

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT Sarah Caraher
COMPANY Kaeja d'Dance
PHONE 226-975-1714
EMAIL urban@kaeja.org
WEBSITE www.kaeja.org

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A Year of Firsts for *Porch View Dances*' 10th Anniversary
Annual festival celebrates "real people dancing in real spaces" in a whole new way

TORONTO – **Kaeja d'Dance** is shaking things up for this summer's 10th anniversary of *Porch View Dances*, which will premiere seven brand new commissioned dance films, featuring a diverse mix of professional artists and community participants, in a virtual event on Thursday, August 5th at 7pm EST.

Porch View Dances, PVD10, marks the first time that the festival will not be led by Co-Artistic Directors Karen and Allen Kaeja. This year, Michael Caldwell, a long-time Kaeja collaborator and PVD-featured choreographer over the years, will be leading our virtual event as Curator and Production Director. All of the new dance films featured in PVD10 will highlight an exploration of the meaning of 'home'. Caldwell writes:

"As I approach my work with *Porch View Dances* in this momentous 10th anniversary season, I am drawn to an expansive idea of 'home', with the acknowledgement that everyone's living spaces are wonderfully different and we each have agency to define 'home' for ourselves."

The 10th anniversary event will also expand to encompass community participants beyond the Seaton Village neighbourhood. Karen Kaeja described this shift:

"We believe in the people who inhabit our city. PVD10 spreads its wings throughout Toronto, bringing together our city's beautiful diverse artists and everyday people. Our 10th anniversary moves inward to the heart, unleashing stories in multiple locations and neighbourhoods representing home. Warm and real, the commissioned short films will expose, inspire, and give insight to a city's humanity through brave inner dialogue transposed to moving gestures."

PVD10 features seven newly-commissioned films and our traditional audience interactive closing. Three distinct choreographer-filmmaker artistic pairings will engage with community participants to each create a dance film, celebrating the stories of everyday people. Interspersed throughout the program, three additional professional dance-makers will appear in short two-minute film vignettes, captured in one continuous shot, in a place that represents home, across the city of Toronto. Kaeja is also celebrating the dedicated group of community participants over the last 10 years in Seaton Village with the Reminiscent Reel, a fun and

uplifting short film, directed by Drew Berry and Michael Caldwell, that will feature past participants recalling *Porch View Dances* memories while participating in a new collective movement creation. PVD10 will conclude with Karen Kaeja's *Flock Landing*, a participatory, site-specific activation which invites people of all ages and abilities to join a collective movement ensemble. Led by professional dancers, it embraces simple gestures that viewers can do from the comfort of their own home.

The online program will close with a moderated conversation with the PVD10 artists, speaking about their creative process, and giving audience members an opportunity to ask questions about any aspect of the event.

DATE: Thursday, August 5, 2021 at 7pm EST.

TICKETS: Available for FREE or a Pay-What-You-Wish donation. For more information and tickets, visit www.kaeja.org/pvd10

FEATURED PVD10 ARTISTS:

Choreographer-Filmmaker Pairings: Sara Porter & Francesca Chudnoff, Atri Nundy & Aria Evans, Rodney Diverlus & Olya Glotka

Vignette Choreographers: Irma Villafuerte, Ravyn Wngz, Sashar Zarif

Flock Landing Dancers: Lilia Leon, Meryem Alaoui, Deltin Sejour

Online Tour Guide: Theatre-maker and actor, Jake Runeckles

ABOUT PORCH VIEW DANCES:

The beloved award-winning *Porch View Dances* (PVD) was conceived by Karen Kaeja and developed with Allen Kaeja in 2012. Since then, it has been presented annually in Toronto's Seaton Village as well as in communities across Ontario. Traditionally, PVD pairs professional choreographers with community members to reveal stories through original dances performed on their front porches and yards. Audiences from across the GTA are led from porch to porch to witness the dances throughout the festival. Last year, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, PVD was reimagined as a digital experience. PVD10 marks the second virtual edition of *Porch View Dances*.

ABOUT MICHAEL CALDWELL:

Michael Caldwell is a Toronto-based choreographer, performer, curator, director, producer, and arts advocate. He has performed/collaborated with over 50 of Canada's esteemed performance creators/companies, performing across North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, earning two (2) Dora Mavor Moore Awards for outstanding performance in dance. His choreography has been commissioned/presented throughout Canada at major festivals, in traditional venues and in site-responsive and community-engaged contexts. Caldwell is a two-time K.M. Hunter Charitable Foundation Artist Award finalist. He is the Executive Producer at Fall for Dance North in Toronto, and Associate Artistic Director at Festival of Dance Annapolis Royal in Nova Scotia, and sits on the board of directors at The CanDance Network and the Dancer Transition Resource Centre.

ABOUT KAEJA AND THE CO-ARTISTIC DIRECTORS:

Karen and Allen Kaeja are Co-Artistic Directors of Kaeja d'Dance. Winners of the 2019 Dance Ontario Lifetime Achievement Award, Paul D. Fleck Fellowships and the Moving Picture Award for best performance, they are a 2X runner up for NOW Magazine's Best Dance Company, Toronto Arts Foundation Celebration of Cultural Life Award finalist. They are commissioned and tour internationally. **Karen Kaeja** is an award-winning performer for stage and film, choreographer, mentor, curator, programmer, dramaturg, educator, community builder, and project instigator. Her awards include the "I Love Dance" Community Award, Toronto Arts Foundation Muriel Sherrin Award Finalist and she is a 7-time Dora Mavor Moore nominee, including 4 Doras for *Crave*, winning one. **Allen Kaeja** is an internationally recognized and award-winning dance film director and choreographer, who has created over 160 stage works and choreographed for 27 films. He is co-founder of the CanAsian Dance Festival. His awards include the Clifford E. Lee, K.M. Hunter, Bonnie Bird, a UNESCO citation and the Kathryn Ash Award.

Kaeja d'Dance is an award-winning contemporary dance company known for innovation, choreography, performance, outreach, site-specific work, and ground-breaking community engagement projects. They thrive on developing intergenerational performance platforms, collaborations with partners, peers and performers, while aiming to bridge the gap between professional artists and everyday people. With over 200 works including commissions and performances, both here in Canada and abroad, Karen and Allen's signatures are uniquely different, while having a blended vision of intimacy, athletic intensity, sensual articulation, theatrical imagery, and story-telling derived from personal and artistic resourcing of lives lived.

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Press and Media Contact:

Sarah Caraher, urban@kaeja.org, 226-975-1714

Photo Credits: Woman spinning photo by SV Photography, Choreography by Karen and Allen Kaeja, Featuring the Bodiya/Qing family

Little boy flying photo by Diana Renelli, Choreography by Karen Kaeja, Featuring the Wyncoll-Kerr family

Fabric dance photo by SV Photography, Choreography by Kathleen Rea, Featuring Shay Elrich and Jen Roy

Boy running photo by SV Photography, Choreography by Alison Cummings, Featuring Jim and Owen Adams