

The Dance Apocalypse



The Dance Apocalypse (Gabrielle Revlock and Nicole Bindler) is a Philadelphia-based company that makes dances with you and for you that transcend the border between audience and stage. Their work is fiercely feminist, wild, and genre defying. They use movement, text, video, stage combat and comedy to create a sensorial extravaganza. They are particularly interested in the Q and A format as performance; critiquing spectacle and competition in contemporary dance; collaboration as a practice and lifestyle. They do not shy away from using animals and babies to charm your pants off. Their work has been frequently described as joyfully disorienting. They have performed their collaborative work throughout Philadelphia, New York, D.C., Pittsburgh and Seattle. Their dances have been supported by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, FringeArts and The A.W.A.R.D. Show! www.TheDanceApocalypse.org

Represented by AccelART
<http://www.Accelartllc.com/>

AccelART^{LLC}

Gabrielle Revlock, co-creator of CardioCreativity®, is a dance-maker working in Philadelphia & New York. In 2010 she received a Rocky Award for her signature piece Halo performed with a hula hoop and premiered at the Korzo Theater in the Netherlands. Her work has been supported by a Fresh Tracks Residency, a LAB Fellowship through FringeArts, The Independence Foundation, The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, the Puffin Foundation, SCUBA National Touring Network for Dance, Omi International Arts Center and the Susan Hess Choreographers' Project. She has danced for Lucinda Childs, Susan Rethorst, Christopher Williams and now Jane Comfort & Company. Interested in bridging experimentation and populism, she created the online video So You Think You Can't Understand Contemporary Dance?, a two-minute conversation with her favorite five-year-old. www.GabrielleRevlock.com



Nicole Bindler, co-creator of CardioCreativity® and originator of Clitoral Embodiment®, is a body-based performing artist whose dances have been shown throughout the U.S., Canada, Argentina and in Berlin, Tokyo, Beirut, Bethlehem, Mexico City and Quito. Her work has been supported by the Leeway Foundation, the Puffin Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Arts, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (through Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts), Philadelphia Dance Projects, the Community Education Center, FringeArts and The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. She teaches at University of the Arts and Temple University in Philadelphia. She has taught workshops in Somatics, Contact Improvisation and Performance Practice throughout the U.S., Argentina and at International Contact Festival Freiburg in Germany. Bindler is a member of Mascher Space Cooperative, the Jewish Voice for Peace Artist Council and she writes for thINKingDANCE. www.NicoleBindler.com



I made this for you

(2011)



“Brilliantly conceived, choreographed, and performed” - *Seattle Dances*

“exuberant, brash, crowd-pleasing, insidery, rambunctious” - *ThINKingDance*

I made this for you is a raucous and playful, yet earnest, dance about audience engagement and community building. It was created in response to The A.W.A.R.D. Show!, a choreography competition for \$10,000. The piece mobilizes a cast of dozens from the community -- including a panel of judges/commentators offering play-by-play -- and challenges notions of competition and conventional forms of beauty by using biting wit and playful commentary. I made this for you offers the opportunity to engage community performers, children, DJ's, and scholars as part of a one-time event.

Running time: 70 minutes.

Venue requirements: Proscenium or Flexible Black Box
30+ community performers (soloists and ensemble dancers)

Load in: 7 full day residency. 1 day tech before first performance

Touring party: 4 people

Housing requirements: 4 hotel rooms

Video: <https://vimeo.com/136542957>

Password: accelartllc

The Dance Apocalypse

(2013)



"It was hilarious. It was weird. I didn't really get it. I doubt I was really supposed to. But it was also wildly entertaining — I couldn't keep my eyes off of the two. Their unpredictability was captivating." – *Philadelphia City Paper*

The Dance Apocalypse takes place within the context of a director's commentary, a sensationalist talk show and a million-dollar kickstarter campaign for a feature length film. Within these comedic backdrops, the dance explores the nature of creative collaboration between Revlock and Bindler— shedding light on tensions and delights in relation to art-making and to each other as female artists in a spectacle-driven world.

Run time 70 minutes.

Venue requirements: Proscenium or flexible black box
Community engagement dance workshop for 20+ community members (no prior skills necessary) 5 day residency (including evening classes)

Load in: 1 day load in/tech prior to first performance day
Touring party: 3 people
Housing requirements: 3 hotel rooms

Videos: <https://vimeo.com/136773784>
Password: accelartllc

The Dance Apocalypse/Solos

(2015)



"I felt lucky to watch Bindler and Revlock reveal themselves over the course of the evening in such poignant, wild, hilarious, and generous ways."
– *Culturebot*

The Dance Apocalypse/Solos is a radical challenge to the paltry circumstances in which artists seek funding and a heart wrenching end-of-the-world love story with pizzazz. It includes clitoral embodiment, taxidermy hats, a kickstarter campaign and true confessions.

