



# Girl Gods

Pat Graney  
COMPANY

Press Kit

# Girl Gods

*Girl Gods* explores the ancestry of women, individuals and family—and the idea of rage. Both a visual installation and time-based performance, *Girl Gods* has connections to feminist artists and art practices of the 1970s, influenced by Judy Chicago's installation projects and the Earth-Body work of Ana Mendieta.

The last major work of Pat Graney Company was *House of Mind*, which explored the idea of memory; its accumulation and its dissolution. *Girl Gods* explores the 'basement' of *House of Mind*, and involves women's family history, ancestry and rage.

**I think it is accurate to say that [Ms. Graney] is exploring the point at which the domestic realm drives down into the earth. In it, she hopes to tap into the molten force of rage with a physical language that gives expression to the undomesticated, the buried and the repressed . . .**

— George Lugg, RedCat

**The fierce women of *Girl Gods* may be wearing cocktail dresses and little heels, but their explosive physical language and wry humor reveals the anger simmering under the surface of the collective feminine mind.**

— Montclair State University

## Touring Dates

*Premiere*

October 1-4, 2015

On the Boards (Seattle, WA)

October 22-25, 2015

Montclair State University (Montclair, NJ)

*Fall 2016*

Miami Light Project (Miami, FL)

UC San Diego (San Diego, CA)


St. Catherine University (St. Paul, MN)

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# Pat Graney Company

The Pat Graney Company, incorporated in 1990, has toured to most major American cities as well as internationally to Japan, England, Scotland, Germany, Singapore, Chile and Brazil. Seattle-based choreographer Graney received numerous Choreography Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as from Artist Trust, the Washington State Arts Commission, the NEA International Program, the National Corporate Fund for Dance and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. In 2008/09, Ms. Graney received both a US Artist Award and the Alpert Award in the Arts/Dance. In 2011, Ms. Graney was selected as one of two artists to receive an 'Arts Innovator' Award from Artist Trust and the Dale Chihuly Foundation. In 2013, Ms. Graney was one of 20 Americans selected to receive a prestigious Doris Duke Performing Artist Award.



Ms. Graney has been commissioned by Pacific Northwest Ballet, has created several large-scale gymnastic performance works, including *Seven/Uneven* with visual artist Beliz Brother and *Pier 62/63*, which featured 150 gymnasts aged 8-50 and was presented as part of the Goodwill Games Arts Festival in 1990. In 1996, Ms. Graney presented the Movement Meditation Project, which featured 130 female martial artists in an environmentally designed work at Seattle's Magnuson Park.

The Pat Graney Company began *Keeping the Faith* in 1992, which they offer to incarcerated women and girls nationwide. The program consists of performances, lecture-demonstrations and workshops for incarcerated women and girls. 2015 marks the 20th consecutive residency of *Keeping the Faith* in Washington State. In 2000, the Company developed a National Model of *Keeping the Faith*, where the KTF Artist Team worked with local artists and social workers in US cities to set up local programs based on *Keeping the Faith*. Ms. Graney has also lectured abroad about this unique program, drawing capacity audiences in Tokyo and Yokohama, Japan. *Keeping the Faith* had its first international presentation of the artist training in Dublin, Ireland in May of 2004.

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Ms. Graney's work *Tattoo* toured to 11 US cities in the 2001/02 season, as well as going to Valparaiso and Santiago, Chile. *Tattoo* completed the triptych that included *Faith* and *Sleep*, which took ten years to create. Her work *the Vivian girls*, based on the visuals of 'outsider' artist Henry Darger, premiered in Seattle in 2004 and toured to six US cities in the 2004/2005 season.

In 2010 the Company was funded by American Dance Masterpieces to reconstruct the Triptych of *Faith, Sleep & Tattoo* – three one-hour works. The evening premiered at On the Boards and then *Faith* was featured at the National Performance Network's annual meeting in 2010 and went on to tour to RedCat in Los Angeles in the spring of 2011.

The Company premiered the installation/performance work *House of Mind* in Seattle in 2008, which traveled to DiverseWorks/Houston in 2009 and was featured at the John Michael Kohler Art Center from June 2011 through February 2012. While at the Kohler Art Center, over 30,000 visitors saw *House of Mind*.

