



Media Contact:

Rosa Navarrete

Community Engagement Manager

Invertigo Dance Theatre

rosa@invertigodance.org

(818) 723-9112

Link to Press Images: <https://bit.ly/3lAdJ21>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Invertigo Dance Theatre’s ‘Kitchen Table Project’ Invites Community to Share Love & Loss

LOS ANGELES (August 20, 2021) — Invertigo Dance Theatre’s new multidisciplinary dance collaboration, *The Kitchen Table Project*, activates communal healing through a web of interconnected dance films, immersive virtual experiences and (eventual) in-person performances using the ritual of gathering around the kitchen table as its stage and thematic center. To support the project’s continued development and 2022 premiere, **Invertigo has launched a [crowdfunding campaign](#) with a goal of raising \$20,000 from now until September 13**; donors will receive personal invitations to Invertigo’s free virtual Fall Soiree on October 21, which will include the premiere of the latest film in *The Kitchen Table Project* series.

Seeded from a need to reconnect during a year of unforgettable loss and isolation, *The Kitchen Table Project* began in 2020 after a few weeks of social distancing, when **Artistic Director Laura Karlin** decided to create a series of short dance films to empower imagination and connect community members at their respective tables at home. The table is where we cook, eat, gather, wait, mourn and laugh. Karlin challenged her community to use that space to also reflect and dream.

“Invertigo is looking at this expanse of connections, and we are hoping to create space for people to tell their stories, to mourn together for all we have lost,” says Karlin. “To

share recipes for food and movement (choreography is just a recipe for dance). To move together, to stretch and unfurl. To ache and to laugh, and process trauma, and hold space for one another, and begin, bit by bit, to heal.”

Invertigo used 2020 to push into innovative technology and virtual storytelling. In the first phase of *The Kitchen Table Project*, the company shared six kitchen table dance films, conceived and created in a completely socially distanced process, incorporating poetry, ancestry, food, inner child spirit, and a sense of home. However, as the weeks continued to pass, the impact of the December 2020 surge was deeply felt within the company’s community and the theme of *The Kitchen Table Project* transformed into a place of remembrance.

As of August 20, 2021, Los Angeles County has lost 24,905 persons due to COVID-19 (<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/locations.htm>), and the number is rising. This pandemic is not over, and communities are in need of the arts as a forum to process, express, and heal now more than ever.

“While we have been doing our best to survive and keep the psychic, economic, and physical tolls from being too great to bear for a long time,” says Karlin, “there is a long, LONG period of healing ahead of us, and very few cultural/social/collective spaces are being offered in which to do so. This is where artists, community leaders, activists, and healing collectives are crucial. This is where we step up. Which we will do, in spite of being devastated by the pandemic also.”

The Kitchen Table Project’s latest film, premiering at Invertigo’s Fall Soiree on October 21, features an intergenerational cast of artists, including: **Cody Brunelle-Potter, Haylee Nichele, Diana Lynn Wallace, Chelsea Roquero, Jeannette Bland, and Spencer Jensen**. The film honors the memories of eight community members who were lost during the pandemic. Alongside Karlin, who directs and choreographs, the film was developed with **Glyn Gray (Director of Photography), Chris Stokes (Lighting Designer), Rebecca Baillie Stumme (Production Manager)**, and Invertigo Dance Theatre staff support.

Among others, the project honors the memories of an elder from Standing Rock and a farmworker from the first community where Karlin delivered handmade masks through her work with the Auntie Sewing Squad in the early days of mask shortages. Karlin also brought her beloved family member, Ann, and Invertigo staff members Rosa Navarrete and Chelsea Sutton brought their family members to the table; Navarrete lost her father and Sutton lost her grandmother in late 2020.

“I couldn’t believe my eyes [while watching the filming],” says Navarrete. “In just a few moments I felt my father’s joy through artists Diana Lynn Wallace, Chelsea Roquero, and Spencer Jensen. I was moved to tears, and something inside told me he’s okay. He’s not here, but I know he’s at peace.”

