

The Wooden Floor 32nd Annual Concert to Showcase Three World Premieres Co-created by Leading Choreographers and Local Low-income Youth.

Santa Ana, Calif. (March 10, 2015) – An annual collaboration between the low-income youth of **The Wooden Floor** and leading contemporary dance choreographers, will culminate **May 28-30, 2015**, at the **Irvine Barclay Theatre** during **The Wooden Floor's 32nd Annual Concert: *As light comes through***. The annual performance, which has a long history of showcasing non-narrative work that is progressive, thought-provoking, and unconventional, has won accolades from the **National Endowment of the Arts** and the **Association of Performing Arts Presenters** for its artistic merit.

"We value creation over imitation," notes The Wooden Floor's **Executive Director and Co-CEO Dawn S. Reese**. "The properties of our dance aesthetic center upon innovation, creativity, teamwork, self-sufficiency, and courage. These same properties directly relate to developing the education and life skills that help each student have the confidence to move their lives forward." Exposure to the high-caliber art-making at the Annual Concert, in addition to The Wooden Floor's year-round dance education, college and career readiness, and family service programs, have resulted in **100% of the organization's graduates finishing high school on time and enrolling in higher education since 2005**. This is a rate about three times higher than their socioeconomic peers.

The adventuresome performances will feature world premieres by two Mikhail Baryshnikov Arts Center Resident Artists, **Faye Driscoll** (winner of the prestigious Bessie Award for choreography) and **John Heginbotham** (recipient of the coveted Jacob's Pillow Dance Award). **Melanie Ríos Glaser**, a Kennedy Center Fellow, Fulbright scholar, and Artistic Director of The Wooden Floor, rounds out the trio of choreographers. Other artistic collaborators include **James F. Ingalls**, prolific lighting designer from **New York's Metropolitan Opera**, and costume designer **Jennifer Vaughan**, known for her work in past Olympic Games.

The Wooden Floor's approach to dance encourages its youth to think differently about themselves and inspires the audience to think and challenge assumptions about what dance is and how it can impact our community. "We encourage everyone to leave their expectations at the door and come out to experience the power of these performances. They are not only breaking down stereotypes of who can contribute to the genre of contemporary dance, but they also allow you to see the depth of youth overcoming adversity and showcase just how much the human spirit can accomplish," adds **Melanie Ríos Glaser, Artistic Director and Co-CEO** of The Wooden Floor.

About the Choreographers

Faye Driscoll is a Bessie Award-winning choreographer and director who strives to investigate new forms of theatrical experience in order to provoke feeling, stimulate the senses, and activate the mind. Driscoll is the recipient of a 2013 Guggenheim Fellowship, a 2013 Creative Capital performing arts award, and a 2013 Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant. She was awarded a 2013 Alumni New Works award from Headlands Center for the Arts, where she was first in residence in 2011. She was a 2011 Choreographic Fellow at the Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography, and an Artist-in-Residence at Baryshnikov Arts Center, The 92nd Street Y, and Park Avenue Armory, and is a 2014/15 Artist-In-Residence at The Performing Garage. Her work has been commissioned by Walker Art Center, Wexner Center for the Arts, ICA/Boston, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Danspace Project, The Kitchen, Dance Theater Workshop, HERE Arts Center, and further presented at Fusebox Festival, UCLA, CounterPULSE, American Dance Festival, and The Yard. In Spring 2015, Driscoll will tour internationally with "You're Me" to Theatre de Vanves in France, through the support of FUSED. She was one of the only dance artists exhibited in YOUNGER THAN JESUS, the first in a series of triennials at New Museum; and her work is included in NYC Makers: The MAD Biennial, the first biennial at the Museum of Arts and Design, on exhibit through October 2014.

