

‘Moon Falling’: Lee-Baik Brings Environmental Message

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Veronica Lee-Baik's *Moon Falling* investigates the damage of society's pursuit for perfection and convenience on the planet and human bodies. The audience will bear witness to seven primary dancers as they unravel, expose, and interact with their environment, forcing viewers to examine their relationship to the continuous destruction of the planet. • **Courtesy Photo**

The recent harvest moon—which many termed a “supermoon”—brought our planet Earth’s satellite into rare focus, and a new dance performance will again direct attention to our moon.

In early November, the Three Yells Performance Company, founded by Artistic Director Veronica Lee-Baik, will present *Moon Falling* at [Velocity Dance Center](#).

But instead of an outsized moon, this new piece aims at highlighting an

“irreversible new moon phase,” which Lee-Baik suggests has both literal and metaphorical meanings.

“During a new moon phase, the moon is not visible and is often seen in silhouette,” Lee-Baik said. “I use that term to signify the darkness that will continue if we ignore the pressing issues of climate change.”

Caring for our environment is one of the many layers incorporated into this piece. Initially inspired by a painting of a bleeding moon created by her nine-year-old son, Lee-Baik has woven additional ideas into her choreography.

“*Moon Falling* deals with issues of today that are very real, very pressing,” she said. “There is a definite urgency in trying to deliver this message and be a strong and convincing voice for what is going on in our environment.”

This urgency has only gotten stronger since Lee-Baik took a hiatus from her company, which she originally formed in 1999, and gave birth to her son. Now, she said, “I’m more concerned with being a voice for the pressing issues that our society is bombarded with.”



Lee-Baik. • Photo by Beth Williamson Laird

Formerly a performer, Lee-Baik now focuses on choreography and running her performance company. “I don’t perform anymore. I don’t feel the need to,” she said. “I have an amazing and highly capable group of performers who are doing a fantastic job translating what I’m trying to communicate through their bodies. I’m grateful that I am able to come back and continue to make work.”

A strong part of this work is its multi-disciplinary focus, and Lee-Baik said her company continues to “explore the infinite possibilities of dance in relation to other mediums.”

She doesn’t envision this emphasis changing. “I don’t see a piece of work without all the other disciplines attached to it,” she said. “It is always a holistic approach.”

In addition to this approach, Lee-Baik also incorporates characteristic breath and vocal work. “What I call the articulation of the ‘breath out,’ which is distinct to my work, is always a challenge for most performers,” she said.

“Here, the performer has to execute a ‘breath out’ or exhale with vocalizing,” she explained. “In the beginning, it always sounds either like a gasp for breath or coughing up a hairball: lots of embarrassment, feelings of self-consciousness, and nerves, but as time goes on and with continual work on channeling the use of the ‘qi,’ we always, as a group, witness tremendous growth in confidence—more grounding and dynamism in our movements.”

Lee-Baik has also recently pursued growth in the community support for her company, by utilizing Kickstarter to financially support this performance of *Moon Falling*. “There is no denying the power of the internet,” she said.

This support materialized much faster than she expected. “It took us six out of a total of 42 days to reach our goal!” Lee-Baik said. “I feel so blessed for the love and support that everyone has shown The Three Yells.”

With that support, Lee-Baik now hopes to tour *Moon Falling* to other cities and bring her environmental concerns to a larger audience. “I realize that I cannot be frivolous with this subject matter,” she said.

Moon Falling will be presented on November 7 and 8 at 8:00 p.m. and November 9 at 7:30 p.m. at Velocity Dance Center, 1621 12th Avenue, Seattle. For tickets and more information, visit moonfalling.brownpapertickets.com.