

# SCOTT/POWELL PERFORMANCE

## *Geography* premiere/tour 2007-2008

photo by Peter Mumford



**Mary Sheldon Scott**  
Artistic Director &  
Choreographer

**Jarrad Powell**  
Music Director & Composer

### Performers

Beth Graczyk  
Mikhail Kaschock  
Jim Kent  
Jess Klein  
Alice de Muizon  
Sean Ryan  
Michael Rioux  
Ellie Sandstrom  
Belle Wolf

**"*Geography* is a visual and intellectual feast, a work that, like life itself, contains moments of piercing beauty and suggestions of violent horror." - Stacey Levine, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer***

*Geography* had its world premiere November 15-17, 2007 at On the Boards, Seattle, as part of On the Board's Northwest Artist Series. *Geography* was performed by company members Alice de Muizon, Beth Graczyk, Mikhail Kaschock, Jim Kent, Jess Klein, Sean Ryan, and Ellie Sandstrom. The project design team included Robert Campbell (visual design), Julianne Keenan (lighting design) and Mark Zappone (costume design).

*Geography* is a National Performance Network Creation Fund Project, co-commissioned by the Myrna Loy Center/Helena Presents in partnership with On the Boards and the National Performance Network. NPN and the NPN Creation Fund is sponsored by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford

Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Altria, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency). Additional funding for *Geography* was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, 4Culture, the City of Seattle's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, and the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Lane Czaplinski, On the Boards supported the project with three on-site creative residencies.

On the Boards, Seattle – Nov. 15-17, 2007  
Myrna Loy Center/Helena Presents – Feb. 1, 2008  
The Southern Theater, Minneapolis – Feb. 22-23, 2008  
Velocity Dance Center, Seattle – May 9-10, 2008

## Announcing *Home* (2009-2010)

*Home*, a new evening-length work for Scott/Powell Performance, begins rehearsals in the fall of 2008. The piece merges physical, sonic, and visual forms as it explores conceptual and tactical questions, structures, landscapes and scenes contained within the word "home." At the beginning of this project is a question: "What is

Home?" This question is set against the following statement: "Actions are required by which men may remain in a positive relationship with Nature."

Scott's current choreographic investigation includes game structures, the exploration of animal vs human physicality, and the use of controlled random processes that reflect processes

found within nature. In addition she is known for her dynamic solos rooted in the individuality of specific performers, as well as for heavily patterned, raw group engagements that involve dynamic lifting and forms of constraint that impact the dancers ability to move freely.

## On the Boards, Seattle, November 15-17, 2007

photos by Peter Mumford



photo by Tim Summers

## Reviews of *Geography*

"Slightly more than an hour long, *Geography* is delivered in three color-coded phases, going from green to brown to black. It oscillates between striking solo passagework and teeming ensemble skirmishes as it weighs the geography of the body against the geography of environment. Patterns emerge, fuguelike, from the chaos and then recede, as Scott's fast-changing, fragmented lexicon of moves embraces everything from finger flutters to sensual swivels to silent screams."

- Michael Upchurch, *The Seattle Times* (Nov. 16, 2007)

"It's not too difficult to spot the genuine article. This is the case with choreographer Mary Sheldon Scott and composer Jarred Powell's most recent modern dance piece, "Geography." The veteran Seattle-based performance group shows no signs of slowing its creative output, even after several consecutive seasons of new works and national touring. "Geography" is a visual and intellectual feast, a work that, like life itself, contains moments of piercing beauty and suggestions of violent horror."

- Stacey Levine, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* (Nov. 16, 2007)



photo by Angela Sterling

“Never grasping at clever concepts, theatrical gimmicks or multimedia distractions, phenomenally talented choreographer Mary Sheldon Scott lets her dance speak for itself. In doing so she allows it a full range of voices, from otherworldly whispers to howls worthy of King Lear.”

