

For Immediate Release
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Artistic Director - Psychopomp Dance Theater

PSYCHOPOMP DANCE THEATER PREMIERES NEW WORK IN FIRST EVENING
LENGTH PERFORMANCE SINCE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

What: Ritual Performance

Where: Stomping Ground LA

When: 8PM Friday-Saturday, June 24-25, 2022

Tickets: \$35 purchased online through Eventbrite link, discounts available. Tickets also available at the door each night.

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/psychopomp-dance-theater-at-stomping-ground-la-tickets-331225784237>

“For dust you are and dust you shall return”

Bereshit 3:19

Psychopomp Dance Theater returns to the Los Angeles stage at 8PM on both June 24th and 25th, performing at one of L.A.’s newest performance spaces and hubs of dance, *Stomping Ground L.A.* The company will be premiering two ritual works collaboratively choreographed by Shenandoah Harris and six eclectic artists entitled *YLEM* and *EYN SOF*. Both works are set to original scores created by Portland composer **Riley Smith** and are costumed by Los Angeles based maker **Ryan Howard**.

The earliest known microbes, the Ten Kabbalistic Sefirot and 19th century Wendigo Psychosis" are all starting points of inspiration for *YLEM*. *YLEM* (meaning the fundamental matter in all things) taps into the unanswerable questions of existence and dissonance between humanity and the natural world. The work brims over with intricate partnering, spaciouly flowing movement and dynamic athleticism. *YLEM*, danced by six virtuosic movers, with a run time of 20-23 minutes was set to premiere in 2020 in Los Angeles but was postponed due to the pandemic.

EYN SOF meditates on the Jewish practice of existence and constant struggle with *YHWH* or *Hashem* or *G-d*. Newly created in 2022, this ritual has a runtime of 23 minutes and will take place after intermission. *EYN SOF*, a Jewish philosophy positing an explanation to the existence of the spiritual realm and lack of human capability to comprehend such a place, translates directly to *without end* or *limitless*. *EYN SOF* tells the story of five dynamically fierce artists meeting in a space of liminality and battling against all odds to reunify. The movement harkens back to *Psychopomp*’s physically aggressive roots– full of acrobatic floorwork, confrontational partnering and parkour inspired movement. These qualities are juxtaposed against highly specified gestural movements embodying Ms. Harris’s personal practice of reflective Davening or prayer.

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Shenandoah Harris, a BFA graduate from University of California, Santa Barbara received degrees in both Dance and Theater Production and Design. She has worked professionally with GoldenVoice, Mattel and Universal Studios in Production and Design. Her professional credits include Akram Khan, Cherice Barton, Colin Conner, Jim Vincent and Jacques Heim. She toured nationally as a performer and dance educator with *Diavolo Architecture in Motion* for two and a half years. As a choreographer, Ms. Harris was awarded a Residency with *MashUp Contemporary Dance* in 2019, is a Resident Artist at Stomping Ground LA, is currently a part of Jacob's Pillow Curriculum in Motion Think Tank, and is also a Jeremiah Fellowship recipient and active member of Bend The Arc: Jews for Social Justice. Shenandoah Harris is the founder and current director of Psychopomp Dance Theater.

Psychopomp Dance Theater's work pushes the limits of dynamically powerful athleticism and storytelling while remaining grounded in virtuosic modern dance technique through a ritualistic mental rigor. Ms. Harris uses Jewish ritual and mysticism to confront her community's most challenging questions. Ms. Harris's Jewish ethno-religious identity and ancestral heritage of collaboration and discourse informs the collaborative culture of Psychopomp. The company resists hierarchical structures in creation processes. The company functions like a rhizome root system, using *felt time* and empathy based movement to create material. The company has shown work across California, most recently performing as a mainstage act at The DoLab's Lightning in a Bottle Music Festival at Buena Vista Lake in May of 2022.

Psychopomp also offers community programming focusing on developing empathy based communication and leadership skills for LA social justice organizers and is currently offering a movement program in tandem with the LWOP (Life Without Parole) Pen Pal Program in LA.

COVID-19 Protocols:

In accordance with LA County Health Officials Stomping Ground LA requires all attendees to wear masks indoors and there will be vaccination/negative covid test check at the door.

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