*The Chair Spectacle*, originally developed at the Kohler Art Center as part of the Community Residency Program, was re-developed in Seattle and commissioned by Seattle Center Foundation for 'The Next Fifty' Festival. *The Chair Spectacle* featured over 100 people, all dressed in white, performing in the International Fountain at Seattle Center in April/Oct of 2012.



# Director: Pat Graney

**Powerful contemporary dance . . . Graney [has a] penchant for exploring the inner worlds of women.**

— *The New York Times*



Seattle-based choreographer Pat Graney received Choreography Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts for 11 consecutive years, as well as from Artist Trust, the Washington State Arts Commission, the NEA International Program, National Corporate Fund for Dance and the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. In 2008, Ms. Graney was awarded both the Alpert Award and a US Artists Award in Dance.

In 2011 Ms. Graney was the recipient of the 'Arts Innovator' Award from Artist Trust and the Dale Chihuly Foundation. In 2013, Ms. Graney was one of 20 Americans to receive a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award.

Ms. Graney hails from St. Augustine, Florida, where she spent her seminal years after the Graney family relocated there from Chicago. In 1969, with her family, Pat moved to Mechanicsville, VA and Philadelphia, PA, before returning to St. Augustine to finish high school. Starting her college career at Tallahassee Community College, Ms. Graney eventually went on to The Evergreen State College, then transferred to University of Arizona where she graduated with a BFA in 1979. While at U of A, Pat studied extensively with Dr. John M. Wilson. In the fall of 1979, Graney moved to Seattle, which has been her home for the past thirty years.

In 1981, Graney presented her first full evening of work entitled *go red go red, laugh white*, set to the writing of Gertrude Stein. She went on to choreograph more work to Stein's writing as well as the writing of Julio Cortazar and Raymond Carver. Departing from the written word, Graney started exploring the use of music combined with American Sign Language to create *Colleen Ann*, a work commissioned for the French/American Dance Exchange in 1986.

In 1987, with Beliz Brother, she created a work for 7 gymnasts on 7 sets of uneven parallel bars, set against the backdrop of Marymoor Park, and in 1988 Graney created an original work for Pacific NW Ballet. *Seven/Uneven* toured to the Serious Fun Festival at Lincoln Center and went on to appear at MayFest in Glasgow in 1991. Following the gymnastic works, Ms. Graney began to create a body of work related to women with *Faith* (1991), *Sleep* (1995), and *Tattoo* (2001). In between creating this Triptych of works, Ms. Graney created the full evening work *Vivaldi*,

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choreographed 150 gymnasts for the Goodwill Games, and worked with 130 female martial artists for the Movement Meditation Project in 1996. Following the 12 city national tour of *Tattoo*, Graney created *the Vivian girls* (set to the artwork of Henry Darger) with music by Martin Hayes and Amy Denio. In 2008, Graney created *House of Mind*, an installation performance work set in a 5000 square foot raw space featuring an eighteen foot high wall containing 4000 miniatures, a wall of 100,000 buttons with water flowing over it, a closet of giant little girls' dresses, hundreds of gold shoes, a 50 x 4 foot-long room covered with 1940's police reports and a large scale video installation by Ellen Bromberg.

Ms. Graney's interest in working with incarcerated women began in 1992 after a conversation with Rebecca Terrell, then head of Florida Dance Festival. This conversation later morphed into what has become Keeping the Faith/The Prison Project. KTF is an arts-based residency program that features dance, expository writing and visual arts, and culminates in performances. This project has been conducted at FCI Lowell & FCI Broward in Florida, MCI Framingham in Massachusetts, Excelsior Girls School in Denver, Houston City Jail, Echo Glen Children's Center & King County Juvenile Detention in Washington, Red Rock Juvenile Center in Maricopa County, AZ, Shakopee Women's Prison in Minnesota, Estrella Jail in Phoenix, AZ, River City Correctional Center in Cincinnati, OH, Tokyo Girls Detention in Japan, Bahia Women's Prison in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, Munich City Jail in Munich, Germany, the Dochas Centre/MountJoy Prison in Dublin, Ireland and Washington State Corrections Center for Women and Mission Creek Corrections Center for Women in Washington State.

Keeping the Faith/The Prison Project is one of the longest-running prison arts programs in the US.

