

Monica Bill Barnes & Company



Booking for Monica Bill Barnes & Company
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Monica Bill Barnes

Quotes



“Ms. Barnes has the kind of humor
—not a snicker in sight—
that is in woefully short supply
in dance these days.”

—THE NEW YORK TIMES

“The witty Ms. Barnes, a master of the dance equivalent of a sly guffaw, blends sadness and hilarity.”

—NEW YORK TIMES (JENNIFER DUNNING)

“Barnes (is) one of the wittiest young choreographers around. Although she can stir your heart as well as make you laugh, *Hollywood Endings* is essentially a charmingly outlandish revue in which nothing is predictable. Barnes has used her considerable skill as a choreographer to make a piece that looks charmingly rickety, beautifully tawdry, and profoundly good-hearted.”

—THE VILLAGE VOICE (DEBORAH JOWITT)

“Barnes has made zippy and understated magic. *When we were pretty* specializes in comic gangliness.”

—THE NEW YORKER (APOLLINAIRE SCHERR)

“Inspired nuttiness with *Up the Hanging Tree* a funny, tender and knowing evocation of young female adolescence. It was performed to perfection by the wonderfully shameless Jennifer Ward and by Melanie Aceto, a touchingly solemn foil for Ms. Ward’s exuberance.”

—THE NEW YORK TIMES (JENNIFER DUNNING)

“Better than a bra burning, this is unapologetic, inclusive, baseline feminism.”

—DANCE INSIDER (CHRIS DOHSE)

“*Once I was in a Beauty Contest, but my Strap Broke* is comic delight. Barnes is an impudent flea of a dancer... and the solo made perfect sense as a zany, purely physical response to the music.”

—THE NEW YORK TIMES (JENNIFER DUNNING)

“Ms. Barnes was extraordinary—her masterful face adds a whole other level of theatricality and meaning to her performance.”

—GAY CITY NEWS (BRIAN MCCORMICK)

“There’s a reason comedy and dance are rarely paired. But Barnes is the mistress of such mischief and has the technical dance ability to make it all work. She breaks all the rules, but also tempers the clowning around with enough darkness and pity to make us care.”

—SAN DIEGO ARTS (KRIS EITLAND)

“She (Barnes) is a kind of conjuror, pulling movement out of her small strong body as if this were a rabbit-hat deal, but without fanfare. She’s constantly startling. I can’t take my eyes off her—not just because she’s a beauty and her actions are compelling, but because, within the silky dancing and the curious gestures, I see her thinking, sense her feeling.”

—THE VILLAGE VOICE (DEBORAH JOWITT)

Monica Bill Barnes

MONICA BILL BARNES (Choreographer) is a New York based choreographer and performer. She founded Monica Bill Barnes & Company as a contemporary dance company with the mission to celebrate individuality, humor and the innate theatricality of everyday life. The company has been presented in over twenty venues in NYC including Danspace Project, Symphony Space, 92nd Street Y, Dancenow/NYC, Fall for Dance at New York City Center, and in thirty cities throughout the US. She has created twelve evening-length dance works, numerous site-specific events and several cabaret numbers for her company. Recent commissions include *Another Parade*, commissioned by the 92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Festival, *I feel like* commissioned by Dancenow's 10 Year Anniversary Project, and *Game Face* presented by Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's SITELINES Festival. She has been an invited Guest Artist at the North Carolina School of The Arts, Vassar College, Virginia Commonwealth University, Connecticut College, Florida State University, James Madison University, Steps on Broadway, Peridance Center and Dance New Amsterdam. Recent funding includes the Greenwall Foundation, Bossak/Heilbron Charitable Foundation, The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Manhattan Community Arts Fund, the Fund for Creative Communities, supported by the New York State Council on the Arts and administered by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and The Puffin Foundation. Major support has come in the form of creative residencies awarded by Jacob's Pillow (2009 Creative Development Residency), the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography at Florida State University (2006-2007 Choreographic Fellowship), a residency provided by The Joyce Theater Foundation (2005-2004), Sushi Performance and Visual Art (2005), Dancenow/NYC Silo Residency (2009, 2008, 2004), Acadia Summer Arts Program(2003-2007) and The Yard (2002). In addition, the company creates dances outside of the city through college residencies and site specific performance projects with local community members. During summer 2010, the company will perform at Bates Dance Festival, American Dance Festival, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, and make their Joyce Theater debut.



