

BLAKE ZIDELL & ASSOCIATES

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BATTERY DANCE COMPANY CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY WITH FREE INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVAL, AUGUST 15-21

2015 Battery Dance Festival (Formerly the Downtown Dance Festival) Will Feature the Erasing Borders Festival of Indian Dance, Curated by the Indo-American Arts Council; Companies and Dancers from Colombia, India, Italy, Norway and Poland; and Performances by 13 NYC-Based Dance Companies, Including Battery Dance Company

Presented in Association with Battery Park City Authority

Founded in the Financial District by Jonathan Hollander in 1976, **Battery Dance Company** gave its first performances in parks, plazas and piers downtown. Five years later, the company launched the Downtown Dance Festival, which has now become the city's longest-running free public dance festival. Battery Dance Company marks its **40th anniversary** with this year's edition, newly renamed the **Battery Dance Festival**, which comprises a week of free performances by a wide range of artists and companies, **August 15-21**.

On the evenings of August 15-20, the Festival will take place at Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park in Battery Park City, against the panoramic backdrop of New York Harbor at dusk (6:30-8:30pm). The Festival will culminate in a grand indoor finale at Pace University's Schimmel Center for the Arts, August 21 at 6pm.

The 2015 Battery Dance Festival kicks off Saturday, August 15 with the 8th edition of the Erasing Borders Festival of Indian Dance, curated by the Indo-American Arts Council (IAAC). The Erasing Borders Festival features artists from around the world practicing—or inspired by—dance from the Indian subcontinent. This year's programming includes Mumbai's Kathak choreographer and performer Sanjukta Wagh; Jayesper Moopen's Johannesburg-based Tribhangi Dance Theatre; New Delhi's Rakesh Sai Babu, who will perform the rarely seen dance/martial arts form of Mayurbhanj Chhau; the choreographer-performer Pallavi Krishnan, from Trichur, Kerala, India, who will give a traditional Mohiniyattam performance; and New York City's own Sonali Skandan and Jiva Dance, presenting the South Indian classical form of Bharata Natyam.

The Battery Dance Festival continues on August 16 with the first of several performances by Battery Dance Company, which will showcase a new work by Tadej Brdnik, a former Principal with the Martha Graham Dance Company who has danced and taught with Battery Dance Company since 1998. The August 16 lineup also includes works by MoralesDance (New York City), Indelible Dance Company (Brooklyn), and Asia Duo (New York City & Malaysia), plus excerpts of works to be presented later in the Festival by Polish Dance Theatre (Poznan, Poland) and Sankofa Danzafro (Medellin, Colombia).

The evening of August 17 will feature artists spanning broad geographic and stylistic ranges, including Kate Thomas' NYC-based Ballet Neo; Enzo Celli's VIVO Ballet, a contemporary dance project based in Rome; and Polish Dance Theatre, from Poznan, Poland, in its New York debut.

On August 18, the Festival will present a multi-artist evening of Colombian dance, with performances by New York's Pajarillo Pinta'o and by Sankofa Danzafro, traveling from Medellin to make its New York debut in the Festival.

An array of American artists and companies—including Beatrice Capote, Cornfield Dance, BOOMERANG and Buglisi Dance Theatre—will share a mixed bill featuring the U.S. debut of the acclaimed Norwegian company Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt on August 19.

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A cornucopia of New York City-based companies make up the lineup of the final outdoor evening of this year's Festival, on August 20: Alison Cook Beatty Dance, Mari Mead Dance Collective, Jennifer Muller/The Works, Tina Croll + Company and Battery Dance Company, which will give another performance of the Tadej Brdnik piece it premieres on August 16.

The 2015 Battery Dance Festival concludes August 21 with a three-part program in the 670-seat Schimmel Center for the Arts at Pace University, Battery Dance Company's first home theater in the late 1970s and early '80s. Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt will present the 60-minute work *Praeambulum*. Battery Dance Company will present the New York premiere of *Terra & Astra*, by Company member Sean Scantlebury, alongside the new work by Tadej Brdnik. Shanmugha Sundaram, widely touted as one of India's leading male dancers, will present a solo based on the story of Parvati and the elephant-headed God Ganesha, performed in the Bharata Natyam style.

