

Biography — Karen Christopher (as at August 2017)

Karen Christopher is a collaborative performance maker, performer and teacher. With her company, Haranczak/Navarre Performance Projects, she has been engaged in creating a series of duet performances devoted to examining the collaborative performance-making process with each duet pair. She was a member of influential Chicago-based Goat Island performance group for 20 years until the group disbanded in 2009. With Goat Island, Karen performed throughout the USA and the UK, and in Austria, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland.

Her focus is on artistic negotiation in the devising process and finding non-traditional structures for working and composing live performance works. Her work includes a search for points of intersection and startling combinations that surprise and awaken the mind. It includes listening for the unnoticed, the almost invisible, and the very quiet. Employing both historical and studio-based research she works toward discovering each piece by making it. She is paying attention as a practice of social cooperation. Recent work includes devised duet performances in collaboration with Sophie Grodin, Gerard Bell, and Teresa Brayshaw, as well as projects with artists such as Rajni Shah, Lucy Cash, Chris Goode, Tom Leabhart, Danae Theodoridou, Shelley Jackson, and Tom Marshman.

Karen has 30 years experience leading performance composition workshops at numerous art centres and universities in the US, UK, and Europe, including extended performance devising workshops at the Centre for Contemporary Arts (Glasgow); the School of the Art Institute of Chicago; in the Context Choreography program at the Inter-University Center for Dance (HZT) Berlin; de Theaterschool, Amsterdamse Hogeschool voor de Kunsten (AHK); Dartington College of Art; University of Aberystwyth; Pomona College (USA); Plymouth University; University of Sussex; Kampnagel (Hamburg); Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance; and the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (*now* Royal Conservatoire of Scotland). In 2009, she undertook a three-year devising project with first year students from Dartington College of Art, which accompanied them through their first year of incorporation by University College Falmouth. This project focussed on collaboratively generating performance material with an eye on lasting, leaving, ending, absence, and residue, as well as solace, community, and facing the generative force of change. From 2010 to 2013 Karen taught on the MA in Advanced Theatre Practice course at Central School of Speech & Drama (*now* Royal Central School of Speech & Drama).

She is an Honorary Fellow of Falmouth University; an Associate Research Fellow at the Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre, University of London; Artist Research Fellow in the Department of Drama at Queen Mary, University of London; and a member of Chisenhale Dance Space. In the recent past she was Visiting Artist at University of Roehampton; and an Associate Artist of Chelsea Theatre (London). In addition to numerous commissions and local, state, and national funding awards for work with Goat Island, she was awarded a Crosscut (Chicago) grant for new collaborations, received an Illinois Governor's grant for international exchange, and in the UK has been the recipient of funding from Grants for the Arts (ACE).

Essays on performance and related topics by Karen Christopher have appeared in 'TDR', 'Frakcija', 'Theatre, Dance, and Performance Training', 'Green Letters', and in *Small Acts of Repair: Performance, Ecology and Goat Island* (Routledge), *DIY and DIY too* (University of Chichester), and *Imagined Theatres: Writing for a theoretical stage* (Routledge).

www.karenchristopher.co.uk