KIDD PIVOT | FRANKFURT RM

Dark Matters
FEB 17 - 20, 2011

Created by Crystal Pite

Company Members: Eric Beauchesne, Peter Chu, Sandra Marín García, Yannick Matton, Jirí Pokorný, Cindy Salgado, Jermaine Maurice Spivey

Composer (original music): Owen Belton
Lighting Designer: Rob Sondergaard
Set Designer: Jay Gower Taylor
Costume Designer: Linda Chow
Voice: Christopher Gaze
Text: Poem on the Lisbon Disaster by Voltaire, excerpts
Puppets: Robert Lewis
Scenic Painters: Angela Carlson, Louise DeGagné, Jay Gower Taylor

Management: Jason Dubois, Bernard Sauvé, Sharon Simpson, Jim Smith, Bonnie Sun
Technical Director: Jeremy Collie-Holmes
Stage Manager: Julie-anne Saroyan
Company Manager: Brent Belsher
International Agent: Menno Plukker Theatre Agent Inc.

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It is not uncommon for people to ask many questions after seeing a show at On the Boards. One of the most common questions is “Was that dance?” Admittedly, we enjoy showcasing artists who push boundaries and definitions, and who frequently confound the expectations of audiences with very conceptual approaches to art making. But does an artist have to confound to be conceptual or even contemporary? Or interesting?

Crystal Pite and her incredible collaborators in Kidd Pivot Frankfurt RM provide an interesting case study for considering what is experimental and why anyone should care. At the core, Crystal makes choreography that transcends what most people might expect or hope for from a piece of dance while achieving a kind of pathos that is uniquely her own. To put it another way, people like the way her dancers move and how it makes them feel while watching it. Like a piece of literature, or an exquisite meal, Crystal’s work is satisfying because it offers complexity and depth in its most distilled form.

Crystal maintains an ongoing investigation into how the body can express itself nonverbally while grappling with human dynamics beyond what the daily din of words manages to convey. Her choreography uses highly trained and expressive bodies to exploit speed, velocity, gravity, lightness and weight in service of larger concepts without ever becoming showy. While this is dance theater with a higher proportion of dance than is normally found in the form, the drama is still there. It just hangs in the air, palpable but drifting.

Crystal says she approaches each new project by taking a universal concept and asking, “Can I make a dance out of this?” What has materialized over the past 10 years or so is a distinctive body of work and rare ability to use dance to solve creative problems. That’s why we’ve been so proud to have featured Kidd Pivot Frankfurt RM 3 times over the past 5 seasons.

What is good? Kidd Pivot Frankfurt RM. (and Crystal’s new baby boy, Niko Gabriel Michael Taylor!)

Sarah Wilke and Lane Czapinski
Grace appears most purely in that human form which either has no consciousness or an infinite consciousness. That is, in the puppet or in the god.


Doubt requires more courage than conviction does, and more energy; because conviction is a resting place and doubt is infinite; it is a passionate exercise. We’ve got to learn to live with a full measure of uncertainty. There is no last word. That’s the silence under the chatter of our time.

– John Patrick Shanley
BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO CRYSTAL PITE

1. Kidd Pivot is the branchchild of Vancouver BC choreographer Crystal Pite. The longtime dancer began choreographing early in her career after receiving commissions from companies such as the Alberta Ballet, Ballet Frankfurt and Nederlands Dans Theater. In 2001 she founded her own company and has continued to make and perform work with them. Read more about her career here.

2. In 2008 Crystal received $75,000 for a new work, which she used to bring together her favorite performers, the best-of-the-best from the companies she had set pieces on. What was at the time a temporary company has now become a solid dream team of dancers that are in residence with Crystal at Frankfurt’s Künstlerhaus Mousonturm. Read more about each performer on Kidd Pivot’s site.

3. Crystal has a history of combining text and dance. In 2007’s Farther Out she used excerpts from Annie Dillard’s book The Writing Life to help illustrate the relationship between an artist and an idea. For Dark Matters she’s turned to Voltaire’s “Poem on the Lisbon Disaster” to serve as the text presiding over the Frankenstein-esque story of the puppet and its master in Act I.

4. Dark Matters is the first time that the company is using puppetry. The specific style that they employ, bunraku, involves multiple puppeteers clad entirely in black manipulating one puppet. By using this style Crystal is able to heighten the theatrical nature of her work and emphasize the minute articulation the company is capable of performing.

