

Saturday, October 22, 2016, 8pm

Sunday, October 23, 2016, 3pm

Zellerbach Hall

## Cullberg Ballet

### Deborah Hay's *Figure a Sea*

Choreography and Direction	Deborah Hay
Dancers	Ulrika Berg,* Anand Bolder, Barry Brannum,* Eleanor Campbell, Jac Carlsson, Eszter Czédulás, Samuel Draper, Unn Faleide, Katie Jacobson, Eva Mohn, Gesine Moog, Vera Nevanlinna,* Camille Prieux, Adam Schütt, Daniel Sjökvist, Simon Tanguy,* Vincent Van der Plas, Katie Vickers,* Tiran Willemse, Dario Barreto Damas
	<i>*guest</i>
Composer	Laurie Anderson
Sound Designer	Martin Ekman
Lighting Designer	Minna Tiikkainen
Assistant Lighting Designer	Heikki Paasonen
Costumes	Marita Tjärnström
Choreographic Assistants	Mira Mutka and Laurent Pichaud
Rehearsal Director	Lisa Drake
Artistic Director	Gabriel Smeets
Managing Director	Stina Dahlström
Producer	Malin Brereton
Assistant Producer	Josefin Kahraman
Technical Coordinator	Matz Palmklint
Stage Manager	Tony Bohlin
Lighting Manager	Elin Holmberg Klasen
Sound Manager	Martin Ekman
Wardrobe Supervisor	Tuva Danhard
Tour Manager	Camilla Carlström
Marketing and Public Relations Manager	Erica Espling

*Major support provided by The Bernard Osher Foundation  
 and additional support provided Patron Sponsor Rockridge Market Hall.*



Vera Nevanlinna, Alexandra Campbell, and Unn Faleide in Deborah Hay's *Figure a Sea*

## PROGRAM

### *a continuity of discontinuity*

An introduction to *Figure a Sea*  
with Deborah Hay

## INTERMISSION

### *Figure a Sea*

Duration: approximately 60 minutes

World premiere: September 24, 2015 at Dansens Hus, Stockholm

Co-commissioned by:

Zodiak, Center for New Dance, Helsinki, Finland;

Peak Performances @ Montclair State University, New Jersey; Balletto di Roma, Rome, Italy;

Centro per la Scena Contemporanea – Comune di Bassano del Grappa, Bassano del Grappa, Italy;  
CCAP, Stockholm, Sweden

Supported by the Italian Cultural Institute, Stockholm

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The Swedish Arts Council, and Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation.

Cullberg Ballet is represented by Key Performance, Koen Vanhove, [info@keyperformance.se](mailto:info@keyperformance.se)

**Cullberg Ballet** has performed all over the world and is a vital contributor to the international presentation of contemporary dance. The company also engages in national outreach through its tours within Sweden. Cullberg Ballet collaborates with a variety of national and international choreographers and performing artists who create works for large and small stages. The company's activities encompass a multitude of different projects and productions, including collaborations with dance training programs. Cullberg Ballet was founded by Birgit Cullberg in 1967 under the auspices of Riksteatern—the Swedish national touring theater—of which it still is a part. The company currently consists of 16 dancers from nearly as many countries. Since its inception, the stage personalities, creativity, and technical strength of its dancers have been Cullberg Ballet's defining characteristics. Gabriel Smeets became the artistic director in 2014.

Highlights from Cullberg Ballet's history include:



#### 1967

Cullberg Ballet is founded under the auspices of Riksteatern, by Birgit Cullberg, a prominent choreographer who has staged ballets in Chile, Iran, Poland, the Soviet Union, the UK, and the United States. The company consists of eight of the world's top dancers, from Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, the US, and Yugoslavia. The founding philosophy is that all the dancers are

to be considered soloists and therefore receive the same pay. Dancers earn a monthly salary of SEK 2,000 plus daily allowance. The company builds a repertoire of works by Birgit Cullberg and guest choreographers.

#### 1969

Cullberg Ballet is contracted to the new television channel TV2 for one year. The company features in the channel's opening night programming and several ballet broadcasts during the 1969–70 season, with *Red Wine in Green Glasses* attracting the most attention. Chroma-key technology creates new visual effects, allowing the dancers to move “inside” an oil painting, for example. (This revolutionary approach earns the program the Prix Italia in 1971.) Cullberg Ballet also wins a gold medal for Best Foreign Ballet at that year's Paris Autumn Festival.