Battery Dance Company presents the Festival having just toured South America with its other signature initiative, *Dancing to Connect*[™], which, like the Festival, reveals the company's uniquely global perspective.

Below, please find programming for each evening of the 2015 Battery Dance Festival, including brief biographies of artists and companies performing. For more information, please visit <http://www.batterydance.org/festival/index.htm>.

Support for the 2015 Battery Dance Festival

American Express is the Battery Dance Festival's Lead Sponsor. Holiday Inn Manhattan-Financial District is the Festival's exclusive hospitality sponsor. Other generous sponsors include Con Edison of New York, Goldman Sachs, Moody's Foundation, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York City Council Member Margaret Chin, and Capezio Ballet Makers Dance Foundation.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15, 6:30 TO 8:30 PM

INDO-AMERICAN ARTS COUNCIL'S ERASING BORDERS FESTIVAL OF INDIAN DANCE

Sanjukta Wagh (Mumbai, India)

Performer, choreographer, teacher and curator Sanjukta Wagh trained extensively in Kathak with Rajashree Shirke, and in Hindustani music with Murli Manohar Shukla. Her engagement with theatre and love of literature have led to interdisciplinary works, both innovative and within Kathak tradition. She has won recognition in India and abroad; her dance-theatre work *Rage and Beyond: Irawati's Gandhari* won two 2015 Mahindra Excellence in Theatre Awards.

Ms. Wagh will perform three works: *Rajat Chandrama: Invocation to Shiva*, set to a Dhrupad musical composition by Baiju Bavra and celebrating Shiva, the lord of Dance; *Teentala: Kathak Nritya*, celebrating the pure or non-interpretative aspect of the Kathak form *nritya*, with a composition set to the time cycle of sixteen beats called *teentala*; and *Thumri: Storytelling in Kathak*, an expression of a *thumri* (romantic-devotional song) by Pandit Bindadin Maharaj, describing an episode in the lives of the eternal lovers Radha and Krishna.

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Shaan Mutiyaaran Di Bhangra (SMD) is an all-female, NY-based, bhangra group who perform the high-energy folk dance of the state of Punjab in India normally associated with male dancers. Alumni of competitive collegiate teams from all over the US, the dancers capitalize on their training in a multitude of bhangra styles to present a unique take on the tradition. Passionate about spreading the art, two members co-founded Shaan Studios NYC, which starts classes this summer.

Bhangra is a lively form of music and dance that originated in the Punjab region in Southeast Asia. Punjab, “land of five rivers”, extends over Northern India and Northeastern Pakistan. Bhangra began as a part of the harvest festival (Vaisakhi) celebrations and has become a part of modern day celebrations such as weddings, birthdays, and parties. After Punjab was split between Pakistan and India at the end of the British Rule in 1947, a large number of Punjabis migrated into the UK, Canada, USA, Australia and elsewhere, which had a significant influence on Bhangra music and dance. The North American bhangra competition circuit began in the 90’s at the collegiate level. Since then, the circuit has grown significantly to include many more collegiate teams as well as independent teams, such as Shaan Mutiyaaran Di.

Rakesh Sai Babu (New Delhi, India)

Born into the royal family of Mayurbhanj (Orissa) renowned for its performance-cum-martial art, Rakesh belongs to the Gurukul Chhau Dance Sangam, a company of six dancers directed by his father and noted for both traditional and new works. Versed in a range of dance forms, he has also choreographed for musicals, theater and television. His primary mission is to promote Mayurbhanj Chhau, a form rarely seen outside of its native place, through performances and workshops around India and the world.

Rakesh Sai Babu will perform *Dandi*, a dance of the wandering ascetic based on the traditional ritual carried out by upper caste boys to celebrate manhood and the possibility of becoming a Brahmachari (a celibate). He will also perform *Yuddha* (war), a dance originally performed in the royal courts of Mayurbhanj to encourage warriors to fight to their last breath and later reproduced as entertainment during celebrations.

