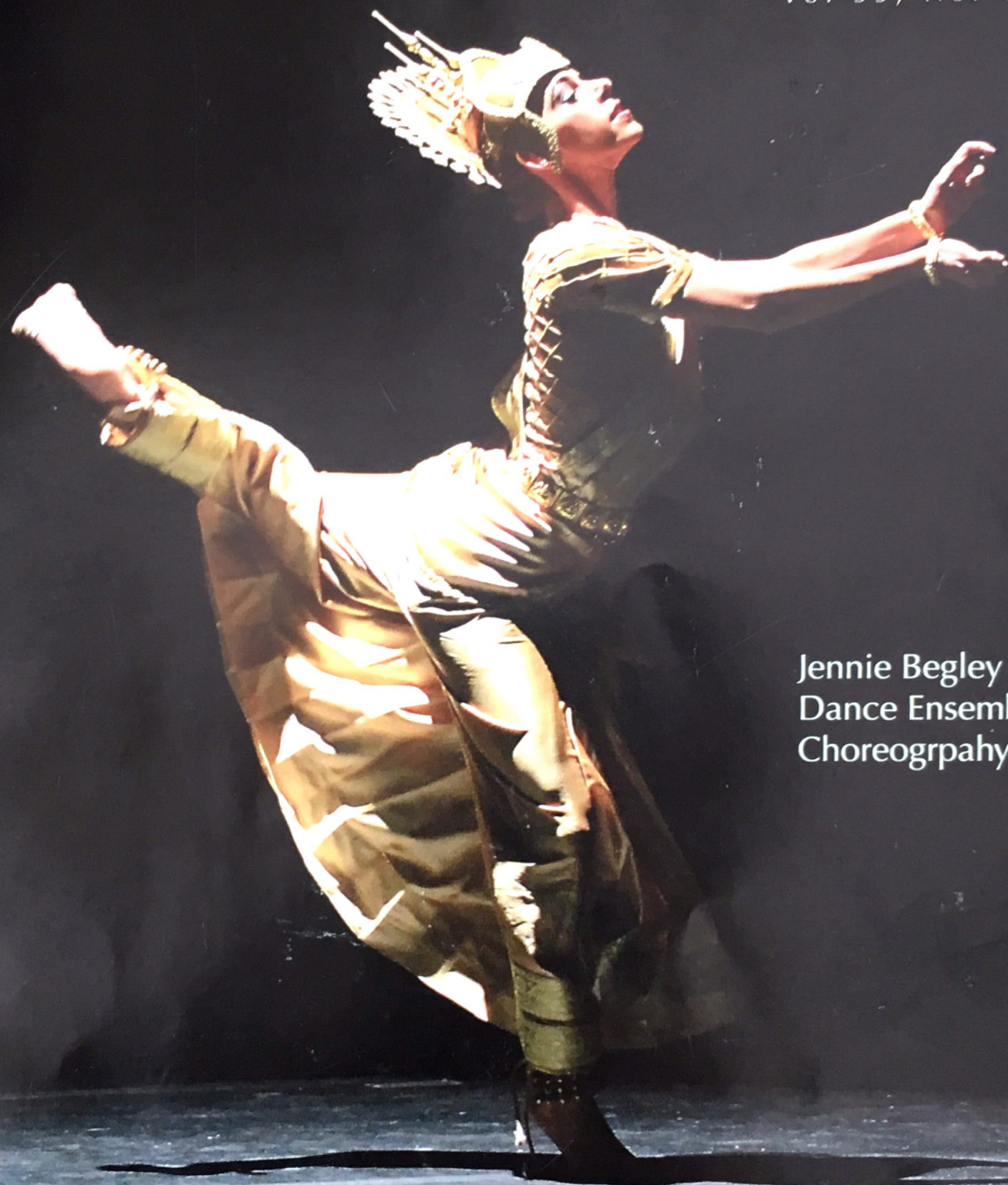


SACRED DANCE GUILD

Special Edition

JOURNAL

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Jennie Begley in the Zikr
Dance Ensemble's "Apsara."
Choreography by David Taylor

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With Deep Bows!

Sacred Dance Acknowledgments

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The **JOURNAL** is the official publication of the Sacred Dance Guild, a non-profit 501(c)3 in the United States founded in 1958 with membership worldwide. From 1958 through 2009 the publication was printed and mailed to all members 2 to 3 times/year. From 2009 to 2012 the publication was available on line. In 2012 the Sacred Dance Guild moved to an on-line, non-regular format with articles being published when received. In 2017 this Special Edition print Journal will be mailed to members and others and will be available on-line.

