

## THE HARC FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2011 HARC AWARD TO EMERGING CHOREOGRAPHER NATALIE METZGER



LOS ANGELES (October 15, 2011) – The HARC Foundation has announced Natalie Metzger is the recipient of a 2011 HARC Award as winner of HARC's 2011 Emerging Choreographer competition for her dance theater piece, *Sacrament*. Ms. Metzger receives a cash award of \$2,500.00, publicity and a presentation of *Sacrament* at Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica, CA. The presentation, in association with Highways Performance Space, will take place on Friday, March 30 and Saturday, March 31, 2012. The competition was adjudicated by professional choreographers, dancers and artistic directors from entries received from choreographers throughout Los Angeles County, CA. This Emerging Choreographer HARC Award competition was a regional Pilot Program for Los Angeles County, CA as part of The HARC Foundation's annual National Creative Arts Competitions.

Natalie Metzger is an award-winning choreographer / filmmaker based in Los Angeles. Her work has been performed and/or screened across the US and in the UK, Germany and Malaysia. She is completely fascinated and engrossed by the human body,

the way it moves, looks and feels and so she uses it as a medium for inspiration, expression exploration and discussion.

In October, Metzger performed in *Luminis Sphaera*, a multimedia work created in collaboration with an artist collective made up of an experimental animator, actress, two musicians and herself. The work was performed at PACT Zollverein in Essen, Germany as part of the CalArts Plays Itself Festival. In the US, Metzger's most recent stage work, *Tryst*, is a dance sextet exploring the impermanence of touch. It was initially inspired by a poem written by writer/collaborator Lan Pham, premiered at REDCAT in Los Angeles and then selected for the SB – Adapt Festival at the Electric Lodge in Venice, Ca.

Metzger also experiments with using the camera to bring audiences closer to the human body than is normally possible in a theater setting. Her film, *For Water*, a collaboration between dancers from Indonesia and America, is inspired by the importance of water to the island of Indonesia and water-starved America and it has received a Certificate of Distinction at the American Dance Festival's International Screendance Festival, a medal for musical excellence at the Park City Film Music Festival and an official selection from six other film festivals. Metzger just recently finished another dance film called *Surgeon General's Warning* which premiered at the LDUB Film Festival in Lake Worth, FL. Currently, Metzger is collaborating with international choreographer Colin Connor on a new dance film, *Barely*, set for completion in December. She is also working on getting her dance theater epic *Sacrament* into theaters around the country.

*Sacrament* is a dance theatre performance experience that examines cult mentality, the evolution of god and the human attraction to destruction. The abstract narrative occurs amidst a futuristic landscape of decay that centers around an enigmatic "deity" that hangs from the ceiling and fills the performance space. This immersive descent into a world of cult mentality, violence and destruction was described by a former dancer of Nederlands Dans Theater as "the Rite of Spring meets Alien in Night of the Living Dead."

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Metzger's work fuses together movement, sound, video, text and image into hybrid performance work that creates an intimate environment for the audience to enter. She has a natural inclination toward dark absurdity but also appreciates humor, wit and the innate theatricality of life. As a choreographer, her movement has awkward beauty, flung extensions, strange sensuality, thrashing momentum and body distortion. Her adoration of the human body is visible in her work and is one of the reasons why she uses the audience in unconventional ways. She wants them to feel the proximity of the living flesh of the performers. Metzger allows the audience to discover the beautiful and the sexy in the ugly, the grotesque and the bizarre.

She finds power in blurring the boundary between artistic disciplines, and in so doing, transcending the traditional concept of dance. To her, the artistic disciplines are complementary and necessary to each other and so collaboration plays an important role in her process and her work. She actively seeks out collaborations with artists who can inspire her and challenge her.

Metzger holds a Master of Fine Arts in Dance/Choreography from California Institute of the Arts with a supplemental concentration in Integrated Media. Metzger earned her Bachelor of Arts at Emory University where she graduated Phi Beta Kappa and Summa Cum Laude in three years with a double major in Theater and Dance/Movement Studies and a minor in English. At Emory, Metzger received the Sudler Award in the Arts for demonstrating the "highest standard of proficiency in the performing arts", the Pioneer Award for "breaking new ground" and Highest Honors for her choreographic thesis, *Mindscape of the Pre-Dead*.

Born and raised in southern Florida, Metzger moved to California three years ago for graduate school and now lives in Burbank with her artistic partner, composer Robert Allaire.

To see more of Natalie Metzger's work, visit <http://www.metzart.org>.