Pallavi Krishnan (Trichur, Kerala, India)

A leading Mohiniyattam exponent, Pallavi Krishnan is acclaimed for her versatility as performer, choreographer and teacher. Having trained in Mohiniyattam with Guru Kalamandalam Shankaranarayanan, she graduated in Dance (Kathakali) at Shantiniketan, the university established by Rabindranath Tagore. Equally proficient in *adavu* (technique) and *abhinaya* (facial expression), she performs and teaches all over the world, and has received several honors for her contributions to Mohiniyattam and its repertoire.

Pallavi Krishnan will perform *Cholkettu*, the first section of a traditional Mohiniyattam performance. *Chollu* means ‘syllables’ and *kettu* means ‘threading’; thus, in this dance, soft and graceful movements are aesthetically threaded with *raga* melody and *tala* rhythms into a garland.

Sonali Skandan and Jiva Dance (New York City)

Sonali Skandan and Jiva Dance create and present works based on the timeless idiom of Bharata Natyam. Dedicated to preserving and promoting the traditional arts, they also explore innovative techniques that invigorate classical works with a fresh voice and perform for diverse audiences. Jiva has participated in notable festivals around the U.S., including Erasing Borders in 2012.

Sonali Skandan and Jiva Dance will perform *Mayil Virutham*, an excerpt from *Mayura: Blue Peacock*, which premiered in 2014. The title refers to 15th century verses written by the Saint Arunagirinathar in the Tamil language.

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 16, 6:30 TO 8:30PM

Battery Dance Company (New York City)

Battery Dance Company will present the first view of a new work choreographed by Tadej Brdnik, a former Principal with the Martha Graham Dance Company. Tadej began his career in Slovenia and joined Martha Graham in 1996. He has danced and taught with Battery Dance Company since 1998, and has performed with Robert Wilson, David Gordon and Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project, among others. He is a recipient of The Benetton Dance Award and the Eugene Loring Award.

MoralesDance (New York City)

Founded in 1997 by Tony Morales, MoralesDance has welcomed guest dancers from various companies including The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, The Paris Opera Ballet, American Ballet Theater, Dance Theater of Harlem, Martha Graham Dance Company, and Battery Dance Company. The company has performed in New York at The Theater of the Riverside Church, Cunningham Studio Theater, Context Theater, JCC of Manhattan, and The Alvin Ailey CitiGroup Theater.

MoralesDance will present *Pleased 2 Meet U*, a duet from 2000 that has been performed by men, women and mixed couples. In three sections and performed here by two women, it is inspired by the process of meeting someone whom you grow to love and trust.

Indelible Dance Company (Brooklyn)

Indelible Dance Company was founded in Williamsburg, Brooklyn in 2010 by Artistic Director Robin Cantrell. Indelible presents a new production annually, collaborating with myriad visual and sonic artists to create immersive performance events that grow in scope each year.

Indelible will perform *Wonderland*, an imaginative work that takes the audience on a multi-sensory immersive journey through an Alice-inspired world. *Wonderland* premiered in Williamsburg in December, 2014.

Asia Duo (New York City & Malaysia)

Asia Duo is an offshoot of ASWARA Dance Company (ADC), which was founded in 1994 as a collective of lecturers and students in Kuala Lumpur's premiere arts university to champion Malaysian and Asian identity in traditional and contemporary dance. In 2014, ADC Principal Dancer/Choreographer Fairul Zahid participated in NYU's Tisch School of the Arts study abroad program and formed "Asia Duo," with the purpose of collaborating with Asian dancers studying abroad and of sharing ideas through their cultural and contemporary background.

Asia Duo will perform *Draw-err*, a work about two men attempting to create another figure in space that has the power to change the past, present and future.

Polish Dance Theatre (Poznan, Poland)

Polish Dance Theatre will perform a 20-minute excerpt of the repertoire they will perform in full on Monday, August 17. Please see below for program details.