A combination of circumstances (travel, funding, curiosity) caused the duo to pull the piece apart, divvying up the material into two solos. Revlock performs The Dance Apocalypse/Fundraiser and Bindler performs The Dance Apocalypse/Class.* The solos bring focus to Revlock and Bindler as individuals and provide personal and sometimes contradictory perspectives on their tumultuous relationship. *In truth they aren't really solos at all because they two halves fit together, commenting on, contradicting and supporting each other.

Run time 60 minutes.

Venue requirements:	Intimate Projector
Load in:	1 day load in/tech before first performance day
Touring party:	2 people
Housing requirements:	2 hotel rooms

Video: <https://vimeo.com/134239044>

Master Classes

CardioCreativity

Do you feel intimidated by dance classes? Do you feel bored by fitness classes? Want to learn and explore dance in a supportive environment that values creativity and personal expression? Then CardioCreativity—an alternative to mainstream dance—size—is the place for you! This is an all levels class. No previous dance experience necessary. People who have felt discouraged from movement classes in the past due to size, age or ability are especially encouraged to join in.

Clitoral Embodiment

In this workshop we will study and embody the embryological homologues of the genitalia with a particular emphasis on the lesser known aspects of the clitoris: the crura and bulbs, which also exist in the penis. These posterior aspects of the genitalia appear in the male form in most anatomy texts, but are conspicuously absent in representations of the female form. We will embody these structures in their embryological, pre-gendered forms, and as they exist presently in our bodies today. We will honor how they manifest in ourselves and acknowledge that in some people the genitalia develop as something in between the male/female binary.

Hula Hooping

Perfect for dancers and non-dancers, children and adults, hula hooping is a fun workout that builds core strength and cardiovascular endurance. Learn cool tricks, graceful dance moves and how to move the hoop from your waist to your neck to your arm.

Contemporary Technique

We begin class by moving continuously, extending, contracting, jumping, moving without concern about doing it perfectly. We simply dive in, get moving and warm the body deeply and thoroughly. By committing to this rigorous, sustained effort we find reserves of energy we didn't know we had available to us. Through repetition and breath awareness, this class will activate the body from the inside out, helping students to discover a richer and more sensitive movement quality. From this juicy, sweaty, sensational place we then dive into precise, technical phrase work that engages the left brain with the underlying support of our warmed and ready bodies. This class can be tailored to the level of the students.

Contact Improvisation

CI is a partner dance form using physical contact, weight sharing and human connection as the impetus for the dance. The point of contact is used as a fulcrum for unusual movement not physically possible in a solo dance. Using gravity and momentum the dance unfolds in unexpected ways. As an improvisational form, there is an emphasis on being present and open to the unknown. All levels of movement experience and ability are welcome to practice CI. There is no judgment about what is beautiful or ugly. It is a deeply personal and experiential dance. The quality of the dance is gauged by how the dancers themselves experience it. There are specific techniques and forms that one can learn and practice in order to make the dance safer and more enjoyable, but these techniques are not an end; they are a means towards a unique, unrepeatable dance.

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation

Wish You Were Here: “Fresh Juice” Serves Up Age Old Questions In A New Vessel

by R. Eric Thomas, October 28, 2011

Gabrielle Revlock and Nicole Bindler’s exuberant, brash, crowd-pleasing, insidery, rambunctious I made this for you demands its own space. It was showy, it was sprawling, it literally blew the doors of the space open. What’s most fascinating, however, about Revlock and Bindler’s superbly constructed, intelligent piece is how well it meshed with the decidedly more subdued pieces that preceded it. I made this for you, its proverbial tongue superglued inside its proverbial cheek, initiated a conversation about what dance “is”—played as a hyper-literal spoken exchange between Revlock’s self described “experimental postmodern abstract” dancer and Bindler’s American Apparel-clad hipster. Bindler objected to Revlock’s loose-limbed, isolated movements, claiming that what she was doing was not dance. Or, I should say, Bindler’s character objected—with the heavy use of dialogue in this performance and its arch tone, the chasm opened up between each dancer and the character she was portraying, functions of the artifice. Aiming to please, Revlock’s character scampered off-stage and returned clutching a hula hoop. She galloped and twirled about the stage with a Toddlers in Tiaras-like air of desperation as Bindler looked on non-plussed, casually disrobed and proceeded to pour her limbs around the space with languid precision. Revlock’s character froze in a grimace that read shock, shame, anger and wonder. The dialogue ended: words failed on-stage as they do in this review and the artifice began to deconstruct itself with Charlie Kaufman-esque cleverness as the dancers descended into a rabbit hole of styles, intentions and meanings.

