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FILE: Dance / Performance

Zoë Klein Productions presents:

"Born, Never Asked."

Choreographer: Zoë Klein

Lighting Design: Daniel Weiermann

Performers: Zoë Klein, Andrey Pfening, Jeremy Vik, Hien Huynh and Xedex

Dance Mission Theater, 3316 24th Street, San Francisco

Three shows: February 2, 3 and 4, 2018

Friday, February 2 and Saturday February 3 at 8:00 pm // Sunday, February 4 at 7:00 pm

Tickets \$18-25 brownpapertickets.com or call 1-800-838-3006

www.ZoeKleinProductions.com

San Francisco, California, December 21, 2017: "Born, Never Asked." premieres at Dance Mission Theater in San Francisco, Friday, February 2 and Saturday, February 3 at 8:00 pm, and Sunday, February 4 at 7:00 pm. Audience members are welcome to come early to Dance Mission Theater and discover an interactive gallery of visual art made by local adopted artists. After the performance, the audience is invited to stay for a post show conversation facilitated by the Adoption Museum Project.

"Born, Never Asked." is a full length new work by choreographer, Zoë Klein, based on her true story of being adopted as an infant from Colombia. Zoë Klein's female character is the central figure supported by an ensemble cast of four, multi-talented men who contributed to the collaboration. Three of them were born in foreign countries (Russia, Vietnam and Mexico). Each one's raw truth about their connection to immigration and/or adoption is captured in this gorgeous, acrobatic dance theater piece.

Klein's cutting edge movement genre of aerials, acrobatics, and imagery delivers a visual feast along with deep meaning and complex emotions. Audiences may viscerally experience the performers' physicality through their powerful partner flips and lifts, lyrical floor work, multi-level suspensions, sculptural levers and inventive inversions. There are also many tender moments depicted within the ensemble, including a duet where two men compress and sense each other close as if they are twins in utero. In one section, Klein has a brave monologue contextualizing her story within racism, classism, and international systems of oppression. She ties herself in knots with aerial fabric to symbolize how complicated it is to balance the needs and points of views between members of the adoption triad: adopted person/adoptive parent/first birth parents.

Zoë Klein arrived in Brooklyn from Bogotá in 1979. She was raised Jewish within a mixed race family (also known as transracial family). She knew little about her birthplace and nothing about her birth

family. Her view on Colombian culture was skewed. She went to a mostly white, private high school; did not know other adopted people; did not learn her native language; and, thought of Colombia as a scary place based on U.S. media reporting. Her artistic instincts have driven her to the question many international adopted persons in a mixed race family may ask: How can one achieve wholeness with conflicting loyalties between lands, languages, families and cultures? In the current political climate, with the rounding up of immigrants without papers and deportation of non-permanent residents, there are now 35,000-50,000 adoptees in the U.S. whose citizenship is in question or unknown.

Yet, like many international adopted persons, Klein yearns for the sights, sounds, smells and experiences of her people. After decades of not knowing how to look at her ancestral identity, she finally found courage to do a DNA test. It confirmed her early body memory. Zoë stepped up the search amidst the quagmire of legal protocol to find her native family. In spite of a "closed adoption" paper trail, Zoë has not given up on her search for connection to her roots. She became a leader in an international salsa dance scene. She returns regularly to Colombia for investigation and sustenance. She is connected with other indigenous choreographers. Now she is partnering with the Adoption Museum Project which will assist in the creation of a timeline of Klein's life interspersed with key political and historical moments in history in order to introduce what the history of adoption in the US may look like.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Zoë Klein is an acrobatic dancer, performing and visual artist and light designer in the Bay Area. She makes work as an indigenous, international adopted person, who was born in Colombia and raised in Brooklyn, NY. She graduated Hampshire College with a degree in Dance and Culture and Lighting Design. She co-founded Paradizo Dance with David Paris in 2005. They toured 28 countries, winning multiple cabaret dance awards, appearing on "So You Think You Can Dance" and becoming finalists on "America's Got Talent" in 2009. Zoë has created 22 choreographic works; self produced two full evening productions; curated acrobatic dance showcases of emerging New York City artists; led acrobatic dance workshops for thousands of people worldwide; and, became a leader in the international Latin dance performance community. Zoë relocated to San Francisco in 2010 to reconnect with local artists doing site specific, community dance projects and to train under Master Lu Yi in the Circus Center's professional acrobatics program.

Zoë's credits include being a company member with Kim Epifano, Ramon Alayo, Rosy Simas, Zaccho Dance Theater and Dancing Earth. She was presented in two recent San Francisco Salsa Conventions; Trolley Dances 2014; D.I.R.T festival 2016; and FLACC festivals 2016 and 2017. Zoë was a lecturer at this year's indigenous contemporary choreographers' festival at the Ordway Theater in Minnesota, curated by Rosy Simas. Her role as Producing Director at CounterPulse from 2013-2017 included mentoring other artists and she also was one of their ARC:Edge residents in 2016.

Hien Huynh was born in Da Nang, Vietnam and graduated from UC Davis with B.A. degrees in Dance and Communication. He is influenced by breakdance, popping, parkour, Laban, contemporary, and somatics. Hien has become the ubiquitous dancer on the local scene performing with Kim Epifano, Robert Moses' Kin, Raissa Simpson, Lenora Lee, Kinetech Arts, and theMoveMessenger(s). His own work was recently presented at SAFEhouse Arts and a new site specific piece with Footloose Presents was featured for Yerba Buena Night in October with an encore performance in December, 2017.

Andrey Pfening was born in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. He spent his childhood in Samara, Russia, and moved to the Bay Area at age 12. Andrey is a parkour teacher and performer who also specializes in hand balancing, acrobatics, crossfit and gymnastic training.

Xedex was born in Chihuahua, Mexico. He holds a M.F.A. in Theater/Film and an M.A. in Dance Choreography from UCLA and a B.A. in Psychology from Cal State University, Long Beach. Xedex

used his Fulbright Fellowship to do dance research in Mexico and won national honors from the American College Dance Association, performing his work at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C.

Jeremy Vik is from North Bend, Oregon. He received a B.F.A. in Theater from Southern Oregon University. He is a graduate of the Clown Conservatory at San Francisco Circus Center and completed their Professional Acrobatics Program in 2011. A member of Actors Equity, Vik has performed for Le Cirque de Boheme, Sweet Can Productions, Circus Bella, Marin Shakespeare Company, Shotgun Players and the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival.

What the press has to say:

"Zoë Klein's acrobatic and dreamy performance highlighted the injustice of international adoptees forced to migrate to the United States but denied citizenship." [Read full article](#)
- Katie O'Connor 11-16-17, The Daily Californian

"CounterPulse 2016 artists-in-residence Zoë Klein and Stephanie Bastos perform in a shared program that highlights their distinct and emerging choreographic voices. Multi-discipline compositions- Klein's "Born, Never Asked." and Stephanie Bastos' "Timeline"-reveal personal, vulnerable and intimate narrative themes." - Heather Desaulniers , SFArts.org

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Zoë Klein Productions is fiscally sponsored by Dancers Group, with funding by Zellerbach Family Foundation and Dancers Group Ca\$h Grant, and is supported by Dance Mission Theater and East Bay Center for the Performing Arts. Community partners include the Adoption Museum Project and generous individuals.

FREE PRESS TICKETS: You and a guest are welcome to complimentary tickets to the show of your choice. Please confirm by email to zoe@zoekleinproductions.com or call the office at 917-685-2709. Pick up your tickets at the box office before the show.