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Sankofa Danzafro (Medellin, Colombia)

Sankofa Danzafro will perform a 15-minute excerpt of *La Ciudad de los Otros*. See Tuesday, August 18 below for full program details.

MONDAY, AUGUST 17, 6:30PM TO 8:30PM

Ballet Neo (New York City)

Ballet Neo was founded in 2007 by Artistic Director and Choreographer, Kate Thomas, as a neo-classical ballet company with repertory rooted in American culture. Recently, the company performed Thomas' *Appalachian Suites - Women of Monongah* at Manhattan Movement and Arts, premiered *Fellini's Dream* for *Ensemble on Ensemble* at The Steps Beyond Series, and was selected for the Brooklyn Dance Festival's *Emerging Company Performance* at the Actors Fund Theater.

Ballet Neo will perform *Fellini's Dream*, a theatrical ballet choreographed by Kate Thomas, set to *Flying Vegetables of the Apocalypse* composed by Guy Klucevsek.

VIVO Ballet (Rome, Italy)

VIVO Ballet is a contemporary dance project founded and directed by Enzo Celli. It is an extension of Enzo Celli's group, Botega Dance Company, which he founded in 1995. Most of VIVO's repertory follows Celli's humanistic visions and was created during his recent years of international experience across Europe and the United States. Latest works include *Zònton* and a contemporary version of *Giselle*.

VIVO Ballet will perform *Zònton*, meaning "alive," a new performance piece created by Enzo Celli that celebrates life and its deeper meanings. Looking to sacrifice, pain and joy, the dance becomes a metaphor for life itself.

Polish Dance Theatre – Polski Teatr Tanca (Poznan, Poland) – New York Debut

Polish Dance Theatre, established in 1973, is among Europe's leading dance ensembles. Ewa Wycichowska, manager and artistic director, has invited distinguished artists such as Birgit Cullberg, Mats Ek, Takako Matsuda and Ohad Naharin, to create original works for the company. Polish Dance Theatre's repertoire, unique dance language and use of contemporary theatre have attracted universal praise from audiences globally. The Company also produces annual workshops and festivals in its home city of Poznań.

Polish Dance Theatre will perform two works in its New York City debut at the Battery Dance Festival. *It's Already Dusk* is Ewa Wycichowska's interpretation of the famous Bergman duel scene in the "Seventh Seal." The duel has a perverse and paradoxically optimistic end, which gives rise to reflections on true strength and hope. *Thousand Colors* is choreographer Takako Matsuda's vision of an ever-changing reality, and how each reality has its own color, both joyful and sad. Memories of the past, of those we have lost, all "color" our lives.

Polish Dance Theatre's Festival performances are made possible in part through grants from the Polish Cultural Institute of New York and The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland.

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 18, 6:30 TO 8:30PM
“AN EVENING OF COLOMBIAN DANCE”

Pajarillo Pinta’o (New York City)

Daniel Fetecua Soto, a member of the Limón Dance Company, founded Pajarillo Pinta’o in Germany in 2003. The company performs works that fuse traditional Colombian dances and rhythms with the principles of American modern dance and German dance-theatre. Soto focuses on presenting traditional Colombian folklore while creating new contemporary works based on these traditions. In 2012, Pajarillo Pinta’o premiered *Bella Vista*, Soto’s first full-length work, dedicated to the memory of the massacre of Bojaya.

Pajarillo Pinta’o will perform a mixture of traditional Colombian folkloric dances and modern dance, all accompanied by live musicians.

Sankofa Danzafro (Medellin, Colombia) – New York Debut

Founded in 1997, Sankofa Danzafro presents the deeply rooted forms of African dance traditions as they have been translated into the Colombian context. The company is focused on building a bridge between Afro-Colombians and Colombians among their shared community. Sankofa Danzafro has performed in the United States, Africa, and Asia. A leading dance company from Medellin, Sankofa will share with Battery Dance Festival audiences a genre of dance rarely seen outside Colombia.