Brangien Davis, *The Seattle Times* (October 24, 2005)



photo by Peter Mumford

**“Astonishing work of visual, musical, and physical art.”**

– Trey Hatch, *The Stranger*

“...so compelling it seems to shuck off the structure that brought it into being and take on a wild, hybrid ride of its own.” - Mary Murfin-Bailey, *The Seattle Times*, 6/28/97

“This is what great and lasting art does - taps into some essential humanness on a cellular level.” - Brangien Davis, *The Seattle Times*, 10/24/05

“In the audience, you can't avoid the reverberations, they touch so near the core of human experience.” - Jae Carlsson, *Reflex*, August/September 1994

“...at once alarming and hypnotic.” - Claire Whitley, *Queen Anne/Magnolia News*, 5/22/02

“The musicians, vocalists and dancers were brilliant, with all the performers showing great control and tremendous range.” - Gigi Berardi, *Dance Magazine*, 2000

“...the music creates the sense that the floor is static-charged and fuels the agitation of the footwork.” - Sandra Kurtz, *Dance Magazine Online*, 11/05

“Scott and Powell's performance ventures have made a mission of creating wordless languages that defy the confines of Webster's Dictionary.” - Leah B. Green, *The Seattle Times/Northwest Life*, 5/21/02

“...rumbles like a volcano...bursts forth unexpectedly in the most dramatic fashion.” - Jim Demetre, *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, 10/9/04

“...It knocked me out...the whole room vibrated.” - Bret Fetzer, *The Stranger*, 2/22/01

“Think David Lynch doing a take on Swan Lake for National Geographic.” - Brangien Davis, *The Seattle Times*, 5/24/03

“Choreographer Mary Sheldon Scott has been working with composer Jarrad Powell for 12 years in a series of increasingly mysterious and beautiful works filled with oblique references to the natural world.”

**Sandra Kurtz, *Seattle Weekly*, (October 19, 2005)**



## Mary Sheldon Scott

Artistic Director & Choreographer

## Jarrad Powell

Music Director & Composer

**Scott/Powell Performance** has a regional history of strong artistic vision, and has gained recognition as an important creative force in the Pacific Northwest. Choreographer **Mary Sheldon Scott** and composer **Jarrad Powell** have worked exclusively with each other for over a decade in projects exploring the confluence between dance and music. Their work emerges from this collaboration with a singular artistic voice. Central to their concerns are the increasingly evident wounds and imbalances resulting from man's deep estrangement from Nature, and our struggle to forge new pathways to re-connect with the deepest levels of our humanity. Scott and Powell address these issues through disciplined actions that are abstract and non-literal in their essence.

Scott/Powell Performance has been presented through On the Boards, Dance Theater Workshop/NYC, Portland Institute of Contemporary Art T:BA Festival, Myrna Loy Center/Helena Presents, The Southern Theater/Minneapolis, Western Washington University, Pacific Northwest Ballet/Celebrate Seattle Festival, American College Dance Festival, Bumbershoot Festival, Velocity

Dance Center, and Composer/Choreographer. Projects of the Company have received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, National Performance Network/Creation Fund, Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, Artist Trust, 4Culture, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs/City of Seattle, and the Washington Composers Forum. The Company has been awarded three creative residencies at Centrum in Port Townsend, WA. Scott/Powell Performance is a 2008 SCUBA Touring Program Company.

**Mary Sheldon Scott** has been actively researching movement and creating innovative dance works for over 20 years. Scott's choreography has been presented through On the Boards, Bumbershoot Festival, Portland Institute for Contemporary Art, American College Dance Festival, Western Washington University, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Dance Theater Workshop/NYC, Dance/USA, Composer/Choreographer, Velocity Dance Center, the Myrna Loy Center/Helena Presents, the Southern Theater, and the Pacific Northwest Dance Lab. Commissions include the Cornish Dance Theater (2000, 2006), the d-9 Dance Collective (2001), and individual commissions. Grants and awards include an Artist Trust Fellowship in Dance and grants from 4Culture/King County, Artist Trust GAP Program, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs/City of Seattle, and the Washington Composers Forum. Since 1993 she has created dance works in collaboration with composer Jarrad Powell, and that collaboration continues to be a central force in the evolution of her work. Scott has been selected as Velocity Dance Center's 2008 Choreographer-in-Residence. Scott is Artistic Director and Choreographer for Scott/Powell Performance and Co-Director of the Composer/Choreographer new

performance series. Scott holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Choreography from the University of Colorado, Boulder. She also works extensively with visual media.