John Heginbotham is originally from Anchorage, Alaska, graduated from The Juilliard School in 1993, and was a member of the Mark Morris Dance Group from 1998 – 2012. In 2011 he founded Dance Heginbotham, a Brooklyn-based performance group devoted to the presentation of his dance and theatrical work. The company has performed at Baryshnikov Arts Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Carolina Performing Arts, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, The Kennedy Center, and Lincoln Center Out of Doors. In addition to Dance Heginbotham, John has provided choreographed for a variety of independent projects, including several operas (*Maria de Buenos Aires* at the Cork Opera House, *The Magic Flute* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis) and Isaac Mizrahi's *Peter and the Wolf* for the Guggenheim Works and Process Series, among others. In July 2014, The Atlanta Ballet premiered his first ballet – *Angel's Share*. A frequent collaborator with live music, John has worked with numerous composers and musicians including Alarm Will Sound, American Classical Orchestra, Brooklyn Rider, Fischerspooner, Raymond Scott Orchestrette, Jesse Blumberg, Tyondai Braxton, Colin Jacobsen, Gabriel Kahane, and Shara Worden. John is the recipient of the 2014 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award and two Jerome Robbins Foundation New

Essential Works (NEW) Fellowships (2010 and 2012). He is on faculty at Princeton University, and is a founding teacher of Dance for PD®, an ongoing collaboration between the Mark Morris Dance Group and the Brooklyn Parkinson Group.

Melanie Ríos Glaser serves as the Artistic Director & Co-CEO for The Wooden Floor. Born and raised in Guatemala, Melanie is a movement artist, curator and choreographer who received her BFA from the Juilliard School in 1994, was named a Kennedy Center Fellow in 1998, and was a Fulbright Scholar in Europe from 2003-2004. Melanie has choreographed more than 30 pieces for groups that include UC Irvine's Dance Department, Group Motion Dance Theatre Company, Ballet Moderno y Folklórico de Guatemala, Ballet de Cali, her own Mosquito Dance Company, and The Wooden Floor. REDCAT (Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater) presented her piece titled "La Tribu" in 2012 and she has participated in the site-specific series HOME LA. Her work has been performed in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, France, Colombia, Brazil, California, Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles and elsewhere. As a dance educator for over twenty years, Melanie has a marked interest in dance improvisation, contact improvisation, and dance composition. Melanie was certified in 2003, as a somatic educator at Moving on Center in Oakland, California. She has been a guest teacher at dance intensives in Southern California, at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and most recently at UCI. In addition she is a Trustee for DanceUSA, which provides national leadership and services and enhances the infrastructure for dance creation and distribution, education, and dissemination of information.

About the Dances

This new work by **John Heginbotham** is set to solo guitar music by Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos. It is fast-paced, athletic, and tender. Inspired in part by the idea of a desert, clean and far, full of vanishing horizons and hovering silver pools, the dance is concerned with vibrant distance, strange reflection, traveling alone and in packs, and occasionally with uncertain obstruction. The performers invite the question, "what's behind that?" —and then suddenly, there is no that.

Faye Driscoll's new work plays with the impact of image, the untraceable ripple of cause and effect, and the epic drama present in a simple hello. Familiar images are mixed-up and linked together to create new social dances and sculptural interconnected forms. Performers playfully shift, twist and stumble into and through each other, balancing individual desires with the tide of community. This new work is a study in interconnected group forms and how everyday acts become heightened towards fantasy.

This dance by **Melanie Ríos Glaser** talks back to us. It is made out of bits and pieces almost exclusively created by the dancers. Through prompts and tasks, we give the dancers the freedom to access the necessary modes for making work by using their intuition, spontaneity, humor, intelligence, self-awareness, and creativity. Particularities and personalities are sought out, celebrating the individual even when forming a part of the group. The dance aims for an evolved sense of empathy and compassion.

Event Details

Name: The Wooden Floor's 32nd Annual Concert: *As light comes through*

When: May 28 - 30, 2015 – Performances 8pm nightly, with a 2:30pm matinee performance on May 30

Where: Irvine Barclay Theatre - 4242 Campus Drive in Irvine

Tickets: \$20 General Seating; \$50 Benefit Seating – Available at 949.854.4646 and www.TheWoodenFloor.org

About The Wooden Floor

At The Wooden Floor, we use dance as a vehicle for transformation in the students we serve because there is so much learning involved. Creativity and expression are catalysts for positive change through the process of inventive art-making. When these young artists are applauded by an audience, they know that they are seen, that they matter. Our long-term artistic immersion is integrated with mentoring, comprehensive academic support, college readiness, and family support services to provide a solid platform for advancement and success. Since 2005, 100 percent of The Wooden Floor's young seniors have graduated from high school on-time and pursued higher education. This is about three-times the national average for their socioeconomic peers. **Find out more online at www.TheWoodenFloor.org**