

John Byrne's *Transcending Form* premieres at Theatre 80, June 2–August 24, 2011

Produced by David LaChapelle in collaboration with Fred Torres

Updated: May 25, 2011 – Choreographer **John Byrne** presents the world premiere of his first full-length dance work, *Transcending Form*, this summer at **Theatre 80**. A work for eight dancers, *Transcending Form* is set to an eclectic mix of music, and incorporates a figurative photo installation by **David LaChapelle**. Performances run **Thursday through Saturday, June 2–4, at 8pm; and Wednesdays, June 15 through August 24, at 8pm.**

An original dance fable, *Transcending Form* explores ideas of life, afterlife, and the transcending soul. Created and choreographed by Byrne, this 70-minute narrative work conjures archetypal images and themes in purely contemporary terms. *Transcending Form* is set to the music of Schubert, Mozart, and Tchaikovsky, as well as folk and gospel music, and features live performances by singer **Gina Figueroa** and other musical guests. The work will be performed by dancers **Debra Zalkind, Soetkin Jacobs, Ryan Braun, Vincent Marra, Lior Shneior, Rob Laqui, Farrah Olieri, and Kimberly Mhoon**. Lighting design is by **Stephen Petrilli**. *Transcending Form* is produced by David LaChapelle, with whom Byrne has worked on a variety of film, art, and stage projects over the last ten years.

Performances will take place at Theatre 80, 80 St. Mark's Place (between First and Second Avenues), in New York City. Tickets can be purchased for \$15 online at www.theatre80.net and are also available at the box office for a \$15 suggested donation. One hundred percent of the ticket sales will be donated to Education In Dance and the Related Arts, a not-for-profit organization that brings an integrated movement, music, visual arts, and nutrition enrichment program to preschool through high school students in over sixty New York City area outreach schools yearly.

John Byrne is a New York City-based choreographer. He received his formal dance training as a scholarship student at the Juilliard School, The School of American Ballet, and The North Carolina School of the Arts, where he performed works by choreographers George Balanchine, Lar Lubovitch, and Twyla Tharp. At the age of 18, Byrne was the youngest member ever to join Taylor II, with which he toured the United States and Europe, performing and teaching the works of Mr. Taylor. He later originated a role in *Promethean Fire* with the Paul Taylor Dance Company at the American Dance Festival. Byrne has also performed with Erick Hawkins Dance, Battery Dance Company, and Corbin Dances.

As a choreographer, Byrne premiered his solo piece *Bridge* in Los Angeles in 2004, and for the past seven years has been honing his craft as a choreographer, creating a style and new vocabulary of movement inspired by the influences of Eliot Feld, José Limón, and house dance. As an educator, Byrne has been teaching dance in the New York City Public Schools for the past 10 years, working with disadvantaged populations and children with special needs through Education In Dance and the Related Arts.

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