

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Karen Stokes Dance presents *DEEP: Seaspaces* at Zilkha Hall, Hobby Center for Performing Arts**

HOUSTON, TX: Karen Stokes Dance presents “**DEEP: Seaspaces**” October 20-22, 2016 at 8:00pm at the Hobby Center for Performing Arts, Zilkha Hall. “**DEEP: Seaspaces**” is the culminating performance of a multi-year initiative inspired by the history and landmarks of the City of Houston. With an original score by composer Bill Ryan played live by nationally recognized musicians, the evening length live performance will explore Houston for two of its defining industries: sea and space.

“DEEP: Seaspaces” fuses history, landscape, dance, and music through the lens of two iconic Houston enterprises: The Houston Ship Channel and NASA. While *Sea* speaks to the pioneering spirit of the founding of Houston along the banks of Buffalo Bayou and the formation of the Houston Ship Channel, *Space* is inspired by Houston’s stronghold in space exploration and human achievement. Celebrating Houston’s unique heritage and Texas’ pioneering spirit, “**DEEP: Seaspaces**” investigates the core of human progress, the fundamental spirit of Houston, and the desire to understand the unknown to forge a better tomorrow.

In “DEEP: Seaspaces,” Stokes explores “launching” and “landing” through a unique blend of quirky and innovative choreographic styles that has become the trademark of her 20 years of work in contemporary dance. Stokes has received regional and national acclaim for her choreography including being named “Best Choreographer in Houston” in both 2014 and 2015 by the Houston Press. Nancy Wozny, of Texas Arts & Culture, wrote: “In Houston, it’s Karen Stokes who comes to mind as an artist tightly tied to Texas. I named Stokes a choreographer of “place” over a decade ago when she created *Hometown*, her choral/kinetic poem to the Bayou City. Now heading up Karen Stokes Dance, she’s exploring the ground truth with Backstage at Allen’s Landing, nine art

and performance installations that reflect on the landscape, history, architecture, and habitat of a historic Houston site...she is not only *the* choreographer of Houston but *on* Houston."

KSD has commissioned a music/soundscape by nationally known composer, Bill Ryan, who collaborated with Stokes in 2011 for "The Secondary Colors." Ryan's music and repertoire has continued to garner national attention: "Rarely has music this earthy been so elegant, and not since the works of Elliott Carter (whose music Ryan's in no way resembles) has a composer fashioned so many facets of his own personality into what is obviously a conversation between musical characters" (Gramophone Magazine). Ryan has selected an all-star cast of musicians to bring his music to life: Michael Lowenstern, Todd Meehan, Doug Perkins, and Todd Reynolds. "DEEP: Seaspaces" also includes lighting design by nationally renowned designer Kevin Rigdon who has been honored with two Tony Award nominations and four Drama Desk Awards, among others.

Karen Stokes Dance premieres **DEEP: Seaspaces** on Thursday-Saturday, October 20-22, 2016, at 8:00 pm at The Hobby Center for Performing Arts, Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby, Houston, TX 77002. Ticket prices: TBA. Student Tickets will be available.

For tickets (on sale beginning August 1), visit [www.thehobbycenter.org](http://www.thehobbycenter.org). For more information on Karen Stokes Dance, visit [www.karenstokesdance.org](http://www.karenstokesdance.org) or contact Company Manager, Toni Valle at 713/409-2838 or [toni@karenstokesdance.org](mailto:toni@karenstokesdance.org).

