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**FORWARD MOTION PHYSICALLY INTEGRATED
DANCE FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE
RETURNS TO MIAMI SEPTEMBER 22 TO 25**
*Third Annual Event Feature Ohio's Dancing Wheels,
Marc Brew from AXIS, Tampa's REVolutions Dance and
Karen Peterson and Dancers*

(Miami, FL: July 13, 2021) – Countries around the world are both reassessing society through the lens of diversity, inclusion and equity, and are working to slow and end the pandemic of COVID-19. Arts and culture that address who we are at this moment can be a vital part of both change and recovery, and the third annual **Forward Motion Physically Integrated Dance Festival & Conference**, taking place in Miami from **September 22 through the 25**, aims to do just that. Venues include Miami-Dade County Auditorium, and the Koubek Center-Miami Dade College.

Returning after being canceled in 2020 when performing arts venues were shuttered, the Festival showcases companies, dancers and choreographers who are inclusive of those with and without disabilities, exploring a new terrain of beauty, movement and performance. Produced by Florida's own groundbreaking physically integrated dance pioneers, **Karen Peterson and Dancers (KPD)**, this third event will truly mark the start of South Florida's reopened performing arts season, and feature some of the best dancers and companies of any kind, in performance, in discussion and holding workshops.

With ongoing lead support from the **National Endowment of the Arts**, KPD has put together a notable program that will appeal to Miami audiences, as well as help define what physically integrated dance is in 2021. The line-up includes:

•**Dancing Wheels Company**, one of the leading physically integrated groups in the United States. The company tours globally presenting innovative works from nationally acclaimed choreographers such as Heidi Latsky, David Dorfman and David Rousseve. The Cleveland Plain Dealer calls them, "Energized and pulsing."

***Choreographer Marc Brew, Artistic Director of AXIS Dance Company**, the acclaimed physically integrated ensemble based in Oakland, CA, returns to Forward Motion to set one of his solo pieces on Miami-based wheel chair dancer Jesus Vidal de Leon. Brew was formerly a dancer in London's Candoco Dance Company, one of the world's top physically integrated groups, and The Scotsman said he, "Knows exactly how to touch his audience in all the right places."

•**Tampa's REVolutions Dance**, is a physically integrated company that has performed around the country. Artistic Director Dwayne Scheunemann is a former member of Oakland's AXIS Dance Company, the leading physically integrated group in the United States, and the company returns to Forward Motion for a second time this year.

•**Karen Peterson and Dancers**, one of the leading physically integrated dance companies in the Southeast United States, tours and collaborates internationally. They were recently named "Best Dance Company" by the Miami New Times, and MiamiArtZine calls their work, "Intricate and meaningful...an eye-opening experience."

"It's with much relief and a renewed sense of commitment that we are bringing Forward Motion back to South Florida this September, after more than a year of reduced contact with our audiences," says **Karen Peterson**, Founder and Artistic Director of both her own KPD company, and the Forward Motion event. "Dancers and choreographers find beauty in the world – much needed right now – through the work we do, and that's especially true for those of us pushing the boundaries of physical differences to discover new vocabularies and possibilities."

The **Forward Motion schedule** includes a set of free "conference" activities, workshops and classes for a range of students and communities, and main performances taking place at the Miami-Dade County Auditorium:

Wednesday, September 22

Workshop with Dancing Wheels, 5:00 to 6:30 pm

For the general public, for those with and without disabilities, and for dance professionals and students. Location ArtSpace/Studio at the Koubek Center-Miami Dade College.

Tickets are \$10 at the door only.

A closed-to-the-public gathering of the physically integrated dance companies attending Forward Motion will follow.

Thursday, September 23

Workshop with Marc Brew, 5:00 to 6:30 pm

For the general public, for those with and without disabilities, and for dance professionals and students. Location ArtSpace/Studio at the Koubek Center-Miami Dade College.

Tickets are \$10 at the door only.

