

# Hollywood Soapbox



DANCE INTERVIEWS NEWS THEATRE

## INTERVIEW: Performance Mix Festival returns to NYC

📅 June 10, 2022 👤 John Soltes 💬 0 Comments 📌 Karen Bernard, New Dance Alliance, Performance Mix Festival

*Photo: The Performance Mix Festival will feature a dance by Christina Noel and the Creature. Photo courtesy of Aeris Meredith Goujon / Provided by press rep with permission.*

The Performance Mix Festival, annually put on by the New Dance Alliance, is back in New York City for in-person dance programming this weekend. Audience members can expect a diverse array of presentations from leading choreographers, dance artists and companies. Things kicked off Thursday, June 9 and continue until Sunday, June 12. The performers and performances are varied, but there's a definite emphasis on new and experimental works.

At the helm of the festival, ever since the beginning more than three decades ago, is Karen Bernard, New Dance Alliance founder and executive director. She will welcome many artists over the weekend, including Nick Alselmo / The Pocket Fuel Groovers, Daina Ashbee, binbinFactory / Sato Haga & Rie Fukuzawa, Bernard Brown / bbmoves, Xan Burley + Alex Springer, Mariam Dingilian, Bob Eisen, Blaze Ferrer, Ashley A. Friend and more, according to press notes. [Performances take place at the Abrons Arts Center in Manhattan.](#)

Recently *Hollywood Soapbox* exchanged emails with Bernard about the festival, which has expanded over the years and now includes dancers from across the globe. Questions and answers have been slightly edited for style.

### **What can audience members expect from this year's festival?**

New Dance Alliance's 36th edition of the Performance Mix Festival presents another extraordinary group of wildly different creators and performers. Maybe it's the zeitgeist, a common thread searching for a sense of place in a chaotic universe and execution that highlights the power of their expression.

### **How difficult is it to coordinate all of these moving parts during a pandemic?**

We are excited to return to an in-person festival this year and to partner with the Abrons Arts Center to increase our audiences as we return to live programming. Our 2020 festival was reimagined as a digital/stay-at-home festival due to Covid-19 restrictions. Our 35th anniversary festival in June 2021 featured in-person outdoor performances, live streams, installations, and video/film screenings at Movement Research/122 Community Center in MR's studios and the Courtyard at 122CC. We are working closely with Abrons Arts Center's mandate for testing all performers for COVID each day and requiring audience members to wear masks. There is always the threat of a member of the team and performers getting COVID, but we have been lucky so far.

### **Could you ever have imagined what the festival would become after 36 years?**

We are like the little train that could. Often working on a shoestring budget, we have successfully received increased support, most importantly to provide fees to artists and other services. The festival has always presented established and emerging artists. Our festival fills a space where artists can try out new material on a platform that provides an expert production and marketing team. We also provide free rehearsal space and video documentation. The festival continues to take chances by presenting NYC-

based artists and national and international artists. We take chances on artists not familiar to NYC audiences and hope they will take a chance on us.

## How important is the promotion of diversity to the future of dance?

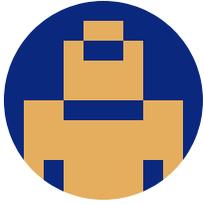
It is very important to be aware and act on providing services to BIPOC and LGBTQ artists. As the founder and executive director of New Dance Alliance, I have stepped back and engaged diverse committee members to be part of the process of developing our programs, including the Performance Mix Festival and residencies: Black Artists Space to Create, LiftOff and Satellite. To learn more about these programs go to [newdancealliance.org](http://newdancealliance.org).

*By John Soltes / Publisher / [John@HollywoodSoapbox.com](mailto:John@HollywoodSoapbox.com)*

*The Performance Mix Festival runs through Sunday, June 12. Click [here](#) for more information and tickets.*

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