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Dance the Sacredness of Water Worldwide

By Marylee Hardenbergh, CMA, BC-DMT, LICSW

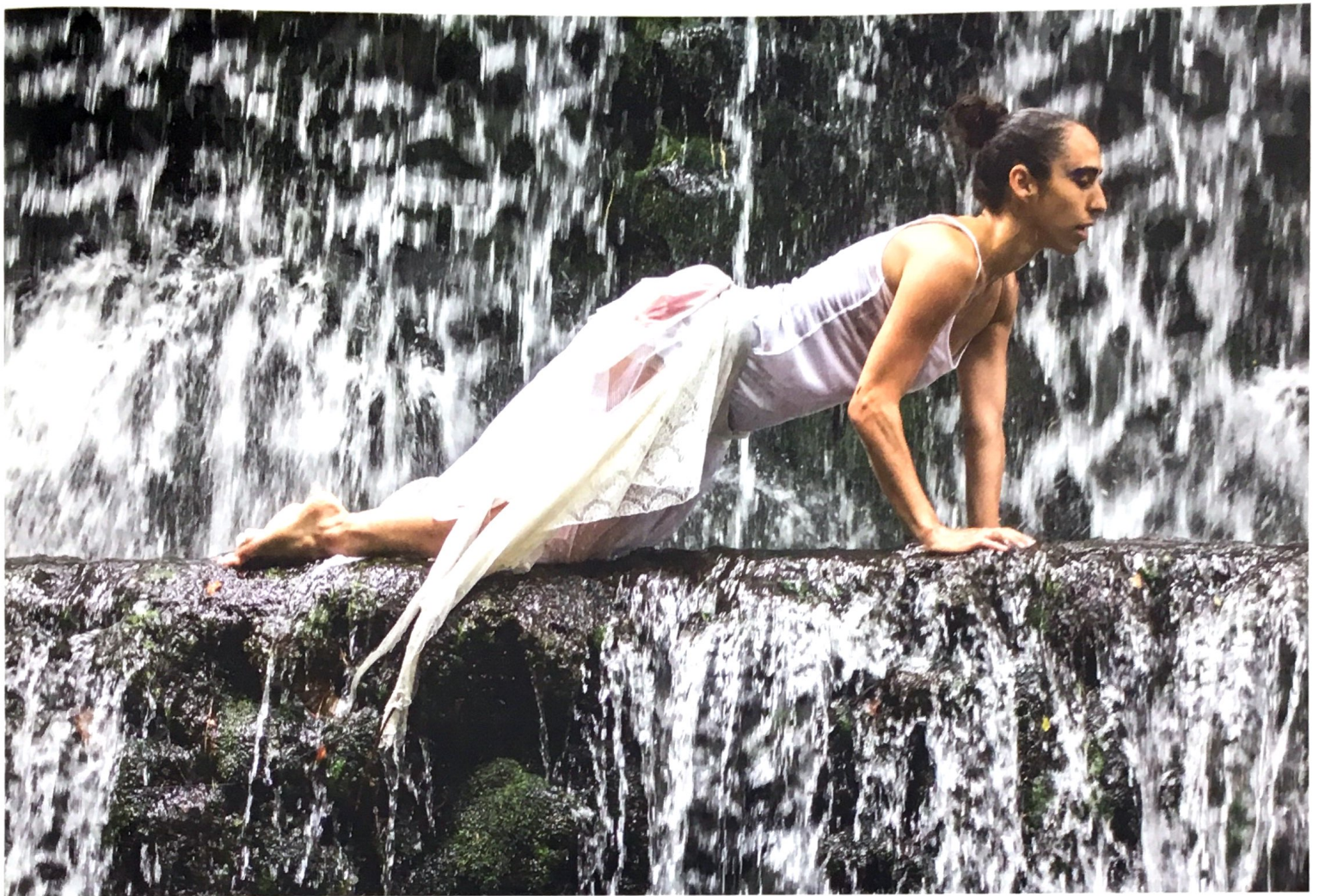
There is a worldwide event called Global Water Dances that occurs biennially on June 24, across six continents and in over eighty cities, that uses dance to illuminate water issues. GWD inspires united stewardship of water to empower communities to help raise awareness for both local and global water issues by creating global communities through the universal language of dance! Though GWD was conceived in 2008, the first international event occurred in 2011 and will enter its fourth year on Saturday, June 24, 2017. GWD's motto is, "Dancing for Safe Water Everywhere."