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# Performers



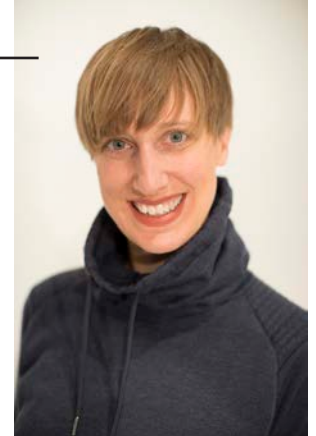
**Sara Jinks** has been a member of Pat Graney Company since 2000. She has also danced extensively with d9 Dance Collective and Crispin Spaeth Dance Group. She recently produced Ten Tiny Dances 2015 in Seattle and is the Production Assistant to Heather Kravas.

**Cheryl Delostrinos** is a Filipino American choreographer, teacher, and performer based in Seattle. She is the artistic director of A.u. Collective, a collective that presents people of color, queer people, and women on stage.



**Sruti Desai** joined the Pat Graney Company in 2011. She has also worked with various other Seattle-based choreographers, including Mark Haim, KT Niehoff and Jessica Jobaris. Outside of dance, she works in research on trauma and substance use at the University of Washington.

**Jody Kuehner** is a Seattle-based dance artist, director, drag queen Cherdonna Shinatra, 2015 Stranger Genius Award Nominee and 2010 Spotlight Award winner. Her choreography has been presented by every major contemporary dance venue in Seattle and she has toured her work throughout the US. She has taught professional contemporary dance nationally at festivals, teaches weekly at Velocity Dance Center and is the Resident Choreographer for the LGBTQ youth choir Diverse Harmony.



**Jenny Peterson** is a Seattle based dance and visual artist and has been a member of the Pat Graney company since 2008. She steadies her time working as a licensed massage therapist and going on long distance bike rides.

**Michelle de la Vega** is a visual, installation, performance and community engagement artist based in Seattle, WA. This year Michelle will be creating an installation at Gallery 4Culture entitled *Succession: The Engagement Project*, and is honored to be an 2015-2016 Artist Trust Fellow. She is an alumni of Otis Parsons (visual art) Cornish College of the Arts (dance). [michelledelavega.com](http://michelledelavega.com)





# Creative Team



Multi-instrumentalist producer **Amy Denio** has composed for Pat Graney since 1991 on her pieces *Sax House*, *Tattoo*, *Vivian Girls*, *House of Mind*, and now *Girl Gods*. She tours and records with the Tiptons Sax Quartet, Kultur Shock, and Ama Trio. She has collaborated with artists on 5 continents to create multi-media pieces, films, theater works, and dance performances. She received a NYC Bessie Award for her score for choreographer David Dorfman's piece *Sky Down*. In March 2015 she was voted into the Seattle Jazz Hall of Fame.  
[amydenio.com](http://amydenio.com) / [amydenio.bandcamp.com](http://amydenio.bandcamp.com)



**Amiya Brown** is an Interdisciplinary Artist who works on solo and collaborative projects, specializing in the medium of light. Amiya grew up studying ballet and modern dance, performing professionally into her early 20's. She received her BA in Drama with a minor in Dance from the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. At UIW she was first introduced to lighting design. After college, she worked as a performer, lighting designer, and theatre practitioner. In 2010, she received her MFA in Theatrical Lighting Design from the University of Washington. Her career is comprised of collaborations with choreographers, theatre companies, and musicians, as well as solo visual art works. Collaborators include Pat Graney, KT Niehoff, zoeljuniper, Kate Wallich + YC, AmyO, Catherine Cabeen, Kyle Loven, Alice Gosti, Cornerstone Theatre Company, and Washington Ensemble Theatre.



**Holly Batt** is a cofounder and designer for Batt + Lear, a family-owned design and build company. Holly first worked with Pat Graney Company as a performer in *Five/Uneven* in 1989. In the last five years, she has worked with the company in the role of set designer. In her free time, Holly enjoys dancing, skiing and skateboarding.



**Frances Kenny** is a costume designer for theater, and a wardrobe stylist for commercials. Most importantly she loves the process of collaboration with other artists and directors to bring visions into reality. She has been enjoying a long collaborative relationship with Pat Graney since the *Faith* trilogy.



