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Two in a Canoe...Dancing!

by Roger Martin atca on February 14, 2012



Pioneer Winter and MARRISA NICK/photo Jared Sharon

They'll be floating on the waves of Biscayne Bay in a tippy canoe and you just know they won't be jitterbugging, knee knocking the boat with a charleston or even waltzing to the warhorse from Vienna. But let me tell you they will be rocking that canoe, and more than somewhat, with a brutally athletic pas de deux. Dancers Pioneer Winter and MARRISA NICK will be testing their balance in a passionate struggle to maintain their composure. And to quote from the pr:

"While they fight on board the canoe and with their relationship structure, they must ultimately confront one another to restore their romantic focus (and footing): mutual affection becomes a function of stasis." (I know, I had to look it up, too. Stasis: inactivity resulting from a static balance between opposing forces.)

You'll get to see this unusual dance four different times, starting at 3 pm on February 18 at the Deering Estate at Cutler as part of the SoBay Festival of the Arts, a two week celebration of the arts

running February 14 - 26th.

Pioneer Winter created the piece, Ebb/Flow, and says the water will become a metaphor based upon the ebb and flow of romantic relationships. "I am a young choreographer—my experiences are not the same as my cohorts—but relationships are something you build upon from birth. Who better to represent a romantic, turbulent, sometimes comedic experience than someone who is still riding that wave?"

I asked Pioneer about MARRISA NICK and he said they've known each other since they were kids. He was just nine years old. "I think our mutual appreciation for each other and our differing aesthetics has made us very compatible." They worked together in his piece at the recent Miami Beach Arts Gala, MARRISA's Shadow Projects in Art Basel, and experimentation with hybrid dance and fusion with the vertical barre. Pioneer said that their work together is complementary, as their similar body types and musculature enable them to rely on each other for support. This allows the choreography that comes from their respective projects to develop into something brutally (his word) athletic. They're an aggressive (and progressive) pas de deux.

So then I asked MARRISA about dancing with Pioneer, and got this:

"Pioneer and I have known each other since our childhood dance studio days, although we never danced together before this past year.

The first time we allowed our bodies to move through the space, we immediately felt a balance, and it is that balance that he and I continue to explore when dancing and creating for one another. We both have different styles, approaches, and visions for the other and various curiosities that drive us. It is that common desire to fully explore the various dynamics in which our balance can be challenged, and discovered yet again.

My style of dance tends to explore a grotesque sensuality that the body yearns to express, sometimes jarring, and discomforting for both the dancer and the spectator, where Pioneer's sometimes less grotesque aesthetic challenges my ideals, allowing his vision to penetrate the evolution of my choreography."

The canoe dances will be filmed by a remotely controlled helicopter and then looped continuously for viewing throughout the remainder of the festival.

The Deering Estate at Cutler, 16701 SW 72nd Avenue, Miami. 305-235-1668 <http://www.deeringestate.org>



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Marrisa Nick and Pioneer Winter/photo Reinier Gamboa

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