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Two Visions and Two Cities – The Philadelphia/Washington, DC Exchange

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Photo by Deborah Boardman: www.debbieboardman.com

Anne-Marie Mulgrew and Dancers Company (AMM & DCO) and [Human Landscape Dance](#) present The Philadelphia/Washington DC Exchange featuring two companies, two visions and two cities. The Philadelphia performances will take place Saturday, May 29 at 7:30pm and Sunday, May 30 at 3:00pm, Painted Bride Art Center, 230 Vine Street, Philadelphia PA.

The program includes works choreographed by the two artistic directors – Anne-Marie Mulgrew (AMM & DCO) and [Malcolm Shute](#) (HLD).

AMM & DCO will present a reimagined version of *The Big Dance*, a lively full-company work performed by Elrey Belmonti, Joseph Cicala, Frances Gremillion, Anne-Marie Mulgrew, Jodi Obeid, Leslie Ann Pike and Kate Speer. Set to an assorted sound score of music by John Beltman, Angeliqye Kidjo and Sylk, this three-section work, “Blue,” “Red” and “Green” incorporates live video feed and a constructed costume worn by Ms. Mulgrew consisting of 40 feet of red fabric. *The Big Dance* was inspired by personal events that celebrates and questions life’s big issues – living, dying and the fragility and resilience of the human spirit. The Philadelphia Inquirer noted, “The work is ever-full of striking visual imagery and whimsy.” AMM & DCO’s program includes the premiere of *Burn* to music of J.S. Bach, Dolphina and Philip Glass. Created as a response to dealing with a medical crisis, *Burn* reflects one’s desire to move past obstacles and discover the joy and solace in everyday interactions.

Choreographically both works show Mulgrew's unique movement vocabulary featuring partnerings, group lifts, tiny gestures, frenetic moments, extensive use of a space and ensemble sections.

[HLD](#) will present the Philadelphia premiere of [Closet Dances and January Night](#). Set on a frigid January Night, three close friends are snowed in, stir crazy, and unable to sleep. In this turbulent dance, Amanda Abrams, Alexander Short, and artistic director [Malcolm Shute](#) are cast high and low in the wind. The soundscore was created by Malcolm Shute who received the Metro DC Dance "Excellence in Sound Design/Original Composition" 2007 award. Shute composed the score from winter sounds in the city: a Styrofoam cup chased down the sidewalk by the wind, lonely traffic murmur late at night, wind chimes tinkling in frosty air.

[HLD's Closet Dances](#) consists of four vignettes (three duets and one trio) that depict people stuck within a narrow, walk-in closet. "Keeping Secrets" reveal lovers who are no longer honest with each other. "Hooked" exposes partners who both attract and repel one another. "Shadowing" depicts a friendship in which one friend overshadows the other, and "Security Chain," the finale, features three dancers who rush about within the closet, forming and breaking links in a chain. *Closet Dances* are about relationships in conflict. Tenderness and aggression, desire and dread find their way into the movement. The intimacy of the relationships is reflected by the closeness of the partnering. The dancers are bound together, like lovers, by invisible strings.

The second installment of the Philadelphia/Washington DC Exchange will take place in Washington, DC at [DancePlace](#), TBA 2011.

Fusing modern dance, theater, music, technology and art, Anne-Marie Mulgrew and Dancers Co. celebrates its 24th season of dance-making. Known for its "highly imaginative" and "visually arresting" dance theater works and unusual collaborations, AMM & DCO, an experimental modern dance troupe based in Philadelphia, PA, was founded in 1986 by artistic director/founder Anne-Marie Mulgrew who has created fifty-seven works for the company that have been seen nationally and in Canada. The company charms, provokes and informs audiences of all ages with its insightful and wacky views of the world. Visit us at www.annemariemulgrewdancersco.org

Human Landscape Dance is a contemporary dance company based in Washington DC. Our work is about interaction: the hand caressing the face, the boot down the stairs, the unknotting of a tangled body—the transformation of relationships through touch. To learn more about us, visit our blog at www.hldance.org.

Artistic Directors Anne-Marie Mulgrew and Malcolm Shute met at Human Landscape Dance's performance of [Rituals of the First Year](#) at Philadelphia's Clark Park. (This performance was [reviewed](#) by Marilyn Jackson of the Inquirer in July 2008.) The companies share a similar aesthetic. They have a penchant for performing works in public spaces, such as galleries, parks, subway stations, city streets, airports and fountains. On stage, the troupes create rich environments that evoke the cities in which they live.

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