When posed with the question, *What is the connection between The Sacred and Water?* readers will think of Holy Water, baptism, and the Ganges, just to mention a few. Last year members of the Sacred Dance Guild traveled to Bali and attended ceremonies in Hindu Temples, where priests conducted rituals and provided celebrants with water blessings splashed on their heads. A few weeks ago, I was privileged to experience a Huichol Indian Medicine Healer in Mexico conduct a ritual blessing where he dipped his healing feathers into ocean water and touched each recipient on their hands and head. On a fundamental level, water is important because without it our planet would not be able to support its life forms.

Community-based dance performances creates a safe environment for communities to connect and gives participants a universal language to communicate with one another. Additionally, GWD provides the opportunity for local choreographers/dancers to come together to focus on important environmental issues that plague water.



Global Water Dances in Zadar, Croatia 2015. Choreographers: Jasna Frankic Brkljacic, CMA, with Lucija Mikas, Vlasta Marotti Hrascanec, & Sanja Petrovski



*Global Water Dances in Morelos, Mexico.
Choreographer María José Pérez Castro*

Who Can Join Global Water Dances?

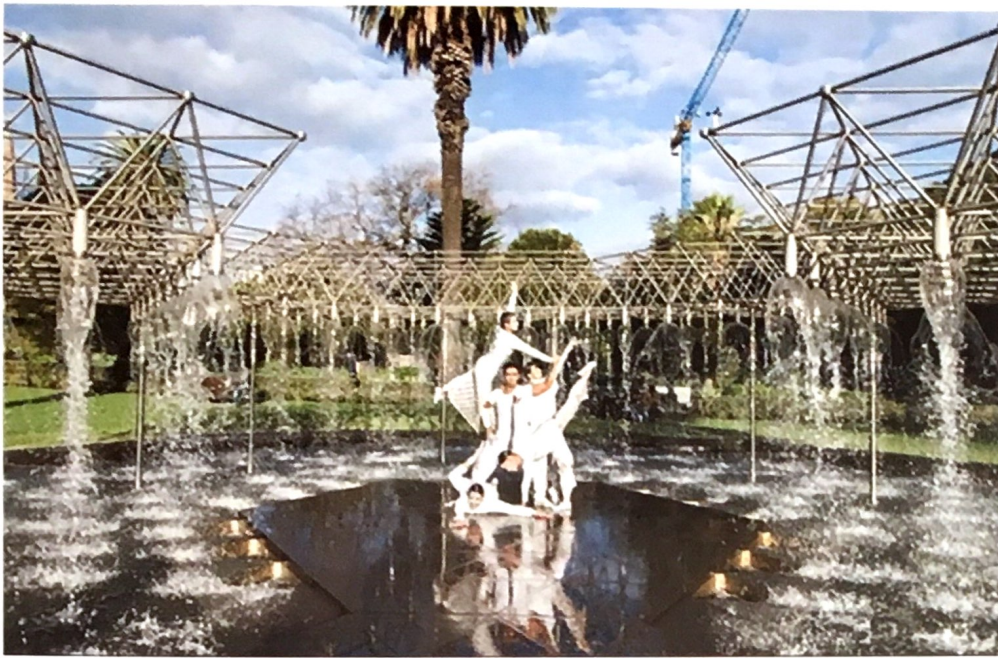
All are welcome to participate in Global Water Dances! We've had the pleasure of welcoming the SDGs affiliate in Ottawa, Canada participate in GWD these past two years. It's always thrilling to know that dancers across the globe are dancing on the same day for water justice, and amazing that participants are developing greater knowledge of water issues in their local area and feel connected to one another when performing together all over the world.

Global Water Dances would not be possible without the Internet. We have a website where choreographers can download music for "global" section (Section III), performed at all sites. The movement for Section III is shown on a video and functions as a "score" of moves that can be

modified as needed. All of the information for the performance is located on our website.

The activities for Global Water Dances are simple; creating bonds using time, space and rhythm. Dances are professionally choreographed and people of all ages and abilities from the local regions participate. Flow, the medium of dance/movement, can connect community, just as water connects people, and communities that grow are often defined by the water in which they are surrounded by. Movement also provides an embodied practice for community-building and can foster new understandings and behaviors. Through Global Water Dances, we want to connect local and global communities to safeguard that all humans have access to clean drinking water, so that the water flowing through us is sustaining and not harming us. Taking responsibility for valuing

"What is the connection between The Sacred and Water?"



