



The University of Texas at Austin
Theatre and Dance
College of Fine Arts

For immediate release:

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE PRESENTS

IN THE ETHER

BY ERICA GIONFRIDDO

DECEMBER 2-6, 2020

PRESENTED VIRTUALLY AS PART OF THE 2020/2021 SEASON

Texas Theatre and Dance presents Erica Gionfriddo's *In the Ether*, streaming December 2-6, 2020 as part of the Texas Theatre and Dance 2020/2021 Season. An investigation of embodiment and our virtual identity, *In the Ether* is a staged rehearsal of possible cyborg realities. Utilizing live streaming, emergent technologies and performance, *In the Ether* explores elements of cyborg and queer theories by challenging our core notions of perception and existence in a cybernetic world.

In the Ether is an iteration of *The Ether* series, created by Erica Gionfriddo (ARCOS), that has been evolving through performances across the U.S. since 2016. "The work of deconstructing a boundary begins with examining how it was constructed," shares Gionfriddo. "The borders that keep us distinct from each other and parts of ourselves separate are too often built by systems tied to oppression. Boundaries constructed in this way tell us anything 'other' is bad, wrong, dangerous... And so, we conform to those externally placed borders, expending energy maintaining them until we can't imagine existing without them."

"The word "cyborg" might seem a perfect way to describe this moment of global isolation and daily life being carried out over Zoom," says Gionfriddo. "And you'd be right to say that you are already a cyborg. A hybrid creature with fluid boundaries, existing in a world where reality and virtuality are no longer distinct. But this would only be a beginning..." By advocating for expansive definitions of

both body and technology, participants and spectators are invited to imagine their sense of self beyond their dominant reality and embrace the pleasurable confusion of the multiplicity of realities we are capable of co-creating.

Erica Gionfriddo is a dance artist, educator and somatic researcher who believes in the intelligent body each of us occupies. They are co-founder of ARCOS Dance (acrosdance.com), whose ongoing inquiry probes the intersection of technology and humanity through rigorous interdisciplinary experimentation. Gionfriddo's extensive experience as a GYROKINESIS® and GYROTONIC® trainer guides their pedagogical methodology, which they bring in their capacity as lecturer in dance at The University of Texas at Austin and as an international teaching artist. Gionfriddo holds a B.F.A. in Dance Performance and Choreography from Shenandoah Conservatory and is currently an M.F.A. candidate at Hollins University.

The production team for *In the Ether* includes: Leah Benaim (Stage Manager), Leon Cai (Web Developer), Sara Chaney (Lighting Designer), Jackson Cobb (Media Designer), Georgina Garza (Web Developer), Erica Gionfriddo (Artistic Director), Kalee Sue Gore (Production Coordinator), Inji Ha (Scenic Designer), Harrison Hayes (Scenic Designer), Libby Jantz (Lighting Designer), Ashton Bennett Murphy (Technical Director), Benjamin Randall (Media Designer), Bill Rios (Lighting Designer) and Lindsey Thurston (Costume Designer).

For more information about *In the Ether*, please visit JoinTheDrama.org

CALENDAR LISTING

December 2-6, 2020 – The University of Texas at Austin Department of Theatre and Dance presents *In the Ether* – details available at JoinTheDrama.org.

Performance times are December 2 (PREVIEW) at 7:30 p.m. and December 3-6 at 7:30 p.m. All ticketing for the 2020/2021 Season will be available at pay-what-you-can pricing. Details about how to stream performances will be made available at: theatredance.utexas.edu/season-tickets/subscription-series. More information about ticketing is available at: theatredance.utexas.edu/ticketing

Texas Theatre and Dance is committed to the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff and audiences. Due to the uncertain nature of our current times, all titles, dates, times and presentation details may be subject to change.

ABOUT TEXAS THEATRE AND DANCE

The University of Texas at Austin Department of Theatre and Dance is a world-class educational environment that serves as the ultimate creative incubator for the next generation of artists, thinkers and leaders in theatre and performance.

Texas Theatre and Dance is a proud participant of [The JUBILEE](#), a year-long, nationwide theatre festival featuring work generated by those who have traditionally been excluded – including, but not limited to artists of color, Native American and Indigenous and First Nations artists, women,

non-binary and gender non-conforming artists, LGBTQIA2+ artists, Deaf artists and artists with disabilities.

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