*Karen Stokes Dance is funded in part by grants from Houston Endowment, the Hamman Foundation, and the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance. Karen Stokes Dance is a participant in the Resident Incubator Program supported by the City of Houston through the Houston Art Alliance.*

*High-resolution photos available upon request*

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## **Fact Sheet**

**WHO:** Karen Stokes Dance

**WHAT:** DEEP: Seaspaces

**WHEN:** Thursday-Saturday October 20-22, 2016 @ 8:00pm

**WHERE:** The Hobby Center for Performing Arts, Zilkha Hall, 800 Bagby, Houston, TX 77002

**Ticket Prices:** TBA

**Tickets:** [www.karenstokesdance.org](http://www.karenstokesdance.org)

**Information:** 713-409-2838 or [toni@karenstokesdance.org](mailto:toni@karenstokesdance.org)

## Artist Bios:

**Karen Stokes** has been choreographing original dance theater since 1988. Since 1998, Stokes has created eight evening length productions in addition to over 35 repertory (short program) works. Her work emphasizes quirky movement invention, strong rhythmic connections, text, original vocals, and concepts of community. In the last three years, Stokes has branched out into creating video projection as an integrated part of her live theatrical productions and several dance for camera projects. Most recently, Stokes has been incorporating site projects into her lexicon, working strongly within setting a time and place, whether imaginary or real.

In 1997, Stokes co-founded Travesty Dance Group in Ohio with colleagues Kimberly Karpanty & Rebecca Malcolm-Naib. In June 2011, the Travesty Dance Group (under the direction of Karen Stokes in Houston) became Karen Stokes Dance. Stokes currently resides in Houston, with her husband and two cats. She can also be found at the University of Houston, where she is a professor in the dance program.

For the past twenty years **Bill Ryan** (b.1968) has been a tireless advocate of contemporary music. Through his work as a composer, conductor, producer and educator, he has engaged diverse audiences throughout the country with the music of our time. He has won the American Composers Forum Champion of New Music Award for his significant contributions to the work and livelihoods of contemporary composers throughout the country, the Michigan Governor's Award in Arts Education, and was a finalist for the Michigan Distinguished Professor of the Year award for his work at Grand Valley State University. Bill's music has been performed in major cities and venues across the country including Le Poisson Rouge, Galapagos, Symphony Space, and Lincoln Center (New York), Woodruff Arts Center (Atlanta), the Atlas (Washington D.C.), Constellation (Chicago), MOCAD (Detroit), Initman Theater (Seattle), and the Hobby Center (Houston), and internationally in Europe, Asia, South America, and Australia. His music has received awards from Meet the Composer, ASCAP, and New Music USA.

Bill has produced three critically acclaimed recordings by the ensemble, named to top year-end lists by the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Weekly, Time Out Chicago, and many others. A track from their second CD, *In C Remixed*, was recently heard on MTV's new hit series *Teen Wolf*. Their first CD, Steve Reich's *Music for 18 Musicians*, was recently named one of the top five classical recordings of the decade by WNYC's John Schaefer.

<http://www.billryanmusic.com/about/>

## **Musician Bios:**

**Todd Reynolds**, violinist, composer, educator and technologist is known as one of the founding fathers of the hybrid-musician movement and one of the most active and versatile proponents of what he calls “present music.” The violinist of choice for Steve Reich, Meredith Monk, Bang on a Can, and a founder of the string quartet known as Ethel, his compositional and performance style is a hybrid of old and new technology, multi-disciplinary aesthetic, and pan-genre composition and improvisation. Reynolds’ music has been called “a charming, multi-mood extravaganza, playful like Milhaud, but hard-edged like Hendrix” (Strings Magazine), and his countless premieres and performances of everything from classical music to Jazz to Rock’n’Roll seem to redefine the concert hall and underground club as undeniably and unavoidably intertwined.

