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## **NEWPORT'S RESIDENT CONTEMPORARY BALLET COMPANY**

### **ON THE MOVE AGAIN THIS SUMMER!**

Island Moving Company Artists creatively adapt classes, rehearsals and performances as they return to work on to begin new projects.

NEWPORT, RI, JULY 13, 2020 — Island Moving Company (IMC), the uniquely accessible, contemporary ballet company and its professional school, The Newport Academy of Ballet begin a safe, gradual re-opening process, in accordance of the RI Department of Health & CDC guidelines, with the goal of offering new performance programming and expanded virtual content, with a phased approach to limited in-person educational programs this summer.

“Bringing people together to share the healing and transformative power of great live dance and world-class dance education experiences is central to IMC’s work,” said Miki Ohlsen, Artistic Director. “We are looking forward to continuing our legacy of presenting great dance in great places with innovative site-specific performances while observing physical distancing and keeping dancers, students and audiences safe.”

The company is recalling its dancers and artistic staff in July to begin a return to classes and rehearsals and to develop several original creative projects. The first public facing project premieres this Thursday, July 16th and is presented in partnership with Discover Newport.

***Where in Newport is IMC?*** is a series of micro pop-up performances performed outdoors in some of Newport’s beautiful public parks. The series premieres this Thursday, July 16th at Battery Park and runs consecutive Thursdays through August 6. Dates and locations include:

- July 16- Battery Park, Washington St. - looking towards the bridge

- July 23- Perrotti Park, America's Cup Ave. - across from Panera.
- July 30- Touro Park, Bellevue Ave. - across from the Newport Art Museum
- August 6- Kings Park, Wellington Ave. - close to Ida Lewis Yacht Club

All Performances run @ 10mins and will be presented at two times: at 12:45 & 1:15 each Thursday. Katherine Farrington, Vice President of Marketing for Discover Newport said, "These performances provide residents and visitors a unique way to explore some of Newport's wonderful public spaces, while experiencing Newport's resident, professional Ballet Company as they create improvisational, whimsical works all from a safe distance in the great outdoors!" Audiences are encouraged to bring a lunch to enjoy with the performances. For more information visit [www.islandmovingco.org](http://www.islandmovingco.org)

***Salsa & Salvation!*** is a new series FREE outdoor salsa dance classes offered through IMC's Newport Academy of Ballet (NAB). IMC company member Jose Losada will lead physically distanced, Cuban Style Salsa Classes on Saturdays from 7-8:00pm starting Saturday, July 18 continuing on consecutive Saturdays through August 22 at 136 Broadway in Newport.

Salsa & Salvation! is made possible from gracious support from Dr. Nate Tilman of Newport Family & Cosmetic Dentistry, who are providing plenty of outdoor space in their parking lot for the class, and to Salvation Cafe who are partnering with IMC to promote the event and who will provide festive atmosphere and physically distanced tables for patrons to enjoy the class. The classes are free, fun and a great way to get moving while learning a new style of dance.

NAB is also offering a series of summer dance classes that may be enjoyed virtually through Zoom or through limited in-studio instruction, for both children and adults alike. For more information go to [www.newportacademyofballet.com](http://www.newportacademyofballet.com)

"While everyone has been challenged by the circumstances of facing a global pandemic, we are all learning and exploring steps IMC can take to fulfill our mission and offer our community valuable and stimulating content safely" said IMC's Executive Director Peter Bramante. "What we have achieved while being physically distanced speaks to our core values of adaptability, innovation, and resiliency," Bramante explained, "We continued to maintain a virtual presence to offer a sense of community in a surreal situation and used our creativity to deliver unique, virtual and recorded content that ended up reaching people far beyond our expectations."

*IMC's Climb the Walls & Dance!* series was launched in March and was created to give dance lovers a social, physical and intellectual outlet during quarantine. The program has evolved to offer a variety of supplemental programming, including:

Free 30-minute online micro-classes, Great Dance in Great Places, IMC Inside the Work, and IMC's Live Watch Parties.

One of the more exciting and innovative projects IMC is embarking on over the summer, is a collaboration around the making of a new dance film currently in development. Co-Choreographed by IMC's Artistic Director, Miki Ohlsen and Associate Artistic Director, Danielle Genest, the work, which is entitled **eMERGE**, will be danced by Island Moving Company Dancers and directed by renown film maker, Marta Renzi with cinematography by Jon Gourlay.

"The film provides a unique outlet for the company to get back to creative dance-making, while recognizing and managing logistics required to safely get back to work" said Artistic Director Miki Ohlsen. "It also allows us to create and share a creative expression that explores many common themes that we are all presently living with" she explained.

The Film's Director Marta Renzi has worked with IMC previously, and was excited by the opportunity to work with the dancers on this timely project. Renzi has choreographed and edited more than 20 short films which have won awards in over 100 festivals both nationally and internationally.

Ohlsen & Genest explain that in developing the film, a patron of IMC shared the following poem by Patience Strong:

*Forget the times of trouble, but not the truths they taught. Forget the days of sorrow, but not the strength they brought.*

*Forget the storms you battled through beneath a heavy load, but not the Light that led you safely down the unknown road.*

The poem provided an initial source of inspiration that has led Ohlsen, Genest and Renzi to explore underlying questions such as; What constitutes community? Is it defined by location? Behavior? How does a community express itself through movement?

Filming will take place at a number of iconic locations across Newport County in August. Postproduction for the film is planned for September and IMC hopes to be able to premiere the film in Newport in October.

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Now in its 38th season, Island Moving Company -- under the Artistic leadership of Miki Ohlsen -- has produced and presented dances by a diverse group of some of the world's leading dance-makers and has collaborated with musicians, poets and visual artists to make original works that leave audiences exhilarated and

transfixed. In addition to its mainstage productions, IMC is widely known for its unique approach to experiential and site-specific performances as well as innovative use of unconventional sites across Newport County.