

RESTAURANTS

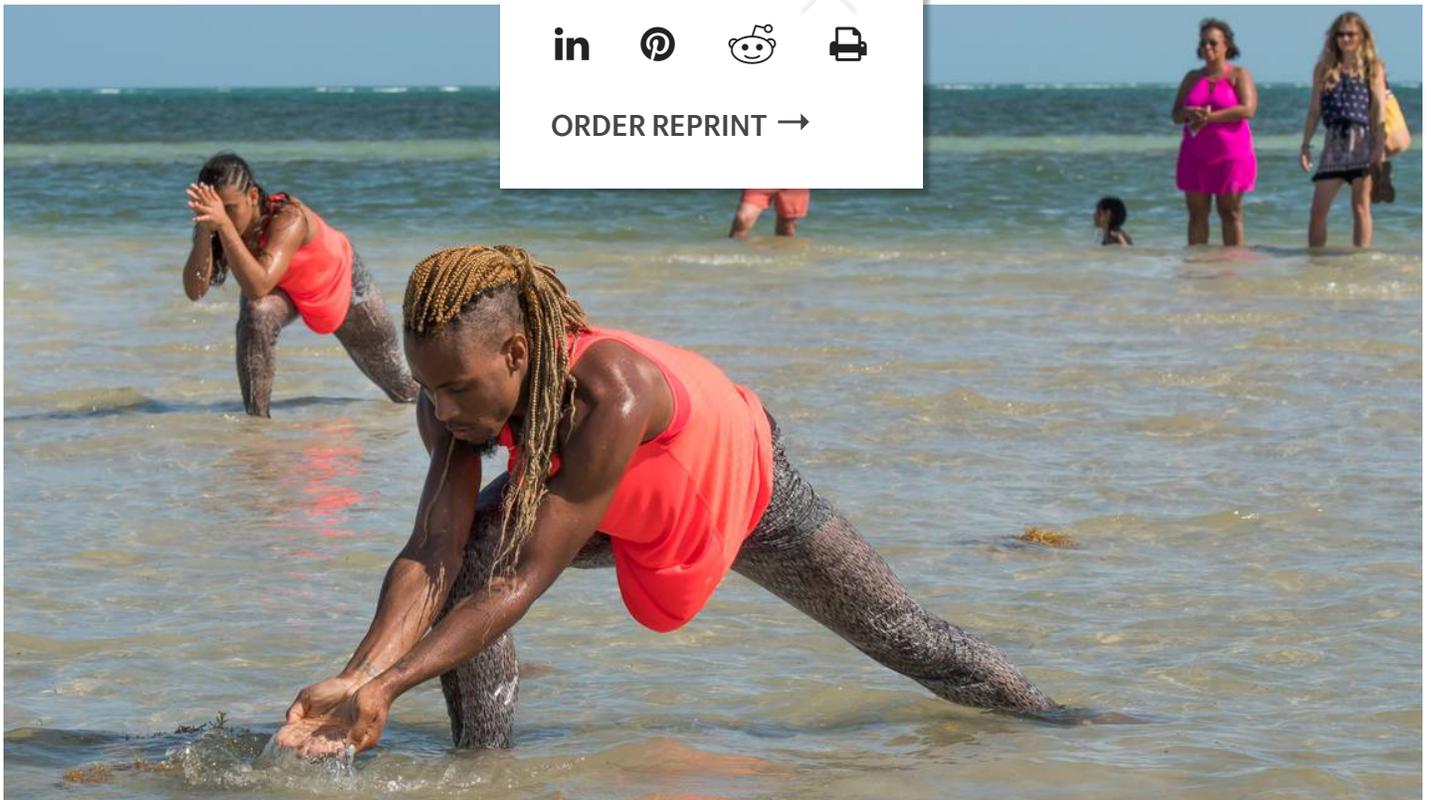
Amid crisis comes a call to dance for unity

BY BY JORDAN LEVIN ARTBURSTMIAMI.COM

MARCH 27, 2020 02:00 PM



ORDER REPRINT →



The National Water Dance performance on Key Biscayne at the beach near the Biscayne Nature Center on April 14, 2018. MITCHELL ZACHS [MITCHELL ZACHS PHOTOGRAPHY / MAGICALPHOTOS.COM](http://MITCHELLZACHSPHOTOGRAPHY.COM)

Dale Andree created National Water Dance as a way to unite dance artists and communities in a creative response to a global crisis she'd become acutely conscious of after nearly four decades in Miami: climate change, sea-level rise and the powerful, essential nature of water.