Company Bios



ANNA BASS (REHEARSAL DIRECTOR/DANCER) grew up dancing in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia and graduated from James Madison University with a BA in Dance and Theater. Since landing in New York she has enjoyed diverse performance experiences with inspiring artists including Danah Bella, Alexandra Beller, Meisha Bosma, Christian Canciani, Donna Costello, Aviva Geismar, Shannon Hummel/Cora Dance, and Teri & Oliver Steele. Anna has studied yoga for many years and recently became a certified yoga instructor through Sankalpa Yoga in NYC. In addition to her onstage work with MBB & Co., Anna also serves as Rehearsal Director, teaches company repertory and assists with The Limelight Fountain Tour community project. She joined the company in 2003.



CELIA ROWLSON-HALL (DANCER/COLLABORATOR) joined MBB & CO. as a dancer in 2008 and began working with the company as a film collaborator in 2009. Celia has also choreographed music videos for Chromeo, MGMT, Sondre Lerche, Kid Sister as well as a dozen videos for CollegeHumor.com. And in collaboration with Dance Films Association, she created a 48-hour dance film contest. She has also choreographed for fashion shows, magazines and films for New York Fashion Week. And this spring she set a new work on the dance majors at University of South Carolina. Celia also danced with Faye Driscoll, most recently in 837 Venice Blvd.



CHARLOTTE BYDWELL (DANCER) grew up in Montreal, Quebec, where she began her dance training at the age of 7. In 2005, she crossed the border to study at the Juilliard School in New York City. During her four years there, she performed works by Ohad Naharin, Susan Marshall, Martha Graham and Larry Keigwin, among others. In 2007, she was honored to receive a Dance Web Scholarship to attend the Impulstanz Festival in Vienna, Austria. Since graduating from Juilliard, she has had the pleasure of working with choreographers Michelle Mola and Zack Winokur, Adam Weinert and Evan Teitelbaum and has been pursuing her acting training with Anthony Abeson. She was thrilled to join Monica Bill Barnes and Company in 2009.



JANE COX (LIGHTING DESIGNER) has collaborated with Monica for more than a decade, and the work continues to be central to Jane's creative life. Jane also designs opera (most recently Don Giovanni at New York City Opera); and theater. New York theater includes Dame Edna and Come Back Little Sheba on Broadway, and designs for the Public Theatre, Brooklyn Academy of Music; Playwrights Horizons; Signature Theatre; NYTW. Jane also has a long-term collaboration with choreographer Doug Varone, with whom she was awarded a Bessie in 2007. She teaches theater design at Princeton University and Vassar College.



KELLY HANSON (SET/COSTUME DESIGNER) is a New York-based designer and director/creator of new performance works. She has collaborated with Monica Bill Barnes on dozens of shows over the past decade. Additional scenic design credits include Bill Irwin's *The Happiness Lecture* at Philadelphia Theatre Company, John Clancy's *Fatboy* in NYC and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival (Fringe First Award), *Flags* (Off-Broadway), and *King Stag* at Seattle Rep. Kelly currently spends her days art directing at NBC for *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*. She is also Co-Artistic Director of Human Company, which is devoted to the creation of new physical theatre works. With Human Company, she developed and directed *Orpheus and Eurydice* (2007) and *Is It True What They Say About Dixie?* (2009), and is now creating a new work that will premiere in Fall 2010. www.humancompany.org

Guest Artist Residency and Master Classes

MASTER CLASS (taught by Barnes & Company Members)

Based on the company's performance style, which blends nuanced theatricality and explosive movement vocabulary, this technique class will focus on understanding how to use your technique to support your personal performance quality. Class begins with an easy to follow, fast-paced warm-up, which brings together an eclectic mix of modern techniques and highlights musicality and bold choices. The second part of class focuses on learning and performing longer phrases, which challenge the students to move with clarity, theatrical intention and full-bodied power.