The piece vacillated wildly between madcap references and earnest contemplations, with equally varying results. At one point a panel of judges was brought on-stage for commentary, a rhetorical gesture both annoying and thought-provoking. Craig Peterson, of the Live Arts Brewery, rather hilariously deemed the piece a “vomitorium of styles” and “a dance apocalypse” with a level of snark that prompted one to wonder, “Is he playing a character, too?” Lisa Kraus, editor of this website, pointed out the potential disconnect. “There’s a piece of me that’s not sure how to look at the performance aspect,” she said. “Is it well-acted, for instance?” The query was left dangling, however, as Peterson took a cellphone call. For every step forward into an exploration of the larger intention, there was an equal step back into artifice. The latter increased in speed and frequency as the judges were quickly ushered off the stage and Revlock and Bindler commenced a series of sketches leading to their stunning final act. There was an prolonged sequence when Bindler French-kissed an audience member while Revlock presented a yoga dance with a partner; there was a trapeze artist, a poll of the audience, a b-girl, a wrestling match, roller skating. There was a moment when the piece broke open and dancers came out of the woodwork, tap-dancing, popping and locking, doing the salsa, capoeira and probably a dozen other kinds of physical performance. The circus-like atmosphere spilled out into the house and dancers cajoled audience members to abandon their seats, their introspection and join them as “Kids” by MGMT admonished “Take only what you need from it.

It didn’t take a leap of imagination to see yourself on-stage at Mascher’s showy, heady “Fresh Juice,” and not only because that’s where the majority (though, curiously, not the entirety) of the audience ended up. Through experiments with form and content—and even redefinition—the evening of disparate, affecting pieces posed questions of being and belonging that lingered long after the impromptu dance party faded away.

Broad Street Review

Dancing for dollars - JONATHAN M. STEIN - 05-24-2011

Spoofing the competition

But for refreshing originality, brilliance in conception and raunchy entertaining fun, my winner in the entire series was Gabrielle Revlock's *I made this for you*. Instead of pulling an earlier piece out of repertory, Revlock, with her co-choreographer Nicole Bindler and a large, boisterous family from the Philadelphia contemporary dance community, created a new event-specific work that courageously seized on and skewered the contradictions of the dance competition series itself. Finally, after six years, dancers responded to the manipulations of the *A.W.A.R.D. Show* with an intelligent take-off delivered through dance.

In this jumble of a performance, Bindler came on stage to interrupt an initial duet by Revlock and Kristel Baldoz, containing quizzical, repeated head turns and clunky but precision-timed falls. Together, Revlock and Bindler interrogated the dance just performed (an "experimental judgment day dance") and asked what is dance (a five-letter word, "j-u-d-g-e").

The spoken and danced satire in *I made this for you* extended to the history of dance competitions in the '30s (remember *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*). If the work contained its share of flat lines, that's in itself an argument for saying more through movement and less in text.

French kissing

Revlock and Bindler spoofed A.W.A.R.D.'s audience participation voting gimmick, by having the audience vote on whether they wanted to see Revlock do her Yoga dance, or Bindler make out on stage with an audience member. To the sweet crooning of "Trouble Every Day," the ballad sung by the Tindersticks, the audience got both: Revlock, with Sean Rosswell, created a strikingly balletic Yoga duet with Sanskrit signage for the uninformed couch potato set; and Bindler, joined by a chosen male audience attendee, shed clothing and smooched it up, assisted by "French Kissing" signage for the uninitiated.

Like a well-designed manic comedy, the piece gained velocity as the identical twin brothers, Gregory and Stephen Holt, kicked off a twinning vaudevillian duet to klezmer music from Electric Simcha as well as a live trombonist, Dan Blacksberg, playing in the audience. The spirited and wild finale became a multi-ringed, Felliniesque circus of the breadth of contemporary dance styles and improvisation movement. The work ended with an endearingly cheesy shower of balloons and counterfeit money.

Survival of the fittest

It is a real pleasure to see artists like Revlock and Bindler using humor and irony so effectively — qualities too often absent in contemporary art. This rich imagination is evident in Revlock's other recent collaborative work, such as the Hulachess duet video of Jennifer Shahade, shortlisted in the Guggenheim Museum international art video competition, or in her website video spoofs of popular music.

More potent than the introductory platitudes about generating community and togetherness was the joyful manifestation of real community in this Revlock-Bindler work. In stark contrast to the social Darwinist "survival of the fittest" ethos of the competition, *I made this for you* brought together two dozen disparate dancers from across the local dance scene. In their joyful company, awards become distracting irrelevancies.

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation

Questioning Conventions, and Questioning the Questioning at Scratch Night by Becca Weber



Audience members who were single separated from those in a relationship. A puppet show, a miniature poodle, a toy piano, Germanic-looking schoolgirl twins. Moderators who rode in on a blue motor scooter, indie rock ballads blaring. Cookies passed out instead of answers during Q&A. A drag queen dance party on stage as we exited the theatre. This *Scratch Night* was anything but the expected.

Which begs the question, what do you usually expect when you go to see a works-in-progress showing? Is the feedback format after this (or more formal shows) meant to be more beneficial for the artists or the audience?

These questions were foregrounded for me throughout the evening by the evening's orchestration by our moderators, Gabrielle Revlock and Nicole Bindler. Their Dance Apocalypse opened with a short puppet show; Revlock and Bindler's fists erupted through a screen in an awkward flirtation of small stop-motion flutters. Humorous interchanges ("I can smell your makeup."/"What makeup?") peppered the conversation as they popped up from behind the "stage" to smoosh their faces together or caress each others' hair. This brief sketch (capped with Revlock stating "When I was younger--I didn't know if I was a boy or a girl," followed by awkward audience giggles, and a long pause from Bindler before her response: "Do you know now?") was less of the "piece" they were showing for Scratch Night than their extended hostessing performance. Entering like superstars

(complete with theme song) for the Q&A session following, Revlock and Bindler ran into the audience and asked questions of each other in “mock-audience” voices. Farcical responses were delivered as the two set up each others’ jokes, never actually answering the audience members’ queries.