Now the dance artist is re-shaping her project to respond to a new world upheaval: the coronavirus pandemic.

Andree is calling on dancers in Miami and across the nation to join [National Water Dance](#) in “dancing for our lives” online on April 18, creating hope and togetherness through movement at a time of growing isolation.

“There’s always that question of, ‘What’s the point?’ There’s a huge point. We’re not giving up. Being in our bodies is the one thing we have and have to try to protect,” says Andree. “We’re dancers, and moving, and made of water. What are we saying with the movement we create? How do we send that out into the world?”

This year was slated to be the biggest yet for National Water Dance, which has taken place every other year since Andree launched it in 2014. More than 100 dance ensembles, university dance departments and other groups from 36 states and Puerto Rico were prepared to simultaneously dance outdoors at 4 p.m. April 18, at water sites ranging from Miami’s Virginia Key Beach to mountain streams to the Great Lakes.

For the first time, Andree was set to stage a dance around the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., creating a potent physical and symbolic metaphor for bringing the country together around a crucial environmental issue. All the performances were going to be livestreamed on the National Water Dance website, in a gorgeous panoply of dance and American natural beauty.

All of that changed early in March, as Andree was in D.C. to plan the Reflecting Pool performance with area dance companies and universities. Like the rest of the world, Andree has been adjusting continually as the coronavirus pandemic has escalated, closing parks, universities, beaches and gatherings across the country. (Although her permit for the National Mall has not been pulled, Andree does not know whether they will be able to perform there.)

Decades of living in Miami and dealing with tropical storms have helped Andree to deal with this fluid new disaster.

“It’s that hurricane energy – you can’t do anything about it, so you improvise,” says Andree, a longtime dance mentor and creator who launched her first Miami dance troupe in 1985 and taught at the New World School of the Arts for 20 years. “You have to deal with the immediate.”

Like so many other artists, she is turning online. Since groups can’t perform together, individual participants are being called to dance in their backyards or kitchens or wherever they can at 4 p.m. EST on April 18.

To unite them choreographically (if not physically), they’ll incorporate specific dance combinations they can learn from a video on the project’s social media accounts. Everyone will film themselves on Facebook Live or Instagram Live. Afterward, participants will upload the videos to their social media accounts, tagging National Water Dance and using the hashtags: #nationalwaterdance, #nationalwaterdance2020 and #dancingforourlives.

“I feel like I’m on an internet highway,” Andree says, jokingly, of her accelerated education in online performance and social media.

In Miami, Andree’s NWD Projects troupe, plus regular collaborator Michelle Grant-Murray, coordinator of dance at Miami Dade College, and her Olujimi Dance Theatre, will perform and livestream separately. Andree is reaching out to other local companies, schools and arts organizations to join them.

She and project social media director Elsa Roberts hope that, as they spread the word virtually, more and more people will join in dancing together in a moment of national and creative unity – like drops of water streaming together into a giant virtual pool.

Roberts, who lives in Seattle, says working on National Water Dance has been inspiring. A freelancer whose roommate was just laid off from a restaurant, Roberts has been reeling from the changes of the last several weeks.

“People need a sense of connection, and this is providing that,” Roberts says. “It’s really nice to be involved in a production so grounded in people and the planet.”

Andree hopes National Water Dance will inspire not just dancers but everyone who watches to contemplate some basic questions: What unites us? What is essential for us as human beings? As communities?

“When something like this happens, you’re stripped down,” she says. “How am I connecting to other people? What am I feeling? How do I say it? People are slowing down, thinking about how we fill our time and what does that mean. This is the time to look around us with a lot more reflection, that will give us a deeper understanding as we move forward.”

“We’re all in this together.”

What: *National Water Dance*

When: *4 p.m. April 18*

Cost: *Free*

More information on the performance or how to participate: nwdprojects.org

ArtburstMiami.com is a nonprofit source of theater, dance, visual arts, music and performing arts news.