5. The title Dark Matters refers to the astronomical term for the unknown and invisible matter that is the majority of our universe. Together, dark matter and dark energy make up 96% of the universe and are understood to be the force behind its expansion. Although scientists continue to study and debate the composition of dark matter, there is very little that is currently understood. Inspired by the concept, Crystal writes, “dark matter affects the speed, structure and evolution of galaxies, yet its nature remains a mystery.”

6. Crystal is a protégée of choreographer and artistic director of the Ballett Frankfurt, William Forsythe. He’s best known for forging new dance territory by deconstructing the structure and theatrically of ballet technique. His work is currently in rep at ballets all over the world, including Seattle’s own Pacific Northwest Ballet. Read more about William Forsythe or watch a clip from his work “One Flat Thing, reproduced.”
Lane Czapinski: What was it like choreographing for a puppet? I mean, I mean you move dancers around, but what was it like conceptualizing space with an inanimate object?

Crystal Pite: I love the puppet, I love choreographing the puppet, – it’s so beautiful and and it’s amazing to see like the folding mechanisms in its little body like just the pure folding mechanisms and coordinations and also that it’s being puppeteered by four people. I think there’s something really beautiful about watching four people work together on one body make it do stuff, and so there’s a real energy and a real spirit that comes with that. And the puppet itself is profoundly beautiful.

I don’t know if you’ve seen that quote that I always include in the program but it’s from Heinrich Von Klise – he’s talking about grace. And he was saying that he feels that grace, appears only in, in something that has no consciousness…at all. Like a puppet. Or infinite consciousness like a god. That really resonated with me, because there’s something with the ego completely stripped out of this little character and you can just watch it move, and it has no self-awareness, and no consciousness, somehow you see movement in a very different way. It’s got this incredible grace, and...this purity that’s very hard to achieve with a real person.

LISTEN TO THE FULL CONVERSATION WITH LANE CZAPLINSKI ONTHEBOARDS.ORG DOWNLOAD INTERVIEW PDF
MAUREEN WHITING ON WILLIAM FORSYTHE

In the dance world we think of him as a technical dance master because of his artistic contributions to ballet (his own early dance form). He worked for many years with the highest caliber of dancers using his innovative physical improvisation techniques to create stunning unparalleled dances. His ballets have all the best juiciness of “do it or die” great live dance, rich with human pathos, speed, amazing sets, great lighting, rockin’ music and of course unbeatable dancers executing brilliant choreography.

Yet from talking with him I began to see him fundamentally as a researcher driven by a passion for visual art. I gathered that movement in it all its forms and mutations is his basic research, a great curiosity for him, and his pursuit seems scientific in its thrust rather than aesthetic. His output of course is extremely aesthetic but he is a movement scientist. He explained to me how he researched. “For example you could look at your fingertips or a three-dimensional object, and understand how it functioned as a two-dimensional plane. Then you physically retrace it back into a three-dimensional event. We discovered that different types of objects and visual stimuli would determine quite a lot…”

I do think that what drives him first and foremost is the ongoing pursuit of his images more in the visual art realm. He fearlessly delves deeply into his psyche excavating image. He experiments, researches, draws, and then he paints human spirit with multidisciplinary kick ass dance.

His artistic DNA is a peculiar passionate combination of intellect soul and vision. His presence in the field is a guiding light. Fearless image excavator and physical experimenter is what I chose to see him as rather than the master dance technician he is. Maybe because I feel his technical skills are a means to an end in order to serve up his vision most deliciously.
More on Dark Matter

Although the term “dark matter” was initially coined by Fritz Zwicky in the 1930’s, when evidence for missing mass in galaxies was first discovered, it was the 1998 Hubble Space Telescope that confirmed the universe was expanding at an increased rate and put new scientific focus on dark matter and dark energy. It is believed that dark energy makes up approximately 70% of the universe and dark matter 25%. Most simply, dark energy is what propels the universe to expand, while dark matter is what continues to hold the galaxies intact. Very little else is currently known about the properties of either. The heated scientific race to explain dark matter and dark energy is explored in a new book The Four Percent Universe written by Richard Panek and released in January 2011. OtB has reprinted a question and answer with Richard Panek below; an excellent layperson’s guide to dark matter.

Q: What is the “four percent universe”?

Panek: It’s the universe we’ve always known, the one that consists of everything we see: you, me, Earth, Sun, planets, stars, galaxies.

Q: What’s the other 96 percent?

Panek: The stuff we can’t see in any form whatsoever. At a loss for words, astronomers have given these missing ingredients the names “dark matter” and “dark energy.”

Q: What are dark matter and dark energy?

Panek: If you find out, book yourself a flight to Stockholm.

Q: So nobody knows? We’re not talking about “dark” as in black holes?