I’m laughing my butt off, but how much of what they said about their work am I supposed to take seriously? Why was I separated from my single friends? What did that have to do with gender and performance, the focus they asked for in their introduction? Cookies are our only answer; is that enough? Perhaps this is the zen koan of Q&A sessions.

Performed to composer Paul Stern’s live toy piano, Katherine Keifer Stark’s Falling into Here featured Stark and Megan Mazarick in space demarcated by a pair of yellow parentheses on the floor and dotted with two wooden chairs. The dancers swept, spun, settled, and collapsed. One dancer jutted her flexed foot out, which became a platform for a bicep. A long sequence of multilevel push-and-pull felt like a seesaw ride. As the piece rambled along, they were never on the same plane—one sat, the other lay down. The other lay down, one stood.

As the work concluded, Revlock and Bindler reappeared, walking a black toy dog and dressed in kitschy red and yellow schoolgirl outfits. They initiated—and then distracted from—Stark’s Q&A. It was difficult to maintain focus on Stark’s work, to give or hear feedback while our larger-than-life emcees led children onstage to play with a pup and parade around with lollipops.

I admire their dedication to challenging a given structure, and the humorous way they shed light on our expectations and assumptions--our ways of viewing (and judging!) work in what is supposed to be an informal setting. But when this happens, it ceases to be a fun experiment for me, and starts to impinge on their fellow artists’ equal rights to traditional, informative feedback. And I wonder: can these two exist simultaneously?

Our hostesses introduced Kate Watson-Wallace’s excerpt from Mash Up Body, a repeat visitor to Scratch Night, by reorganizing us around the stage, and delineating rules for watching which served mostly to identify the work’s lack of linear narrative and meandering logic... Bodies formed lines--horizontal and perpendicular to the front of the stage--and dancers kept returning to face front.

Why are we seated in a “U” shape if the dance is so frontal? Facial expressions are blocked from me, remnants of smiles fading as they change facing. Often, I find myself left wanting to see what those in the front are viewing. When asked about it, Wawa notes that the size of the space they plan to perform in is much larger--but never addresses the facing. It leaves me confused, again wondering who this format was designed to benefit.

In Watson-Wallace’s Q&A session, our outrageous moderators appeared ready for a night out in sequined leggings and a cocktail dress, and instructed only five people to provide feedback--but they were required to come on stage and touch Watson-Wallace’s shoulders, arms, or feet while doing so. Their proximity made the whole exchange awkward as the respondents often interrupted themselves with acknowledgement of that discomfort.

The shift in expectation--not taking this showing too seriously--is a refreshing change, and definitely highlights my own assumptions and expectations about these events, as well as some of the more problematic aspects of their structure. The audiences at Scratch night are offered beer and snacks, and in this looser environment, the freedom this hosting provides is more successful than I think it would be at another venue. But, even as I exit laughing at the tongue-in-cheek play of men in drag dancing us to a close, I leave feeling that I wasn’t really given answers or insight into the works I saw and that the value of instant, gut-response verbal feedback wasn’t available to the choreographers because of the talkback performance. Yes, they get written responses, and yes--just showing a work is enough to provide a wealth of information for the artist (and audience). But this Scratch Night feels like it was for the hosts more than the audience or creators. It leaves me with another question: who is this feedback process for? And maybe, that is the point they are making all along.

The Dance Apocalypse: You never know what you're gonna get

By Mikala Jamison

What sticks with me most from *The Dance Apocalypse*, nearly 20 hours later, is the moment when Nicole Bindler unzipped the top portion of her jumpsuit, fell to her knees, grabbed a barely one-inch pinch of stomach skin, and made her belly button talk.

“She swims laps at the Y sometimes, but she never wears a bikini anymore. I never get to see the other belly buttons,” Bindler’s naval lamented. “She used to have a belly button ring, and she’d play with me all the time, but then she went to a homeopathic doctor who told her the nickel was seeping into her bloodstream and causing chronic fucking fatigue, so she took me out.”

Alongside that body talk, with Bindler’s face contorted into exaggerated misery, Gabrielle Revlock was behind her on stage, on her back, clapping along with the words. Revlock was also contorted — she’d bent herself into a spine-snapping pretzel form, her arms laced though her legs, which rested on her shoulders.



It was hilarious. It was weird. I didn't really get it. I doubt I was really supposed to. But it was also wildly entertaining — I couldn't keep my eyes off of the two. Their unpredictability was captivating.

There were segments of dance, of course — of frantic gesticulating, choreographed (and quite realistic) fight scenes, with hair pulling and smacking, of guttural grunts and thrashings. It was movement expressing attitudes and emotions that weren't clear; Revlock and Bindler switched so rapidly from arguing, to laughing, to galloping around the stage, to mock Q-and-A with the audience that we didn't know really what they were expressing, or at times, what we were feeling.

