

## The Art of Sexy Smart Dance

Inner Workings of San Diego Dance  
Theater

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### Choreographers Corner- Trolley Dances 2015: Stephan Koplowitz

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[Trolley Dances](#) is an exhilarating experience because of the spaces it inhabits. We enjoy traveling through our city, exploring nooks and crannies we've never seen before, or experiencing a place we know well in a new light because of the dance that takes place there. Visiting Trolley Dances 2015 choreographer [Stephan Koplowitz](#), has a lot of experience with bringing these familiar places to life in a new way. Stephan is a well known site-specific dance maker and Dean of the Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance at the [California Institute for the Arts](#). He also teaches site-specific dance courses online. He worked intensively with his Trolley Dances cast a couple of weeks ago, and here is what he has to share about this work!

#### What is your past experience with site-specific work?

I've been fortunate to be involved in the creation of site-specific work for almost thirty years! In all that time, I've encountered so many different types of sites in different countries/states/cultures and have had the pleasure of working with hundreds and hundreds of performers. I don't get tired of working within this art form, I love the fact that working site-specifically allows me to learn more about our world, history and society.



#### Tell us a little bit about your site. How did you pick your Trolley Dances site?

I picked my Trolley Dances site because I was drawn to the design and sight lines. I found the location eye catching, spacious and I was interested in how it interfaces with the general public.

#### How has the site/cast helped to shape the dance? Can you please include a little bit about the concept for the work.



My approach to site-specific work is to approach the site without any preconceptions or ideas and to truly allow the site itself to dictate my creative vision and material. I feel good about how this particular work evolved and am grateful to have ten wonderful performers with whom I could collaborate with in the creation of some of the movement material you will see in the work. I would give the performers very specific movement problems to solve, all tied to specific aspects of the site design or have them explore a movement structure. All of this goes into the big "mix" of material and gets edited and shaped as I develop the work. This work, called *Play(as)* is a highly visual work that allows the performers to interact with the elements found on site and to make a visual impact over the course of time.

#### What music is on your Trolley Dances playlist right now? Why?

The "music" for my dance will be the ambient sounds found at my site. There are many! I felt that it would distance the audience experience of the site if I were to include a recorded sound score. The ambient sounds will compel (I hope) the audiences to lean into the experience of this site and the natural sounds made by the performers while performing.

Catch this new work by Stephan Koplowitz, along with five other new works on September 26/27 & October 3 &4:  
<http://www.sandiegodancetheater.org/trolleydances.html>

Photos by Jim Carmody

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