REPERTORY CLASS (taught by Barnes & Bass)

Students will investigate the use of deadpan humor, dynamic movement and theatrical scenarios in the course of learning the repertory of Monica Bill Barnes. The movement vocabulary swings from full bodied dancing to nuanced gesture in dances which draw on a radical mixture of influences: pop-culture, show business, absurdity and high drama. Through this workshop, the students will focus on their performance choices within this company's work, which celebrates individuality, humor and the innate theatricality of everyday life.

COMPOSITION WORKSHOP (taught by Barnes)

This composition class encourages indulgence and bold decision making through a series of experiments with stillness, speed, gesture, repetition and music. References to other art forms, including film, music and theater, will be used throughout to illustrate extreme artistic choices. By taking away the expectation of making "good dance," the choreographers will have the opportunity to explore wide dynamic range, question their assumptions, cultivate a sense of humor about their process and take risks in a supportive, generous environment.

SITE-SPECIFIC DANCE (taught by Barnes)

This workshop explores the unique possibilities of site-specific dance and can include community performance projects with students.

YOGA (taught by Bass)

This easy to follow, challenging yoga class has been designed for dancers with a focus on finding balance and developing upper body strength.



Touring Repertory

MOSTLY FANFARE (2010)

CHOREOGRAPHY: Monica Bill Barnes

PERFORMERS: Anna Bass, Monica Bill Barnes and Charlotte Bydwell

MUSIC CREDITS: Nina Simone, Jerry Livingston/Paul Francis Webster, Camille Saint-Saëns

COSTUME & SET DESIGNER: Kelly Hanson

LIGHTING DESIGNER: Jane Cox

PREMIERE: Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival

LENGTH: 20 minutes

mostly fanfare juxtaposes strong feminine images with distinct quirky characterizations and broad theatricality. This trio mixes processional and parade elements with costumes that combine plain clothes with elaborate headdresses. This work has a collaborative film component, created by company member, Celia Rowson-Hall. A series of short films about the process and metaphors behind this work will be available on-line and for presentation.

ANOTHER PARADE (2009)

"Barnes' choreography has a genuine wit and humor and all the dancers are terrific." —The New York Times, Roslyn Sulcas

CHOREOGRAPHY: Monica Bill Barnes

PERFORMERS: Anna Bass, Monica Bill Barnes, Charlotte Bydwell and Celia Rowson-Hall

MUSIC CREDITS: Johann Sebastian Bach, James Brown, Bobby Byrd, Ron Lenhoff, Burt Bacharach/Hal David, Tony Joe White, Joe South, Holland, Dozier, Holland

COSTUME & SET DESIGNER: Kelly Hanson

LIGHTING DESIGNER: Jane Cox

PREMIERE: 92nd Street Y Harkness Dance Festival

LENGTH: 40 minutes

Another Parade celebrates the singular, exhilarating experience of being on stage. This 40-minute dance features four ungainly winning performers who flirt with subtlety while wearing their hearts on their sleeves. This quartet is a go for broke, all out dance event that packs much punch while straddling awkward and debonair.

SUDDENLY SUMMER SOMEWHERE (2007)

"And nothing about it—from Barnes's extraordinary and insightful movement choices to the dramatic arc of the relationship—was expected or stale. If you missed this one, look for your next opportunity to see it, and let your heart open to it." —Eva Yaa Asantewaa, critic

CHOREOGRAPHY: Monica Bill Barnes

PERFORMERS: Monica Bill Barnes & Anna Bass

MUSIC CREDITS: Rodgers/ Hammerstein, Cavanaugh/Morgan/Stock, Cahn/Van Heusen, Warren/Dubin, Rodgers/Hart, Sinatra/Aznavour, Rodgers/Hart

COSTUME & SET DESIGNER: Kelly Hanson

LIGHTING DESIGNER: Carol Mullins

VIDEO DESIGN: Aaron Rhyne

PREMIERE: Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church

LENGTH: 35 minutes

Simultaneously hilarious and painful, this new work, performed by Barnes and Anna Bass, explores how the passage of time affects the collective lives of two people. The result is dense, dark and messy ...heartbreak with a glimmer of hope.