Reynolds has just released his double CD set, *Outerborough* on Innova Recordings, featuring InSide, a collection of his own music, paired with OutSide, music written by a veritable who’s who of contemporary composers. A forerunner in the expansion of the violin beyond its classical and ‘wood-bound’ tradition, Reynolds electrifies in concert, weaves together composed and improvised segments, and makes use of computer technology and digital loops to sculpt his sounds in real time, seamlessly integrating minimalist, pop, Jazz, Indian, African, Celtic and indigenous folk music into his own sonic blend. As a cross-genre improviser and collaborator, he has appeared and/or recorded with such artists as Anthony Braxton, Uri Caine, John Cale, Steve Coleman, Joe Jackson, Dave Liebman, Yo-Yo Ma, Graham Nash, Greg Osby, Steve Reich, Marcus Roberts and Todd Rundgren, and has commissioned and premiered countless numbers of new works by America’s most compelling composers, including John King, Phil Kline, Michael Gordon, Neil Rolnick, Julia Wolfe, David Lang, Evan Ziporyn and Randall Wolff. His interdisciplinary work includes ongoing collaborations with SoundPainter Walter Thompson as well as media artists Bill Morrison and Luke DuBois and sound artist Jody Elff.

[www.toddreynolds.com/](http://www.toddreynolds.com/)

**Michael Lowenstern**, is an American bass clarinetist and composer specializing in new music. Lowenstern holds a B.M. and Performer's Certificate from the Eastman School of Music, an Artist's Certificate from the Sweelinck Conservatorium Amsterdam, and an M.M. and D.M.A. from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. In 1989, Lowenstern received a Fulbright grant to study in Amsterdam with bass clarinet virtuoso Harry Sparnaay. In addition to Sparnaay, Lowenstern's clarinet and bass clarinet teachers have included Charles Neidich, Richard MacDowell, and John Bruce Yeh, and he has also studied composition with Daniel Weymouth.

<http://www.earspasm.com/omega/>

**Doug Perkins** specializes in new works for percussion as a chamber musician and soloist. This has taken him to stages and festivals throughout North America and Europe including Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the Brooklyn Academy of Music, the Spoleto USA Festival, and the World Expo in Lisbon, Portugal. He was a founding member of *So Percussion* and is presently hard at work with the *Meehan/Perkins Duo*. He works regularly with composers David Lang, Steve Reich, Paul Lansky, John Luther Adams, Steve Mackey, Nathan Davis, and Larry Polansky. He also performs regularly with the International Contemporary Ensemble, Alarm Will Sound, Camerata Pacifica, Collage New Music, eighth blackbird, Max Roach's M’ Boom, and the electronica duo Matmos. Doug currently teaches percussion at Dartmouth College and directs the Contemporary

Music Lab. He is the Director of the Annual Festival of New Music and the concert series The Way to Go Out. Doug received his Bachelor's degree from the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Masters and Artist Diploma degrees from Yale University, and his Doctorate from Stony Brook University. His principle percussion teachers were Jack Dilanni, Jim Culley, and Robert Van Sice. <http://www.dougperkins.com> or <http://www.mpduo.com>

**Todd Meehan** currently serves as Associate Professor of Percussion at the Baylor University School of Music. He joined the faculty in 2003 and was recently honored with Baylor University's 2010-2011 Outstanding Faculty Award in Teaching. His performance endeavors are focused on the creation of new music for percussion. In this capacity, he has commissioned works from Paul Lansky, David Lang, Charles Wuorinen, Tristan Perich, Alejandro Viñao, John Supko, Matt McBane, and Jonathan Leshnoff, among many others, and has presented numerous premieres for solo and chamber percussion.

As an orchestral musician, Todd has performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Japan, including performances under conductors Christoph Eschenbach, Michael Tilson Thomas, Gunther Schuller, Robert Spano, Myung Whung Chung, and Peter Oundjian. He has performed with the Austin Symphony Orchestra, the Austin Lyric Opera, and is an alumnus of the Pacific Music Festival and the International Festival-Institute at Round Top. He currently serves as Principal Timpanist of the Waco Symphony Orchestra. Todd received his Doctor of Musical Arts and Bachelor of Music degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, and his Master of Music degree from Yale University. He also pursued non-degree studies at DePaul University. His principal teachers include Robert van Sice, George Frock, James Ross, and Michael Green.

[https://blogs.baylor.edu/todd\\_meehan/biography/](https://blogs.baylor.edu/todd_meehan/biography/)