Sankofa will perform *La Ciudad de los Otros*, a look into city life that is often hostile, discriminating, and lonely—rather than a source of progress for humankind. It reveals the lack of opportunities for many minority groups who have been marked by social injustice, but at the same time celebrates their resilience and spirit.

Sankofa Danzafro’s Festival performances are made possible in part through grants from the Consulate General of Colombia in New York, and the Ministry of Culture of Colombia.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 6:30PM TO 8:30PM

Beatrice Capote (New York City)

Beatrice Capote received her BA in Dance Education from Montclair State University. Capote has choreographed and performed her solo work as a guest artist for ASHA Dance Company, Eric Dolphy Jazz Festival, WestFest Dance, and the Bronx Academy of Arts and Dance (BAAD). She is currently on faculty at the Ailey School, Joffrey Ballet, Montclair State University, and works with Camille A. Brown and Dancers.

Capote will perform her solo *One Step Closer*, a work about persistence, the voices of conflicting decisions and temptations, and the forward and back pull of growth.

BOOMERANG (Gambier, Ohio)

BOOMERANG is a dance and performance project created in 2012 by co-directors Matty Davis, a visual artist and athlete, and Kora Radella, an assistant Dance professor at Kenyon College, with founding member Adrian Galvin. The group’s members have been referred to as the “punk Mozarts of dance.” Their new evening-length work, a collaboration with Deerhoof drummer Greg Saunier, will premiere in March 2016 at Dixon Place.

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At the Battery Dance Festival, BOOMERANG will perform *Our Past the Fuse*, a highly physical piece that invites the audience to become submerged in viscerally emotional experiences. Daring jumps and lifts are counterbalanced with tender exchanges of weight and listening. Endurance is essential as the two male performers abandon themselves between full-bodied efforts and evocative gestures. *Our Past the Fuse* will feature accompaniment by live musicians.

Buglisi Dance Theatre (New York City)

Buglisi Dance Theatre, founded in 1993 by Artistic Director/Choreographer Jacquelyn Buglisi and fellow stars of the Martha Graham Dance Company, has performed nationally at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, Vail International Dance Festival, the River to River Festival, The Joyce Theater, and internationally at festivals in Australia, Israel, and Italy. Committed to changing lives through art, BDT embraces 150+ dancers in The Table of Silence Project 9/11, a multi-cultural performance ritual for peace at Lincoln Center, viewed by 30,000 worldwide in 82 countries and 45 states via live streaming.

Buglisi Dance Theatre will perform *Sacred Landscapes Part 1*, which premiered at New York Live Arts in June 2015. The dance, set to commissioned music by Paola Prestini, brings awareness to the growing concern for human existence and the natural world. *Part 1* is dedicated to water.

Cornfield Dance (New York City)

Ellen Cornfield, a dancer known as a long-time member of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, founded Cornfield Dance in 1989. The company has traveled throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe and Japan, performing in theaters and universities, as well as outdoor and public spaces. International venues include: the International Dance Festival in Bytom, Poland (four times), the C. Munch Theatre, Paris, The Place Theatre in London, the OPEN LOOK Festival, in St. Petersburg, Russia, and three venues in Japan over a two-week tour, with performances in Tokyo and Okayama.

Cornfield Dance will perform an excerpt from *Pas de Detour*, an evening-length dance for three plus Ms. Cornfield, which deals with the idea of obstacles as we experience them in our lives and the ways they can detour and derail us.

Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt (Oslo, Norway) – U.S. Debut

Ingun Bjørnsgaard, one of Norway's leading choreographers, established Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt (IBP) in 1992. Characterized by courage, breadth of theme, and elegance, Bjørnsgaard's work tackles the social, erotic and political dynamics between the sexes. Ms. Bjørnsgaard has been a guest choreographer at institutions such as the Norwegian National Ballet and the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm. She is the only choreographer to have received the Norwegian Critics' Association Award twice—for *Sleeping Beauty* (1995) and *Largo* (2010).