“It’s not about literally representing a person’s life, but evoking their energy and spirit,” says Sutton. “The last day I sat at a table with my grandmother was November 12, 2020. *The Kitchen Table Project* has created space for her to sit again with us, not to mourn exactly, but to be held one more time.”

The \$20,000 raised in the crowdfunding campaign will support not only the development of *The Kitchen Table Project*, but also various Invertigo Dance Theatre programs that involve and integrate community into the work through its Invert/ED Education program, Community In/Motion events, and the popular Dancing Through Parkinson’s program. All contributions impact an intergenerational and diverse community.

Those interested in contributing to the future development of *The Kitchen Table Project* can visit <https://chuffed.org/project/kitchen-table-project> before September 13; donation perks include Virtual Fall Soiree tickets, an original recipe book, and homemade jam. Audiences can catch a peek at some of the project’s dance films on Invertigo’s Vimeo page at <https://vimeo.com/478260678> and <https://vimeo.com/582284928>.

The arts are a way to share stories, reach across the table and say “I was affected too.” It integrates loss and love of community in a creative way. As Karlin says, “The kitchen table is full of memories and symbolism, intercultural exchange and intergenerational connections...there are so many stories to tell.”

About Invertigo Dance Theatre

Invertigo Dance Theatre was founded by Laura Karlin in 2007 and is an institution at the forefront of Los Angeles dance, connecting people to story and community through a blend of dynamic contemporary movement and compelling theatre. Invertigo has created and performed over 40 original choreographic works, across Los Angeles, including the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Ford Theatres, Grand Park, and Broad Stage. Invertigo has also performed in Las Vegas, San Diego, Seattle and Santa Barbara, and won the Grand Prize in the 2016 McCallum Theatre Choreography Festival. Invertigo recently earned one of the highest national honors in American dance when awarded a 2018 National Dance Project production grant, **and The National Endowment for the Arts grant for their production in development *The Dream Eaters***. In addition to

their production work, Invertigo Dance Theatre also works with intergenerational community members, from students in their **Invert/ED Education** program to community members who have Parkinson's Disease in weekly classes through the **Dancing Through Parkinson's** program.

Providing accessible dance programming is at the heart of Invertigo's mission, and the organization operates two year-round community engagement programs: Dancing Through Parkinson's offers donation-based classes to people living with degenerative conditions and Community In/Motion which includes the Invert/ED program, providing a range of dance education and performance opportunities to local students. Throughout all company initiatives, Invertigo is committed to paying fair wages to all artists, teachers, and staff.

More Information

www.InvertigoDance.org

Invertigo Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/invertigodance>

Invertigo Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/invertigodance/>

Invertigo Twitter: <https://twitter.com/invertigodance>

Link to Press Images <https://bit.ly/3lAdJ21>

Video Links

2021 Kitchen Table Project Story & Crowdfunding Campaign Video (**featured**):

<https://vimeo.com/585160451>

KTP 2020 Short Film Trailers

<https://vimeo.com/478260678>

Kitchen Table Project, 2021 Film - Behind the Scenes

<https://vimeo.com/582284928>

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Invertigo Dance Theatre

KITCHEN TABLE PROJECT

L to R: Spencer Jensen, Diana Lynn Wallace, Chelsea Roquero, Laura Karlin, Jeannette Bland, Cody Brunelle-Potter, Haylee Nichele. The Kitchen Table Project dance film collaborators and performing artists.



The Kitchen Table Project, materials at the table. Tea, sage, perfume, flowers in teacups in the foreground. In the background our group of performing artists embrace after weeks of working together to bring these stories to life at the table. Artists: Spencer Jensen, Diana Lynn Wallace, Chelsea Roquero, Laura Karlin, Jeannette Bland, Cody Brunelle-Potter, Haylee Nichele.



Dancing Through Parkinson's community. Images feature our dancers pre-pandemic times. Featuring Board Member, Francine Ringold reaching her arms up and instructors Rachel Whiting and Linda Berghoff.