



# BEBE MILLER COMPANY: *A HISTORY*

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presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

**CaLARTS**

# BEBE MILLER COMPANY: A HISTORY

Performed by Angie Hauser and Darrell Jones

Dramturgy: Talvin Wilks

Video: Lily Skove

Music: Michael Wall and Darren Morze; additional music from BMC repertory by Albert Mathias: *Landing/Place* (2005); Hahn Rowe: *Verge* (2001); excerpt from "The Italian Lesson" by Ruth Draper

Text: Angie Hauser, Talvin Wilks and the Company; excerpt from Andre Aciman, Personal History, "Arbitrage," *The New Yorker*, July 10, 2000

Lighting Design: Michael Mazzola

Set Design: Mimi Lien

Costume Construction: Anne DeVelder and Nadine Spray, from a design by Liz Prince for *Going To The Wall* (1998)

Installation: Maya Ciarrocchi

Production Supervisor: Ryan Osborn

Stage Manager: Valerie Oliveiro

Sound Supervisor: Dave Wallingford

Company Administration: Nicole Garlando

Booking: PMG Arts Management

The Bebe Miller Company appears by arrangement with:

PMG Arts Management

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The logo for the Western States Arts Federation (WESTAF) is displayed in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. The letters are spaced out, with 'W' and 'E' being significantly larger than the other letters.

## **A HISTORY:** The Use of Text

Throughout the performance, text is used as hyper-reality, sometimes inserted, projected and interjected into scenes. The sources are from various interviews, recorded rehearsal conversations, journal reflections, original writings and past texts generated from previous dances. Texts range from discussions used as source material fed through the dancers'

headsets, to an essay written by Angie Hauser describing her experience of performing with Darrell Jones in *Landing/Place* (2005). Also included is text from *Verge* (2001), generated through the “capture” of bits of speech from the rehearsal process. The intention is to create self-reflecting loops of meaning and history that are strung throughout, purposely absurd, at times nonsensical, but hopefully, revealing layers of thought, concept and process. — Talvin Wilks, Dramaturg

### **INSTALLATION:** *Moving Portraits*

Maya Ciarrocchi’s video installation depicts a number of long time Bebe Miller Company collaborators and is a continuation of the artist’s ongoing portrait series *I’m Nobody! Who Are You?* The work is comprised of life-sized video portraits presented in pairs. The work breaks boundaries by allowing the viewer to observe individuals for longer lengths of time than would exist in standard social conditions. By observing paired portraits, viewers create relationships, and consequently narratives, between the participants despite the known conditions of the filming. The work challenges the viewer to consider how they construct their appearance for others and respond to the same construction of others. Ultimately, *Moving Portraits* asks viewers to consider the artificiality of their assumptions about communities and individuals.

### **CHOREOGRAPHER’S STATEMENT**

We started by looking back.

At once an archive and installation as well as a performance piece, *A History* reveals the interpersonal subtext that drives our particular mode of inquiry. The exchange that’s at the heart of our process began before there was a place for it. It has taken us through one work to the next – picking up the thread, the next new sense of the body, the unfinished business we couldn’t solve. *A History* is remembering *remembering*. As such, it is an archive of our practice, an incomplete and completely subjective accounting built on ideas, movement and conversations from the past 10 years. It is filtered through Angie and Darrell’s nuanced collaboration as dancers that began with *Verge* (2001) and travels through *Landing/Place* (2005) and *Necessary Beauty* (2008). Talvin’s attendant dramaturgy carries a structural tone through those works towards this new one, sensed more than seen. Lily’s films viscerally and formally re-imagine our view of the process of making and performing dances. And Maya’s video installation, comprised of life-sized video portraits of a number of Bebe Miller Company’s longtime collaborators, invites the viewer to challenge their assumptions about the nature of relationships. Together, we have logged hundreds of hours of asking and answering questions about how we do what we do, identifying our independent and collective maps through the works we’ve made, and creating new materials that expose the methodologies at the heart of our process.

The evidence of our artistic history together is referenced throughout *A History*. Used texts and dances resurface, new to most audiences; they trigger old connections that are recalled, retold and carried forward. I trust this process is familiar; we’ve all been purposeful magpies gathering the shiny bits into something newly made. — Bebe Miller

## ABOUT THE COMPANY

The mission of Bebe Miller Company is to support the artistic vision of choreographer Bebe Miller in creative, cross-disciplinary explorations and in creating and performing new works. Miller's vision of dance and performance resides in her faith in the moving body as a record of thought, experience and sheer beauty. Her aesthetic relies on the interplay of a work's idea, its physicality, and the contributions of company members to fashion its singular voice. Seeking to expand the language of dance, Miller's work encompasses choreography, writing, film, video and digital media. The Company is dedicated to providing access to the creative process, and committed to keeping dance available for a diverse community.

The Company celebrated its 25th year in 2010 and, after nearly two decades of operating as a traditional touring company, BMC is now structured as a "virtual company," with members living in various locations around the U.S. New work is developed over a period of years in long-term residencies that bring BMC dancers and project collaborators together for creative exploration and community-based activities. Through their project Dance Fort, BMC is pioneering the use of interactive digital media as an artist-driven archive of creative process. The public availability of this media is a means to share company process and methodologies with the dance field, artists in other disciplines and the general public.