**John DeShazo** is a woodworker, actor, and theatre and film technician. He has worked on many projects with Northwest Film Forum, Annex Theatre, Typing Explosion, The Film Company, Megan Murphy, Matt Wilkins, Guy Maddin, Web Crowell, Herbert Bergel, Firehouse Theatre Project, Implied Violence, Ampersand, and Empty Space Theatre. He is on the board of Northwest Film Forum. By day, he works for Meyer-Wells in Seattle.



# Press Quotes

## Girl Gods

Graney has pinpointed the female rage that seethes under the surface, quietly and fiercely. This simmering anger occasionally explodes (the women thrashed on the floor in cocktail dresses and heels), sometimes softly implodes . . .

— *Seattle Dances*, June 2014

## The Triptych

Graney spreads the composition across the whole stage, sometimes in magical tableaux that resolve suddenly out of languid gesture, sometimes in time, as a body is carried a few steps, then shifted to another woman's shoulders, carried a few steps, and the burden given away again.

— *The SunBreak*, October 2010

Set for seven female dancers, it's an hour-long immersion in the feminine psyche. Its movement is velvet-edged, unhurried, mesmerizing—closer to slow-motion gymnastics than dance . . . 'Faith,' with its measured pace and hypnotic musical score, pulls you into a dream dimension.

— *The Seattle Times*, October 2010

## House of Mind

In *House of Mind*, Pat Graney once again uses memory and consciousness as her muse [The Dancers] sleep in kitchen drawers and even dance around the room with them, perform headstands on chairs or balance precariously on their rims . . . The dancers stretch, cringe, take regimented stances, and try to hold onto a routine, with lots of pacing in tight skirts and high heels—maybe it's a way of remembering. . . Time disappears into sameness. How can we even know what we know—for the image becomes the memory—and which came first?

— *Dance Magazine*, December 2008



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# Contact

## Images

Additional high resolution images for press are available upon request.

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## Booking

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206-329-3705  
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Press Kit Images: Jenny Peterson, Tim Summers  
Design: Leah Vendl



FREE > ORANGUTAN SAVANT, MONEY TROUBLE, ELVIS AND JEZEBEL < FREE

# City Arts

SEATTLE

March 2009

CREATIVITY EVERYWHERE

## OUTSIDERS REBELS + REJECTS

### Jesse Edwards

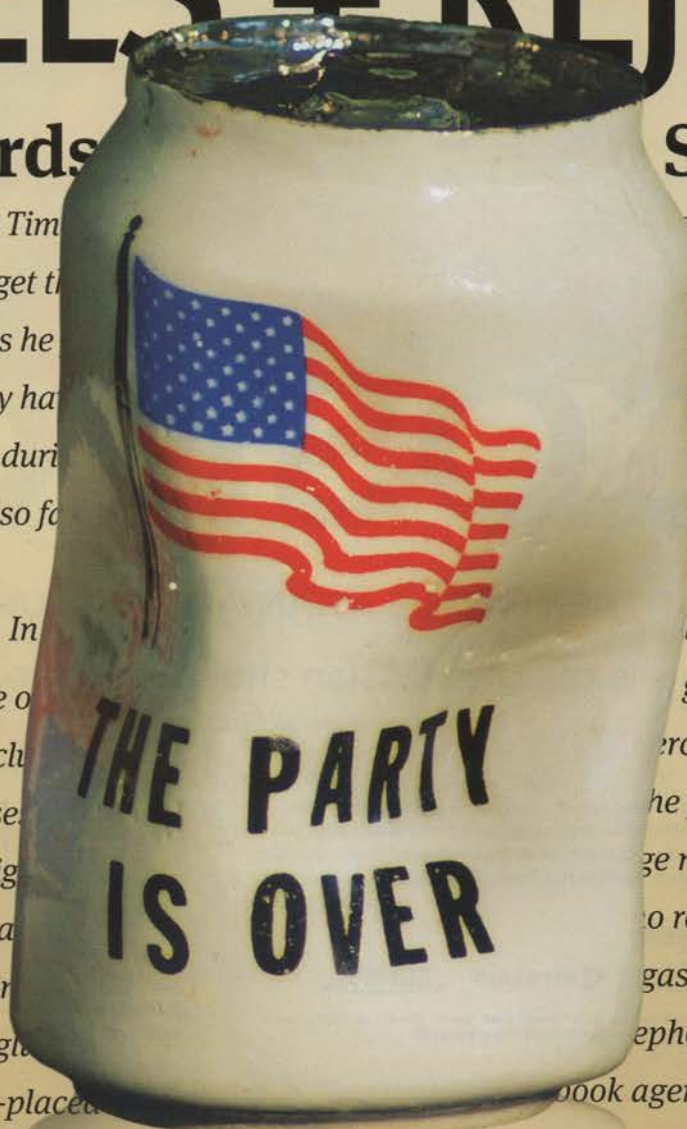
wants to make it to the Big Time  
he hasn't compromised to get there  
doing and saying exactly as he  
And while his behavior may have  
generated some animosity during  
course of his career, he's also fo

