

PERFORMANCE PROSPECTUS

Pat Graney Company
Faith Triptych

OCT 21 - 24, 2010

Choreography/Direction : Pat Graney

Lighting Design : Ben Geffen

Original Costumes : Frances Kenny

Costume Wrangler : K.D. Schill

Technical Director : Heather Mayhew

Genius Engineer : Jeff Gerson

Stage Assistant : Elliot Graney-Saucke

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Faith (premiere 1991)

Performers: Nancy Burtenshaw, Deb Rhodes-King, Amii Legendre, KT Niehoff, Sara Parish, Peggy Piacenza, Kim Root

Original Cast: Nancy Burtenshaw, Tasha Cook, Pat Graney, Kara O'Toole, Peggy Piacenza, Deb Rhodes-King, Kathryn Stewart

Second Cast: Tasha Cook, Pat Graney, Michele Miller, KT Niehoff, Peggy Piacenza, Kim Root, Kathryn Stewart

Music: Arvo Part, Cocteau Twins, Lights in a Fat City, Amy Denio, Rachel Warwick
Original Lighting Design: Meg Fox

Sleep (making peace with the angels) (premiere 1995)

Performers: Alison Cockrill, Sandra Fann, Deb Rhodes-King, Maggie Lear, Amii Legendre, Sara Parish, Peggy Piacenza, Kim Root

Original Cast: Alison Cockrill, Pat Graney, Robin Jennings-Jaecklein, Saiko Kobayashi, Jean Landry, Amii Legendre, Peggy Piacenza, Kim Root

Alligator Design & Construction: Marilyn Lysohir
Original Alligator Creation & Design: Carla Wesson
Table Engineering, Rice Drops: Jeff Gerson
Original Lighting Design: Jeff Bickford

Music: Sounds of the Earth, Madre Deus, Word of Mouth Chorus, Japanese 60s Pop Song, Delores Keane & John Faulkner, Hillil McDonald, Clannad, The Bothy Band, Ellen Fullman, Zelwer, Davy Spillane
Wedding Cake Artisan by Cake Guild, Toby deChristopher

Tattoo (premiere 2001)

Performers: Alison Cockrill, Sandra Fann, Amii Legendre, KT Niehoff, Kim Root

Original Cast: Carla Barragon, Alyssa Baustad, Alison Cockrill, Saiko Kobayashi, Amy O'Neal

Second Cast: Alison Cockrill, Sandra Fann, Saiko Kobayashi, Amy O'Neal, Kim Root

Sand Drop: Jeff Gerson
Sound Skirts Original Concept: Ellen Fullman
Original Tattoo Designs: George Long
Music: Amy Denio (Grid Section/Ellen Fullman)
Visual Design/Construction: Marilyn Lysohir

A NOTE FROM OTB

While On the Boards helped commission *Faith*, *Sleep* and *Tattoo* when they premiered between 1991 and 2001, at least half of our staff has never seen one of Pat's fully staged shows, and in fact, many of our current patrons haven't seen one either. Accordingly, when she approached us with idea of remounting her triptych we couldn't pass up the opportunity to give audiences a chance to experience 3 seminal works by the most influential choreographer living in the Pacific Northwest.

Over her 30 year career, Pat has established herself as a dance maverick, one of a rare breed of American choreographers living outside NYC who regularly creates and tours work for national audiences. The impact of her presence in Seattle on the local artistic community cannot be emphasized enough as she has demonstrated over her career that it is possible to have an artistic and social impact while living outside America's cultural capital. The fact that Pat has received support from the National Endowment for the Arts American Masterpieces program and the National Performance Network on the occasion of its 25th anniversary is testimony – along with the many prestigious awards she has received – to the regard held for this artist by her peers. So is the fact that many of the original collaborators and dancers from the original staged works have joined in to revisit what is historically regarded as a particularly fruitful period of time in her career.

Pat's artistry is characterized by ambitious collaborations, lush visuals, idiosyncratic movement vocabularies crafted specifically for each project, and a strong sense of female identity and power that emanates from her always talented dancers. While watching a rehearsal this past August, it was hard not to compare Pat to the late Pina Bausch. While the two artists have created similar tempos and haunting tableaux in their works, Pat's contribution feels more concerned with female gaze and presence rather than abdicating to the conceit of Bausch's male-oriented universe.