Bebe Miller Company has toured extensively throughout the United States and in eight countries, most recently to Frankfurt, Germany for a residency and in-progress performances of *A History* as part of the Forsythe Project/Motion Bank's TWO Project, directed by Maria Palazzi and Norah Suniga-Shaw. The Company has been commissioned by such venues as Brooklyn Academy of Music's NEXT WAVE Festival, City Center Theater, The Joyce Theater, Wexner Center for the Arts, Walker Art Center, Northrop Auditorium, On The Boards, Hancher Auditorium, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Theater Artaud, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, New England Presenters, Bates Dance Festival, Painted Bride Art Center, Dance Theater Workshop, Dancing in the Streets and Danspace Project. All of this would not have been possible without the contributions of all of the dancers, collaborators, staff and board members who have been a part of the process for over twenty-five years.

## BIOGRAPHIES

**BEBE MILLER** (Choreography and Direction) has been making dances for over 30 years and formed Bebe Miller Company in 1985. Known for a mix of virtuosic dancing and fundamental humanity, her choreography has been produced at major dance centers throughout the US and abroad. In addition to her ongoing work with her ensemble, Miller has received commissions from Boston Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Philadanco, Britain's Phoenix Dance Theatre and Johannesburg's PACT Dancen, among other groups across the country and abroad. Collaboration being fundamental to her

creative process she has worked with numerous composers, visual artists, writers, filmmakers and directors; she has received four Bessie Awards for choreography and direction, most recently for her collaboration with the 11-member creative team in *Landing/Place* (2005). She is a United States Artists Ford Fellow and recently was named as one of the inaugural class of Doris Duke Artists, a program of the Doris Duke Performing Artist Awards. Currently a Professor in Dance at The Ohio State University, she is a member of the International Artists Advisory Board of the Wexner Center for the Arts and serves on the board of Bearstow, an arts retreat in central Maine.

**ANGIE HAUSER** (Performance) has been a dancer/collaborator with Bebe Miller Company since 2000. She has contributed to BMC works *Verge*, *Landing/Place* and *Necessary Beauty*, receiving a BESSIE award for her work in *Landing/Place*. In addition to her work with BMC she is a dance maker, performer and teacher who has been presented throughout North America and Europe. She collaborates with many gifted artists in the field of dance improvisation including Andrew Harwood, K.J. Holmes, Darrell Jones, and Kathleen Hermesdorf. She has an ongoing collaboration with dance artist Chris Aiken creating evening length improvisation performances in collaboration with musicians and other dancers. She is an Assistant Professor at Smith College, Northampton, MA.

**DARRELL JONES** (Performance) has performed in the United States and abroad with a variety of choreographers and companies such as Bebe Miller, Urban Bush Women, Ronald K. Brown, Min Tanaka, Ralph Lemon and KOKUMA Dance Theater. Along with performing, Darrell continues to choreograph and teach. He has collaborated with other choreographers including Kirstie Simson, Angie Hauser, Jeremy Wade, Lisa Gonzales, Paige Cunningham and writer, Cheryl Boyce-Taylor; musicians Jessie Manno, Brian Schuler, and DJ Franco De Leon; and designer, Mawish Syed, in dance films, documentations and interactive multimedia installations. Darrell is presently an Associate Professor at The Dance Center of Columbia College in Chicago.

**LILY SKOVE** (Video) is a filmmaker and choreographer, creating for the screen, installation, and live performance. Her films have been shown at Dance Theater Workshop's Digital Series, The San Diego/Tijuana DANCEonFILM Festival, and Dance Camera Istanbul, and she has worked as a video editor on *Synchronous Objects For One Flat Thing, Reproduced*, a website and installation made in collaboration between The William Forsythe Company and The Ohio State University. Her choreographies have been presented at the Chocolate Factory Theater in New York City, the Dailes Theatre in Riga, Latvia and Oberlin College among other venues. Lily holds a Diploma in Dance Studies from the Laban Centre, UK, and an MFA in Dance from The Ohio State University. Currently Lily runs a production company in Los Angeles and works in camera departments on feature films.

**TALVIN WILKS** (Dramaturgy) is a playwright, director and dramaturg. His plays include *Tod*, the boy, *Tod*, *The Trial of Uncle S&M*, *Bread of Heaven*, and *An American Triptych*. Directorial

projects include the world premiere productions of UDU by Sekou Sundiata (651Arts/BAM), The Love Space Demands by Ntozake Shange (Crossroads), No Black Male Show/Pagan Operetta by Carl Hancock Rux (Joe's Pub/The Kitchen), the Obie Award/AUDELCO Award winning The Shaneequa Chronicles by Stephanie Berry (Ensemble Studio Theatre), and AUDELCO nominations for Best Director for Ensemble Studio Theatre's productions of Relativity by Cassandra Medley and On the Way to Timbuktu by Petronia Paley. He has served as co-writer/dramaturg for Ping Chong's ongoing series of Undesirable Elements, and dramaturg for four collaborations with the Bebe Miller Company, receiving a 2006 Bessie Award for Dramaturgy for Landing/Place

**MICHAEL WALL** (Sound Design) began collaborating with dance and other art forms at an early age and continues to work with artists nationally and internationally. Michael and designer, Jamie Karczewski, have formed the company ASIMPLESOUND, LLC that produces music and resources for dance, film and other media. Michael works full-time in the Department of Dance at Ohio State University and accompanies at the Bates Dance Festival and the American Dance Festival.