“Be prepared to be slightly disoriented,” read some pre-show info. I was. But I was also delightfully disoriented.

The Dance Apocalypse, a free show part of "Scratch Night" at Fringe Arts on April 7, began in the lobby with an announcement from a staff member:

“If you are in a relationship, enter through the third door. If you are single, enter through the second door. If you *have to pee*, enter through the first door.”

As we walked into the theater, a group of about 20 was performing a dance — they'd form two lines, with partners cascading down the aisle; they'd grasp hands and spin in a circle; they'd jump joyfully up and down while smacking their knees. Revlock and Bindler have been teaching “CardioCreativity” classes since Feb. 17; these must have been the participants who now get to engage in the performance.

Bullet points best serve the description of the rest of the evening, I think:

- At the beginning of the night, we're asked to take out our smart phones and watch two YouTube videos of Revlock and Bindler. Bindler's naked in hers.
- The two lined up on stage for ass-smacks from audience members who raised their hands when asked if they didn't like the performance.
- Revlock and Bindler spent about five minutes of the performance apologizing to various people. One was the girlfriend of a man Revlock made out with for four minutes as part of a performance. Bindler apologized to a past audience member who wrote on a performance comment card that the duo's work was “bitchy, painful, [an] overuse of white privilege and female privilege.”
- In the performance program packet (which includes locks of the dancers' hair), there is also a diagram of the internal structures of the clitoris. On stage, Bindler uses the bent-over (clothed) crotch of Revlock to demonstrate where these can be found on a live human.

The evening served as a chance to raise awareness (and money) for *Chicken Fight*, a film the two hope to make. It's supported by the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, but they need to raise money from the private sector, and are aiming for \$1 million. It's on Kickstarter. Here's the trailer.

[Chicken Fight Extended Trailer \(OFFICIAL\)](#)

The Dance Apocalypse echoes the work for which Bindler and Revlock received attention in 2011, *I made this for you*, presented as part of the 2011 A.W.A.R.D. Show here in Philly. They described the performance as challenging the “notions of competition and conventional forms of beauty by using biting wit and playful commentary...I made this for you deepens the intimacy between performer and audience and allows for everyone to see and be seen.”

At the A.W.A.R.D. Show, they said they essentially skewered the format of dance competition and raised questions about the nature of dance itself.

“Women competing at the A.W.A.R.D. Show keeps women from supporting one another,” Revlock said last night, to cheers.

That’s how the evening felt — like a great, collaborative show of support for these two offbeat performers, who manage to enthrall their audience, no matter how far the presentation departs from the traditional. It was witty, playful and sometimes challenging. Therein lies the charm.

If *Chicken Fight* manages to make its way to the big screen, it will be yet another chance for audiences to make what they will of Bindler and Revlock's innovative and provocative work.

And if they think it's awful, that's cool — as last night's haters lined up to take a wallop at the performer's butts, the two kept shouting:

"That's okay! You can hate it! Every opinion is valid!"



thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation

Performance Art Physical Education by Ellen Chenoweth

The marketing materials were appealing, yet slightly mysterious. “Do you feel intimidated by dance classes? Do you feel bored by fitness classes? Want to learn and explore dance in a supportive environment that values creativity and personal expression?”

Yes, yes, and yes, but what would we be *doing*?

It turns out, over the course of 6 weekly classes, we would be: skipping, stomping, chanting, fake fighting, listening to our heartbeats, learning how to do a full body smile.

Pretending that the floor was a canvas and we could paint whatever we wanted on it with our bodies, opening our heart chakra, learning about the diaphragm, creating a couple of simple dance phrases and then sharing with a partner, witnessing a pseudo-marriage ceremony between the two instructors as they pledged devotion to one another in art-making and friendship.



The class turned out to be an exuberant hybrid: half performance art, half physical education, combining into an unusual and unpredictable mixture. CardioCreativity was part of a larger project called *The Dance Apocalypse* involving an ambitious Kickstarter campaign, a performance at FringeArts and extensive social media materials.

A beautiful variety of people of all ages were drawn to the sessions. There were some newcomers each time, but a sizable number of consistent attendees, mostly women along with a few men. People found out about the class through a friend, or a personal connection to Revlock or Bindler, or by seeing a listing in Philly Funsavers. A few ended up in class after seeing a short segment about the project on ABC news.

Revlock and Bindler were careful always to give a variety of options appropriate to a wide spectrum of bodies, which helped create a safe and supportive environment. Providing additional comfort, the instructors packed so many activities into each short session that even if something felt awkward, we'd soon be on to the next thing anyway.

I became convinced that Bindler and Revlock are the Click and Clack (the Tappet brothers on NPR's "Car Talk") of contemporary dance. Just as Click and Clack have degrees from MIT but often hide their smarts behind goofy façades, Revlock and Bindler actually know their stuff. Class usually started with a few minutes of anatomy lessons taught by Bindler in which we would learn (or be reminded) that our spines goes all the way up into our skulls or we'd hear about the mechanics of breathing. These lessons gave a taste of Bindler's substantial body of knowledge. Revlock was masterful in creating community and crafting embodied exercises that were both fun and accessible.

