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Yerba Buena Center for the Arts presents
the world premiere of
Last Blue Couch in the Sky
by Kim Epifano / Epiphany Dance Theater



Hien Huynh and Nuria Bowart in Last Blue Couch in the Sky. Photo: Andy Mogg

This dance journey starts at Tutubi Plaza, traverses the streets of SOMA,

and culminates with a thrilling performance in YBCA's Forum.

Friday–Sunday, June 2–4, 2017

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 701 Mission Street, San Francisco CA94103

SAN FRANCISCO – (April 19, 2017) [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts \(YBCA\)](#) announces the world premiere of [Last Blue Couch in the Sky](#), conceived and created by **Kim Epifano** and [Epiphany Dance Theater](#), now celebrating its **20th anniversary season**.

Last Blue Couch in the Sky is a two-part dance performance that reveals the cultural erasure witnessed in the South of Market neighborhood of San Francisco. Commissioned by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts and developed in part with neighborhood residents, schools, businesses, and community centers, *Last Blue Couch in the Sky* is a collaboration involving more than 20 dancers, actors, writers, and musicians. The title references Brian Goggin's recently dismantled public art installation *Defenestration* (1997) and will feature Goggin's actual blue couch.

Featuring site-specific dance and performance happenings in the streets, on fire escapes, and throughout public spaces, *Last Blue Couch in the Sky* will begin in **Tutubi Plaza** (Russ Street between Minna and Natoma) and stop for dance performances at **six locations** before entering **YBCA's Forum**, where the energy and potency of the street dance comes inside for a thrilling 75-minute culmination. Live music accompanies the entire evening.

Epifano explains, "This project highlights my ability to collaborate and connect with the community I am working in, not just plop something on top of what already exists there. I have a long history of creating work that is social justice-based and politically charged. *Last Blue Couch in the Sky* is not just a dance-theater piece, but a hands-on art exchange that allows residents to connect and get to know their neighbors—and realize how powerful that can be."

Marc Bamuthi Joseph, YBCA Chief of Program and Pedagogy, remarks, "Kim Epifano's work exemplifies our institutional value of excellent art engaging a social context. Structurally, she reframes both 'theater' and 'environment' in contemporary performance. Her ambitious staging across a wide swath of public space is a humble gesture toward accessibility that encourages our institution to breathe in the life outside our walls."

In the creation of this work, Epifano is collaborating with several important neighborhood groups and organizations that have influenced her work over the years, and which serve communities in this rapidly changing city. These include: **Yerba Buena Gardens**; **Bindlestiff Studio** (a Filipino theater/community center); the **Orlando Hotel** (an SRO hotel home to many immigrant families, especially from Nepal); **United Playaz** (a violence prevention and youth development program); **Hospitality House Art Studio** (a self-help center for the homeless); **Children's Creativity Museum and Carousel**; and **Bessie Carmichael Elementary School**.

About Kim Epifano / Epiphany Dance Theater

Kim Epifano has a 30-year history as a choreographer, director, performer, vocalist, educator, curator, and

collaborator. Since 1997 she has been the artistic/executive director of the San Francisco–based Epiphany Dance Theater, which creates thought-provoking, accessible dance performances and educational programs, building understanding across cultures and ages. On the stage and in the street, she also founded SF Trolley Dances in 2004, receiving *SF Weekly's* Best Transit City Ballet award as well as a nomination for the MTC Excellence in Motion Transportation Award.

Epifano is also co–artistic director of Mudd Butt Mystery Theater Troupe and Mudd Butt International. She holds an MFA in choreography from UC Davis. She has recently been a guest and adjunct professor at UC Berkeley and UC Davis. Epifano's work has been funded by the National Endowment for the Arts, the Irvine Foundation, Grants for the Arts, The Creative Work Fund, The Haas Fund, and The Hewlett Foundation, among others. For more information, visit epiphanydance.org.

The commissioning and production of this world premiere is made possible by Gerbode-Hewlett Foundation's 2014 Choreographer Commissioning Awards initiative. Additional support for *Last Blue Couch in the Sky* is provided by the National Endowment for the Arts.

About Yerba Buena Center for the Arts

Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA) is one of the nation's most innovative contemporary arts centers. Founded in 1993, YBCA's mission is to generate culture that moves people. Through powerful art experiences, thoughtful and provocative content, and deep opportunities for participation, YBCA is committed to creating an inclusive culture that awakens personal and societal transformation. YBCA presents a wide variety of programming year-round, including performing arts, visual arts, film/video and civic engagement. YBCA venues include the Forum, Screening Room, Galleries and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts Theater. For tickets and information, call 415.978.ARTS (2787).



FACT SHEET

Kim Epifano / Epiphany Dance Theater ***Last Blue Couch in the Sky***

WHO/WHAT: [Yerba Buena Center for the Arts \(YBCA\)](http://Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (YBCA)) presents **Kim Epifano's Epiphany Theater** in the world premiere of [*Last Blue Couch in the Sky*](#), a two-part dance performance that reveals the cultural erasure witnessed in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood.

The first half of the evening is a **walking tour**, stopping at six different site-specific performance locations. The second half of the evening is a ticketed indoor performance in **YBCA's Forum**. Audiences are encouraged to attend both parts. Live music accompanies the entire production.

Last Blue Couch in the Sky features more than 20 performers and is conceived, directed, and choreographed by Kim Epifano with musical direction by **Laura Insera**, lighting design by **Allen Wilner**, costume design by **Maria Chenut**, design and rigging by **Richard Kittle**, and writing by **Joan Holden** and **Oliver Saria**, featuring the actor, musician, and dramaturg **Bob Ernst**.

WHEN/WHERE:

Fri, Jun 2 & Sat, Jun 3

SOMA walk begins at Tutubi Plaza, between Russ and Natoma Streets, SF, CA 94103 at **7pm (free)**

Performance inside the YBCA Forum, 701 Mission Street, SF, CA 94103 at **9pm (ticketed)**

Sun, Jun 4

SOMA walk begins at Tutubi Plaza, between Russ and Natoma Streets, SF, CA 94103 at **7pm (free)**

Performance inside the YBCA Forum, 701 Mission Street, SF, CA 94103 at **8:30pm (ticketed)**

TOTAL RUN TIME:

SOMA walk: 80 minutes

Intermission: 20 minutes

Performance inside YBCA Forum: 75 minutes

TICKETS: <https://ybca.org/whats-on/kim-epifano> / 415.978.2787

COST:

General: \$15 advance / \$20 at the door

Seniors, teachers, and students: \$13 advance / \$18 at the door

YBCA members: \$12

All Access members: Free (limit 1)

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