the broader community.

LISTING INFORMATION Kaeja d'Dance presents *Porch View Dances: 'Real People Dancing In Real Spaces'*

Dates: August 9 – 13, 2023
August 9 – 12 at 7pm
August 13 at 2pm

Ticket Prices: Pay What You Wish

Address: Seaton Village, Toronto
(located between Bathurst and Christie, from Bloor to Dupont)

Tickets and Info: kaeja.org

Website: kaeja.org

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For further media information, contact

Adam Scime | Managing Director | kaeja@kaeja.org
urban@kaeja.org