



PUBLIC RELATIONS
& MARKETING

**VERTICAL DANCE COMPANY
BANDALOOP
CELEBRATES 30TH ANNIVERSARY WITH
FREE OUTDOOR PERFORMANCE
“LOOM:FIELD”**

**April 15-16, 2022
Breuner Building (Grand & Broadway, Oakland)**

**BANDALOOP explores art of weaving
and ecological implications of fast-fashion.**

OAKLAND, CA (1 February 2022) — Oakland-based innovator of vertical dance BANDALOOP, activator of international public spaces with awe-inspiring, perspective-changing mid-air performances, will celebrate its 30th anniversary by unveiling a new large-scale outdoor work titled *LOOM:FIELD*. Performed high above uptown Oakland on the side of the art deco Breuner Building, *LOOM:FIELD* is the centerpiece of the *LOOM* trilogy, a multi-year initiative bringing together a collective of performing artists, climate scientists, regenerative textile artists, a visual technologist, and creative riggers to create performances that deepen and challenge perspectives on the art and industry of textiles. Transforming the building’s façade into a giant loom where stories and dances interlace, *LOOM:FIELD* is directed by Melecio Estrella and marks the first major work by the company since Estrella assumed the position following Founding Artistic Director Amelia Rudolph’s shift to Director of Special Projects. “*LOOM* lifts up the social, the environmental, and the ancestral aspects of fabric and fashion,” says Estrella. BANDALOOP’s performances of *LOOM:FIELD* will be presented **FREE, 8pm, Friday, April 15, and 5pm & 8pm, Saturday April 16, 2022** on the side of the Breuner Building, Grand and Broadway in Uptown Oakland. The 5pm family-friendly performance of *LOOM:FIELD* on Saturday features an opening set by the mega-popular **Alphabet Rockers**, the Grammy-nominated hip-hop group. On the street below the performances, Grand Avenue will be closed to traffic, offering seated and picnic viewing areas with food and drink available from Oakland’s favorite food trucks in a festive

atmosphere. Guests are invited to bring blankets and camping chairs to enjoy the aerial performance. These performances will also celebrate the expansion of the company's 2022 West Oakland Studio, where it incubates new dance, works with community youth, and offers classes, camps, and intensives for youth and adults, as well as team building programs for executives and leaders. For more information, the public may visit bandaloop.org/loom.

LOOM:FIELD offers audiences a 45-minute vertical dance performance set to original live music, that fuses intricate choreography and climbing technology to offer a narrative of ancestral weaving mythologies, traditional techniques of fabric creation, expressions of the ecological and social impacts of a globalized textile industry, and the influence of technological fibers that connect and divide. Although one of the largest polluting industries in the world, the impact of clothing and fashion is often overlooked in modern consumer lifestyles. Fraught with devastating globalized labor and farming practices, the fallout of textile consumption will be dealt with for generations to come. *LOOM:FIELD* juxtaposes this large-scale ecological crisis with the timeless cross-cultural power of fabric to hold, comfort, adorn, and sanctify the human experience. Fabric stories are drawn from the swaddling blanket, the altar cloth, the death shroud, and the fishing net. *LOOM:FIELD* also weaves in the community building and therapeutic aspects of handmaking techniques; the focused rhythms of stitching, knitting, spinning, and weaving of fiber into cloth.

Choreography for *LOOM:FIELD* was developed by Melecio Estrella and the BANDALOOOP dancers. Collaborators for the production include ninth-generation Nigerian weaver and costume designer **IB Bayo**, theater artist **Chibueze Crouch**, composer **Ben Juodvalkis**, and lighting designer **Jim French**. The result of this multi-layered collaboration is an evening of dance theater featuring spoken word, vertical dance, fabric manipulation, film segments, and original music. As vertical dance is a form that relies on state-of-the-science woven nylon climbing ropes, *LOOM:FIELD* locates BANDALOOOP's core technical framework in a textile lineage. The first installment of the *LOOM* trilogy, titled *FLOOD*, premiered in February 2020 at the grand opening of The Momentary, a contemporary visual, performing, and culinary arts space in Northwest Arkansas. The second installment, *FIELD*, premiered in Atlanta, Georgia, in October

2021. *LOOM:FIELD*, after its hometown premiere in Oakland, California, will tour nationally through spring of 2023 before work on the third installment, *FLOCK*, begins.

ABOUT BANDALOO

BANDALOO celebrates the human spirit, nature, and communities through dance that uses climbing technology to expand and challenge what is possible. An innovator of vertical performance, BANDALOO seamlessly weaves dynamic physicality and intricate choreography to turn the dance floor on its side. Founded by Amelia Rudolph and under the artistic direction of Melecio Estrella, the work re-imagines dance, activates public spaces, and inspires wonder and imagination in audiences around the world. BANDALOO trains dancers and youth at home and on tour, and has performed live for millions of people.

Based in Oakland, the company incubates and produces work for its local audiences and for touring performances presented around the globe. Education and outreach are an intrinsic part of the company's mission, and BANDALOO offers open level and intermediate/advanced classes, youth and adult camps, weekend intensive, and team building programs. BANDALOO's adult and young adult classes give students ages 15+ a chance to ascend into BANDALOO's signature style of harness assisted dance. From a foundation of safety, care, and equipment training, students can activate the dance walls, trampoline wall, and low flying floor space of BANDALOO's home studio with fun and rigorous dancing. Youth classes introduce students ages 9-14 to safety awareness, athletic creative expression, coordination, core strength, confidence, and collaborative skills. Dancers throughout the Bay Area will be able to learn the basics of harness assisted dancing with a growing roster of classes coming in the fall of 2022, as BANDALOO's 8,000 square foot facility in West Oakland continues to expand.