One only has to watch the section of *Faith* with the red balls to have a sense of Pat's approach. For starters, it shouldn't work. Performers generally look silly while holding and manipulating balls, and usually end up breaking any intended effect with extraneous movement or awkward expressions. Somehow, though, Pat's dancers exhibit ease and confidence without any cheesy displays. The balls glide, dissolving from one location to the next, all in service of the performers and the movement. In Pat's universe, the dancers maintain the power even when challenged – just as she has over her impressive journey

Sarah Wilke & Lane Czaplinski

A NOTE FROM PAT GRANNEY

The triptych of *Faith*, *Sleep* and *Tattoo* were created over a ten-year period, from 1991 to 2001. When we started working on *Faith* in 1989, I wanted to create a work that was based on Caravaggio's paintings and his use of light. Other sources include the writings of Roshi Jiyu Kennett, the work of Francesco Clemente, animation work by Zbigniew Rybczynski and paintings in the Sistine Chapel by Michaelangelo. With the support of (then) Executive Director of Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Sam Miller, and the administrative support of Loris Bradley, *Faith* reached a wide audience in the US, making it a signature work for the Company.

While touring *Faith*, we continued the investigation into the lives of women and creating. *Sleep* came from the desire to continue "process-oriented" work with a group of women. Again, the support of Jacob's Pillow's Sam Miller provided important financial and personal support for the development of the work, as well as booking support from Liz Roth. Taking some of the initial images from the paintings of William Bourguereau, we also kept dream journals, interviewed our mothers, and created and performed our own death rituals. A process that started in January of 1992 finally brought the work to fruition in 1995 at the Moore Theater. While exploring rituals important to women, weddings figured prominently. Since the creation of *Sleep* with its original cast, I have had the pleasure of attending many of the cast member's weddings. Starting off with a cast of women with no children, we return to this triptych with thirteen children among the performers and original cast members.

The inspiration of *Tattoo* originated from the sketch of a new work that visual artist Marilyn Lysohir was creating. The work "The Tattooed Ladies and the Dinosaurs" showed two tattooed female figures crossing a field of 1,000 dinosaur bones with tiles of birds in the background. What came to mind was the possibility of female genetic memory and the limbic brain, which we explored extensively in the creative process. Creating *Tattoo* began in 1998, with many cast members coming in and out of the process. We worked closely with Marilyn Lysohir to create visual art pieces during the creation process; we sculpted our hands and feet in clay, decorating them with tattoos, as well as making life-sized figures of our bodies out of clay. We drew large portraits of ourselves and drew tattoos on our bodies that told stories of our inner lives. We did rituals, trance speaking, and created movement from architectural drawings of our houses, and pathways in our everyday lives. Composer Amy Denio figured prominently in the creation of this work, making the score from slowed down bird songs, water splashing, construction sites and her own inimitable voice.

What you see onstage here at On the Boards is the culmination of thirteen years of creative work, involving over 30 artists from the Seattle community. Together, we have made this work – and made it to share with you, the audience, as you complete the cycle of the realization of this triptych.

All three works were commissioned and supported by On the Boards.

Thank all of you so much for your support in the creation and realization of these works.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PAT GRANNEY

1. Pat has been creating work in Seattle for **nearly 30 years**.

From her first piece in 1982 up until now, she has been a mainstay of the local dance scene and has toured widely (the original tours of *Faith*, *Sleep* and *Tattoo* took Pat and company everywhere from NYC to Germany to Chile).

2. Pat and OtB have a relationship that extends back to the earliest days of the organization and Pat's career. She used to trade work for rehearsal space when she was working on her earliest creations. She also **named OtB's longest running program** – 12 Minutes Max.

3. A longterm focus for Pat has been mentoring dancers who are early in their careers. Many established dancers and choreographers in Seattle **got their start** with Pat. Some of the artists who have worked with her in the past include Amy O'Neal, Kara O'Toole, Peggy Piacenza, KT Niehoff, Amelia Reeber, Amii Legendre and many, many more.