The National Water Dance performance on Key Biscayne at the beach near the Biscayne Nature Center on April 14, 2018. MITCHELL ZACHS [MITCHELL ZACHS PHOTOGRAPHY / MAGICALPHOTOS.COM](http://MITCHELL_ZACHS_PHOTOGRAPHY/MAGICALPHOTOS.COM)

KENDALL HAMERSLY

   305-376-3667

Kendall Hamersly is a longtime Miami Herald editor with more than two decades of experience writing about

restaurants. He has reviewed hundreds of restaurants in Miami-Dade County, from the best to the worst.

FROM OUR ADVERTISING PARTNERS

COMMENTS ▾



Artist Romero Britto teams with Miami Children's Museum





Watch Jimmy Buffett play Jimmy Buffett in his own musical

VIEW MORE VIDEO →

TRENDING STORIES

No information. No way off. 100,000 crew members remain in cruise ship limbo for months

UPDATED 1 HOUR 28 MINUTES AGO

Miami-Dade and Broward see 285 new coronavirus cases as counties reopen for business

UPDATED 4 HOURS 36 MINUTES AGO

Miami-Dade and Broward see 285 new coronavirus cases as counties reopen for business

UPDATED 4 HOURS 36 MINUTES AGO

Florida Keys to reopen to visitors June 1, leaders say. Hotels will reopen, checkpoints to end

UPDATED 5 HOURS 34 MINUTES AGO

Miami theme park goes retro with new drive-in as COVID-19 keeps movie theaters closed

UPDATED 23 MINUTES AGO

READ NEXT



PERFORMING ARTS

Miami dance community's contagion-induced existential crisis

BY SEAN ERWIN ARTBURSTMIAMI.COM

APRIL 23, 2020 12:00 PM



When the rapid spread of COVID-19 vacated performance halls, it attacked Miami's economic ecosystem of artistic activity. Within the dance community, as with many others, performers and organizations saw anticipated revenues evaporate in a matter of hours

KEEP READING →

Local news has never been more

Subscribe for unlimited digital access to the news that matters to your community.

#READLOCAL

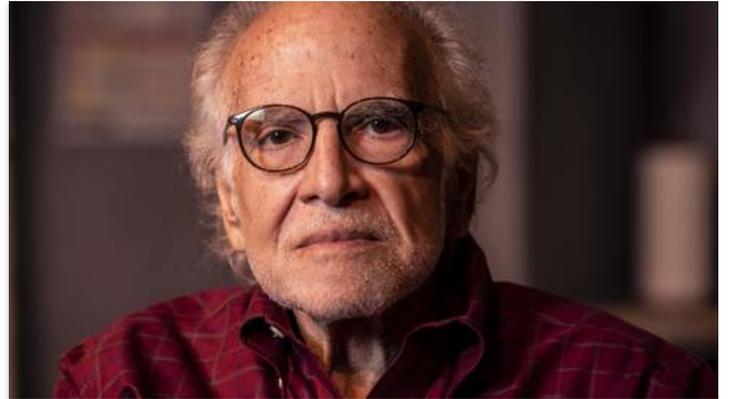
MORE PERFORMING ARTS



VISUAL ARTS

A grim report details the toll on Miami-Dade cultural groups from the virus pandemic

UPDATED APRIL 22, 2020 09:51 AM



LOCAL OBITUARIES

'Godfather' of South Florida theater Joseph Adler dies at 79

UPDATED APRIL 17, 2020 08:10 AM



PERFORMING ARTS

Theater groups get creative to survive

APRIL 15, 2020 3:30 PM



CORONAVIRUS

These South Florida entertainers have more to offer you than those 'Tiger King' binges

UPDATED APRIL 22, 2020 12:29 PM



MUSIC & NIGHT LIFE

Miami music scene refuses to be silent

APRIL 08, 2020 6:30 PM



PERFORMING ARTS

Are you an artist who has lost work because of coronavirus? Relief is on the way

UPDATED APRIL 08, 2020 01:52 PM

Take Us With You

Real-time updates and all local stories you want right in the palm of your hand.



[MIAMI HERALD APP →](#)

[VIEW NEWSLETTERS →](#)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

[Start a Subscription](#)

[Customer Service](#)

[eEdition](#)

[Vacation Hold](#)

[Pay Your Bill](#)

LEARN MORE

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[News in Education](#)

[Public Insight Network](#)

[Reader Panel](#)

[Archives](#)

ADVERTISING

Place a Classified

Media Kit

Public Notices

COPYRIGHT

COMMENTING POLICY

PRIVACY POLICY

TERMS OF SERVICE