#### 1970

Cullberg Ballet moves to a permanent home on Stockholm's Jungfrugatan. Until now the company has moved from place to place, spending one memorable winter rehearsing at the Gröna Lund amusement park, where the building was so cold that huge fan heaters had to be brought in to warm the dancers.

#### 1971

Cullberg Ballet is a major international success, giving 14 performances in London followed by 20 in Paris in 1972. In the space of a few years the company has attained a leading position in the world of dance.

#### 1976

Mats Ek choreographs his first work for Cullberg Ballet, *The Officer's Servant*. He also produces *Soweto* and *St. George and the Dragon*, in which he dances the main role.

#### 1978

Mats Ek's major breakthrough as a choreographer comes with *The House of Bernarda Alba*, a phenomenal success for Cullberg. The work is based on the famous play by the Spanish dramatist Federico García Lorca.



Urban Jön

Jefta van Dinther's *Plateau Effect*, 2013

**1982**

Mats Ek creates his masterpiece, *Giselle*, which has been performed by the Cullberg Ballet more than 300 times in 28 countries.

**1985**

Mats Ek becomes artistic director.

**1987**

Mats Ek produces a new version of *Swan Lake*, to great public acclaim. Birgit Cullberg creates her last work for Cullberg Ballet at the age of 79.

**1989**

Cullberg Ballet moves from Jungfrugatan to the Riksteatern headquarters in Hallunda, a suburb south of Stockholm.

**1993**

Carolyn Carlson succeeds Mats Ek as artistic director. Carlson introduces improvisation, largely a new departure for the company.

**1995**

Lena Wennergren-Juras, a member of the company since its founding, and Margareta Lidström (a dancer from the Royal Swedish Opera) become artistic directors. The collaborative relationship with Mats Ek continues, and other guest choreographers are also invited to create works for the company.

**2003**

Choreographer Johan Inger becomes artistic director, leaving the position in 2008.

**2007**

Cullberg Ballet turns 40 and celebrates with a successful and sold-out performance at Dansens Hus in Stockholm.

**2010**

Anna Grip becomes artistic director and introduces the company to several site-specific works both outside in parks and at festivals, and inside museums. Grip also takes the initiative in developing programs for smaller-scale stages, and invites Canadian choreographers Benoit Lachambre and Crystal Pite, and Norwegian Ina Christel Johannessen to create for Dansens Hus' small stage. Grip also invites Alexander Ekman to create his first full-evening production, *Ekman's Triptych—A Study of Entertainment*, as well as Jefta van Dinther, who creates his first large-stage production with *Plateau Effect*, which premieres at Julidans in Amsterdam in 2013.

**2013**

Anna Grip steps down as artistic director in August. A board consisting of Monica Fredriksson, Jane Hopper, Lisa Drake, and Thomas Zamolo is appointed to serve until the end of the year.

**2014**

Gabriel Smeets becomes artistic director and introduces the work of choreographers Trajal Harrell, Eszter Salamon, Cristian Duarte, and Deborah Hay.

# To Look in Order to See

Susan Leigh Foster

As a tool for how to generate and also practice dance movement, Deborah Hay has recently proposed the directive “turn your f\*\*king head.” This phrase crystallizes Hay’s ongoing inquiry into the relationship between perception and consciousness.

The directive is first and foremost an invitation simply to look in a different direction in order to see. Over the years of her work with trained and untrained performers, Hay witnessed dancers succumbing to a fixedness in terms of their experience of movement and their motivation for dancing. Habitualized through years of technical training as well as the socialization entailed in subject formation, this fixedness manifests as a repertoire of standard responses to the world and also as a perceptual dullness, an inability to see what is in front of one while dancing. Turning one’s head literally affords an opportunity to look at the world anew. It invites a rich inpouring of information, an energizing of one’s physicality, and the possibility to remake one’s world.

Beginning with her earliest choreographic projects, Hay has experimented with the use of spoken and written instructions designed to guide the dancers’ perceptual activity while dancing. Often times addressing the body as an aggregate of individually conscious cells, Hay asks:

- What if every cell in my body at once has the potential to perceive time passing?
- What if Now is Here is Harmony?
- What if every cell in my body has the potential to perceive the uniqueness and originality of space and time, of all there is?