4. Similar to a few other artists in the season, Pat has often taken inspiration from **visual arts**. The opening to *Faith*, for example, is filled with references to paintings by Caravaggio.

5. One of the main throughlines in the triptych is the exploration of the **culture of women**.



FAITH AND CARAVAGGIO

Graney's work is heavily influenced by visual arts. When Pat Graney created *Faith* in 1991, she referenced a series of Caravaggio's paintings.

See if you can spot how these paintings are quoted in *Faith*, the first part of the *Faith Triptych*.

SEE MORE PAINTINGS

INTERVIEW EXCERPT WITH PAT GRANNEY

...At the time, people were talking about using your limbic brain, and this sort of **primitive animal person** and how we access that – and I thought immediately, like “ok, I can see my 4th grade history book, and I’m looking at primitive images, and they’re all men. So where do I fit in?”

Where do we access that as women?

And that really is where *Tattoo* came from. And so there’s all these rituals that are very funny and kind of goofy/clever, but hopefully there’s a poignancy in there that makes the code or the language of women into a real thing. And I feel like at the beginning there are two people walking through a field.

And at the end. And there’s a sensibility of the passage of time. And it refers back to *Faith* in that way. Where it has nudity, but it’s decorative nudity.

And you’re really referring back to all the pieces there. And...for me, **it has a very deep impact** – it has the emotional and it has the mental, together.

LISTEN TO THE FULL INTERVIEW
WITH MARCIE SILLMAN
ONTHEBOARDS.ORG
DOWNLOAD INTERVIEW PDF

ESSAY BY JEANMARIE HIGGINS

Walking in Their Shoes: Art and Work in Pat Graney's *Faith Triptych*

In the final moments of *Faith*, six dancers wearing red high heels walk toward the audience, remove their shoes, line them up in a row downstage, then turn their backs to us and exit. The shoes remain. “Here,” the dancers seem to say, “see if you have any better luck with these.” The difficulty of walking in shoes—from toe shoes to street shoes to spike heels—is a problem the dancers work to solve throughout *Faith Triptych*. Shoes are just as mysterious as they are everyday in Pat Graney’s work, they are at once ordinary and extraordinary. They stabilize us, mediating between our feet and the earth. They communicate information about us—our social status, our occupations, our genders. Shoes change our heights and our walks, dictating where we can and cannot go.

In Graney’s later work, shoes haunt. In the 2008 dance theatre piece, *House of Mind*, a room is filled with hundreds of gold-painted shoes. The effect is chilling, each pair of shoes standing in for a person who once wore them. Like the dancers in *Faith Triptych*, *House of Mind*’s dancers all wear high heels, at times looking as if they are impersonating their mothers and grandmothers. Their heels are metronomes, keeping time for the dancers’ movement. They are timepieces, their rhythmic clicking mimicking the ticking of a clock. Walking in someone else’s shoes: in other Graney pieces, this becomes a sort of dancing empathy, a kinetic way to remember. In her most recent “Keeping the Faith” Prison Project, an ensemble of inmates at the Washington Corrections Center for Women begins a performance by reconstructing Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” video, marking the passing of a personal icon by copying the steps he created, the women moving as one.

Like many of her scenic and costume choices, the shoes that hobble *Faith Triptych*’s dancers also give them life. Shoes are sometimes the key to playing, solving problems, even worshipping. Dancers “catch the spirit:” a teenaged girl, possessed by her high heeled Mary Janes, dances in confused joy at the new and unfamiliar workings of her body; a woman in a crowded ladies room steals cigarettes from her fellow mirror-gazers, then, as if controlled by her high-heeled shoes, dances ecstatically in celebration.

READ MORE

BIOS

Seattle-based choreographer **Pat Graney** received Choreography Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts for 11 consecutive years, as well as from Artist Trust, the Washington State Arts Commission, the NEA International Program, National Corporate Fund for Dance and the Guggenheim Foundation. In 2008, Ms. Graney was awarded both the Alpert Award and a US Artists Award in Dance.

