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FALL ARTS PREVIEW – DANCE & PERFORMANCE

The Twin Cities is unique for the number of entrepreneurial spirits who have formed artist-driven networks and performance series. The latest is Paul Herwig, the co-artistic director of Off-Leash Area, who is launching the Right Here Showcase, a new annual juried platform of contemporary performance aimed at mid career artists. The Lineup is diverse and intriguing, and includes Bart Buch (puppetry), Kym Longhi (movement theater), Gadu Fukasawa Schmitz (Butoh dance), Rosy Simas (contemporary dance), Deborah Jinza Thayer (contemporary dance, and Vanessa Voskuil (contemporary dance).

Over the past few years, Voskuil has produced two sui generis works, “En Masse” and “The Student”, that employ masses of dancers and civilians of diverse genders, ethnicities, and ages with a surreal dynamism. Thayer transforms bodies and spaces architecturally, while dealing with provocative issues like cloning, politics, and objects of desire. Longhi is fascinated by the connection between visual art and the body, while Simas explores memory and family history through dance, film, and art installations. Schmitz mines the outer limits of Japanese Butoh, and Buch says that he employs puppets to “contribute to a new paradigm that honors the place of queer theory and poetry in our cultural evolution.” – Linda Shapiro.