

Shape & Motion at VPAC in 2017-18!***The America's Got Talent Finalist*****DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®
Celebrates 25th Anniversary at VPAC (The Soraya)
Saturday, November 11 from 1:00pm to 11:00pm**

11 DIAVOLO works to be performed onstage during all day participatory family friendly “open house” – outdoors and indoors – in the Courtyard, on the Lawn, in the Great Hall, and more, concluding with a free late-night dance party!

Including the new *The Veterans Project*, created with U.S. veterans

(Los Angeles, CA) October 25, 2017 – Following the **DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®** stunning multi-week appearances as finalists on NBC's *America's Got Talent*, LA's own daredevil dance company wraps its 25th Anniversary milestone season at Valley Performing Arts Company (The Soraya) with a participatory all-day, indoor-outdoor “open house” series of free workshops, community activities, and three fully staged performances (1:00pm, 3:00pm and 7:00pm) featuring 11 DIAVOLO works, followed by a free dance party on Saturday, November 11 from 1:00pm to 11:00pm.

“We are celebrating an impressive milestone - the 25th Anniversary of DIAVOLO, said Thor Steingraber, VPAC's Executive Director. “For any dance company to persevere and thrive, especially one wrought from the vision of one man, is an incredible act of perseverance. But DIAVOLO's artistic director Jacques Heim is no ordinary artist - his work stands alone in its originality; he is a tireless citizen of the greater LA dance and arts community; and he is fearless in taking on new challenges. The national television audience witnessed his moxie this summer when he created new pieces in lightning speed for each subsequent round of *America's Got Talent*.”

“VPAC is just a short distance from where DIAVOLO began its life; and now our audience will witness the fruit of his latest passion - serving the Veterans' community with Heim's newest work, *The Veteran's Project*, an exciting piece of dance created with actual veterans, and an outlet for community-building. DIAVOLO will perform it twice as part of our DIAVOLO all day event on November 11.”

On its many performance and activity spaces, Great Hall, Courtyard Stage, Lawn, and Art Gallery, VPAC is celebrating *everything* DIAVOLO including performances at 1:00pm, 3:00pm and 7:00pm that include eleven different works from their entire history of the company, participatory workshops for all ages at which the public can learn DIAVOLO's moves and physical vocabulary, and a variety of other open air and under the roof fun activity.

DIAVOLO Founder and Artistic Director, Jacques Heim says, “To me, to have a dance company in North America is a gigantic success, and to have a dance company for 25 years is a landmark. We are celebrating arriving at this landmark. This is a tremendous time we are in: working with veterans has been a moving and life affirming experience. At the same time, we have received a very American kind of appreciation that could only happen by being the featured stars of a national television reality show. To be a finalist on *America's Got Talent* – what a way

to celebrate a 25th anniversary!”

Heim continued, “A lot of our success wouldn’t be possible without Executive Director Jennifer Cheng, who conceived our new initiative *The Veterans Project*, produced *Passengers*, and was instrumental in our appearance on *America’s Got Talent*.”

About DIAVOLO’s 25th Anniversary Celebration on Saturday, November 11

With a carnival-like atmosphere, replete with food trucks, free play on actual DIAVOLO structures, a DIAVOLO (temporary) tattoo station, photo workshop (dubbed *Pose, Snap, & Frame it!*), creative participatory movement sessions led by DIAVOLO Institute teaching artists, pop-up and fully staged performances, this 25th Anniversary Celebration promises to be a day-long encyclopediac celebration of DIAVOLO.

At 1:00 pm the festival site opens to the public with a kaleidoscope of activities highlighted by an outdoor performance on the open air Courtyard Stage of six short works from the company’s quarter century archive: *Nocturne* (1998, re-staged 2006), *A.W.O.L.* (1992, recreated 2009), *Bench* (2000, restaged 2008), *Origine* (1999, restaged 2005), *Caged* (1993, re-staged 2009), *Chaise Lounge* (2016) and a new work created by students at a workshop from that very morning. That workshop for students 9-14 started at 11:00am (*please note that this workshop and its wait list are fully reserved*).

