



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Media Contact: John Hill
johnhillpr@gmail.com
510.435.7128

IN ASSOCIATION WITH EPIPHANY PRODUCTIONS
RHYTHMIX CULTURAL WORKS PRESENTS

Island City Waterways

An admission-free public art event celebrating Alameda's past and present through music, dance, theater, storytelling and the visual arts.

May 21 - 22, 2016

Sat. – Sun.: three shows each day at 10:30 am, 12:30 pm, 2:30 pm

islandcitywaterways.org

ALAMEDA, CA, March 1, 2016 – In association with Epiphany Productions, **Rhythmix Cultural Works** has announced details for an ambitious new public art event titled ***Island City Waterways***, celebrating the past and present of Alameda, California, through music, dance, theater, storytelling and the visual arts. Spanning the water's edge between the Fruitvale and Park Street bridges, this admission-free event will take audiences on a journey into the city's rich maritime past and the origins of its great diversity. *Island City Waterways* takes place **Saturday to Sunday, May 21 – 22**, with three 90-minute tours each day at **10:30 am, 12:30 pm** and **2:30 pm**. Tours reserved exclusively for Alameda Unified middle school students will take place on Friday, May 20.

Conceived and directed by Rhythmix Founder and Artistic Director **Janet Koike**, *Island City Waterways* traces the many waves of immigrants who settled in Alameda from the time of the Ohlone people to the completion in 1902 of the Tidal Canal, an event which made Alameda into the "The Island City" it is today.

Island City Waterways covers a half-mile path organized around four focal points along the city's historic Waterfront Trail. More than two dozen performing and visual artists, and nearly three dozen volunteers will guide audiences on an interactive journey taking inspiration from the natural and manmade landscape.



Right to left: Janet Koike, Megan Lowe, Tina Blaine on Alameda's Park Street Bridge. Photo by Andy Mogg.

Koike invited award-winning dance maker and producer of site-specific performance **Kim Epifano** to contribute original choreography for the event, and she invited veteran actor and director **Ed Holmes** to serve as the event's lead storyteller in the figure of an "old mariner."

Other collaborators include painter and chalk artist **Mark Wagner**, video installation artist **Alessandro Moruzzi**, environmental artist **Ginny Parsons**, Rhythmix executive director **Tina Blaine**, and the members of **Maze Daiko**, a taiko-based percussion ensemble. Local East Bay historians **Eric Kos** and **Dennis Evanosky** serve as lead outside consultants.

"Our goal is to offer audiences an art experience that transports them back in time in their own backyard," says Koike. "How did we get here? is the central question *Island City Waterways* asks."

The walking tour begins near the foot of the Fruitvale Bridge at Blanding Avenue. Individuals are encouraged to arrive 30 minutes in advance to park and register. Participation on each tour will be limited to about 100 people, with 50 spots per tour available for advance reservation at islandcitywaterways.org.

Along the way audiences will be invited to participate in a variety of activities including weaving grasses into abstract forms similar to those that the Ohlone people made, contributing to a large-scale chalk mural depicting the estuary waterways, sharing stories about how one's family came to the Bay Area, and joining the performers in song inspired by the folk traditions of the immigrants who worked in Alameda's maritime trades.

After the tour, participants may return to Rhythmix Cultural Works to record brief video histories about their family roots. The recording booth, in the form of a boat's hull, will be open to the public in the Rhythmix gallery from early May through the end of July. In August, Koike and her partners will then present the collected oral histories to the Alameda Library for preservation.

"*Island City Waterways* is an event that I envision producing on a biennial basis," says Koike. "In future years I'd be interested to explore other locations along the island's waterfront to tell tales of the Navy, Neptune Beach or the China Clipper."

"*Island City Waterways* is a much-needed celebration that should complement the city's current revitalization," says **Donna Layburn**, president of the Downtown Alameda Business Association. "It has the potential to become a signature event for Alameda."

In advance of the May performances, Rhythmix will host a talk led by Kos and Evanosky titled "**How did you get here? A dozen waves of Alameda population growth.**" This event will take place April 14 at 7:00 pm in the Rhythmix theater. Tickets are \$10.