Panek: No. This is “dark” as in unknown for now and possibly forever.
**BIOS**

**Kidd Pivot Frankfurt RM** Under the direction of internationally renowned Canadian choreographer Crystal Pite, Kidd Pivot Frankfurt RM has been resident company at Künstlerhaus Mousonturm in Frankfurt since spring 2010. The residency is made possible by Kulturfonds Frankfurt Rhein Main.

Integrating movement, original music, text, and rich visual design, Kidd Pivot Frankfurt RM’s performance work is assembled with recklessness and rigour, balancing sharp exactitude with irreverence and risk. Kidd Pivot’s distinct choreographic language – a breadth of movement fusing classical elements and the complexity and freedom of structured improvisation – is marked by a strong theatrical sensibility and a keen sense of wit and invention.

Crystal Pite has collaborated with celebrated dance artists, theatre companies and filmmakers in Canada, Europe, and the United States. Since 2001, Crystal Pite she has created and performed under the banner of her own company. Her work and her company have been recognized with numerous awards and commissions. Kidd Pivot tours extensively around the world with productions that include *Dark Matters* (2009), *Fault* (2008), *Lost Action* (2006), *Uncollected Work* (2002) and *Double Story* (2004), created with Richard Siegal. Kidd Pivot is the recipient of the 2006 Rio Tinto Alcan Performing Arts Award.

**Crystal Pite – Choreographer**

Born and raised on the Canadian West Coast, choreographer and performer Crystal Pite is a former company member of Ballet British Columbia and William Forsythe’s Ballett Frankfurt. Crystal’s choreographic debut was in 1990, at Ballet British Columbia. Since then, she has created works for Nederlands Dans Theater I, Cullberg Ballet, Ballett Frankfurt, The National Ballet of Canada, Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal (Resident Choreographer, 2001-2004), Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, Ballet British Columbia, Alberta Ballet, Ballet Jorgen, and several independent dance artists; most recently Louise Lecavalier. Crystal is Associate Choreographer of Nederlands Dans Theater and Associate Dance Artist of National Arts Centre in Ottawa.

In 2001 she formed Kidd Pivot and continues to create and perform in her own work. The company tours nationally and internationally, performing such highly demanded and critically acclaimed works as *Dark Matters* and *Lost Action*. Kidd Pivot’s residency at the Künstlerhaus
Mousonturm in Frankfurt has provided her the opportunity to create her most recent work, The You Show, with her dancers and collaborators. Crystal is the recipient of the Banff Centre’s Clifford E. Lee Award (1995), the Bonnie Bird North American Choreography Award (2004), and the Isadora Award (2005). Her work has received four Dora Mavor Moore Awards (2009), and a Jessie Richardson Theatre Award (2006). She is the recipient of the 2008 Governor General of Canada’s Performing Arts Award, Mentorship Program.

**Eric Beauchesne – Performer**

Born in Bécancour, Québec, Eric first encountered dance at the age of 16 when he made his performing arts debut in a student musical. After graduating from l’Ecole Supérieure de Danse du Québec, he participated in many productions with Les Grands Ballets Canadiens, Le Jeune Ballet du Québec and The Banff Festival Ballet. In 1994, he left for Europe where he became a member of the Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe and later the Stadttheater Moenchengladbach in Germany. From 1997 to 2004, he danced with Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal with whom he toured extensively the works of more than fifteen choreographers including James Kudelka, Mia Michaels, Dominique Dumais, Patrick Delcroix and Crystal Pite. In 2004, he became an independent artist and has had, since then, the privilege of performing with La Fondation Jean-Pierre Perrault, Paul-André Fortier, Sylvain Emard Danse, Lina Cruz, ezdanza, Aszure Barton, ProArteDanza, Van Grimde/Corps Secrets and Louise Lecavalier. Eric has been part of Kidd Pivot’s projects since 2004 as a performer and has also recently collaborated as repetiteur and teacher for Kidd Pivot, Cullberg Ballet and Ballet British Columbia in the remount of Crystal’s past work.

