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Inclusive Dance Festival Will Make Debut in Miami

By [Maureen Gazda](#) | August 17th, 2018

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Forward Motion, a four-day festival celebrating and showcasing physically-integrated dance, is coming to the Miami-Dade County Auditorium September 26-29.

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Featured dance troupes include London's **Candoco Dance Company**, San Francisco Bay's **AXIS Dance Company** and Tampa's **REvolutions Dance**. It is being launched by Miami's **Karen Peterson Dancers**, which envision it as an annual inclusive international dance festival and conference highlighting artists with physical disabilities.

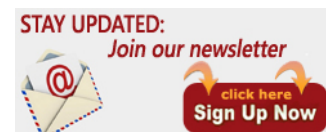
"What we are doing is trying to shift the paradigm of what contemporary dance can be," says founder and artistic director of the dance company, Karen Peterson. "This is one of the first festivals and conferences to bring these amazing international companies who work in physically integrated dance all together in one place, and we're so excited that place is our hometown, Miami."



Peterson says meeting an activist with multiple sclerosis back in 1990 ignited her passion for inclusive dance. That was the year the Americans with Disabilities Act was signed, and as it's taken root, she says, dance that integrates performers with physical disabilities began to grow as well.

"Although the movement is relatively young at 30 years old, the form has found acceptance in the dance world as the definition of disabled and nondisabled keeps getting refined, redefined and updated," she says. "Candoco Dance Company from London and Axis Dance Company from San Francisco led the way in the early '90s with inclusive workshops, touring and choreography

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created by traditional mainstream choreographers.”

Peterson’s goal in creating The Forward Motion Dance Festival is to change the perceptions that many people in Miami have about disability in the context of athleticism, artistry and performance. “I want audience members to open their minds and view the high-level dance companies in performance without preconceived notions, bias or prejudices,” she says.

The festival is open to everyone. Tickets are currently on sale for \$20-\$25. For more information on ticket packages, registration, discussions and workshops available, or any other requests, please visit the [Forward Motion website](#), email Karen@karenpetersondancers.org, or call (305) 298-5879.