### Pat Graney

"House of Mind" the tangle of  
rooms the viewer enters include  
a forest of satin hoop dresses  
(9 feet tall by 5 feet wide, right  
12 feet off the ground); a wall of  
pearly buttons under running  
(80,000 of them, all hand-glued)  
partitioned wall with hand-placed

### Suffragettes

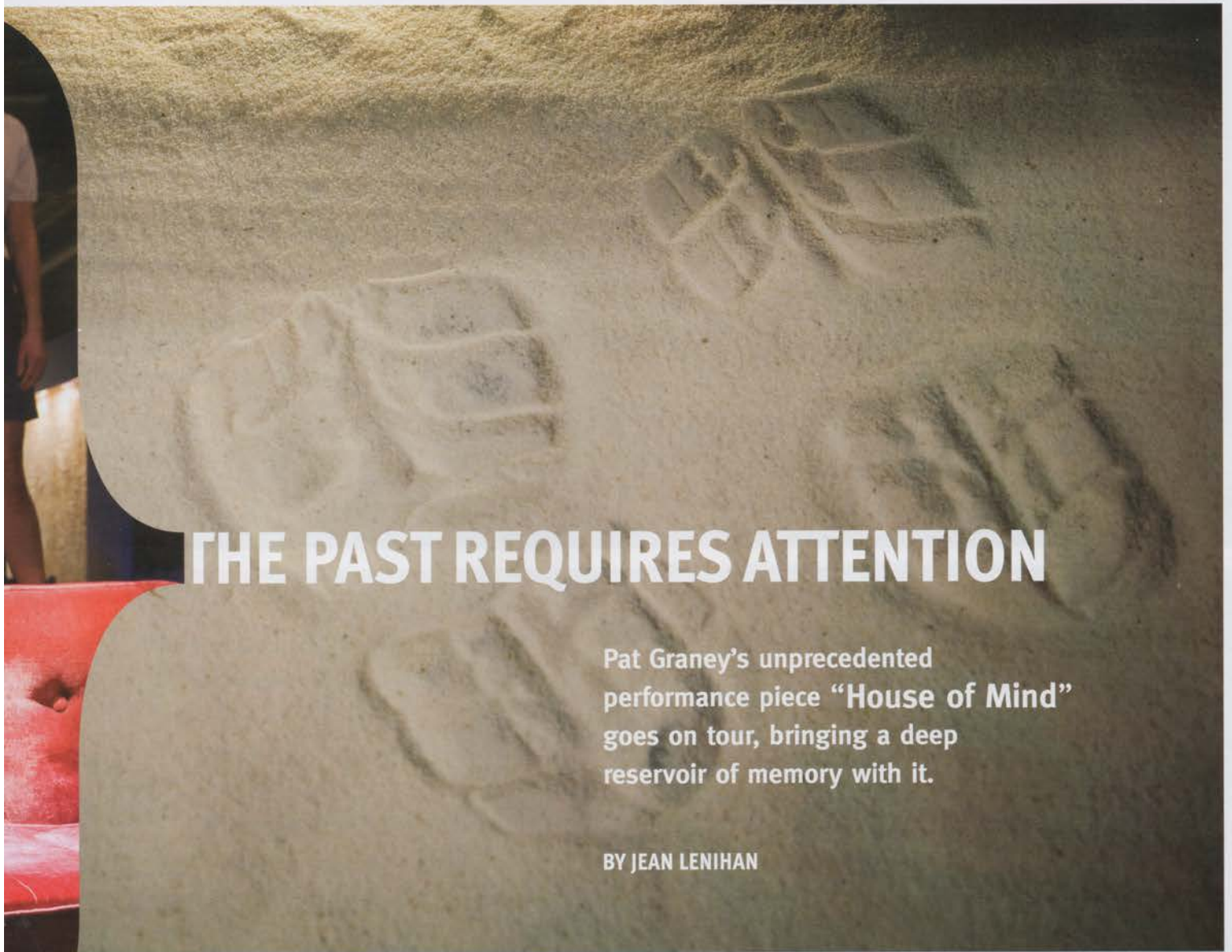
cornered their husbands and  
s and uncles, and they told  
why women should have the  
the August–September 1910  
e of the "Votes for Women"  
per calls for women to "ask  
ness people with whom you  
help you get the ballot: Not  
grocer and the butcher and  
merchant, but the laundryman,  
the postman, the milkman, the  
ge man, the gardener, the man  
o reads the electric meter and  
gas meter, the collector for the  
ephone, for the newspaper, the  
book agent, the peddler, the tramp...