Later, there are two programs in the Great Hall, at 3:00pm and 7:00pm that both feature *The Veterans Project* (2017), a new initiative built for veterans of the armed forces to bring back a sense of *home*, a sense of belonging, and a renewed sense of purpose. Heim has been working closely with veterans creating this work that incorporates authentic movement, sound, and text, over a yearlong period.

Heim said, “This is not a ‘piece,’ but more of a presentation ... what the audience will not see is the incredible intensity, struggle, liberation that these vets experienced throughout the four month workshop. So the theme of “home” represents a place that is peaceful, a place where they feel comfortable, a sacred space. A space of strength, hope and light. HOME.”

He continued, “We realized the importance and power of the philosophy of DIAVOLO by witnessing the men and women of the military being so positively affected in their life. The way we conduct our workshop brings these veterans back to the time they spent in the military and helps them connect to what they miss, but in a very caring way.”

Heim concluded, “The Veterans Project has helped me realize the tremendous impact art has on other people. Working with the veterans community has made me understand why I am doing what I am doing. I don’t have any money—I’m not a rich man, the only thing I have is my art. The art of DIAVOLO can become medicine for others. This program has helped me evolve, not only as a man, but as an educator, an artist, a creator.

The 3:00pm is an hour-long performance free to the public; besides *The Veterans Project*, there are two works from the DIAVOLO repertory: *Humachina* (2002, restaged 2006) and *D2R* (1995, re-staged 2002), also with a military theme. The performance is followed by a post-performance Q+A with Jacques Heim, veterans, and members of the DIAVOLO Company. General Admission tickets will be distributed at the VPAC Box Office beginning at 12-noon; please note that there are a limited number of these tickets.

Humachina explores the relationship between human motion and mechanical forms using the most simple and important of machines, the wheel. The piece depicts the fragility and endurance of the human spirit in our increasingly technological world. *D2R* represents the chaos of everyday life through an abstract military obstacle course. The dancers must achieve their goals even in the trenches of war.

At 7:00pm there will be a ticketed performance in the Great Hall, which includes a classic work *Trajectoire* (1999) and *Passengers* (2016), and a second performance of the new *The Veterans Project*. Tickets for the 7:00pm Grand Hall performance from \$48.00-\$105.00 are available online at ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org and by phone at (818) 677-3000.

Passengers (2016) -- On and around a giant morphing staircase with multiple doors, passageways and shifting surfaces, the dancers reckon with themes of journey and transition and the tenuous balance we attempt to strike each day as both indomitable dirves and unwitting passengers.

Trajectoire (1999) – performed on a 3,000-pound boat made of wood, aluminum, and steel -- is a visceral and emotional journey through the ebb and flow of the human experience. As the performers struggle to find their balance on a voyage of destiny and destination, *Trajectoire* shows the transcendence of the human soul against all odds. Laura Bleiberg in the *Los Angeles Times* said, “*Trajectoire* is vintage DIAVOLO. A quick-paced and astonishing feat of strength and fearlessness ... defying gravity doesn’t just look easy. It feels like the human spirit, ever enduring.”

VPAC is located at 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330.

About DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®

DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion® uses dance to explore the relationship between the human body and its architectural environment. Artistic Director Jacques Heim steers DIAVOLO’s diverse team of dancers, designers, choreographers and engineers to create visceral and awe-inspiring works that reveal how we are affected emotionally, physically and socially by the spaces we inhabit.

Meticulously designed bespoke architectural structures serve as the central inspiration for each work, activated by the stylistically varied and intensely physical choreography which has become the hallmark of this truly original company throughout its rich 25 year history. Through The DIAVOLO Institute the company also provides educational and outreach opportunities to people of all ages and abilities while touring internationally and at home in Los Angeles, sharing the pioneering art form and the power of dance as a means of social impact. For more information, visit www.diavolo.org

DIAVOLO is deeply woven into the dance fabric of Los Angeles. On the occasion of their 20th anniversary, the *Los Angeles Times* said, “DIAVOLO has been Los Angeles’ wild child, a company of daredevil dancers leaping and cavorting on pitching wheels, Goliath walls and playground equipment from a super-sized wonderland.”

Founded in 1992 by French-born choreographer and visionary Jacques Heim, DIAVOLO is a cultural pillar of the Los Angeles community and has performed for hundreds of thousands of concertgoers worldwide as well as millions more on television. The name, DIAVOLO, is inspired in part by the Spanish word for “day,” and the Latin word for “I fly.”