Conversation With Company Directors, 7:00 pm

Free and open to all, a conversation with all four company directors and dance critic Jordan Levin, on the past, present and future of physically integrated dance. Also at Koubek

Friday, September 24

Community Contact Improvisation "Jam," 5:30 to 6:45 pm

Free and open to all, led by Karen Peterson of KPD and Dwayne Scheunemann of REVolutions Dance for those with and without disabilities, and for dance professionals and students. At the Koubek Center.

I Am A Dancer, 7:00 pm

Free talk and discussion with choreographer Marc Brew about his career in dance as a wheelchair user breaking boundaries. At the Koubek Center.

Welcome Reception, 8:00 pm

Free reception for all immediately following the talk, in the patio At the Koubek Center.

Saturday, September 25

Forward Motion Main Performances, 2:00 and 8:00 pm

The main performances this afternoon and evening feature the same program, showcasing all Forward Motion companies and guest on the main stage of the Miami-Dade County Auditorium. Performances include the Miami premieres of Dancing Wheels' Company's *Pallas Athena*, with choreography by Catherine Meredith, and *Odyssey*, with choreography by Marc Brew; the Miami premiere of *Quirky*, from REVolutions Dance, with choreography by Christina Acosta; the Miami premiere of *Remember When*, a solo featuring Jesus Vidal de Leon, choreography by Marc Brew; and a new restaging of KPD's *Lost and Found*, choreography by Karen Peterson, video by Dinorah de Jesus Rodriguez. Tickets are \$25, with special discounts and ticket packages available.

Visit www.ForwardMotionMiami.com for full Forward Motion information, schedule and ticket purchase links. Saturday main shows are each \$25 general admission, \$18 for students with ID, seniors 65 and over, and people with disabilities. Show tickets through Ticketmaster or in-person at the Auditorium box office. Workshops are \$10 for everyone, pay at the door. Visit www.ForwardMotionMiami.com for more information. The Miami-Dade County Auditorium is located at 2901 West Flagler Street, in Miami, is fully wheelchair accessible, and has free onsite parking. The Koubek Center-Miami Dade College is located at 2705 SW 3rd Street, in Miami's Little Havana neighborhood, and is fully wheelchair accessible, with on-site parking. To arrange for group sales discounts (10 or more people), for any questions, and to request materials in accessible format, sign language interpreters, and/or any disability accommodation call (786) 498-6756 or email ForwardMotionMiami@gmail.com.

Support for Forward Motion comes from the National Endowment of the Arts; the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and Cultural Affairs Council, and the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners; The Miami Foundation; the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; Citizens Interested in the Arts; Funding Arts Network; Marriot Airport Hotel & Suites Coral Gables; WLRN; and other donors.

WHAT:

Third Annual Forward Motion Physically Integrated Dance Festival & Conference

WHEN:

- Wednesday, September 22, 5:00 to 6:30 pm, workshop with Dancing Wheels
- Thursday, September 23, 5:00 to 6:30 pm, workshop with Marc Brew; 7:00 pm Conversation with Company Directors;
- Friday, September 24, 5:30 to 6:45 pm, Community Contact Improvisation; 7:00 pm "I Am A Dancer" with Marc Brew; 8:00 pm reception open to all
- Saturday, September 25, 2:00 and 8:00 pm, performances by all companies

WHERE:

- Friday and Saturday all events, Miami-Dade County Auditorium main stage, 2901 West Flagler Street, Miami, FL, 33135
- Wednesday and Thursday events, Koubek Center-Miami Dade College, 2705 SW 3rd Street, Miami, FL, 33135

ADMISSION:

- Wednesday and Thursday workshops \$10 at door
- Thursday "Conversation" free
- Friday all events free

•Saturday matinee or evening performances are \$25 general admission, \$18 for students with ID, seniors 65 and over, and those with disabilities. Tickets through Ticketmaster or in-person at the Auditorium box office; group sales and full info visit www.ForwardMotionMiami.com.

