

Dance



SEPARATE REALITIES Jessie Young and Anna Goldman of Dim Sum dance look away.

Dance, interrupted

Julie Mayo's dances make sense of non sequitur.
By Asimina Chremos

Now is a prime time to see the current incarnation of Julie Mayo's quirky, unpredictable and psychologically complex dances. Two weeks after this weekend's concert by her small company, Dim Sum Dance, the Chicago resident is packing up her car and moving to California to attend the M.F.A. program in experimental choreography at University of California, Riverside. She'll be keeping one foot in Chicago, but her work is bound to evolve from this point and it will be fascinating to follow. We observed a rehearsal for her new work, "Fever Drift," then sat down with Mayo to discuss her upcoming move and her unique approach to dance making.

In rehearsal, you worked with the dancers on a kind of improvisational technique or style you called "truncation."

Yes, I feel like I first heard that word from [choreographer] Stephanie Skura when I was working with her in Seattle in 2006. Truncation is a micro-subversion: You're starting something but then quickly cutting it off and going to something else before following through. For me, it requires a heightened sense of attention. You have to be completely there [doing a body movement] in every cell, and

then you're into something else with no time passing in between. It's like multiple voices speaking almost simultaneously but not quite. You're creating but at the same time letting things happen to you.

What drew you to the experimental choreography M.F.A.?

Last summer when I was at a choreographic residency in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania [SUPA, for Studio Upsun in Pennsylvania at Wilson College], I made a connection with Neil Greenberg, who is one of the professors there. [Greenberg is a lauded artist whose career includes a stint with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company and a choreographic commission for Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project]. Our work isn't similar, but I think there's a crossover in our interest in the non-narrative aspect of dance. I don't think dance is the right form for storytelling—it has so much to offer about being.

What does "narrative" mean to you?

Over the years, in postshow feedback sessions or hearing what performers' friends and family say about dance, it seems that audiences want to see a clear through-line and a resolution. People talk about traditional structures, climaxes and denouements, or conflicts presented and then being resolved in ways people can feel good about.

So, how do you structure your choreography?

I'm interested in how the art making and the work relates to life. I like theater and theatricality, but I'm interested in the way things can really be. Things in life don't necessarily have a resolution. Life has surprises, sharp turns, moments of settling and then moving again. I'm juxtaposing the constant change and variety in life with the repetition and mundaneness of everyday living. "Fever Drift" deals with the fleetingness of consciousness, nonresolution, the intensity of movement and change.

What do you hope to focus on in grad school?

I want to explore questions about what is dance. I know that's such a broad, overarching question, but what is it for me? What do I want to do with it? I'm curious about what is the emotional feeling of a dance? How do things affect each other, what is next to what and how does that resonate? What are alternative ways to have a through-line in a work? I'm not particularly looking for "the" answers; I'm not interested in figuring it out so I can keep doing the same thing over and over again. I like to engage in a series of questions and experiences in the studio, and then the dances themselves are the answers. They are the visual, kinesthetic, auditory answers.

"Fever Drift" premieres at the Hamlin Park Fieldhouse Theater August 27. See Listings.

Listings

If you want to be listed

Submit information by mail, e-mail (dance@timeoutchicago.com) or fax (312-924-9350) to **Asimina Chremos**. Include details, dates, times, address of venue, nearest El station or bus routes, contact information and admission price, if any. **Deadline is 10am on Monday, ten days before publication date.**

* Recommended or notable
♦ Cheap

Thursday 27

FREE Dance in the Parks Douglas Park, 1600 S Sacramento Dr. El: Blue to California or Kedzie. Bus: 12, 52, 6:30pm. Ballet dancer turned arts administrator Kathleen McCann started this new nonprofit to present a series of dance concerts in Chicago parks. Expect to see works by one or more of these artists: Keesha Beckford, Brock Clawson, Autumn Eckman, Cheryl Mann, Matt Pardo, Jon Sloven and August Tye.

* **Dim Sum Dance: "Fever Drift"** Hamlin Park Fieldhouse Theater, 3035 N Hoyle Ave (800-838-3006, brownpapertickets.com). Bus: 50, 76, 77.

7:30pm; \$15, students and seniors \$12. Choreographer Julie Mayo, a maker of collage-y, Beckett-esque dances, presents her troupe, Dim Sum Dance, in its second Chicago concert. Works include a new solo by Mayo, *whoaa man!!*, the 2008 ensemble piece *Feed the Guest* and the premiere of *Fever Drift*, a trio. Guest choreographer Tiffany Rhyndard of Vermont performs a solo, *SPILL*, developed during a recent residency in Scheiffling, Austria. See "Dance, interrupted," this page.

Friday 28

FREE Argentina Tango in Concert Chicago Cultural Center, 78 E Washington St (312-744-6630). El: Red to Lake; Orange, Pink, Green, Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Randolph. Bus: 3, X3, 4, X4, 6, 10, 14, 26, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 151, 157. Metra: Elec Main to Millennium Station. 6pm. This free evening features the Argentina Tango On Stage Orchestra with Pocho Palmer on *bandoneón* (type of accordion) and legendary singer Alberto Podestá, along with performances by internationally recognized dancers. The concert is followed by a typical tango social dance called *milonga*, in which you can participate.

FREE Dance for Life: Free Classes in Millennium Park Millennium Park, Michigan Ave between Monroe and Randolph Sts. El: Red to Monroe; Blue to Washington; Pink, Orange, Green, Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Randolph. Bus: 3, 4, 14, 124, 145, 157. Noon-5pm. Put on your dance shoes and head to Millennium Park for an afternoon of random dance lessons. Here's the lineup: At noon, kick off with the South African gum-boot dance at Crown Fountain; at 1pm, activities move to Wrigley Square for African Moves; pop, lock and break at 1:45pm; followed by Jazz Beats at 2:30pm; Latin Dance Groove starts at 3:15pm; at 5pm head to the *Cloud Gate* sculpture to do the Cupid Shuffle line dance. The classes are organized by the HIV/AIDS charity Dance for Life.

* **Dim Sum Dance: "Fever Drift"** See Thu 27.