

## LETTER FROM THE CURATOR

Among the many sublime side effects of falling in love is the implicit permission we receive from our lovers to take an extended impression of their bodies. To look without shame upon the human form and to grant your opposite the gift of being seen. *Undivided Divided* echoes this transparency, played out across 36 cubes and 18 dancers within 7000 square feet of newly realized potent space. It achieves the urgent daring of lingering witness without the correlative consequence of emotional pitfall. Rather, the artists risk everything for the sake of your safety in gazing. They become one with a kaleidoscope of color in a setting as intimate as the almost-touch of two pedestrians in the rain...

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It's pouring in New York and I've got Olympic-sized choreography in my head. I'm inside a Shen Wei painting, coloring between the lines among an impossibly adaptive instant community at the Park Avenue Armory. This kind of beautiful takes a village to grow it; the artist's mind is fertile ground.

Two weeks after the premiere I attended of *Undivided Divided*, I was named Director of Performing Arts at YBCA. Two weeks after starting work here, Shen Wei came to San Francisco to walk through our building with Ken Foster and me. Say what you want about fate, but it don't take a whole day to recognize sunshine...

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First light signals advancing Spring. At the verge of vernal equinox, *Undivided Divided* is an awakening unto poem; unspoken...heard...

The piece re-visits Shen Wei's expert knack for painting dance, literally, and using collective consciousness as canvas. His work has made him one of the best-regarded choreographers on the planet, evidenced by his company's presence on five different continents this season. And yet amidst that profound global reach, this particular work is only having one showing west of the Appalachian Mountains, and that's here at YBCA. It is a coup for us, and a win for Bay Area arts lovers, an approximate viewing of an artist in love with the complexity of the body at work.

**Marc Bamuthi Joseph**

**DIRECTOR OF PERFORMING ARTS**

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