Their 25-year history is rich with innovation and transformation. Three years after it was founded, DIAVOLO makes its European debut at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where it was named “Best of the Fest” by the *London Independent* and Critic’s Choice by *The Guardian*. DIAVOLO performed for the then newly-built Getty Center in Los Angeles in 1998 and embarked on their first North American tour in 1999.

In 2005, the creative team at Cirque du Soleil was inspired to hire Heim, to choreograph *KÀ* at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, which is now in its eleventh year. In 2007, the City of Los Angeles recognized DIAVOLO as a cultural treasure. The Los Angeles Philharmonic commissioned DIAVOLO to create *L’Espace du Temps*, a trilogy of dance pieces to premiere with the orchestra at the Hollywood Bowl: *Foreign Bodies* (2007), set to the music of Esa-Pekka Salonen; *Fearful Symmetries* (2010), set to the music of John Adams; and *Fluid Infinities* (2013), set to the music of Philip Glass. *Los Angeles Times* reviewer Lewis Segal describes the Hollywood Bowl performance as “those rare events that define the art of this city ... to say DIAVOLO is exciting is redundant.”

DIAVOLO continued to transform itself with inventive dance happenings. In 2012, DIAVOLO premiered *Transit Space*, inspired by the movement of skateboarding and the documentary film *Dogtown and Z-Boys*. *Transit Space* was the first dance work ever created in residency at Gloria Kaufman presents Dance at the Music Center, Los Angeles.

DIAVOLO continues to reach important artistic milestones. In 2015, DIAVOLO's *L'Espace du Temps* (North American Premiere) took the stage at the VPAC with live orchestra in collaboration with New West Symphony and Christopher Rountree.

Education and outreach are crucial to DIAVOLO's mission. DIAVOLO brings dance to tens of thousands of community members annually through young people's concerts, in-school assemblies, intensive trainings, master classes, and residencies nationwide. DIAVOLO regularly conducts extensive community engagement workshops in schools, hospitals, and juvenile detention centers. In Los Angeles, the DIAVOLO Institute offers dance education and outreach programs that increase active arts participation and community engagement for thousands of Los Angeles youth and families.

About Jacques Heim, Choreographer/Founder

Jacques Heim has been a transformative Director for over 20 years, founding DIAVOLO in 1992, newly renamed DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion®, and has directed the Company's work ever since.

Mr. Heim was born and raised in Paris, France. His earliest experiences with performance came from street performing. He attended Middlebury College (B.F.A. in Theater, Dance, and Film), the University of Surrey in England (Certificate for Analysis and Criticism of Dance), and the California Institute for the Arts (M.F.A., Choreography). Heim is not a dancer or acrobat but calls himself an "architect of motion". He is like a drill sergeant or a football coach. He loves working with dancers; pushing them beyond their own physical and emotional limits to make them feel like they can conquer anything...to make them realize they are heroes.

Jacques Heim is named directly after his grandfather, the late and revolutionary fashion designer, who in 1946 launched the first ever two piece bathing suit called Atome, later renamed the Bikini, and also invented le pret a porter, or Ready to Wear. Just as his grandfather broke ground in the fashion industry, Jacques Heim continues to challenge and break the mold of conventional wisdom surrounding dance, developing the unique and incomparable aesthetic of Architecture in Motion®.

In addition to his work with DIAVOLO, Mr. Heim has worked extensively for other companies in dance, theater, TV, and special events worldwide. For Cirque du Soleil, Mr. Heim choreographed *KÀ* at the MGM Grand, Las Vegas, a destination show featuring apparatus inspired by DIAVOLO structures and architecture. In 2010, he was invited to be a Creative Director for the Opening Ceremony of The 16th Asian Games, in Guangzhou, China. Most recently, Mr. Heim worked with Guy Caron and Michael Curry as consulting choreographer on *Ice Age Live!*, a "mammoth" arena show which had its world premiere at London's Wembley Stadium in November 2012 and is now touring Europe.