Global Water Dances in Melbourne, Australia. Choreographer Kathleen Gonzalez. Dances take place near water, which can include city parks or fountains.

and protecting water can easily shift people into other ways of caring for the planet.

About Our Performances

The overall template for Global Water Dances' structure is very elegant. There is a lot of room for individual expression and artistic choices. We want choreographers to exult in their dancing at their site. After the ritual opening ceremony (Section I) and local dance (Section II), the remaining two sections allows participants to connect globally in the performance process. To sign up for GWD, please go to our website: www.GlobalWaterDances.org.

This year, we encourage choreographers to produce a site-specific dance with large groups of dancers when possible and involve the community in the creative process. Each dance will be performed at a specific time and location determined by choreographer. The event structure is comprised of each group producing a 4-part site-specific performance:

Section I. Ritual: An opening ceremony specific to each site.

Section II. Local Dance: A dance created by choreographers from that area, using locally-based music, around specific local issues with water.

Section III. Global Dance: Simultaneous choreography done by all the performers worldwide to the same piece of music, connecting participants and audience globally.

Section IV. Participatory Dance: Audience participation in a very simple movement sequence. Some sites will teach the moves right during this Finale, while at other sites the audience will have learned prior to performance.

We want to deliver a stronger message to the world when addressing environmental issues through the art form

of dance. Water is a serious issue on many levels, including who has the right to water.

On the health front, there are an estimated 5 million deaths per year globally from polluted water according to the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs. By 2025, over half of the world's population will face water-related problems. Our website has a section devoted to environmental water issues. To this end, we ask choreographers to consider the following when developing their site-specific work:

- ◆ Include actions that address issues in your community, including politics, petitions, calls-to-action, causes, etc.
- ◆ Partner up with an environmentally related organizations, invite speakers, collect donations or help charities related to water such as water.org, globalfunding.org, etc. We can help you find the right match!
- ◆ Include Movement Choirs in your performance. The idea is to have large groups of people dancing together. If you want ideas on how to develop a Movement Choir, please read [Modern Day Movement Choirs Document](#) on our website.

💧 Embody water when moving because it is believed that at some point we become water, river, stream, ocean, puddle. Moving as one mind and body has potency. Working on consciousness and action is important!

💧 Consider programming your site-specific work to be participatory, involving other dancers, dance companies, organizations, kids, seniors to perform in different sections of the GWD performance structure.

A Little History on Global Water Dances

Global Water Dances' Steering Committee is comprised of an international network of dance and nonverbal communication experts. This project was created by an international group of Laban Movement Analysts who gathered in



"Plastic Plagues Our Waters" Griselda Fernandes, choreographer and dancer, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, 2011. Griselda Fernandes is in a dress made of plastic bags, helping another dancer climb out of a huge bag of plastic water bottles, all collected from the trash. Source: Photographer: Christina Almeida

2008. The project grew out of the first multi-site performance, connecting seven sites along the Mississippi River, from the headwaters to the Gulf, where each site used the same movements to the same music at precisely the same moment. As a site-specific choreographer, I choreographed the environmental dance, *One River Mississippi*, in 2006. In working with local choreographers from around the world, we draw on Rudolf Laban and Irmgard Bartenieff's practices with human movement to mirror the universe's dynamic patterns. Using Laban's technique of Movement Choirs, choreographers create dances that not only *move* the participants, but the observers as well.

Dancing together all over the world is amazing, and can now communicate about GWD via the Internet. There is so much to be expressed about the sacredness of water, its preciousness, and its deeper meaning in our lives. All are welcome to participate in this important global event!

"There is so much to be expressed about the sacredness of water, its preciousness, and its deeper meaning in our lives."

About the Author

Marylee Hardenbergh has created site-specific dances in Bosnia, Russia, Israel and the USA. She is currently the Artistic Director of *Global Site Performance* and past Artistic/Executive Director of *Global Water Dances*. She received fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the McKnight and Soros Foundations, been featured in *Dance Magazine*, in *Site Dance: Choreographers and the Lure of Alternative Spaces* (2009) and in *Emergent Possibilities in Global Sustainability* (2016) and is an Artist-in-Residence at the Center for Global Environmental Education at Hamline University in Minnesota. She was the keynote speaker at the 2015 American Dance Therapy Association conference.