

# Breakin' the rules

Nicole LeGette curates a festival where B-boys and Butoh dancers share the stage **By Sarah Best**



**F\*\*K GRAVITY** The Brickheadz work their moves at the Spareroom.

You may not think that break-dancers, with their gravity-defying, high-energy moves, have much in common with Butoh artists, whose slow-moving work often probes the darkest parts of the human psyche. As curator of a monthlong program of performances, panel discussions and public workshops, Nicole LeGette hopes to shed some light on their similarities. "The Body Breaks: Butoh, Breakdancing and Beyond" begins Friday 3.

LeGette, who once traveled to Japan to study Butoh at its source, first got the idea of bringing these two groups of dance artists together when she sat in on open-floor break-dancing sessions at the Spareroom, an arts space in Humboldt Park.

"I wouldn't say that I am a break-dancer; I'm really not," she admits. "But it became very clear to me that there was a relation between these two forms. Even though at the outset it seems like there's a lot in contrast or even in friction...they actually share a lot

of similarities."

LeGette says that both dance forms foster a kind of antiestablishment rebelliousness. Although break dancing is regularly presented in mainstream dance venues, it first emerged as a competitive form of street dancing. "I believe that they exist as social and political statements against what is perceived as the norm or the status quo," she says of the two genres.

**Inherent in both of these dance forms is a kind of antiestablishment rebelliousness.**

The Chicago-based Brickheadz crew will present a classic battle, or one-on-one dance competition, Friday 3 to Sunday 5 at Links Hall. It'll also open for Yumiko Yoshioka, who presents a new solo Butoh

work, *Before the Dawn*, at the Chicago Cultural Center on March 16.

Butoh, an experimental form of dance that emerged in Japan after WWII, grew out of a different sort of underground movement. The first Butoh artists sought to deal with subject matter that was "considered dark or ugly, taboo or inappropriate," LeGette explains, which "hadn't really been presented in public before."

Neither Butoh nor break dancing aspires to be pretty; instead, LeGette says, they make use of "the broken body, this idea where you actually bend the elbows and the knees and the wrists." In these forms, LeGette adds, "the limbs are rarely fully extended, and if they are, it's usually really pushing the extreme: hyperextending, looking like people are going to rip the arms out of their shoulders.

"I'm also bringing in what I am terming the *beyond*," LeGette says. "Artists that are breaking out or bending the rules that define classic Butoh or classic break dancing." For example, performer Carol Genetti won't use her body at all. Known primarily as a vocalist, she will do a sound-based performance about disembodiment.

The "Body Breaks" also features the Chicago premiere of work by two international Butoh artists, Diego Piñón and Yoshioka, who both have pushed the dance form in new directions. Piñón studied Butoh in Japan with Kazuo Ohno and other masters before returning to his native Mexico and creating Butoh Ritual Mexicano, a new style infused with Mexican folk dance and ritual. Yoshioka, a Japanese artist based in Germany, continues to push the boundaries of Butoh in her work through collaborations with visual, sound and installation artists.

"I'm hoping by presenting these works together that not only the artists themselves but the audience will start to think about and experience the dance that they are viewing in a different light," LeGette says. "I hope that it opens the door to viewing the body in all of its capacities."

**"The Body Breaks..." takes place at Links Hall and venues around the city from Friday 3 to Sunday 26. For details, visit [www.linkshall.org](http://www.linkshall.org).**

## Listings

### IF YOU WANT TO BE LISTED

Submit information by mail, e-mail ([dance@timeoutchicago.com](mailto:dance@timeoutchicago.com)) or fax (312-924-9350) to **Asimina Chremos**. Include details of event, dates, times, address of venue with cross streets, nearest El station and bus routes, telephone number and admission price, if any. **Deadline is 6pm Monday, ten days before publication date.** Incomplete submissions will not be included, and listings information will not be accepted over the phone. Listings are free but, as space is limited, inclusion is not guaranteed.

★=Recommended or notable

### Thursday 2

#### ★Breakbone DanceCo: *Heroine—A Woman's Tale*

*Strawdog Theatre Company*, 3829 N Broadway between Grace St and Sheridan Rd (773-528-9696). El: Red to Sheridan. Bus: 36 Broadway, 80 Irving Park. 8pm, \$12-\$15. With her bold goth-influenced style and a dance technique based on slamming the body into the ground, post-punk performer-choreographer Atalee Judy is the Marilyn Manson of Chicago dance. Her latest vision is described as a "dramatic noise opera," with music by Toronto electronic outfit s:cage. Judy will perform this piece about childhood abuse and the healing powers of imagination along with Berianne Bramman, Jyl Fehrenkamp and Tabitha Faes. Ann Filmer, the theater director and visionary behind the Chicago women's theater festival EstrogenFest, acts as dramaturge. See "Turning points," page 92.

#### Danceworks 2006

*Josephine Louis Theatre, Northwestern University Campus*, 20 Arts Circle Dr, Evanston (847-491-7282). El: Purple to Davis. 8pm, \$18-\$20. Some of the city's finest dance artists keep their bills paid through teaching. This showcase of faculty at Northwestern University includes pieces by Joseph Mills, Molly Shanahan (her new work, *The New Hungry*, is noteworthy for its rigorous movement investigation), Laura Wade, Jeff Hancock, Alexis Leonard and Glenn Leslie. The program also includes a reconstruction of a 1986 work by MOMIX.

#### 3rd annual Full Circle Danztheatre Festival, program two

*Hamlin Park Auditorium*, 3035 N Hoyne Ave between Wellington and Belmont Aves (773-880-5402). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Wellington. Bus: 50 Damen, 77 Belmont (24 hrs). 7:30pm, \$5-\$15. Ellyzabeth Adler's Adler Danztheatre Project organizes this annual showcase of theatrical dance creations. Participating performers and artists are Diandra Jones, CAMP Creative Arts Melting Pot, 3 Card Molly, Synapse Arts Collective, Adler Danztheatre Project, Marquez Dance Project, Nana Shineflug, Susan Padveen, Aloft Aerial Dance and Matrix Dance Improv.

#### ★Luna Negra Dance Theatre: *Coreografos Cubanos*

*The Dance Center*, 1306 S Michigan Ave at 13th St (312-344-8300). El: Red, Orange, Green to Roosevelt. Bus: 1, 3, 4 (24 hrs), 129. Metra: Elec Main to Roosevelt Rd. 8pm, \$28. The Chicago-based outfit offers a program focusing on the Cuban worldview. Check out a world premiere from Maray Gutierrez and the Chicago premiere of Pedro Ruiz's *Enamorados*. Luna will also revisit rep works: the

### DANCE

Turning points	92
Here's looking at two	93