LIMELIGHT THE FOUNTAIN TOUR (2005)

"With sharply synchronized movements performed in the circular fountain at Bowling Green Park, the performance of Monica Bill Barnes' dance was too much fun to miss." —The New York Times

CHOREOGRAPHY: Monica Bill Barnes

MUSIC CREDITS: The Supremes

COSTUME & SET DESIGNER: Kelly Hanson

PREMIERE: Jean Isaacs San Diego Dance's Theater's Trolley Dances

LENGTH: 10 minutes

A public fountain is somehow exactly the right venue for this water-based extravaganza; in which some dozen local dancers perform an energetic group number. Clad in bright swim attire and sneakers, they execute sharp movements to the music of the Supremes with bravado and panache, and props like sunglasses and umbrellas only heighten the theatricality of their dance while underscoring its bizarre setting. This thoroughly engaging and completely charming piece has been customized for performances in fountains across the country.

SOLO TOURING REP ON REQUEST

The New York Times

June 29th, 2005

By Jack Anderson

KICKING UP A STORM WHERE WATER IS A GIVEN

“Coins aren’t tossed into this fountain, but women are.”

Ten women made quite a splash when they danced Monica Bill Barnes’s “Limelight” at lunchtime on Monday in Bowling Green Park. Their performance took place in the circular fountain that stands in front of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian.

Not around or beside that fountain. In it.

The women, in sneakers and light-colored costumes, ran into the park shouting: “Hello New York City! We’ve got something special for you!” then they jumped into the fountain, where, for about 15 minutes, they enthusiastically performed chorus-line routines to recorded songs by Diana Ross and the Supremes.

The fountain sent jets of water into the cloudy sky. The heavens, in return, sent a bit of drizzle down to the earth. But spectators didn’t seem to mind the little shower. The dance was too much fun to miss.

Keeping their movements sharply synchronized, the dancers often kicked like aquatic Rockettes in this attraction, part of the site-specific events presented by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council. Holding sunglasses in their hands, they also stood still in the water like glamorous movie stars languidly posing for portraits at beach resorts. And they paraded in the fountain’s basin while twirling umbrellas.

After dancers lifted other dancers to the fountain’s rim, the entire cast suddenly lost its footing and toppled into the water. It looked like a collective accident. But the apparent mistake was so precisely timed that you knew it was all part of Ms. Barnes’s witty choreography.



The New York Times

Dance in Review

By JENNIFER DUNNING

Published: November 10, 2007

Most choreographers make dance out of music, steps and thematic ideas. Monica Bill Barnes seems to create hers out of glances and stumbles. She works with dancers who look wonderfully unafraid to teeter on the edge of sudden, careless plummeting or, even more, of making endearing “wise fools” of themselves.

The two fools in Ms. Barnes’s new “Suddenly Summer Somewhere,” performed on Thursday night at the Danspace Project at St. Mark’s Church, at first look like dollhouse inhabitants as they stand close, moving slightly together, on a small table at the back of the stage. One, and then the other, gradually makes her way down and into the stage space. Soon they are up and dancing to slyly soupy songs performed by Frank Sinatra and other members of the Rat Pack.

The tone of the piece has been set before it begins, with karaoke microphones at the front for audience members to sing along with projected lyrics — a novel approach to dance. But Ms. Barnes specializes in the nuttily unexpected. “Suddenly Summer Somewhere” barrels along once it hits the floor, a thing of manic, mugging grins; lumbering embraces; and big, juicy syncopated sprints through space that seems to have just opened out.

The balance shifts very slowly between the characters danced by Ms. Barnes and the delectably innocent-looking Anna Bass, who begins, very subtly, to take the lead. Sadness momentarily pools in Ms. Bass’s eyes. Ms. Barnes bends slightly into the support of her arms. Ms. Bass moves behind her, removes her coat and lays it on the floor, like a gallant partner laying a path across a puddle or rocky ground. Ms. Barnes arches over Ms. Bass’s bending body, and then they stand and move forward slowly, arms lowering peacefully in lowering stage light. Suddenly love has pushed through zany, witty pratfalls for the body and the soul. Ms. Barnes has pulled a fast one on her audience.



