



a waiting dog

A General Theory of Love

Performance and Workshop

Lecture and Concert



A General Theory of Love

Duet // 60 min

Concept: Michael O'Connor

Performance: Mike O'Connor and partner

Vocal Performance: Inertia DeWitt

Choreography: Mike O'Connor and Brandon Gonzalez

Music/Sound: Al Green, Percy Sledge, Brandon Gonzalez

Production: Joachim Kapuy

Supported by: Department of Cultural Affairs Vienna MA7, WUK Vienna,
Herberger College of the Arts - Arizona State University.

Produced by: a waiting dog

Premiere: WUK Vienna, April 26, 2012

Additional performances: Burgenland TanzTage, Oberwart, Austria.

Technical Rider:

Theatre provides:

2 Chairs, with four legs and without arms, preferably neutral color

Grand Piano with bench

Microphone (cordless)

Lighting and Sound technician

Black dance floor

Side lighting, blinders above audience, plus normal overhead stage lighting

Preferably no back or side curtains.

Music is from CD

Lighting design is available in written form, with cues and also on floppy disk

About the performance: A General Theory of Love

“Loving is different than being in love. Loving is mutuality, attunement and modulation. Loving derives from prolonged contact and exposure of each body and person.”

Can a stage be a place to access human kinds most desired experience?

Based on the latest discoveries in neuroscience, *A General Theory of Love* aims to cultivate love by creating an environment where body systems can synchronize. The performers play with a physicality and closeness that anyone can project themselves into. Thereby not only challenging established audience – performer relationships of superficial attraction, but it is also a strong political statement of the male duet. As love is the foundation of life, it is urgently necessary to reveal that love can be learned and created as well.

Advances in communication technology foster a false fantasy of togetherness by transmitting the impression of contact; phone calls, emails, sms, skype. But no physical contact is actually exchanged. In this duet, contact is the source of creation and the product. Not only as dancers but as humans we must continue to value the importance of touch.

About the lecture: Empathic Encounters

Grounded in theories of love, neuroscience and dance, the lecture aims to explain Mike O’Connor’s research and interest in the potential of the moving body as a political and social instrument. The intriguing concepts that float between fact and theory offer inspiration for the importance of art, dance and collaboration.

Presented at:

June 9th, 2012 [TanzQuartier Wien:](#) **Workshop on the Intersection of Art and Science.**

May 13th, 2012 [Ottersberg, Germany:](#) **Festival of Art as Research.**

About the workshop: Technologies of Love

"Attempting to define love is indeed a hazardous enterprise, more suitable for a poet than a scientist." J.Z. Young

How is love a psychological, neuroscientific performance tool?

As workshop participants, we aim to increase our awareness of perceptions and build a group that has a higher potential for collaboration and connection by attuning our instinct and natural preferences. Through heightened sensitivity and by following stages, we can use love/attraction/comfort as a practice and a performance tool.

How we approach LOVE as a laboratory.

Each participant's definition, experience and questions of love will be honoured as information. We will use the proximity and sensory awareness to explore the steps the human brain and body go through when they learn love. Using improvisation, partnering, contact and individual work, we will investigate and discuss what our bodies already know.

Other areas to be investigated: Buddhist aspects of love | Social aspects | Community | Empathy | Personal needs | Sexuality | Music and Song | the service and sacrificing for others.

As a group we explore, define, test and experiment with love, starting from a neuroscientific standpoint. Bring memories, pictures, poems, songs and texts that move you and can contribute to the lab.

Love could be called "the dissolution of the obsession of one's self."

Taught at [ImpulsTanz](#) 2012 with Neuroscientist Corinne Jola: [More info](#)

About the concert: Soul Etcetera

With the aim of including the audience, Inertia DeWitt's seducing vocals reveal how the influential music genre has accurately contained components of love's science and elusiveness. Characterized by call and response, improvisation and hypnotizing rhythms, DeWitt sings an array of soul classics that allow the audience to move and sing along, providing an entertaining and uplifting experience.

Songs performed:

Can't Take My Eyes Off of You / My World is Empty Without You / Rescue Me / Tracks of my Tears / You Can't Hurry Love / Why Do Fools Fall in Love / Lets Stay Together / Band of Gold...etc

Vimeo Link of concert: [Soul Etcetera](#)

Password: soul

A General Theory of Love on Vimeo

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

Premiere Info: [Wuk in German](#)

Review on European Cultural Website: [In German](#)

Michael O'Connor received his BFA in Modern Dance from the University of Utah where he was the first student to receive an assistantship for artistic dance research. He presented his work at the National Conference of Undergraduate Research twice as well as opened for the keynote speaker Stephan Koester. He then worked with Cie. Willi Dorner from 2003-2010 in a variety of works and assisting in the creation and performance of 'Bodies in Urban Spaces' in over 30 cities. Michael is the Vienna branch facilitator for the Field Method, an organization based in NYC, which through TanzQuartier Wien gives artists a place to show work and receive feedback. He was listed in the 2008 BalletTanz Magazine as the 'dancer to watch' in Vienna for his own choreography and performance in his piece entitled 'a waiting dog dies.' In 2010 Michael received a Turbo Residency scholarship at ImpulsTanz and in 2011 Michael premiered his new work 'You are the subject of my seeing' at TanzQuartierWien (TQW). He worked with Deborah Hay on NEWS as part of the Solo Performance Commissioning Project which premiered in a new adaptation in 2011 at ImpulsTanz by his drag persona Jai Jai Sincere. In 2012, Michael was guest artist faculty at Arizona State University teaching creative practice based off of anthropological research and began developing the duet "A General Theory of Love" with Brandon Gonzalez. His research on the intersection of neuroscience and dance will be presented at the 'Festival of Art as Research' in Ottersberg, Germany and he continues his neuroscience and dance research with Dr. Guido Orgs in June at TQW. Michael has also worked with Paul Wenninger, Barbara Kraus and Georg Blaschke. He will teach 'Technologies of Love' at ImpulsTanz Festival 2012.

Michael O'Connor

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