# THE PAST REQUIRES ATTENTION

Pat Graney's unprecedented performance piece "House of Mind" goes on tour, bringing a deep reservoir of memory with it.

BY JEAN LENIHAN





**F**or twenty years Seattle-based choreographer Pat Graney has been concocting otherworldly dance-theatre allegories marked by intelligence and restraint, pieces where a beautifully carved tip stands in for a massive iceberg below.

This past December, Graney, 53, finally allowed Seattle a glimpse of what lies beneath with her site-specific art installation/dance concert entitled "House of Mind." Now traveling America, Graney is touring with both the "House" dance concert and the enormous seven-room art installation she created and shaping the whole megillah to fit within a trio of crazily unique sites.

The piece that made its Seattle debut inside a crumbly five-thousand-foot City Light storage warehouse played in February inside a pristine white-walled artists' gallery (Houston's Diverseworks) and will land finally in a deconsecrated church on New York's Governor's Island in June (a seven-minute ferry ride from lower Manhattan). There is also hope of restaging it in Seattle, although there's no current site available, and Miami presenters are sniffing at the project as well.

For "House of Mind," billed as "an experiential interpretation of her mind," Graney summoned a goodly sum of private and public funding to build and create dance inside physical representations of memories from her childhood in Edison Park, Chicago, and St. Augustine, Florida. Ink-stained, nostalgia-swollen histories and busy, wordless human activity suffuse the haunting show, which sold out for three weekends in Seattle, including snow days when the warehouse street was only accessible by foot.

"I have a naïveté that gives me a blind kind of faith in what I'm doing," Graney explains. "There's no one here in this project who's done this kind of work before so we're all really new at it, and discovering it, and trying to keep it a collaborative venture so we can really develop each of our roles in an integrated fashion."

"House of Mind" composer Amy Denio sat in the cold warehouse for weeks watching Graney develop the piece with her dancers, gathering samples of Graney's aural memories ("palm fronds and trains passing"): clips from movies, sixties radio tunes and slowed-down melodies from a large collection of music boxes. "For me it was one of the most challenging projects with Pat because it was all such a mystery," Denio says.

William Moore, house manager and production coordinator, says, "This is dance and performance art and installation art. She's not bound by those idioms; I think she's trying to express a new idiom."

While Seattle audiences were granted only a half hour to explore the "house" before the dance began, lucky Houston audiences were able to preview (and revisit) the installation during regular gallery hours. The tangle of rooms the viewer enters includes a hallway featuring a broadside of stacked books (three thousand pounds' worth, eight feet high), a dark bedroom with a projected child on the bed and a projected window on the wall, an inaccessible office sprayed entirely in an eerie green wash, a forest of satin hoop dresses (nine feet tall by five feet wide, rigged twelve feet off the ground), a wall of pearly buttons under running water (eighty thousand of them, all hand-glued), a partitioned wall with hand-placed dollhouse pieces (thirty-five hundred miniatures), a narrowing hallway papered with police reports typed by her late father and another room of books where her mother appears in a video loop over which we hear her discussing life with Alzheimer's disease. There are also sand floors (four thousand pounds' worth), a half-dozen video tracks by Ellen Bromberg and three different soundtracks by Denio. Originally hired as a bookkeeper, David Traylor became Graney's design wizard. On tour, the installation is handled by production managers Bill Moore and Heather Mayhew.