**Peter Chu – Performer**

Peter Chu, originally from Cocoa Beach, Florida, began his dance training as a competitive gymnast and cheerleader. He evolved into a dancer at Dussich Dance Studio. Upon receiving his BFA from The Juilliard School, he was awarded the Hector Zaraspe Prize for Choreography. He has danced with such companies as Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal and EZdanza. Peter was a part of the *A New Day* cast starring Céline Dion in Las Vegas. He can also be seen in Christina Perri’s *Jar of Hearts* music video. Now pursuing a career as choreographer and performer, Peter formed chuthis., a project-based company. In 2008, he was selected to present a full evening of his work at the Perry-Mansfield New Works Festival in Colorado. Peter has been involved in exciting projects such as Naomi Stikeman’s *Cатурн* (consulted by Robert Lepage), as both choreographer and dancer. He created a
site-specific work for the San Diego Dance Theatre at the US-Mexico border. Peter has also had the opportunity to create work for Montreal-based solo performer Sarah Williams. His choreography is featured on the ARTV series Meneuse de Claques (Cheerleaders). Peter is the proud recipient of the 2010 Capezio A.C.E. awards for choreography and is enjoying his time dancing with the Kidd Pivot family.

Sandra Marín García – Performer
Sandra Marín García was born in Barcelona where she studied at the Institute of Theatre, Dance and Choreography. After her graduation in 1992, Sandra joined the company Concert Dansa Dark, under the direction of Guillermima Coll. After that, she worked for the Polish Dance Theatre (1995-1997), Vorpommern Theater Greifswald & Stralsund (1997-1999), Stadttheater Dortmund (1999-2000), Scapino Ballet Rotterdam (2000-2005), Cullberg Ballet (2005-2008) and Nederlands Dans Theater I (2008-2010). Sandra has worked with choreographers such as Johan Inger, Paul Lightfoot, Sol León, Mats Ek, Jiří Kylián and Crystal Pite, amongst others. She danced in Henrik Kaalund’s choreography So Far, during the New York-Burgos choreographic competition in 2003, which won the second prize. She also danced in Inma Rubio’s choreography Standing for Zero, finalist at the same competition and finalist for the Kürts Prize in Essen (2004). She has taught workshops organized by the educational department at the Nederlands Dans Theater. In summer 2010 she taught at the Maximum Dans Course in Den Haag. She joined Kidd Pivot in August 2010.

Yannick Matthon – Performer
For Yannick Matthon, a versatile interpreter, pedagogue and choreographer, dance has been a focal point for 25 years. Now having passed the 1000th representation milestone, his career is atypically diverse considering the classical formation he received; he studied the French technique with renowned teacher Daniel Sellier and the Vaganova syllabus with Max Ratevosian, himself a pupil of Pushkin. Free-spirited and pedantic, it is these two traits that are primarily responsible for the shaping of his career and teachings. Some of our contemporaries who have helped forge his character through work and friendship are Aszure Barton, Benoît Lachambre, Crystal Pite, Dominique Porte, Lee Su-Feh, Myriam Naisy, Robert Battle, Rudi Van Dantzig, Serge Denoncourt, Yannik Larivé and the aforementioned Mr. Sellier and Mr. Ratevosian. When not on tour with Kidd Pivot, Yannick divides his time between Canada and Germany.
Jirí Pokorný – Performer
Born in Prague, Czech Republic, Jirí Pokorný currently lives in The Hague, Netherlands. After his studies at the National Conservatory in Prague he joined Laterna Magika Praha where he danced for three years. He joined Nederlands Dans Theater II for three seasons and then the main company, NDT I, for four years. He has worked with such choreographers as Jiri Kylian, Sol Leon, Paul Lightfoot, Mats Ek, Stefan Toss, Crystal Pite, and many others. As a choreographer he has created three small works for Switch, a program at NDT and in August 2010 he created his first larger piece for the students of “Maximum Dance Course” in The Hague. He has also been collaborating with Spitfire Company (physical theatre) in Prague. Jirí joined Kidd Pivot in August 2010.

Cindy Salgado – Performer
Originally from Sunnyvale, California, Cindy Salgado now lives in New York. She joined Kidd Pivot in January 2009 for the creation of Dark Matters. She is a member of Aszure Barton & Artists and has performed with Ms. Barton on projects like Busk, a recent creation debuted in Sarasota, Florida. She has performed in Earth, a collaborative performance in Kenya and Mikhail Baryshnikov’s Hell’s Kitchen Dance Tour. She performed in the Elton John and Friends Benefit Concert on Broadway in a piece by Andy Blankenbuehler and has worked on preproduction with Mr. Blankenbuehler for The Wiz, In The Heights and 9 to 5. Cindy has worked for Mia Michaels as both a performer and an assistant on projects like So You Think You Can Dance, Delirium (a Cirque du Soleil production), and Anna Vissi concerts in Greece. As a 2005 Juilliard School graduate, Cindy was honored to receive the Princess Grace Award. She has taught and choreographed for dance schools throughout the US, and has been a guest teacher at Santa Clara University. She is cofounder and teacher for Artists Striving To End Poverty, an outreach organization that provides arts programming for underserved children in New York, South Florida, South Africa, and India.

