

# Love Stories: PROGRAM NOTES

---

## **ASH TO GLASS** **Choreography by Deanna Carter**

*Ash to Glass* was created during my participation in the National Choreographer's Initiative (NCI) project held at UC Irvine in July 2009. The NCI project is an event where professional choreographers are selected by audition and merit to have the luxury of developing their choreographic ideas with some of the top professional dancers in the country who also auditioned to be a part of the NCI. In our industry, professional choreographers typically have a very short timeline to be creative and produce high quality work, leaving very little studio time for creative experimentation. The NCI project is a gift to choreographers because they can let their imagination run wild in the studio with eager, willing dancers to try out ideas they have been marinating on for a time or to begin a new process altogether.

After much experimentation in the studio with Baroque, Lieder, World Music and 20<sup>th</sup> Century composers and weighing the feedback of my dancers about what music they liked and felt worked physically and emotionally with the music, I narrowed it down to works by two composers: Gary Eistler and Ezio Bosso.

In choosing this music, the dancers started to layer their own emotional responses to my work on top of the movement. This is a tremendously exciting point in the creative process. It is difficult to explain, but from my perspective I have an instinctual feeling about the movement that I create; anything can trigger my creativity. It might be a social situation, an emotion or a response to a personal experience. Humans are complicated, so the jump off point for me to make a work can be from a variety of sources. I have noticed that I always seem to be able to tap into the possibilities the dancer has to offer, and luckily, I have been able to work with so many different dancers who perform many diverse dance techniques.

With *Ash to Glass*, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the process, I decide to start to frame the movement as a constructed work in sections. The dance seemed to become a loose, emotional narrative about male and female relationships. I also felt there was a sense of a desire or unanswered emotional dilemma as a subtext of the work. Each performer was asked to create their own private story about who they were and what kind of interpersonal relationship they had with each other. I didn't know what their stories were, but as human beings and dancers our bodies are our artistic material and we naturally integrate our mental, physical and spiritual lives into what we are performing. I loved the haunting quality of the Gary Eistler music created for the Glass Armonica, which is an instrument created in the 1950s by the French Baschet brothers, Francoise and Bernard. The concept of this instrument evolved from the sound made by rubbing a damp finger around the edge of a water-filled goblet to create the humming sound. The Glass Armonica, is a tube-like blown glass object that can maintain pitch and notes. I like the emotional quality this instrument has blended with stringed instruments. The other music I decided to use by Ezio Bosso had a similar mood of dissonance and longing with enough rhythmic drive to serve the physicality of the emerging work.

I have revised and reconstructed the work originated at NCI Project for Ballet Quad Cities. This work was also accepted by adjudication to be presented in New York City at Ballet Builders' New Choreographers on Pointe. Ballet Builders presents the newest works of emerging and established choreographers to audiences in New York City. Happily, Ballet Quad Cities will be able to perform *Ash to Glass* at Ballet Builders in April due to the added financial support from its board of directors and audience members.

- Deanna Carter

## Love Stories: PROGRAM NOTES

---

### **AMOR DESCONOCIDO (UNKNOWN LOVE) Choreography by L.D. Kidd**

The First Encounter can often times play out in our heads differently than in real life. We never know where the first date will lead and whether that person will be our unknown love.

- L.D. Kidd

### **PAQUITA PAS DE DEUX Choreography by Erica Attwood**

*Paquita* was choreographed by Marius Petipa in 1881. Like most pas de deus (step of two), *Paquita* is a story about two people in love.

The ballet takes place in Spain during the days of Napoleon. Paquita is a young gypsy girl that saves the life of Lucien d'Hervilly, a French officer, who is a target to be killed by a Spanish governor. She discovers that she was abducted by Gypsies as an infant and was actually of noble birth. Paquita and Lucien are able to be married.

Petipa's original choreography for the Finale included a corps of dancers. It has been revised to showcase the talents of Paquita and Lucien and how they express their love for one another.

- Erica Attwood

### **CONVEYENCE Choreography by Deanna Carter**

The work *Conveyance* is a lighthearted duet originally choreographed for my UI student graduate candidate Elizabeth Bergman's thesis concert. I paired her with Phillip Ollenburg, another student in the dance department.

When creating this work, I did not know if the piece was going to evolve into a dramatic work or a comedic work. To build the piece, I created many different movement phrases, which helped me decide how to progress. I also jumpstarted the rehearsal process by using several different pieces of music. While working with these dancers, I decided I needed to take advantage of their opposing personalities and melodramatic flair. A dysfunctional bond began to emerge between the dancers in their personal relationship during the rehearsal process. Once I saw how they were relating to each other, it was easy for me to structure the work. It seemed the work had choreographed itself. I liked the clarity of the Bach Violin music, and felt it was the best choice for this choreography.

I have now restaged this work for Maggie and Patrick, who both bring fresh personalities and a different relationship to this work. It's my observation that most couples who have been together for some years have their own quirks and idiosyncrasies and have learned to develop tolerance and love for each other.

- Deanna Carter

## Love Stories: PROGRAM NOTES

---

### **EVOL – AN ANAGRAM OF LOVE** **Choreography by Simone Ferro** **Original Music by Seth Warren-Crow**

How many times we have written “love” in our lives? How many times have we fallen in love, and how many times was love our only way to continue moving forward?

Love can be experienced in many ways and so can the way the body expresses love. *EVOL - An Anagram of Love* explores the many different ways one can design the word LOVE through movement. The work invites the viewer to experience the 3-dimensionality of the word on the body of the dancers. We ask you, the audience, to be active participants, viewers -- not only by paying attention when LOVE appears, but also finding the nature of love in the different *love stories* that happen in the work.

Special Thanks to the BQC dancers for their commitment and inspiration, to Joedy Cook and to Mary-Elizabeth and Ben.  
- Simone Ferro

Hearing that the show had a love theme, I was immediately interested in creating a piece that was a kind of homage to one of my favorite groups from the 1940's, The Ink Spots, and, in particular, a song called “That's The Way It Is.” The song, typical of them, is a maudlin meditation on unrequited love, suffocating in its obsessive reverence for the object of affection. The sentiment of the singer is simple: regardless of her feelings and despite his better judgment, his love for her is unwavering and eternal: “that's just the way it is.” My piece is an attempt to gaze at this seemingly simple sentiment from several different angles and to underscore how messy love can be, despite our desires – constantly reinforced by love songs – for it to be otherwise.

In order to complicate the song's approach to love, I manipulated the original recording, juxtaposed it with an off-kilter version of another famous love song, and finally returned to a cover of it using the now ubiquitous digital effect “auto-tuning” on the voices. These perhaps unconventional ways of reinterpreting an old love song draw attention to the lead singer's overwrought and overbearing affect. At the same time, however, “Ways It Is” ultimately does not conceal my own form of longing and nostalgia for the beauty of the original piece and, in a way, even the emotion it expresses. That's just the way it is.  
- Seth Warren-Crow

*Seth Warren-Crow, sound designer and arranger of “Ways It Is,” is a sound artist, sound designer, composer, percussionist and instructor based in Milwaukee, WI. Seth composes music locally and nationally for dance and theater performances. His music and sound design combines found sound, field recording, voice, and sound synthesis to create intricate and uncanny electro-acoustic pieces. Seth received a MFA in Electronic Music and Recording Media from Mills College in Oakland, California. Seth is an instructor in the Film Department and musical director for the Dance Department at UW-Milwaukee. He teaches courses in sound art, music, and digital media.*