

# Dance Musings

Erin Bomboy focuses on the performative and generative aspects of dance. Types of dance reviewed include ballet, modern, contemporary, world, and experimental forms.

Friday, September 28, 2012

## DELIRIOUS Dances' To Begin The World Over Again: Your Participation Is Required



DELIRIOUS Dances performs *To Begin The World Over Again*. Photo by Julie Lemberger.

Does this contentious election season have you down? Are you frustrated by the endless partisan bickering and political mud slinging?

Edisa Weeks, artistic director and choreographer of DELIRIOUS Dances, has the antidote. Her lively new piece—*To Begin The World Over Again*, in residence at Brooklyn's Irondale Center through October 6th—investigates the musings of Thomas Paine and his vigorous promotion for freedom and democracy.

The piece opens with a bribe. Acting as the ringleader, Michael Henry, sporting the iconic red tie of a politician, exchanges fortune cookies for assurances that your cell phone is off. Nestled in the treats lies a scrap of paper featuring a quote by Thomas Paine. Democracy tastes sweet.

Weeks has a marvelous ally in composer Joseph C. Phillips Jr. With the energetic Numinous Music providing live accompaniment, Weeks' premise takes aural shape. Hand claps, hoofing rhythms, and folk-inspired melodies reference the venerable past while atonality and dissonance speak to our conflicted present. Haunting vocals, resounding with ruminations from Paine's writings, accentuate Phillips' riveting score.

Choreographically, Weeks keeps it simple. She opts for straightforward movements—lots of running, gazelle leaps, log rolls, and loping patterns—from a standard modern dance vocabulary. *To Begin The World All Over Again* unfolds in sections, some featuring the dancers, others highlighting the music, with occasional forays into literal demonstrations of democracy at work. In one instance, Henry, charmingly strident, rounds up the performers for a dance-off. You vote with your applause for the dancer's performance that best represents your values. By the slimmest of margins, victory goes to Sharifa Linton for her generous smile and gripping solo.

The six dancers, loose-limbed and liberated movers, sometimes forgo technique for spirit. But this freedom from physical restraints only underscores the dancers' performance, which is enthralling. They commit fervently; when they leap and fling their bodies to the floor, it's executed with a blind trust that is deeply affecting.

Democracy requires participation, so when the dancers invite you out to the performance space, don't balk. The audience and the cast dance, stroll hand-in-hand, and even strut their way through a soul train line. Hokey? Perhaps. Fun? Definitely! In the finale everyone performs an American Sign Language version of "We Have It In Our Power"; it's impossible not to be moved.

*To Begin The World All Over Again* is a call to action. Weeks' earnest insistence on community, participation, and cooperation stands as a timely reminder that democracy requires a variety of voices to succeed. More importantly, it needs your voice. So get inspired. Get involved. And go see *To Begin The*

*World All Over Again.*

*This review refers to the Thursday, September 27<sup>th</sup> performance.*

*\*\*\*\*\* Coinciding with the performances of To Begin The World Over Again, are a series of FREE community events coordinated*

Posted by Erin Bomboy at 9:47 PM



Labels: Brooklyn, Delirious Dances, democracy, Edisa Weeks, Erin Bomboy, Irondale Center, Joseph C. Phillips Jr, Michael Henry, Numinous Music, Sharifa Linton, Thomas Paine, To Begin the World Again

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