**DARREN MORZE** (Sound Design) is a composer, producer, and audio engineer living in Philadelphia, PA. From 2000 through 2010, he toured the world as a musician or live-mix engineer with bands like The Killers, Jane's Addiction, Placebo, Easy Star All-Stars, Stellastarr, The Sounds, and Asobi Seksu. He also ran his own recording facility, Plan B Studios, where he produced, engineered, and collaborated on hundreds of recordings with local, national, and international artists. For the past three years, Morze has scored 2 internationally acclaimed films for director Shawn Christensen (Abduction), 2 feature films for Caliber Media (both released by Lionsgate), and dozens of short films and documentaries- many of which are still winning awards and praise from the international festival circuit.

**MIMI LIEN** (Set Design) is a designer of sets/environments for theater, dance, and opera. Having arrived at set design from a background in architecture, her work often focuses on the interaction between audience/environment and object/performer. Mimi is an artistic associate with Pig Iron Theatre Company and The Civilians, and resident designer at BalletTech. Her design work has been exhibited at the Prague Quadrennial, and her sculpture work at the Storefront for Art and Architecture. She was a recipient of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program, a MacDowell Colony Fellow, and her work has been recognized by a Barrymore Award, and an OBIE award for Sustained Excellence.

**MAYA CIARROCCHI** (Installation) is a New York-based video artist and projection designer. She has created video for performance with Merce Cunningham, Ping Chong, Bebe Miller and Donna Uchizono, among others, and for regional theaters throughout the country. Her work has been exhibited in New York at chashama, The Chocolate Factory, New York Live Arts, Westbeth Gallery and Sasha Wolf Gallery; regionally at Artisphere in Virginia and the Hammer Museum in California and internationally at Borderlines Film Festival in the UK and

the Moving Pictures Festival in Toronto, Canada. Ms. Ciarrocchi has received residencies from the Kala Art Institute, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Ucross Foundation, and was awarded a Bessie Award for her projection design of Bebe Miller Company's Landing/Place. Ms. Ciarrocchi earned a BFA in dance from SUNY Purchase and an MFA in computer art from the School of Visual Arts. She is currently developing a large-scale installation centering on mountaintop removal mining in Appalachia.

Bebe Miller Company's ***A History*** was commissioned by the Wexner Center for the Arts at The Ohio State University through its Wexner Center Artist Residency Award program and the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. *A History* was also developed with support from Wesleyan University's Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance.

The creation of *A History* was made possible with support from The Ohio State University's College of Arts and Humanities Grants for Research and Creative Activity and the Department of Dance, as well as by the Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, and the Department of Women's Studies and their Coca-Cola Critical Difference for Women grant program.

The creation of Bebe Miller Company's *A History* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and additional funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the MetLife Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The presentation of Bebe Miller Company's *A History* was made possible by the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project, with lead funding from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and additional funding from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Additional support for Bebe Miller Company has been provided by the Multi-Arts Production Fund, a program of Creative Capital Foundation supported by The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Bebe Miller Company and *A History* are supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The work's development was co-produced as part of The Forsythe Company's Motion Bank: TWO Project by Maria Palazzi and Norah Zuniga-Shaw, Advanced Computing Center for Arts and Design at The Ohio State University. Motion Bank is funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, the Hessian Ministry for Science and the Arts, the Kulturfonds Frankfurt RheinMain and Ms. Susanne Klatten.

Funding for *A History* was also provided by the United States Artists' USA Projects donation program.

### ***Bebe Miller: Tracing History***

The exhibition *Bebe Miller: Tracing History* is made possible at OSU's Urban Arts Space with support from Ohio State's Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee Theatre Research Institute, as well as Ohio State's Arts Initiative. Additional support is provided by the Wexner Center for the Arts' Performing Arts program. The exhibition *Bebe Miller: Tracing History* is made possible by the Contemporary Art Center (CAC) network, administered by the New England Foundation for the Arts (NEFA), with major support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. CAC is comprised of leading art centers and brings together performing arts curators to support collaboration and work across disciplines, and is an initiative of NEFA's National Dance Project. Wexner Center for the Arts' Performing Arts program is a member of CAC.

*Bebe Miller: Tracing History* is curated by Jerry Dannemiller, Wexner Center for the Arts, a project developed at the Institute for Curatorial Practice in Performance (ICPP) at Wesleyan University. Peter Taub, Director of Performance Programs at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago, served as ICPP project advisor.

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