On May 6 at 6:00 pm, the K Gallery at Rhythmix will host an opening reception for ***Island City Waterways: Waves of Inspiration***, an exhibition featuring new works by Alameda-based artists **Parsons**, **Pons Maar** and **Marc Ribaud**. The show, which runs through June 30, investigates the industrial landscape along the water's edge. Admission is free.

For additional information about *Island City Waterways*, including reservations and a route map, visit islandcitywaterways.org.

Island City Waterways is supported in part by generous grants from The James Irvine Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Major sponsors include Alameda Marina.

ABOUT RHYTHMIX CULTURAL WORKS

Open since 2007, Rhythmix Cultural Works is a nonprofit community arts organization where diverse cultures come together to perform, inspire, teach and interact. With a flexible 150-seat theater, gallery space and classroom, Rhythmix supports local, regional and international artists in the presentation of their work and encourages broad participation in the arts. The venue has presented performances by award-winning artists such as Mads Tolling, John Santos, Caminos Flamencos, Will Durst, Brenda Wong Aoki and Gamelan Sekar Jaya, among many others. Annually, the group produces and hosts dozens of live performances, art exhibitions, community events, classes, workshops and seasonal camps for youth, families and adults. Rhythmix has received support from The James Irvine Foundation, the Zellerbach Family Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the San Francisco Foundation and the East Bay Community Foundation. To date, it is the only arts organization in Alameda to receive a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, which was awarded through the agency's Challenge America Fast-Track program. For more information about Rhythmix, including a list of upcoming events, visit rhythmix.org.

ABOUT EPIPHANY PRODUCTIONS

Epiphany Productions Sonic Dance Theater was founded by Kim Epifano in 1997 as a vehicle to create thought-provoking, accessible dance and educational programs. Epifano has a 30-year history as an award-winning choreographer, director and performer. She founded San Francisco Trolley Dances, now in its 13th year, an admission-free festival that has been dubbed "art for citizens" and "a gift to the City" by past attendees. Recent evening-length company works include *Botany's Breath*, a site-specific dance created for the San Francisco Conservatory of Flowers, *Baile en La Calle* and *Precarious Visions*. Epifano has toured the world, including workshops and performances in China, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Turkey and Bali. She is the recipient of four Isadora Duncan Dance Awards, a CHIME mentorship, a Paul Dresher Ensemble ARC Residency, and the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation's Choreographer Commissioning Award. For more information about Epiphany Productions visit epiphanydance.org.

FACT SHEET

WHAT:

Island City Waterways, an admission-free public art event celebrating the past and present of Alameda, California through dance, theater, music, storytelling and the visual arts. Presented by Rhythmix Cultural Works in association with Epiphany Productions.

WHEN:

May 21 – 22, 2016

Saturday and Sunday: three tours each day @ **10:30 am, 12:30 pm, 2:30 pm**

Each tour runs approximately 90 minutes.

Additional Events:

April 14 @ 7:00 pm

Rhythmix Cultural Works
2513 Blanding Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Lecture: East Bay historians Evan Kos and Dennis Evanosky, “How did you get here? A dozen waves of Alameda population growth.”

May 6 @ 6:00 pm

Rhythmix Cultural Works
2513 Blanding Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Exhibition: Opening reception for *Island City Waterways: Waves of Inspiration*, featuring new works by Alameda-based visual artists Ginny Parsons, Pons Maar and Marc Ribaud. The show runs through June 30.

WHERE:

The foot of the Fruitvale Bridge at Blanding Avenue

Closest address: 2661 Blanding Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501

Note: Parking is available at the Bridgeside Shopping Center located at 2531-2661 Blanding Avenue.

TICKETS:

Free admission

To reserve a spot on a tour, visit **islandcitywaterways.org**. Individuals may also register on site 30 minutes in advance of each tour. Tours are limited to about 100 participants.

FOR PHOTOS & MORE INFORMATION:

islandcitywaterways.org

For all press inquiries please contact John Hill at johnhillpr@gmail.com.