These koan-like questions emphasize their own inability to be answered or to be answered in any conclusive or final way. By asking dancers to focus on these questions in rehearsal and in performance, Hay deviates radically from conventional models of performance in which movement is presented as something to execute “well,” “with confidence and clarity,” or “with feeling.” Instead, the practicing of dancing becomes a site of interrogation and reflection, one without resolution.

Although “turn your f\*\*king head” indicates an insistence, even an anger about the need to do something differently, the directive simply to change the visual array of what one can see does not deny old habits but rather steps to the side of them. As dancers both devise and perform the sequences of images that compose Hay’s dance, they are invited to re-perceive what they are doing and thereby make it new. By continually asking oneself to turn one’s “f\*\*king head,” the dancer becomes aware of the fixedness of perception at the same time that s/he apprehends something unique. For Hay this tool enables the dancer not to deny old habits but rather to keep them at bay, to keep them from functioning in their routinized way.

And “turn your f\*\*king head” serves a further and perhaps most important function: it provides dancers with a focus for the practice of continually renewing their relationship to dancing, which, finally, is what the dance itself is about.

—Susan Leigh Foster  
choreographer, scholar,  
Distinguished Professor, Department of  
World Arts and Cultures/Dance, UCLA

# A Minefield I Never Heard Of

Gabriel Smeets, Artistic Director, Cullberg Ballet

"I walked into love. I walked into a minefield I never heard of."

Deborah Hay sang these famous Ane Brun lines to me *sotto voce*. It was at the end of her second week of working with Cullberg Ballet and it was her response to my question how she was doing. She added: "A minefield I never heard of. Isn't that the most accurate definition of love?"

Her name was high on the list of choreographers I wanted to invite to work with Cullberg Ballet. Not only because I admire her as a choreographer. Also because I felt that the company, with its reputation for innovation, should be the first European dance company to ask Deborah Hay to create a work. So, when I presented my list of choreographers to the dancers, I was extremely happy that they applauded the mention of her name.

Dancers love to work with Deborah because her work is all about dance. Her deep understanding of the core qualities of dance (body, space, time) comes from a lifelong experience, both as a woman and choreographer. She increases the space for dance by "removing everything that does not belong there." She has no dying swans, man-woman conflict, objects, story line, or representations. There is nothing but dance and choreography; everything can be found right there.

Deborah Hay wants to create in *Figure a Sea* a space of endless possibilities. She has a clear path to go there. Part of Deborah's strategy is the way she throws out words to the world. She throws words at dancers using an endless series of questions that all start with "What if..." She also throws them at me. At a lunch meeting in New York when we first discussed *Figure a Sea* she looked at me and said: "I am having dinner with Laurie Anderson tonight." I got the mes-

sage right away; the next morning I had breakfast with Laurie Anderson. She immediately agreed to be involved in the project. "Deborah normally does not like to have music in her work. So I will try to make her use music in this piece; I like the idea." Laurie created for Deborah a catalogue of sounds, scores, and possibilities. She gave Deborah the freedom to pick whatever she wanted to use from that catalogue.

A crucial element in the creation of this "space of endless possibilities" was the requirement for 20 dancers. Since Cullberg Ballet's ensemble contains "only" 16 dancers we had to be smart in dealing with Hay's request. We asked friends for assistance. With the generous support of Jed Wheeler (Peak Performances @ Montclair State University, New Jersey), Roberto Casarotto (Balletto di Roma), Harri Kuorelahti (Zodiak-Center for New Dance, Helsinki), Cristina Caprioli (CCAP, Stockholm), and Mia Larsson (Riksteatern, Sweden) we managed to add several guest dancers to our company for this project.

*Figure a Sea*. Imagine endless movement. Experience a space full of change. At one point, dear audience member, you might find yourself in the position of one of the dancers, and become a co-choreographer with Deborah Hay, too. Creating your own sea of possibilities.

That same day in New York I saw the huge Jackson Pollock paintings at the Museum of Modern Art, the so-called dripping paintings. Each painting an encounter of colors, lines, directions, and movement. Like Deborah Hay's work, they create a space of endless possibilities. But in Hay's *Figure a Sea* the endless possibilities are even more endless because her work is dance. And like life, dance is always "here and gone."