In 1981, Graney presented her first full evening of work at On the Boards, titled *go red go red, laugh white*, set to the writing of Gertrude Stein. She went on to choreograph more work to the writing of Julio Cortazar and Raymond Carver. In 1986, Graney started exploring the use of music combined with American Sign Language to create *Colleen Ann*, a work commissioned for the French/American Dance Exchange. In 1987, with Beliz Brother, she created a work for 7 gymnasts on 7 sets of uneven parallel bars, set against the backdrop of Marymoor Park; and in 1988 Graney created *Light Years* for Pacific NW Ballet. *Seven/Uneven* toured to the Serious Fun Festival at Lincoln Center and went on to appear at MayFest in Glasgow in 1991. In 1991, Ms. Graney began to create a body of work related to women with *Faith* (1991), *Sleep* (1995), and *Tattoo* (2001). In between creating this triptych of works, Ms. Graney created the full evening works *Vivaldi* and *Sax House*, choreographed 150 gymnasts for the Goodwill Games, and worked with 130 female martial artists for the Movement Meditation Project. Following the 12-city tour of *Tattoo*, Graney created *The Vivian Girls*. In 2008, Graney created *House of Mind*, an installation performance work set in a 5000 square foot raw space featuring an eighteen foot high wall containing 4000 miniatures, and a wall of 100,000 buttons. *House of Mind* will be hosted at the Kohler Art Center for a six-month installation as well as being featured at Art Basel Miami in 2011.

Nancy Burtenshaw is honored to have been asked back as an original cast member of *Faith* after a 20 year hiatus! When Nancy left the Pat Graney Company in 1992 many things in life changed: She gave birth to her son Owen (now 11); worked as a museum educator; earned her Master's in Teaching K-6; got re-married and became step-mom to three wonderful kids (Sean, Audrey and Sebastian). Nancy is a dedicated yoga practitioner and teacher and now lives in Moscow, Idaho with her son, and loving spouse, Mark.

Alison Cockrill commenced formal dance training at age 4, with the vaudeville sensations Stan and Vera St. Clair - "The St. Clairettes". She saw Pat's piece *Table* in the late 80s and said to her sister "That guy would be so cool to work for!" She and Pat finally met at Cornish College of the Arts, and thus began a lifelong process of

friendship and collaboration. Alison was involved in the making and performing of a number of Pat's pieces, including *Vivaldi*, *Sleep*, *Tattoo* and *The Vivian Girls*. For the past 23 years, Pat and Alison have toured tiny towns, foreign countries and interior landscapes together. It's been an honor. When not engaged in modern dance, Alison works as a dancer/performer/instructor at The Century Ballroom, trying to transform the world through social dance.

Sandra Fann received her B.A. in Dance from the University of Washington in 1995. She then went on to perform with the d9 Dance Collective, Wade Madsen and Dancers, and other local choreographers. As a member of the Pat Graney Company between 1999 and 2003, Sandra toured the United States and Chile in *Tattoo*, performed in *Colleen Ann* and *Pagan Love Song*, and participated in the creation of *The Vivian Girls*. These days, Sandra is the proud mother of a six-year old and a three-year old, and is thrilled to be revisiting this work with this wonderful group of artists.

Deb (Rhodes) King graduated from The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance. She moved to Seattle in 1989 to join The Pat Graney Company. She was part of the original cast of *Faith* in 1991. She toured with the company to Montana, New York and Scotland. Her performances include *Jesus Loves the Little Cowgirls*, *Colleen Ann*, *Table*, *Sax House* and *Faith*.

Deb currently lives in Michigan with her husband Stephen and 2 children, Austin and Lauren, and works full-time teaching water fitness classes. Deb is excited and privileged to be part of the Triptych project!

Amii LeGendre lived and worked in Seattle for 14 years where she directed LeGendre Performance Group and danced with Pat Graney from 1992-97. She premiered *Sleep* with Pat Graney Company and was rehearsal director for Graney's Movement Meditation Project. Now in NY, she is an adjunct professor at Bard College, performs and makes site-specific work with a performance collective, and is the dance faculty for Bard Prison Initiative, where she teaches dance to incarcerated men. She is currently pursuing her MFA at UWisconsin, and is the mother of a 5 year old.