In addition to three USA Fellowship nominations and four Alpert Award nominations, Mr. Heim has received the Martha Hill Choreography Award of the American Dance Festival, the Special Prize of the Jury at the 6th Saitama International Dance Festival, a Brody Arts Fund fellowship, a James Irvine Foundation Fellowship and is the 2016 Barney Creative Prize recipient.

About Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya)

Valley Performing Arts Center (The Soraya) opened its 2017-2018 season on September 16 with a performance of *AMADEUS Live* (Milos Foreman's 1984 Academy Award winning Best Picture with live orchestra) with the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra and members of the LA Opera Chorus. The evening honored the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Foundation in recognition of the family's recent \$17 million gift that will rename VPAC as the Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center, known as The Soraya. The gift is one of the largest in the history of the California State University and the system's largest single gift to support the arts; gift to support the programming and operations of the award-winning Valley Performing Arts Center – which has become one of the cultural jewels of the region in the six years since it opened.

The 2017-18 Soraya season signals a new era for the premier event venue. Under the leadership of Executive Director Thor Steingraber, the renamed Younes and Soraya Nazarian Performing Arts Center expands its programming and outstanding multidisciplinary performances. The mission of The Soraya is to present a wide

variety of performances that not only includes new and original work from the Los Angeles region but also work from around the world that appeal to all of LA's rich and diverse communities.

Located on the campus of California State University, Northridge, The Soraya's season offers a vibrant performance program of nearly 50 classical and popular music, dance, theater, family and international events that will serve to establish The Soraya as the intellectual and cultural heart of the San Fernando Valley, and further establish itself as one of the top arts companies in Southern California. The award-winning, 1,700-seat theatre was designed by HGA Architects and Engineers and was recently cited by the Los Angeles Times as "a growing hub for live music, dance, drama and other cultural events."

DIAVOLO | Architecture in Motion® 25th Anniversary Celebration

**VPAC (The Soraya) Great Hall, Courtyard Stage, VPAC Lawn and Art Gallery
 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330**

Saturday, November 11, 2017 -- Schedule

- **From 1:00pm** – Festival site opens to the public with a kaleidoscope of activities including food trucks, free play on DIAVOLO structures and "flying station," DIAVOLO temporary tattoo station, gallery exhibit of stage pieces, models and photos from DIAVOLO archive, screening of selected DIAVOLO repertoire, photo workshop: *Pose, Snap, & Frame it!*
- **1:00pm – 2:00pm at Courtyard Stage** -- Six short pieces from DIAVOLO 25-year archive: *AWOL, Nocturne, Bench, Origine, Caged, Chaise Lounge* and student workshop performance. These early works are often performed in educational settings when DIAVOLO tours to schools and community centers; also brief performance from students developed at DIAVOLO led workshop.
- **3:00pm – 4:00 pm -- Great Hall Performance (ticketed, free to the public).** Repertoire includes **NEW The Veterans Project** a DIAVOLO: Architecture in Motion initiative with U.S. veterans, creating work of theater incorporating authentic movement, sound, and text. Also *Humachina* and *D2R*. **Post-performance Q+A with Jacques Heim and veterans.**
General Admission Tickets, free to the public, available at 12-noon in person (only) at the VPAC Box office. Please note that there are a limited number of tickets available for this performance.
- **4:15pm – 5:00pm** - Participatory Movement Workshops exploring the company's signature creative process on actual DIAVOLO stage structures led by DIAVOLO Institute Teaching Artists.
- **6:00pm – 7:00pm** - Courtyard Stage, Lobby & Lawn DIAVOLO Pop up performances
- **7:00pm -- Great Hall Performance (ticketed)**
Program includes *Passengers, The Veterans Project, Trajectoire*
Tickets \$48 to \$105 available Online at ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org and by phone at (818) 677-3000
- **9:00pm – 11:00pm** -- Dance Party on the Courtyard

Editors please note: The day also includes two workshops, which required pre-registration –"Fox Flyers" at 11:00am and "La Familia" at 2:00pm. *Both workshops and their wait lists are fully registered and are no longer available.* At these workshops for 9-14, participants explore the creative process on an actual DIAVOLO stage structure led by DIAVOLO Institute Teaching Artists; "Fox Flyers" workshop includes creation of a brief work for courtyard performance immediately following.

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