I wish you a wonderful experience.



Sarah Grantham

## Deborah Hay

American dancer, choreographer, and author Deborah Hay was born 1941 in Brooklyn. She trained with Merce Cunningham and Mia Slavenska, and she danced with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 1964. Hay belongs to a group of choreographers who were behind the Judson Church Movement in New York in the 1960s, where daily life movements became part of the choreography and untrained people became dancers. This marked a major development in the history of dance. The group, known as the Judson Dance Theatre, created one of the most radical and explosive postmodern 20th-century art movements. Hay focused on large-scale dance projects, and later almost exclusively on rarified and enigmatic solo dances based on her new experimental choreographic method. She also choreographed a duet for herself and Mikhail Baryshnikov, *Single Duet*, in 2000.

Hay is the recipient of a 1983 Guggenheim Fellowship in choreography, numerous National Endowment for the Arts choreography fellowships, and the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Fellowship (1996). She has received an honorary degree as Doctor of Dance from the Theater Academy in Helsinki, Finland (2009), a United States Artist Friends Fellowship (2010), and an artist's grant from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts, based in New York (2011). In 2012, Hay became one of the 21 American performing artists to receive the inaugural and groundbreaking Doris Duke Artist Award.

After a two-year research collaboration with Motion Bank, a project of the Forsythe Company, an online, interactive website was dedicated to Hay's choreographic aesthetics. *Turn Your F^\*king Head* is a 2012 documentary by British filmmaker Becky Edmunds about Hay's last solo performance commissioning project at the Findhorn Community Foundation. Deborah Hay's book *Using the Sky: a dance* was published by Routledge last October.

"*Figure a Sea* is a meditation on seeing," says Hay. "Seeing music, fleeting incidences, synchronicities, copious input points, collectivity, surprise. It is a space for self-reflection: for seeing oneself seeing." The dancer and the stage are considered a sea of endless possibilities. Nothing happens by chance. Hay challenges,





Urban Jelen

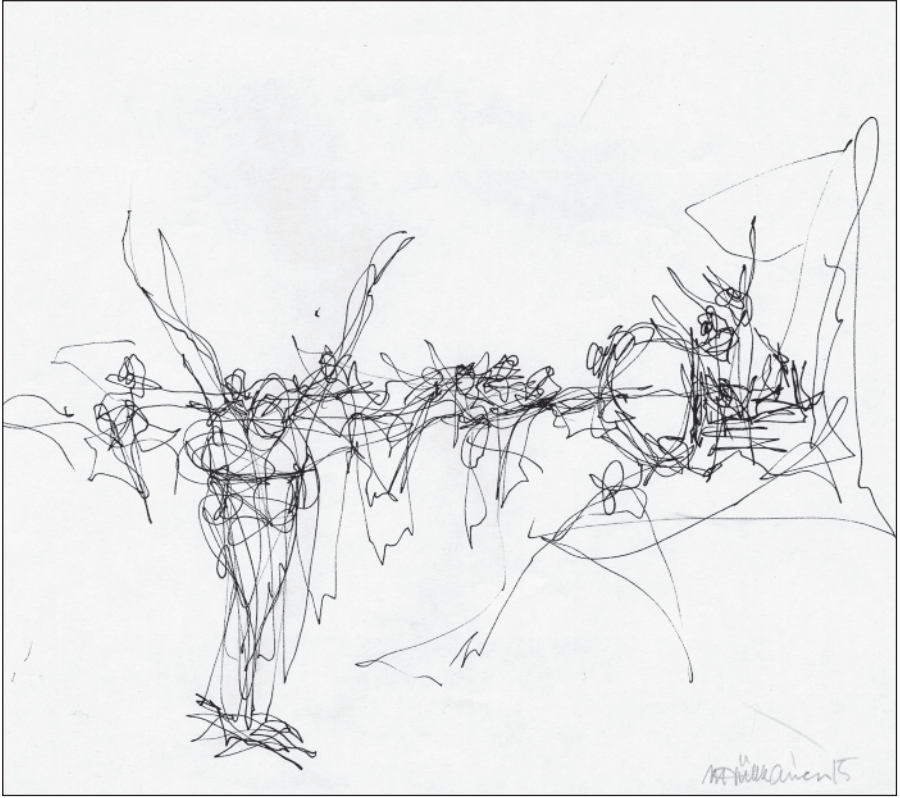
*Tiran Willemse and Daniel Sjökvist in Deborah Hay's Figure a Sea*

without diminishing, the dancer's intelligence, beauty, and speed. Ease, accuracy, visibility, ambiguity, and uniformity are the work's key organizing principles.