Technical Requirements

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Monica Bill Barnes & Company is adaptable to most performance situations. In order to minimize costs we do not travel with lighting equipment or flooring. The presenter is expected to provide the following technical equipment and set-up, although the Company can often adapt to what is available, given sufficient notice to prepare a program of works appropriate to the presenter's facilities.

TECH TIME

The company generally prefers up to 16 hours of crew time in the theater prior to the first performance: 8 hours the day before the first performance to focus pre-hung light plot, set trims, dress the stage; 8 hours on the day of the first performance for cueing and technical rehearsal.

PERFORMANCE SPACE:

- Minimum Stage Dimensions: 25ft. (Width) x 20ft. (Depth).
- Minimum Proscenium Height: 15ft.
- Stage Floor: Floor must be wood that is laid on sleepers that provides some give ("sprung"). Marley flooring is acceptable.
- Stage will be swept and mopped prior to technical rehearsal and prior to performance.
- Monica Bill Barnes & Company cannot dance on concrete or flooring laid directly on concrete.
- Floor shall be maintained properly and shall be cleaned prior to each rehearsal and performance.

LIGHTING

It is the company's intent to minimize costs to the presenter while ensuring the visual quality of the work to be presented. Company and local Technical Director will work together to minimize any equipment rental, but certain effects are essential to the success of the show. Company will agree to equipment substitutions where possible and well in advance to match house inventory as closely as possible, but cannot guarantee specific equipment numbers without consultation with local Technical Director once program has been determined. Company's lighting Director shall provide Presenter with a light plot and all requisite paperwork no later than one month prior to scheduled performance date, once equipment needs have been mutually agreed upon by Company and local Technical Director.

SOUND

Presenter shall provide a qualified sound engineer who knows the venue and the system. Presenter shall provide a professional stereo sound system that is capable of being heard throughout the entire audience at 90dB concert levels which includes:

- Two compact disc players (one used as simultaneous backup)
- Mixing console with a minimum of 6 inputs and 3 outputs
- 4 onstage high powered monitors located stage right and stage left in wings one and three
- Separate control of onstage monitors and house speakers.
- System must be in place and fully operational by two hours before scheduled rehearsal start time.

Technical Requirements

PAGE 2

PERSONNEL/ CREW

Presenter will provide load-in / focus / cueing crew to be mutually determined according to skill level, schedule and extent of focus /dressing to be done given time constraints.

For running crew presenter shall provide the following experienced personnel:

- One technical director / crew head for load-in through load-out.
- One head electrician for load-in through load-out.
- One house audio technician.
- One wardrobe/dresser for a four-hour prep call and show call for each performance through load-out.
- Whatever number of carpenters / props needed to: run main curtain, fly rail, and clean the stage
- All crew should have "show blacks" and flashlights. The crew that techs the show must be the crew that runs the show.

MASKING/SCENERY/PROPS

Masking in not necessary. Monica Bill Barnes and Company provides the necessary set pieces. The crew will help to set up and strike company set pieces with Production Manager's assistance.

WARM-UP AREAS

Presenter shall provide either a dance rehearsal hall with proper flooring and mirrors. Presenter shall provide a sound system (boom-box or better) for Company use during warm-up.

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms should accommodate a total of 6 performers.

CLIMATE/ ELEVATION

Performance, dressing, and rehearsal areas must be kept between 70-78° F at all times.

FRONT OF HOUSE

The timing of late audience seating shall be mutually agreed upon by Presenter and Company. Presenter should consult with Company contact on site to establish a late seating policy prior to house opening.

LODGING: IMPORTANT

The company travels with six (6) individuals: Artistic Director, Production Stage Manager, Lighting Designer, and three (3) Dancers. To accommodate them the following housing breakdown is needed: (4) four single rooms and (1) one double room.

» Monica Bill Barnes «
& Company

