

JESSICA FOGEL, ARTIST STATEMENT

I'm always somewhere within a cycle of making a dance, whether that be in the thick of it, in a trail of afterimages, or en route to a new orbit. Each dance develops within the communities of the performers and collaborators and audiences involved, and each charts its own textures, rhythms, symbols, metaphors, and motions. I think of dances as vessels containing aspects of time, space, energy, people, and place.

As a choreographer coming of age in the mid-1970s and early 1980s in New York City, I was responsive to new approaches of those times. I began making dances when the idea that anything could be a dance was a basic tenet. I was drawn towards new experiments with non-linear narratives, found movement, integrations of text with movement, collage sound scores, site-specific work, exposure of process within performance, a blurring of boundaries between audience and performer, between theater and dance. These concerns are still present in my work.

Sometimes I've embarked on a new work with no agenda, while other times there have been unique commissions that have led me down paths I had not expected to explore, but that I've travelled with great wonder and intent research. I learn enormously from each process. Inspiration is everywhere, and has come from wide-ranging subjects--the life and work of visual artists, the nature of memory, the science of chaos, environmental challenges, particle physics, poetry. My dances are multi-layered, often merging movement, sound, text and digital projections, and I welcome the challenges of this balancing act.

One of my interests for the past two decades has been the creation of large-scale site dances, drawing inspiration from the stories I discover in natural and built environments. I've embraced the many opportunities I've had to work on interdisciplinary creative projects and value deeply the ideas and contributions of my collaborators, including dancers, designers, visual artists, composers, sound engineers, scientists, and writers. Together we create a world for each dance. The dancers are intimately involved in the creative process, often generating their own

materials from movement blueprints –key phrases or prompts that I devise and they reinvent and I redirect.

Making dances is always a humbling and often daunting process. I've been at it for over five decades, and I can't say that it gets easier with experience. With each new dance, I navigate anew. Doubts are buoyed by resonant moments of connection and insight--not only for me, but also hopefully for the intimate community of my casts and collaborators, and for the larger community of audience members. For these luminous moments, I continue to take the plunge.

Jessica Fogel, 2021