

DAVID V. APPEL

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David Appel has a B.A. in Dance from Bennington College (1972) and an M.A. in Dance from Goddard College (1977). His training includes a range of movement techniques (including Cunningham, Nikolais, Limon, Graham, ballet, release, T'ai Chi Ch'uan, and Aikido), intensive study with Simone Forti, improvisation with Judith Dunn and Dana Reitz, and contact improvisation with Steve Paxton and Nancy Stark Smith, among others. He has studied music for many years, having had teachers such as Bill Dixon, Sam Rivers, and Lou Calabro. Since 1971 he has worked with a variety of body-centered and energy-based therapies and methods of movement re-education (Ideokinesiology with Andre Bernard, massage, private study with somatic practitioner Glenna Batson, etc.), allowing that information to feed into an ongoing personal inquiry—one that continually reconsiders the nature and parameters of his movement language in dynamic encounter with the forces of growth and change.

Though he has primarily pursued his own choreographic interests throughout his 50-year-long career, he also has performed with Simone Forti, Steve Paxton, City Dance Theater of Boston (a group touring innovative work in the early 1970s), Tumbleweed (a San Francisco-based company of dancers and musicians), Ausdruckstanz Dance Theatre (Philadelphia), and in collaboration with many other individual dancer/choreographers and artists in various media.

Appel was a member of Orb. Fade. Trip. Dog., an occasional quartet of veteran improvising choreographer/performers living in four different cities. He was co-founder/director of both BWI (Baltimore/Washington Improvisers) and Renegades, a New York City-based sound and movement performance group. In addition, he co-founded Talus, a Washington, DC contact improvisation group, and Zooba, a Boston-based collective of dancers and musicians.

His solo and group choreography and performances have been presented in numerous different contexts throughout North America, Europe, and in Mexico since 1973. This includes dance and art centers such as Joyce SoHo, Dance New Amsterdam, Dixon Place, and The Kitchen (New York, NY), The Mark O'Donnell Theater at The Actors Fund Arts Center (Brooklyn, NY), Painted Bride Art Center (Philadelphia), Links Hall (Chicago), The Chrysler Museum (Norfolk, VA), Dance Place (Washington, DC), Barking Legs Theater (Chattanooga, TN), Tangente (Montreal), and Divadlo Bratří Mrštíků (Brno, Czech Republic). He has also created, directed, and performed pieces in university gymnasiums, community centers, a bookstore, and other indoor spaces, and outdoors in parks, at crafts fairs, and on city sidewalks. From 1994-97, his *Home Visits* project brought dancing and dialogue to small groups of people gathering in homes around the Philadelphia area.

Some of the companies who have commissioned and performed his choreography are Aura Dance Theatre (Kaunas, Lithuania), Mimi Fortunae Dance Theatre (Brno, Czech Republic), Wall Street Dance Works (Asheville, NC), and Southern Danceworks (Birmingham, AL).

David's activities have taken him to many colleges and universities; for example, short teaching stints at the University of Southern Mississippi, Southwest Missouri State University, the University of Michigan, and Colby College (ME). He has created pieces for/with students at institutions such as Humboldt State University (CA), Alma College (MI), and Ohio University, and has taught in summer programs including the

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International Summer School of Dance (Edinburgh, Scotland), Boston University Theater Institute, and Penland School of Crafts (NC). He has been on the faculty at New York University, the University of the Arts (PA), and George Washington University (DC), among others. David has offered classes/workshops at dance/art and community centers, schools, and private studios, and for dance/non-dance-related organizations—working with people from various communities and cultural backgrounds and a spectrum of age groups (ranging from children to older adults). From January 1984-89, he co-directed and was an instructor in *Alternative Strategies for Moving the Body*, an annual week-long workshop in Washington, DC drawing teachers and students from around the United States.

His writing includes articles published in *Contact Quarterly* (2000, 1987, 1983), *The Washington Post* (1983), and several lesser-known publications; all aspects of writing and production for *Hartford's Other Voice*, a bi-weekly newspaper in Hartford, CT (1969); extensive media/PR for arts performances (1973-present); as well as institutional communications and grant writing/development work (International Center of Photography, New York, NY, 1998-2012).

Appel has received a number of honors for and in support of his choreography, such as: a New York State Council on the Arts grant (with composer John Morton, 2023); being one of five invitees to the 2013 DNA RAW Directions program (New York, NY); grants from the Fund for U.S. Artists at International Festivals and Exhibitions (2002, 1988), ArtsLink/CEC International Partners (2002), 92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Center (2000), American Composers Forum (with composer John Morton, 1999), Philadelphia Repertory Development Initiative (1997), International Theatre Institute/Pew Charitable Trusts (1993), Independent Performing Artists Project (1992), and the New Forms Regional Grant Program (1991); Choreographers Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts (1990, 1985, 1981); and selection as the 1990 Halla K. Kealiinohomoku Memorial Research Choreographer-in-Residence (Flagstaff, AZ). He has been invited to perform at festivals in both the U.S. and abroad, such as the Virtual DUMBO Dance Festival 2022 (Brooklyn, NY), *Dance Conversations 2013, 2012, and 2011* (New York, NY; also in the series *Dance Conversations @ The Flea* in 2009, 2008, 2006, 2005), *Performance Mix* (2011, 2007, New York, NY), *Performática* (2008, Puebla, Mexico), the Festival of New Dance (2007, St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada), Dancenow/NYC (2004, New York, NY), *Improvised and Otherwise* (2004, Brooklyn, NY), the 12th International Festival of Modern Dance (2002, Kaunas, Lithuania), Williamsburg/Greenpoint Dance Festival (2001-2004, Brooklyn, NY), Improvisation Festival/NY (2001, 1996, New York, NY), New Genre Festival VII (1999, Tulsa, OK), *Transit Dances* (1993, Philadelphia, PA), *New Views, New Voices* (1991, Philadelphia, PA), the 1988 International Dance Week (Prague, Czech Republic), the 1986 Dartington Dance Festival (Totnes, Devon, England), and *Contact at 10th & 2nd* (1983, New York, NY).

Additionally, he was the subject of an hour-long interview on *New Arts Alive* (Berks Community Television, Reading, PA) in June of 2013, an interview with Billie Mahoney for *Dance On* [public cable television series] in May of 1990, and was included in the book *Collective Consciousness: Art Performances in the Seventies* (Jean Dupuy, ed., 1980).