

# 37th Annual Performance Mix Festival Runs This June In New York City

Risa Sarachan Contributor 

*I cover the arts, from theater and dance to film and design.*

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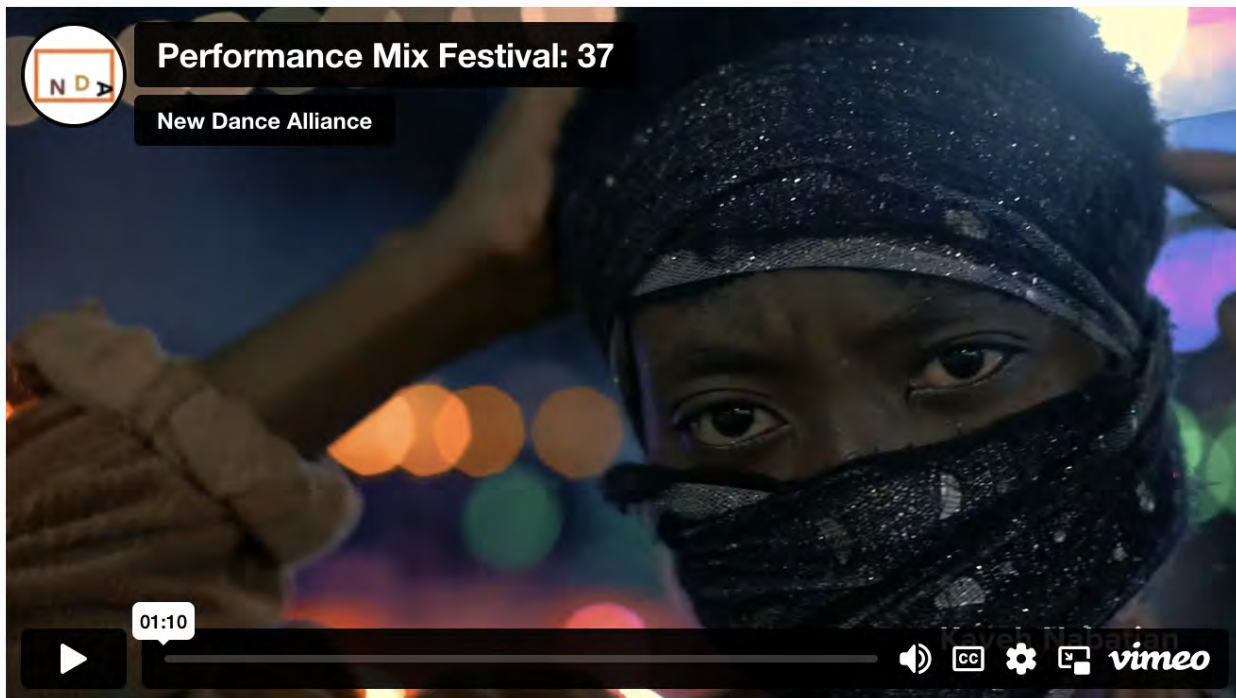
A still from "Navigation." KES TAGNEY

The [37th Annual Performance Mix Festival](#) will bring together 30 experimental dance and film artists and will take place from June 8th through June 11th at Abrons Art Center in New York City. The Festival is curated by Executive Director Karen Bernard and artist panel Mawu Ama Ma'at Gora, Bob Eisen, Blaze Ferrer, Glenn Potter-Takata, Hortense Gerardo, and x. In addition, films were selected in collaboration with

Cinédanse. The Performance Mix Festival is the longest-running woman-led experimental dance festival in New York City.

This season includes new work by Bessie Award-winning choreographer Raúl Tamez, acclaimed freestyle street/club dance and live music artists LayeRhythm, film selections in collaboration with Cinédanse (Québec), and resident artists from New Dance Alliance's Black Artists Space to Create and LiftOff programs. New Dance Alliance will also host the Breakfast Mix, a convivial gathering and discussion with the international artists that will feature a special screening of *Gravel (re)Works* by Jean-Christophe Yacono (yako).

Forbes spoke via email with Bernard about what she most looks forward to in this year's Festival. We also discussed the role that film plays in the Festival and how things have changed in the 37 years since it first started.



**Risa Sarachan: What are you excited about as we approach this year's Performance Mix Festival?**

**Karen Bernard:** I am excited about the diversity of artists and unique approaches to experimental movement and interdisciplinary forms. Local artists will share the stage with artists from Mexico, Argentina, and Quebec. We are highlighting Bessie Award winner, Raúl Tamez, with support from COMEX and CUNY, LayeRhythm, the acclaimed freestylestreet/club dance and live music group, and trying something different by programming Quebec filmmakers. Also, our free Breakfast Mix is a convivial event to meet and greet artists.

**Sarachan: How are the performances for this event selected?**

**Bernard:** Artists from an open application process are selected by an artist advisory panel made up of past Performance Mix artists (Ama Ma'at Gora, Bob Eisen, Blaze Ferrer, Glenn Potter-Takata, and Hortense Gerardo). Resident artists from our Black Artists Space to Create and LiftOff program are invited to present work at the festival. Special invitations are given to a select group of international artists.



A still from "Infinita Compañía." HAZEL BLACKMORE

**Sarachan:** This Festival is in its 37th year! That's a fantastic accomplishment. How has it changed and grown during this time?

**Bernard:** Our festival program has grown to include local, national, and international emerging and mid-career dance artists with an emphasis on

diversity. Programming offers new perspectives on how we experience dance, ranging from traditional venues to site-specific installations to open rehearsals to video screenings and artist talks. We have increased support to artists through artists' fees and out-of-town travel expenses, marketing, free rehearsal space, video and photographic documentation, and complimentary tickets to festival artists to further exchange ideas.

**Sarachan: What role does film play in this year's festival?**

**Bernard:** We are excited to be in partnership with Cinédanse to present eight Quebec filmmakers. I had the pleasure of attending the Cinédanse Festival in Rouyn-Noranda in Quebec. I was totally excited by these films of raw energy that took place in unusual locations. Each Performance Mix program will feature a short film making our festival a true mix. This partnership is made possible by Cinédanse founder Sylvain Bleau and the Consulate General of Canada and the Quebec Government in New York.

**Sarachan: What can audiences expect?**

**Bernard:** Audiences can expect to be taken out of their comfort zone as they experience different cultures and perspectives. They may question, what is dance? We encourage our audiences to be inquisitive and travel on this emotional roller coaster.





Morgan Amirah Burns JOSHUA EDWARDS

This interview has been edited and condensed for clarity.

Tickets to the Performance Mix Festival can be purchased [here](#).

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**Risa Sarachan**

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I have a BFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, where I discovered my love of writing in a roundabout way while creating my own work as an acting student. My original show 'Inconvenient Interviews with Risa' was picked up by Zooey Deschanel's HelloGiggles website as a weekly feature. In it, I interviewed celebrities from Kristen Wiig to Questlove to The Rockettes, all at awkward times for comedic effect and spontaneous moments. The show generated invitations to red carpets at Sundance and Tribeca Film Festivals, The Tony and Drama Desk Awards. It gave me the opportunity to travel to London for National Geographic and HelloGiggles to interview Malala's father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, about their important documentary 'He Named Me Malala.' My writing and videos can found on HelloGiggles, Yahoo Lifestyle and RisaSarachan.com. **Read Less**

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