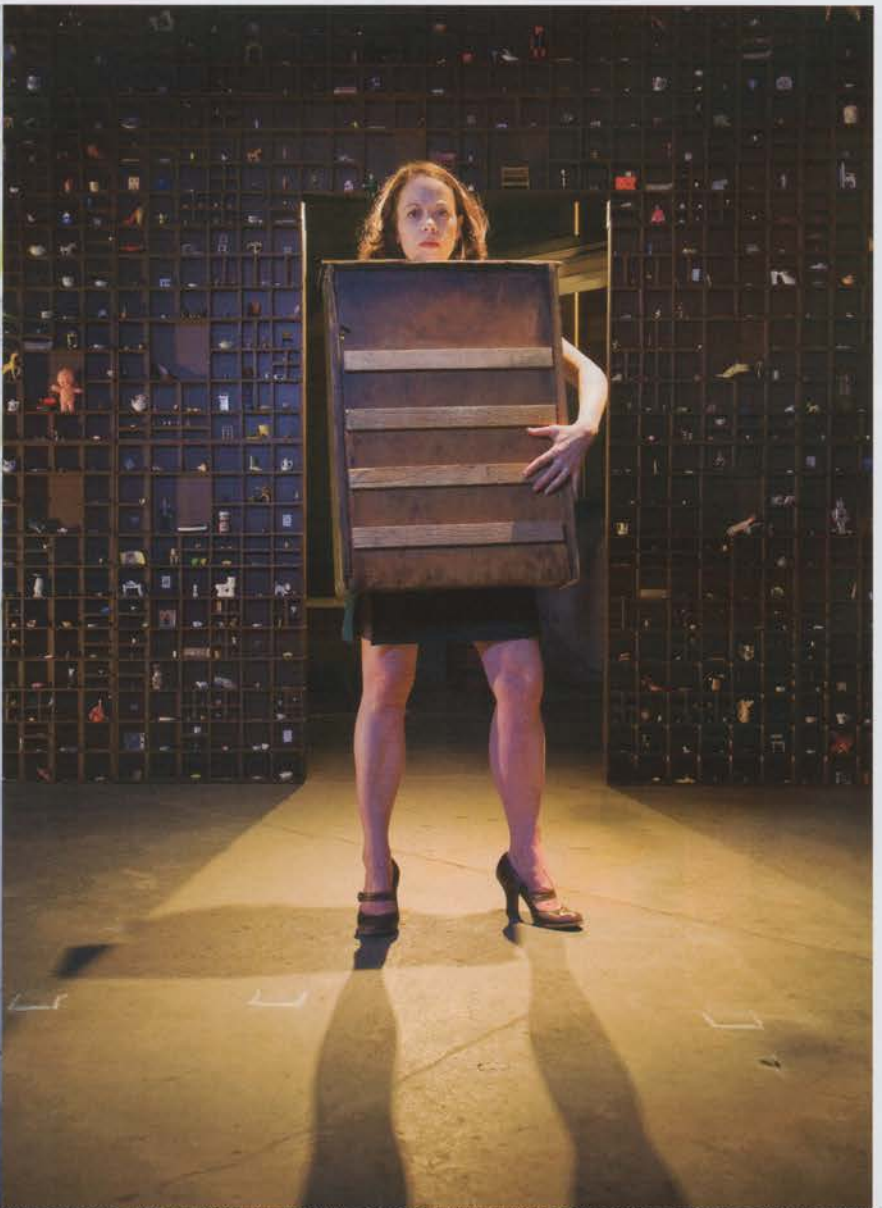
**The piece that made its Seattle debut inside a crumbly five-thousand-foot City Light STORAGE WAREHOUSE played in February inside a pristine WHITE-WALLED ARTISTS' GALLERY (Houston's Diverseworks) and will land finally in a deconsecrated church on New York's Governor's Island in June.**
















The walking pattern that acts as a foundation for the piece is defiantly long and subtle “so **YOU CAN’T TELL EXACTLY WHERE IT REPEATS UNTIL THEY DO ALL THESE LITTLE TURNS.** It’s very very complex — come in on the five or the twelve — I don’t even know the pattern, actually,” Graney laughs.

