

September 2018: Featured Artist

Cross-discipline performance artist, choreographer & founder of New Dance Alliance Karen Bernard

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Photo Credit: Svelta Atanasova

KAREN'S WEBSITE

**Karen Bernard** is a choreographer and cross-discipline performance artist based in New York City. She began studying dance at age three with her father, Steven Bernard, a company member with 20th century pioneer, Charles Weidman. She grew up in a household which incorporated her father's dance school, with students crossing through the family space, so performance art has been deeply ingrained throughout her life. As an artist and the Founder and Director of New Dance Alliance (NDA), she teaches, lectures and serves on advisory panels across the U.S., Canada and Europe. This cross-pollination strengthens an ongoing social dialogue among international artists, one that exemplifies her lifelong commitment to performance. That commitment is fully brought to life in NDA's justly-renowned Performance Mix Festival, now in its 32nd year.

Between 1986 and 1998, Bernard presented a series of solos in collaboration with Dia Center for Arts and went on to be presented at The Kitchen and Performance Space 122 ("It Could Have Been Different") and Danspace at St. Mark's Church and Dance Theater Workshop ("Blue"). In 2004, incorporating old video footage, conversational text and popular music, Bernard received critical acclaim for "Removed Exposure," which premiered at Dixon Place in New York (Also performed at: The Festival of New Dance in St. John's, Newfoundland, Women in Transition in Vienna, and HERE Arts Center in New York). A handmade book of the same name, *Removed Exposure*, was co-created with Canadian bookmaker Gray Fraser.

She has been invited to tour in Portland, Philadelphia, Chicago, Boston, Amsterdam, Berlin, Vienna, St. John's, Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa, and Quebec City.

Karen received a BAX 10 award for her invaluable service to artists in the founding and development of the Performance Mix Festival. She is a co-founder of E|MERGE Interdisciplinary Collaborative Residency at Earthdance.

Jennifer Dunning, a critic for the *New York Times*, has described Karen as a "spellbinding performer with unusual themes."

#### **About New Dance Alliance:**

Incorporated in 1989, New Dance Alliance (NDA) is an arts service organization whose mission is to actively promote emerging forms of innovative dance, music, video and interdisciplinary performance. NDA's initial aims were to support an artistic community which has limited institutional resources and to provide that community with increased opportunities to share experimental works with the public. NDA's legacy of services to artists and audiences began almost three decades ago, when Karen Bernard opened up her Tribeca loft as a low-cost rehearsal space. Its programs

have grown organically and in direct response to artists and audiences. Today, NDA's goals remain deeply rooted in those founding principles and have expanded in response to current artistic challenges and goals. NDA's programming fosters artists and audiences through annual events, retreats, educational panels and performances.



**Scene from *Showgirls***

Photo Credit: Svelta Atanasova

***Showgirls* became a Dance Enthusiast "Top Pick" in May 2018.**

*Showgirls* portrays a delicious deconstruction of glamour in decline. Bernard's "*showgirls*" recognize their imperfections and deny those of the world around them, creating an emotionally charged and complex performance.

Creation and performance: Karen Bernard

Collaborators:

Dramaturg: Andi Stover

Performers: Jil Guyon, Lisa Parra, Rachel Thorne Germond

Costume Designer: Hwa Park

Video Editor: Jil Guyon

Lighting Designer: Emma Rivera

**UPCOMING PERFORMANCE:**

**Movement Research**

**Judson Memorial Church**

55 Washington Square South

New York, NY

**November 12th at 8 pm**

***This shared program is free.***

***No reservations required.***

[MORE ABOUT PERFORMANCE](#)



**Karen performing a solo in *Showgirls* at Brooklyn Studios for Dance  
2018**

KAREN BERNARD/NDA

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