As with "Car Talk," much of the project's success lay in the chemistry between the two leaders co-teaching the class, with the lead role flowing easily between them. Bindler and Revlock had a comfortable and easy rapport with each other; sometimes one would question the other's decision, but always good-naturedly. This model of disagreeing with a collaborator, even publicly, felt like an important lesson.

Perhaps the most valuable and rare quality of CardioCreativity was that it frequently elicited sheer joy from everyone in sight. You witnessed huge, beaming smiles as people came sashaying down a square dance line. At the best of times, it felt like a small, temporary utopia created within the walls of Mt. Vernon church, where everyone was supportive of one another and felt free to express their best selves. The joy was contagious.

phindie.

Independent coverage of
Philadelphia theater and arts

CardioCreativity (Dance Apocalypse): A Not-So-Blue Monday

by Rita Algorri

Article courtesy of Art Attack Philly, in association with Drexel University and the Knight Foundation.

Got a bad case of the Mondays?
CardioCreativity dance classes can help beat your work or school day blues. Created by

Gabrielle Revlock and Nicole Bindler as a segment of their larger Dance Apocalypse project, these classes transcend the average dance or fitness regiment by allowing participants to unleash their creativity in a performance-based setting while burning calories. The class occurs every Monday through April 7th and appeals to everyone, of all ages, sizes and socioeconomic classes. Even if you've never danced in your life, you can still join in and have a good idea of what's going on during the class.



Each class has a different theme featuring quirky and fun activities, from kegels to psychic sessions to karaoke; you can learn something new each week. For example, the class that I attended was Jewish Wedding themed. Wine and cookies were offered to celebrate a mock wedding between instructors Revlock and Bindler, who are expecting their first “child,” which is actually their collaborative film, “Chicken Fight.” After the wedding ceremony, everyone formed a giant circle and began doing a traditional Jewish wedding dance. An amazing sense of community emerged amongst all of the

participants, as a group of strangers, all of them smiling ear-to-ear, joined hand-in-hand and danced. I walked in not knowing anyone, and left feeling like I had just made 30 new friends, and it wasn't just because of the wine.

The duo's mission in creating these classes and of their Dance Apocalypse project as a whole is to engage audiences in dance performance through participation. In Revlock's and Bindler's experiences as dance artists, there seems to be a lack of interest in concert dance. She says of herself and Bindler, "[we] appear desperate to reach audiences in an age where live performance is overshadowed by virtual entertainment. To address this 'dance apocalypse' head on, the project extends beyond a stage performance to include lots of social media, online videos and free dance classes as a way of engaging the public, potential audience members." Revlock and Bindler are taking a hands-on approach to stimulating interest in the arts, and it seems to be working, judging by the enthusiastic CardioCreativity crowd.

Revlock also hopes that the fitness crowd will become more familiar with dance as a performing art, rather than just a means for calorie burning. She says, "Sidling up to Zumba fans, we aim to subvert their experience of dance, introducing them to dance as a performing art. The classes will help them to become differently embodied and also provide them with tools to access contemporary and experimental dance that might previously have felt impenetrable."

Did I mention that the classes are free? The CardioCreativity classes are one of the most fun free activities happening in Philly right now and a great way to generate interest in the arts. Participating is simple, just RSVP first. If you're more of an audience member than a dancer, you should try to participate anyway, but if you're really too shy to get out there, Revlock and Bindler will be



hosting a performance following the last class on April 7th. The performance, entitled The Dance Apocalypse, will offer a commentary of dance and of Revlock's and Bindler's artistry, essentially summing up their experience with the integrative, multi-media Dance Apocalypse project. So, step up and help prevent an apocalyptic death to the performing arts, or at least enjoy the ride to the end by joining in on the excitement in a CardioCreativity class. No tights or leotards required, but make sure to bring an open mind and your creativity.



SIDF CULMINATES WITH A BANG

Written by Miranda Chantelois

As the Seattle International Dance Festival (directed by Cyrus Khambatta) drew to a close on Sunday June 22, 2014 there was an ironic air of openness amidst the duality of works presented. This openness, no doubt, was cultivated by the sheer vulnerability of subject matter and an eclectic, all-ages audience whose engagement stripped (in every sense of the term) the barrier between the anticipatory and the avant-garde. Performed at Raisbeck Hall, Romanian choreographer Cristina Lilienfeld and her fellow artists Nicole Bindler and Gabrielle Revlock presented works tonally at odds and yet beautifully reminiscent of one another. The combination

ultimately made for a cohesive, colorful performance that was refreshingly thought provoking. While the individual works posed a number of questions in and of themselves, it was primarily the juxtaposition between them that left the audience answerless perhaps, but with a greater understanding of themselves and of dance as an art form.