Jermaine Maurice Spivey – Performer
Jermaine Maurice Spivey was born in Baltimore, Maryland USA where he began his dance training and later attended performing arts high school at the Baltimore School for the Arts. After graduating with a BFA in dance from The Juilliard School in 2002, he moved to Lisbon, Portugal where he danced with Ballet Gulbenkian from 2002 to 2005. In 2005, Jermaine joined the Cullberg Ballet, where he met Crystal Pite, and performed with the company until the summer of 2008. Jermaine has received several awards in dance including the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts 1st
Level Scholarship and the Princess Grace Award. Jermaine has been performing with Kidd Pivot since August 2008.

**Owen Belton** — Composer
Owen Belton graduated from Simon Fraser University in 1993 with a degree in Fine and Performing Arts, and studied music composition with Barry Truax and Owen Underhill. In his work, he uses acoustic and electronic instruments, often in combination with computer processing techniques such as granular synthesis. Over the last ten years he has written music for many dance companies, including Kidd Pivot, the National Ballet of Canada, the Cullberg Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater, Les Ballet Jazz de Montréal, the Stuttgart Ballet and the Royal Ballet of London. In addition to collaborating with Crystal Pite on over a dozen works he has also scored music for choreographers such as Matjash Mrozewski, Donald Sales and Chick Snipper. Owen also creates scores and sound design for theatre and film.

**Robert Sondergaard** — Lighting Designer
Robert Sondergaard is a Vancouver-based lighting designer with a diverse portfolio spanning over 15 years. He has designed sporting events (2010 Vancouver Paralympic Winter Games, 2007 Canada Winter Games), for film (*Catwoman*, *Deck the Halls*), television (*21st Annual Gemini Awards, Anne Murray: Friends and Legends*), theme parks (Legoland California, Dollywood), dance (Kidd Pivot, Ballet BC), ceremonies (United Nations World Urban Forum) and music (*Barrage: Vagabond Tales World Tour, Rankin Family Canadian Tour*). Robert is a member of the Associated Designers of Canada. He lives in Port Moody with his wife Philomena and their girls, Riley and Bree.

**Jay Gower Taylor** — Set Designer
Jay Gower Taylor started out in theatre as a professional dancer where he enjoyed an international career spanning more than twenty years. Parallel to his dance career, Jay developed his skills as a designer. Some of his first opportunities designing for theatre were with Dancemakers, collaborating with Serge Bennathan on *Absences, The Invisible Life of Joseph Finch*, and the film *Quand les grandmeres s'envolent* for CBC’s Opening Night. More recently, Jay designed Bennathan’s MANGA and the play version of Finch, Crystal Pite’s *Plot Point* and *Frontier* for Nederlands Dans Theatre, *Emergence* for the National Ballet of Canada, *Dark Matters* for Kidd Pivot, and Electric Company Theatre’s live-cinematic interpretation of Jean-Paul Sartre’s *No Exit*.
**Linda Chow** – *Costume Designer*

Linda Chow’s work for Kidd Pivot has included *Uncollected Work, Lost Action, Fault, Decembering, A Picture of You Falling* and *Dark Matters*. She has also collaborated with Crystal on Arietta for Ballet British Columbia and Emergence for the National Ballet of Canada.

**Jeremy Collie-Holmes** – *Technical Director*

Originally from Wellington, New Zealand, Jeremy Collie-Holmes graduated from Victoria University in Wellington with a BA in Theatre and Film and a BCA in Management. Since then he has combined his love of travel with his career. Jeremy has worked as a production manager, technical director and in various other technical roles for festivals, venues and companies in New Zealand, Australia, the UK, and Europe. He is excited to now be part of the Kidd Pivot team, basing himself in Canada, while still touring the globe. He is happy to call Vancouver home, but returns to New Zealand whenever possible for some bungy jumping and time with family and friends.

**Julie-anne Saroyan** – *Stage Manager*

Julie-anne Saroyan graduated with a BFA in Dance from York University in 1993 and then attended the Banff Centre as an intern in dance stage management. Julie-anne has had the pleasure of working with many dance artists and companies and artists including Ballet BC, Lola Dance, Margie Gillis, Emily Molnar, Alison Brown and Richard Seigel. She is also artistic producer of MovEnt, where she has produced over 22 installments of Dances for a Small Stage (a dance cabaret series) in Vancouver and Ottawa. Julie-anne has been working with Crystal for over ten years and tours nationally and internationally with Kidd Pivot. Julie-anne wishes to thank all “The Pivots” for a downright great time!
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