BANDALOO is funded by the City of Oakland, the National Endowment for the Arts and a diverse set of individual and Bay Area corporate donors who support the work that starts in Oakland and tours the world. *LOOM:FIELD* funding includes the New England Foundation for the Arts, National Dance Project Production Grant, Creative Work Fund, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Fleishhacker Foundation, The Kenneth Rainin Foundation, The CA Arts Council. This project is a National Dance Project 2021 Award Recipient.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Melecio Estrella is a director, dance artist, and educator based in Oakland, California. In addition to his work with **BANDALOO**, he co-directs the dance theater company Fog Beast and is a longtime member of the Joe Goode Performance Group. His choreographies have been commissioned by Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the San Francisco Opera Center, Dancers' Group, Headlands Center for the Arts, and numerous universities around the US. He is a 2018-2019 recipient of the Gerbode Special Award in the Arts, and a 2017/18 Leadership Fellow with the Association for Performing Arts Professionals (APAP). Melecio has been dancing with **BANDALOO** since 2003. In 2011 he became the company's Education Director and in 2015, the Associate Artistic Director, and in 2020 was appointed Artistic Director, succeeding the

Founding Artistic Director. His recent work includes *Tidal Constellations* (2019) performed at the National Art Gallery of Malaysia for international arts and culture dignitaries at the Summit of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFACCA), and *FLOOD* (2020) at the opening of The Momentary in Bentonville, Arkansas. Other engagements as Associate Artistic Director include making dances on the cliffs of Tianmen Mountain in the Hunan province of China; Art and About in Sydney, Australia; The Africa Cup in Libreville, Gabon; The Barents Spektacle in Kirkenes, Norway; and the JFK Centennial at The Kennedy Center, Washington, DC.

Born in Osogbo, Nigeria, **IB Bayo** is descended from generations of cloth artisans, and learned how to weave and dye from his mother, and how to sew from his father who made traditional clothing for Nigerian royalty. Bayo began sewing at age five and learned to sell cotton, dye yarn, and use beading and hand-embroidery as he grew up. He attended the Niké Center for Art and Culture in Osogbo, dedicated to preserving traditional Yoruba art forms, where he studied batik cloth dying, quilt making, reverse appliqué, and clothing design. Now based in Santa Cruz, California, Bayo adapts his reverse appliqué and quilting techniques to his contemporary fashion and tailoring practice. He combines the hand-woven, hand-dyed, and embroidered fabrics made by his family in Nigeria with other fabrics, new and upcycled, to create the uniquely designed clothing in his I.B.Bayo line. Bayo also teaches Nigerian Batik and Reverse Appliqué workshops, and gives presentations on his family history, showing clothing that spans from past generations to modern creations.

Chibueze Crouch is a queer Nigerian-American (Igbo) actor and artist from Danbury, Connecticut (Paugussett land) currently living in Oakland (Chochenyo Ohlone land). Her creative practice straddles theater and performance art, examining Diasporic longing and constructions of identity through masquerade, song, text, and multidisciplinary live performance. Chibueze has performed at Brava Theater, Finnish Hall, SFSU, the National Queer Arts Festival, BAMPFA, and Crowded Fire Theater, among others.

Ben Juodvalkis composes original music for dance, film, theater, corporate events, and museum installations. He has created scores for over 50 organizations and has had his music performed on four continents.

The **Alphabet Rockers** are a Grammy Award-nominated musical group based in Oakland that aims to shape a more equitable world through hip-hop. Led by Kaitlin McGaw and Tommy Shepherd, the Alphabet Rockers' hip-hop concerts (assemblies) and workshops engage communities in critical thinking and conversations about diversity, skin color, gender identity, and social justice. Its music, videos, concerts, and curriculum are designed by an intercultural team of anti-bias thought leaders, educators, artists, parents, and young people of all genders. The Alphabet Rockers' Grammy-nominated 2018 album, *Rise Shine #Woke*, has reached 300K children and families since its release, inspiring American kids to stand up against hate and be their brave and beautiful selves. Its 2019 album, *The Love*, lifted up voices of the trans, two-spirit, and gender non-conforming community. The group performs in over 50 schools across the country each year, and has headlined at Lollapalooza, The Kennedy Center, San Francisco Pride Festival, the National Museum for African-American Arts & Culture (Smithsonian), and more.

For Calendar Editors

WHAT: Oakland-based innovator of vertical dance **BANDALOOP**, activator of international public spaces with awe-inspiring, perspective-changing mid-air performances, will celebrate its 30th anniversary by unveiling a new large-scale outdoor work titled *LOOM:FIELD*. Performed high above uptown Oakland on the side of the art deco Breuner Building, *LOOM:FIELD* transforms the building's façade into a giant loom where stories and dances interlace. The street below the performances, Grand Avenue, will be closed to traffic, offering seated and picnic viewing areas with food and drink available from Oakland's favorite food trucks in a festive atmosphere. Guests are invited to bring blankets and camping chairs to enjoy the aerial performance.

WHERE: Breuner Building (Grand and Broadway in Uptown Oakland)

WHEN: **8pm, Friday, April 15**
5pm* & 8pm, Saturday April 16, 2022

*Family-friendly performance featuring opening set by Alphabet Rockers

INFO: FREE – OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. For more information, the public may visit bandaloop.org/loom.

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PHOTOS: Media may download high-res photos at:
<https://www.cbpr.co/press/bandaloop/>