Nicole Bindler and Gabrielle Revlock followed Lay(ers) with surprising ease and uniformity in, I made this for you.—an explorative, theatrical journey seeking to examine the extent to which choreography is created, transformed, and produced with audience desires in mind. Bindler and Revlock (accompanied off and on by a wide variety of performers), outwitted the audience with satirical rhetoric on dance performance, poking fun at postmodern movement, flashy



competition dance, and eroticism. They created an altogether idiosyncratic and ironically avant-garde critique of what it means to be, well, avant-garde. While Bindler shocked audiences with her pant-less escapades and audience make-out session, Revlock's characteristic hesitancy, hoola hoop jam session, and yoga dance, spoke to a far more "conventional" and classically modest approach to movement. They left whichever was more appealing up to the audience and the "judges," whose pointed (albeit pre-conceived) commentary spoke more to the indeterminacy of dance as an art-form than to the performances as a whole. Brilliantly conceived, choreographed, and performed, Bindler and Revlock's I made this for you. was more question than artistic statement though it offered more answers than might be expected from such an ostensibly satirical show.

Pittsburgh Examiner

Philadelphia duo uses humor in a work about beauty and competition

by Adrienne Totino



The Kelly Strayhorn Theater continues to present more daring work, most recently from Philadelphia's choreographic duo, Nicole Bindler and Gabrielle Revlock. Not that nudity is daring; the duo's large group piece, *I made this for you...*, had a few moments of nakedness, and it worked well. They also broke the fourth wall, which has been done countless times; that suited the work, too, and wasn't the particularly courageous part.

What was bold about the show was Bindler and Revlock's willingness to free themselves from typical choreographic forms, and to also include local performers outside the contemporary genre. Hence the title of the piece, it actually did feel like the two made the work for Pittsburgh.

The piece opened with a duet of seated gestures. Text accompanied the dancers, a mix of jumbled words that never came together or resolved in an obvious way. That led to the first of many humorous moments in the hour-long show. After questioning what exactly dance is, Revlock performed a snarky hula hoop routine to the Spice Girls' "Wannabe."

Because the crux of the show was about competition and beauty, Bindler judged Revlock's performance, harping on her hair bow (on the wrong side of her head), and her fake eyelashes (non-existent). Then, dramatically, Bindler said, "And...I saw you eating french fries backstage." The section comically poked fun at a world of competition dance that often places emphasis on stereotypes of beauty, rather than artistry or movement invention.

Bindler then announced that she would show Revlock how dance was really done. She took off all her clothes, let down her hair, and performed a slow-moving solo in and out of the floor. The comfort she had with her body was refreshing, especially in an art form where women still worry about their shape, despite more openness to different sizes.

After their individual solos, Revlock and Bindler brought a panel of judges onto the stage. That group ranged from choreographers, writers, and producers of Pittsburgh dance and theater. Joseph Hall, Producing Director of the Kelly Strayhorn Theater, started the discussion. With straight faces, they broke down the first half of the show. Rather than judging the height of a leg or precision of a turn, they spoke more intellectually and esoterically, a hilarious mocking of the classic question and answer session that often follows a contemporary dance.

The humor continued through the second half of the show. Bindler talked about her wedding plans, a funny quip at the infamous "Bride-zilla" caricature some of us have known or at least heard about. Phrases like "gluten-free" garnered laughs from the audience.

Eventually, they polled the viewers as to what we wanted to see next. Would it be a "yoga dance" between Revlock and another performer? Or did we want to see Bindler make out with an audience member? Not to worry, they did both.

The yoga brought to mind how an ancient spiritual practice can be (and has been) hijacked into a body-focused and beauty-oriented physical form in the United States. The kissing--yes, of course, someone volunteered!--was uncomfortable for a moment, as public displays of affection often are, until we were used to seeing it. Then it strangely become a lovely part of the performance.

In the midst of that, a tap dancer entered stage. And then a contortionist, bending backwards with extreme flexibility. The lights became brighter and an African dancer moved rhythmically at the back of the stage. We lost sight of Revlock and Bindler as more and more presentational forms of dance took over. A gymnast, or cheerleader, several burlesque dancers. Next, voguing and fouetté turns. Leashed dogs, paraded by their owners, trotted through the aisles of the house and onto the stage.

Balloons fell from the rafters and each performer came together in a unison phrase of frontal and flashy movement. Eventually, the dancers came into the audience and led us onto the stage. A DJ set up at one end, mixing dance beats. And the show ended with a party right there on stage.

The performance was enjoyable, especially in its wit, and even in its confusion. The audience was willing to go along for the ride of starts, stops, and abrupt turns. I made this for you... was even better the more we thought about it. The piece could still be developed further, with more of those moments that made us think. All in all, the show was a welcome break from the norm.

Not What You Were Expecting Dance Apocalypse present Solos at JACK By QUINN BATSON

What is it about Philadelphia that produces awkwardly amazing woman duos?* Dance Apocalypse fit right in by not fitting in at all with their "Solos" show at JACK.