Deborah Hay always asks her dancers "What if?". What if, for example, all the cells in a body can create a dialogue with everything that they see? In other words: "I do not look at the world. I participate in it." Not only the eyes see, but the whole body.

**Laurie Anderson** (*composer*) was born in 1947 and began her career as a sculptor and performance artist in the late 1960s. Early in her career she worked as an illustrator and art critic. She is a pioneer in electronic music and has written both popular and art music and collaborated with, among others, William Burroughs, Peter Gabriel, and Lou Reed. Since 1975, she has recorded seven albums. Anderson plays several instruments, including several variations of the violin. "O Superman," from 1981, which reached as high as second place in the British charts, is one of her most famous songs. Her film *Heart of a Dog* was screened at the Venice Film festival in 2015.





*Drawing by lighting designer Minna Tiikkainen, created during rehearsals for Figure a Sea*

**Gabriel Smeets** (*artistic director*) was born in the Netherlands in 1958 and studied visual arts and arts journalism. From 2006–14 he served as the artistic director of SNDO, the School for New Dance Development, under the umbrella of the Amsterdam School of the Arts. While at SNDO, Smeets created a four-year program in choreography, establishing the school as a leader in the field of performing arts education. Today, alumni from the school regularly present their work in a variety of performing arts festivals and venues.

Smeets has worked as a dramaturg and also has a background in journalism and communications. He is active as a mentor and curator and regularly participates in panels and symposiums on the subject of dance. He was also the interim chief curator of programming at the Springdance Festival in Utrecht.

From 2000–06 Smeets was the dance editor for the Dutch monthly magazine *TM* (*Theatermaker*). As a dramaturg, he created works with the Dutch theater company Paralyse D'Amour, choreographer Krisztina de Chatel, visual artist Marina Abramovic, fashion designer Aziz Bekkaoui, and director/choreographer Ibrahim Quraishi.

In 2006, and in close collaboration with Ibrahim Quraishi, Smeets developed a 10-week education program called “The Political Body” at DasArts, the Amsterdam school for advanced research on theater and dance. Smeets is also the co-author of *Why All These Questions?*, published in 2003 (Theatre Institute of the Netherlands), a book he created in close collaboration with Simon Dove.

In 2004 Smeets developed and produced a symposium called “How Much Body Does

Dance Need?” for the Amsterdam forum De Balie. In 2005 he received the Dutch Foundation for the Performing Arts Award as a fellow with the National Arts Journalism Program at Columbia University in New York. As a curator he developed a series of panels on the state of contemporary dance called “Dance Unwrapped” for the Dance Theater Workshop in New York (2006).

In 2006 Smeets took part in the Spring Dance Dialogue in Moscow between choreographers from New York, Moscow, and Amsterdam. Between 2009 and 2011 he was invited by choreographer Germaine Acogny to teach workshops at her École des Sables in Senegal, where he worked with 24 young choreographers from all over Africa. Gabriel Smeets became the artistic director of Cullberg Ballet in May 2014.

# Berkeley RADICAL

## INCLUSION, **INNOVATION**, AND IMMERSION

These performances by **Cullberg Ballet** are part of the 2016/17 Berkeley RADICAL *Innovation* strand, a selection of concerts and related activities that follow a group of artistic trailblazers, some celebrating key milestones, who continually ask us to perceive, to think, and to understand in new ways. Cal Performances’ *Innovation* programs this season include *Letter to a Man*, a thrilling new theatrical collaboration between Mikhail Baryshnikov and director Robert Wilson (Nov 10–13); the American premiere of composer Steve Reich’s *Runner*, in honor of Reich’s 80th birthday, in a performance with the renowned **Ensemble Signal** (Jan 29); and a celebration of composer John Adams’ 70th birthday with revival performances of choreographer Lucinda Childs’ 1983 masterwork *Available Light* (Feb 3–4), set to Adams’ richly impressionistic *Light Over Water* score. For complete details of all performances and related activities, please visit [calperformances.org](http://calperformances.org).