In 1992, **KT Niehoff** migrated to Seattle from NYC to join the Pat Graney Company. She was excited about getting a letter jacket with a big PGC! on the back. Although she wound up wearing her own, ratty sweatshirt on tour for the next four years, she still had the privilege of belonging to and growing up with the “graney girls”. Back then she was 22. Now she is 42. This has been one hell of a family reunion – a once in a lifetime chance for redemption, reflection and ruminations on the power of time, history and what it means to belong.

Sara Parish is a dancer, choreographer, and performance art/multimedia creator. She pursued a MFA in dance from Arizona State University and a BS from Western Illinois University. She has collaborated with artists such as Cliff Keuter, Shouze Ma, Jennifer Tsukayama, and John Mitchell. She also danced with Visionary Dance Company and Aaron McGloin Dance. Her work has been commissioned by Roxy Theatre, Hale Theatre, WIU, State Street Performing Company and on an individual project basis. She is thrilled to be performing Pat Graney's work and honored to be sharing the stage with an amazing group of women.

Peggy Piacenza is a 2010 undergraduate of the Ada Comstock Scholars program at Smith College. For most of her pre-college life she has worked extensively as a choreographer and performer touring both nationally and internationally.

Kim Root is honored to be back with The Pat Graney Company for this tremendous reunion. Kim originally performed in *Faith* from 1992-1995, *Sleep* from 1995-1997 and *Tattoo* from 2000-2001 and was involved in the creation process of *Sleep*, *Vivaldi*, and *The Vivian Girls*. Kim has an MFA in Dance from The Ohio State University. She was a Visiting Assistant Professor of Dance at Wesleyan University from 2003-2009. Currently living in Louisville, KY with her family, Kim continues to work as an independent dance artist, choreographer, teacher and film maker while raising her 2 young sons.

Ben Geffen has been lighting dance and theater for the last 15 years, and has been working with Pat Graney in one capacity or another for most of that time. He moved to Minneapolis 5 years ago and is working as the Associate Director of Events and Media Production at the Walker Art Center, which means he's an AV guy with a long title.

K.D. Schill has had the honor of designing and procuring costumes for some of the finest and most talented theatre directors, film directors, choreographers, musicians, actors, writers, dancers and artists in Seattle for the last 15 years. For that she is deeply grateful. This is her first show with Pat Graney.

Heather A. Mayhew is quite pleased to once again have the opportunity to work with Pat Graney, especially on the extravaganza that is *Faith Triptych*. Other fun-filled adventures have included: Pat Graney's *House of Mind*, as well as working with Dayna Hanson, The Swedish Housewife, Miss Lily Verlaine, Miss Indigo Blue, On the Boards, Velocity Dance, Corpus Movement, UMO Ensemble, and Teatro ZinZanni.

Jeff Gerson has served as the Company Engineer for almost two decades. Cascading water, shimmering veils of sand, and salutatory falls of rice, have been his hallmark. Outside of his company work, Jeff has designed video displays for the Winter Olympics, and museum exhibits in Beijing, amongst many, many other projects. It's a pleasure to begin this tour of *Faith Triptych* at OtB, our spiritual home.

Marilyn Lysohir, like a character in a spy novel, leads a complicated life and plays many roles. She is an artist who works primarily in clay and has a national reputation. You will find her work reproduced in almost every ceramic book published in the last fifteen or twenty years. She is a pioneer in large scale ceramic installations one of which “The Dark Side of Dazzle” consisted of a 2 ton 24’ long ceramic battleship and a life size bathroom , and another “The Tattooed Ladies and the Dinosaur” had 700 dinosaur bones along with 9 sets of giant tattooed legs. She just finished working on a series of portraits of the 163 girls with whom she graduated from high school, “Good Girls 1968.” Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is in major museums and collections worldwide.
cowgirlchocolates.com or **marilynlysohir.com**

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Pat Graney Company photos by Harley Soltes and Tim Summers