**Jarrad Powell's** works have been performed and broadcast internationally and include pieces for voice, gamelan, various western and non-western instruments, electro-acoustic music, music for theater, dance and experimental film. His work includes numerous cross-cultural collaborations, particularly with Indonesian artists, including the innovative theater pieces *Visible Religion* and *Kali*. Since the early 80's he has directed Gamelan Pacifica, one of the most active and adventurous gamelan ensembles in the U.S. He is Music Director and composer for Scott/Powell Performance, a contemporary dance company formed in 1994 with choreographer Mary Sheldon Scott. Recent projects include music for three innovative short films of Robert Campbell. His work has been commissioned by The Walker Arts Center, Performing Arts Chicago, On the Boards, Music in Motion, Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, Myrna Loy Center/Helena Presents, the National Performance Network and many individual performers. Awards include NEA, Arts International, Rockefeller Foundation, Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, 4Culture/King County, Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs/Seattle, Artist Trust Foundation and Creative Capital Foundation. His most recent recordings, *Natural Selection* and *Stonehouse Songs*, are available from Present Sounds Recordings. He is a Professor in the Music Department at Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle.

## “Captivating, lovely, and utterly human”

– Brangien Davis, *The Seattle Times*

### LOCATE

Premiere: McCaw Hall, Seattle - 2007 (18 minutes)  
 Pacific Northwest Ballet’s Celebrate Seattle Festival  
 Cast: 6 women / 3 men.  
 Lighting design: Randall G. Chiarelli  
 Costume design: Mary Sheldon Scott

Solos, duets, trios and quartets dominate as the dancers explore means of locating in space and establishing relationships that both impede and support individual investigation. Composer Powell’s electroacoustic score includes buoyant energy and quiet spatial pointillism that reveals the dancers’ effort and the resonance of the space.



photo © Angela Sterling

### ASHES

Premiere: Velocity MainSpace Theater, Seattle - 2005 (45 minutes)  
 Tour: Dance Theater Workshop/NYC - June 2006  
 Cast: 6 women / 4 men.  
 Lighting design: Julianne Keenan.  
 Costume design: Tasa Gleason.

*Ashes* deals with human struggle, connection, and loss. In Scott's choreography the emotional territory of bone and flesh is pressed against the rigor of a technically charged movement vocabulary, revealing a physical voice that is elemental and visceral. Composer Powell's sound score includes momentary explosions of sounds, minimalistic rhythmic investigations, gradual sonic transformations, and brief vocal interludes.



photo by Luke Allen

### VESSEL

Premiere: On the Boards, Seattle - Northwest Artist Series - 2004 (55 minutes)  
 Cast: 6-8 dancers.  
 Visual & Video Design: Robert Campbell.  
 Lighting Design: Ben Geffen.  
 Costume Design: Tasa Gleason.

*Vessel* explores a saturated female landscape that flickers between characters, emotions, textures, and shapes. A set by Robert Campbell frames the work. Slender, towering pillars serve as a source of light and a receptacle for abstract video imagery. The music incorporates lyrical string-like sounds as well as the transformation of tiny shards of delicate noise into an enveloping ocean of sound.



photo by M. Scott

**“...at once alarming and hypnotic”**

– Claire Whitley, *Queen Anne/Magnolia News*

**KINGDOM**

On the Boards, Seattle - 2003 (55 minutes)

Cast: 6-8 dancers.

Visual/Video Design: Robert Campbell.

Lighting design: Ben Geffen.

Costume design: Lisa DeFrance.

*Kingdom* evokes myths and fairytales, archetypal journeys containing complex spiritual dimensions, earth's creatures, and the essential elements of earth, wind, fire, and water. *Kingdom* explores the diverse layers of meaning evoked by this compelling word. This work completes a trilogy whose primary themes revolve around the deep imbalance created through man's separation from Nature. The companion works are *Natura Abolita* (2001) and *Praying Mantis* (2002).



photo by M. Scott

**PRAYING MANTIS**

Premiere: On the Boards, Seattle - 2002 (18 minutes)

Cast: 6 dancers.

Lighting design: Ben Geffen.

Costume design: Lisa DeFrance.

The praying mantis, an insect that feeds on other insects and clasps its prey in forelimbs held up as if in prayer, mysteriously intertwines the dual aspects of preying and praying. At the core of this work is a search to manifest a deep expression of prayer that lifting and opening of the human heart and spirit in hope and yearning, even as the body inevitably stumbles and twists upon the material of its own flawed and human clay. The electronic score creates a long, slowly developing arch, evocative of an orchestral tone-poem.



photo by Luke Allen

**“Moments of unspeakable grace”**

– Brangien Davis, *The Seattle Times*