FOR MORE INFO:

www.ForwardMotionMiami.com (786) 498-6756 ForwardMotionMiami@gmail.com
Instagram/Facebook: @ForwardMotionMiami Twitter: @ForwardMotionFL

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– **Hi res images, video and other materials, and interviews with key talent, are available upon request –**

More About the Dance Companies

Dancing Wheels Company

Mary Verdi-Fletcher, the first professional wheelchair dancer in the U.S., founded the Dancing Wheels Company in Cleveland in 1980. Born with spina bifida, Mary wanted to offer others with disabilities full and equal access into the world of dance. An almost unimaginable concept at the time, Mary's vision and passion have since helped to revolutionize the very notion of dance – as well as what defines a dancer. The Dancing Wheels Company, comprised of professional dancers with and without disabilities, tours globally, presenting innovative works from nationally acclaimed choreographers such as Heidi Latsky, David Dorfman and David Rousseve. The Cleveland Plain Dealer calls them, "Energized and pulsing." The School of Dancing Wheels embraces inclusive arts programming, reaching over 7,000 children and adults with disabilities and economic challenges each year. For more visit www.dancingwheels.org.

Marc Brew

Acclaimed International choreographer and AXIS Dance Company Artistic Director Marc Brew trained as a professional dancer at the Victorian College of the Arts Secondary School and The Australian Ballet School. He has been working in the U.K. and Internationally for over 20 years as a director, choreographer, dancer, teacher and speaker. He has been part of the Australian Ballet Company, State Theatre Ballet Company of South Africa, Infinity Dance Theatre and Candoco Dance Company. Marc was Associate Director with Scottish Dance Theatre, Associate Artistic Director with Ballet Cymru in Wales and was Associate Artist at Tramway Theatre in Glasgow. Since 2008 Marc has been dedicating time to his own choreography with Marc Brew Company and his recent choreographic commissions include San Francisco Ballet School, Dancing Wheels Company, Scottish Ballet, Ballet Cymru (Wales), YDance (Scotland), AXIS Dance Company (USA), Candoco Dance Company (UK), Touch Compass (NZ), Amy Seiwert's Imagery (USA) and Scottish Dance Theatre (Scotland). Marc was presented with a Centenary Medal for Outstanding Contribution as a dancer and choreographer. His work "Remember When" was nominated for an Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Best Performance (individual) and his recent solo work "For Now, I am..." was listed in the Guardians Top 10 Dance Shows for 2016. For more visit www.marcbrew.com.

REVolutions Dance

REVolutions Dance was created with the intention of uniting diverse communities of individuals with and without disabilities through movement, creativity, and artistry. Their work to achieve equity and unity in the dance world can be experienced through education, community outreach programming, and professional performances. The company, based in Tampa, Florida, was founded in 2005 by Dwayne Scheuneman, an accomplished wheelchair dancer, and Amie West. REVolutions Dance has performed work and conducted workshops nationally and internationally

in Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Scheuneman, who is the current Artistic Director, is also known for his tenure as member of AXIS Dance Company. For more visit www.revdance.org.

KPD

Karen Peterson and Dancers was founded in 1990 and is dedicated to the development, education and presentation of dance through workshops and performances, integrating dancers and students with a range of physical abilities. They have presented an annual season of new work at multiple venues throughout South Florida, have performed throughout the state, and have presented their work nationally, from New York to Washington, D.C., and in nine countries, including Brazil, Spain, Ireland, Serbia and Portugal. In honor of her work, Ms. Peterson has received a "Lifetime Achievement Award" from the New World School of the Arts, a Bank of America "Cultural Award" from the American Red Cross, and a "Queen of the Arts" Award from the Miami Herald. In 2019 the company was named "Best Dance Company" in Miami by the New Times. KPD has produced two international festivals of physically integrated dance, Forward Motion, in 2018 and 2019, with the support of a Knight Arts Challenge grant from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. For more visit www.KarenPetersonDancers.org.