The Company is bringing to Festival audiences its 2013 work *Praeambulum* (which means prelude, introduction, or preparation). In both music and rhetoric, a *Praeambulum* is a virtuosic and artful opening that is meant to heighten our expectations of what is to come. The Company will perform excerpts at Wagner Park on August 19 and the full-length production on August 21 at Schimmel Center for the Arts.

Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt's Festival performances are sponsored in part by the Royal Norwegian Consulate General of Norway in New York, the American-Scandinavian Foundation through the Andrew E. and G. Norman Wigeland Fund, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway and Performing Arts Hub Norway.

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 6:30PM TO 8:30PM

Alison Cook Beatty Dance (New York City)

Alison Cook Beatty Dance, founded in 2012, is grounded in American modern dance traditions. Founder and Artistic Director Alison Cook Beatty's choreography has been commissioned by Ballet Next, Columbia Ballet Collaborative, Carolina Ballet Theater, Joffrey Ballet School NYC, Opera Dolce, The Boston Conservatory, and NYU. The company has performed throughout the East and West Coasts of the U.S.

Alison Cook Beatty Dance will present *Banshee's Lamentation*, performed by five dancers and three musicians. The musical score, *Lyric Trio, Op. 710: I. Red Darkness*, has been created through a collaboration between pianist Eunbi Kim and composer Carson Cooma.

Battery Dance Company (New York City)

See Sunday, August 16 above for program details.

Mari Meade Dance Collective (Brooklyn)

Mari Meade Dance Collective (MMDC) is a Brooklyn-based company that presents off-kilter work choreographed by Mari Meade. Humorous twists, often inspired by the dancers, layer the work with an irreverent and playful air.

Mari Meade Dance Company will perform *Cog*, an abstract examination of cicada interactions in the form of a highly physical and rhythmic group work for six women and two men.

Jennifer Muller/ The Works (New York City)

Jennifer Muller/The Works is celebrating its 40th anniversary. The Works has electrified world audiences in 39 countries, on four continents, in 30 states in the U.S., and in 24 New York Seasons—including performances at Lincoln Center, The Joyce, David H. Koch, and City Center Theaters – and US performances at the Kennedy Center and Jacob's Pillow.

Jennifer Muller/The Works will perform a revival of *Flowers* (2004), a work that captures the spirit of the photography of Barbara Bordnick, whose images become symbols of growth, delicacy, sensuality, and fleeting beauty.

Tina Croll + Company (New York City)

A pioneer in the New York dance community, Tina Croll is a founding member of Dance Theater Workshop and co-director of *From the Horse's Mouth*. She established Tina Croll + Company in New York City and performed with her company at Judson Church, Dance Theater Workshop, The Theatre of the Riverside Church, Clark Center, and other theaters in the city. The company also toured extensively throughout the U.S.

Tina Croll + Company will perform an excerpt of *Ancient Springs*, an evening-length work originally presented by Danspace Project in 2007. *Ancient Springs* is inspired by the poet Kathleen Raine's book *Defending Ancient Springs* and Federico Fellini's landmark film *La Strada*.

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 21, 6:00PM TO 8:30PM
CLOSING EVENT AT PACE UNIVERSITY'S SCHIMMEL CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Ingun Bjørnsgaard Prosjekt (Oslo, Norway)

Praeambulum. (See Wednesday, August 19 above for details.)

Shanmugha Sundaram (Chennai, India) New York Debut

Shanmugha Sundaram, senior disciple of the late K.J Sarasa and one of India's most celebrated male dancers, will perform a solo in the Bharata Natyam style. In this Varnam, the most complex element in a traditional Bharata Natyam recital, he will take on multiple characters in portraying two episodes from the life of Lord Ganesha. Originally choreographed by K.J Sarasa based on a traditional story and musical composition, this is a new iteration of the piece, re-staged by Shanmugha for the Festival.

Battery Dance Company

New Work by Tadej Brdnik. (See Sunday, August 16, above).

Terra & Astra by Sean Scantlebury.

**For more information, please contact Blake Zidell or Emily Reilly at Blake Zidell & Associates:
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