Nothing is as it seems in a Dance Apocalypse show. Solos are collaborative performances, apologies are satire, and belly buttons are people. Songs and movie clips may bring perception and reality closer together, or not — the point is often that you'll never know the point. Nothing is pointless, but the point is always up for debate, if agreement can be reached that it is actually a point in the first place.



Meanwhile, the debate is part of what happens onstage, or vice versa. Dance is deconstructed to the point of apocalyptic destruction, resurrected and repackaged — appropriate fare for Easter/Passover weekend. But specifically, Gabrielle Revlock channels awkward beautifully with memories of childhood and a fake offering of stickers for donations.

Revlock spazzes silently for an uncomfortably long time and then regains full control as she picks up a hula hoop and reads from her prewritten notes — while hula hooping. The notes are a lengthy list of apologies to people who have crossed her dance path — very insidery but funny even if not an insider.

Nicole Bindler, the other soloist of the duo, fixes on female pelvic anatomy, for better or worse. She leads the class, er, audience, in a somatic exercise on the dance floor, after making her way down from the audience and before giving a brief scientific lecture on the differentiation of sex in the human embryo. After class, Revlock-in-a-wig asks questions, before or after Bindler pelvic-squirms all over her.

Somehow, there is a segue to Bindler rolling around naked for a bit, to a song with 'we are human, we are heroes' lyrics; the combination is actually uplifting, to this audience member. Finally, the belly button person complains about meeting and keeping partners, and the absurdity reaches a nice endpoint. Audience comfort and reaction to the intentional madness, and nudity, was mixed, but Solos as a whole seems a success.

CULTUREBOT

MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE

NICOLE BINDLER AND GABRIELLE REVLOCK'S THE DANCE APOCALYPSE/SOLOS AT JACK by Katie Gaydos

A few weeks back I stumbled upon Nicole Bindler and Gabrielle Revlock's trailer for their film *Chicken Fight*. Unfamiliar with their larger body of work, I was surprised at how instantly I felt drawn to their incisive humor and magnetic presence. Unearthing a bewildering array of sensibilities and undermining traditional notions of how live dance or theater can exist, *The Dance Apocalypse/Solos*, last weekend at JACK (April 3-5), further reinforced my initial enthrallment.

More or less commanding separate halves of the evening, Bindler and Revlock presented solos they created independently. Yet, while structurally set apart, they continually maintained an energetic presence in each other's performances by at times supporting, questioning, or challenging each other's actions. Appearing first, Revlock, equipped with a fake microphone made out of tinfoil, delivered a rambling monologue about her childhood friends/dance classes/mother/etc., (pointing to the back of her head she exclaimed at one point, "we didn't even know how to make a bun!"). In an intentionally awkward (yet endearing) reference to failed Kickstarter attempts and a plea to the audience for money (Revlock literally passed the audience a recycled yogurt container for donations), Revlock subtly blurred the line between parody and reality.



When Revlock explained we would get a homemade “packet” — complete with a lock of human hair and a note from her psychiatrist — with every \$5 donation we made, it became clear that she was satirizing the absurd nature of fundraising. Yet while employing comedic tactics to encourage her audience to laugh at the desperate lengths dance artists have to go to to get even the smallest amounts of money, she poignantly reminded us of the depressing insanity that is fundraising.

For me, the magic of The Dance Apocalypse/Solos existed in precisely the way that both Revlock and Bindler managed to not only continually blur the line between absurdity and reality but more importantly how they managed to use comic absurdity as a means of arriving at very real and genuine places. This was visible as Revlock transitioned from carrying out a sincere movement sequence that left her crumpled in on herself, to hula hooping her way through an apology/confession list that included apologies to people for everything from the very funny to the very serious.

Bindler’s solo blurred the line between somatic class and performance. She had the entire audience out of their seats and lying on the floor (an impressive feat) before anyone had a chance to opt out. As her guided meditation took us from being present in our own bodies to tracing back to being a cell in our mother’s uterus, it wasn’t totally clear how serious we were meant to take the exercise. For me, it didn’t really matter whether Bindler was completely earnest or testing to what extent we would follow her instructions. The level of openness of the “class” (Bindler encouraged us to improvise movement initiated from our pelvic floor) created an ambiguity of experience that forced each audience member’s subconscious to make itself and its expectations known, even if only privately.

With unwavering confidence and ease, Bindler moved seamlessly from leading the audience in a feminist meditation, to taking a piss in the bathroom while answering Revlock’s questions, to reappearing completely naked to move through a beautifully brazen dance sequence. I found it interesting that it was during a moment towards the end of her solo that Bindler, zipping up her onesie snowsuit and making eye contact with the audience, appeared the most vulnerably exposed. In that glimmer of a moment — once again dressed — she seemed to generously allow us to really see her.

I felt lucky to watch Bindler and Revlock reveal themselves over the course of the evening in such poignant, wild, hilarious, and generous ways.

In the end I left feeling as if I had witnessed Bindler and Revlock artfully split open, with one fierce swing, a radical unicorn piñata packed with sparklers, rock candy, colored condoms, and strawberry-scented swords. In the event of an apocalypse I’m glad I now know who to call.