After the art viewing, audience members find their way to a semicircle of wooden chairs with sawed-off legs. Five women in pencil skirts and high heels slowly crisscross a busy domestic environment, scraping their shoes noisily as they light the stage with a mysterious repetitive animation. Dancers walking up and down to the second floor disappear behind doorways, reemerge, disappear. One dancer makes a cake onstage. Someone sits in a bubble bath.

Interviewed on the Seattle set in December, Graney described her aim: “To encapsulate all of memory in one day or one hour” with “that neurological kind of memory, where you’re just taking the images you get and you’re just going there. You might not know what they meant, you might never know. But they sort of reveal themselves throughout the piece, which is very interesting to me because I know some of those things but I don’t know others.”

She cites her aunt Kate as the inspiration for the clip-clop of shoes, which also contributes to her fascination with women’s lower legs. “And oh my god my fascination with Barbies and living in the Barbie world, having the Barbie stuff — *oh my god I love that stuff,*” she wailed.

It had been Graney’s plan to have at least twelve months in the building to extend the space and create the movement studies within it. In the end, she had just twelve weeks. “So we took the yearlong project and had to mash it into three months. And it was horrendous.” When she finally got into the old City Light warehouse, Graney asked her dancers to forge their own personal relationships to the rambling interior. “We came in here and talked and thought about how we are marked by our own memories, then we talked about this space. What do we think marks this space?”

The walking pattern that acts as a foundation for the piece is defiantly long and subtle “so you can’t tell exactly where it repeats until they do all these little turns. It’s very very complex — come in on the five or the twelve — I don’t even know the pattern, actually,” Graney laughs. “That constant rhythm is what creates the dynamic of the piece, not the movement but the actual rhythm of how the piece is constructed.”

Graney’s love for her mother, Irene, has found a place here. The gestalt of Pat’s mom, a former antiquarian bookseller and rare-button collector, was embedded in the piece from the inception. Then, during the wait time for a building to come free, Irene was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s. “I thought [‘House of Mind’] was just going to be this additive thing on memory,” Graney says. “But it’s both how memory gets added and how it gets taken away.” In a videotaped interview with her mother — which runs during the piece — Irene says: “As far as recalling even the last ten minutes? I can’t. It’s frightening for a moment because the memory is a *thing*. And that thing you were thinking about — the memory — is *gone*. And you can’t get it back.”

Graney’s early childhood was shaped by tragedy. Her only memory of her policeman father was hearing of his fatal accident when she was three (he was thrown from a front-loader and died of a head injury). With four small children, her mother moved to Florida where she bought a dilapidated fourteen-room house and installed her bookshop on the main floor. “That has been her love, books, and my love, too,” Graney says. “I lived in that world completely, pretty much.”

One text she shares in detail in “House of Mind” is her father’s police reports:

Complaint alleges bookie was noted seated in the rear booth on the first floor of the premises taking bets and also over a phone at the rear of the premises on the west. He also went to the west end of the bar to take a bet from a patron answering to the name of “Flash.” The bookie is described as being 60 to 65 years of age, 5’6” in height, 140–150 pounds in weight, with grey hair and partially bald, also wore dark horn-rimmed glasses. He wore a white dress shirt, dark blue tie, bluish-grey suit and black shoes.

Prisons are Graney’s other work site, and her decade-long commitment to working with incarcerated women has not slowed during this new venture. She has two group-teaching programs developed for women offenders — Keeping the Faith Inside, a creative workshop for women in jail, and Keeping the Faith Transitions, which seeks to assist and inspire women and their children after release.

Recently one of Graney’s brothers was released from prison after serving a ten-year sentence in Florida for a drug conviction. “My family — we’ve had a very, very tough upbringing,” Graney says. “And I really feel like there’s a way for me to bridge my past and my present and my future together with the prison project . . . what I’ve come to realize is you share what you love. And that’s art.”

Graney fingers a porcelain cup and saucer she’s brought today to add to the set. “I love its heft,” she says, turning it over again and again, trailing off. ◀