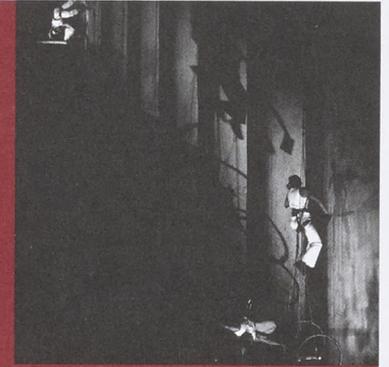
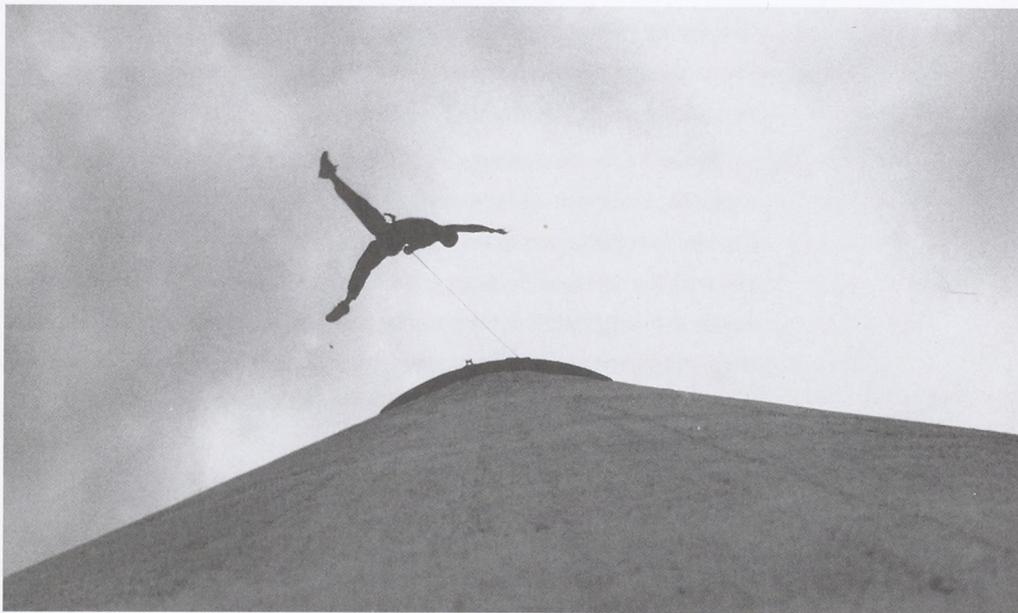


# GHOST ARCHITECTURE

As a child Joanna Haigood lived in New York with her family near Pratt Institute, Brooklyn's famed school of art, architecture, and design, where her mother was director of admissions and financial aid. "I must have been soaking up talk and ideas on design and architecture," says the innovative San Francisco-based dancer/choreographer, whose works reflect a fascination with architecture. Add to this the fact that her mother might have pursued an architect's career had not marriage and the demands of raising three children come along. So it's no mere whimsy then that Haigood's aerial dance group is named after an architectural form: ZACCHO Dance Theatre, borrowing the ancient Greek word for the base of a column.

Anyone who has seen her work knows that Haigood's interest in architecture goes beyond structural appearance. Her dances also involve meditations on space and memory and the

*[continued]*



JOANNA HAIGOOD / WAYNE CAMPBELL

"The work unfolds as an aerial dance and sculptural installation at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in the city's downtown district, and makes reference to the invisible history of this location."

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ways in which the two constantly interact at specific sites. *Ghost Architecture*, Haigood's recent project, is all about such interaction. The work unfolds as an aerial dance and sculptural installation at San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in the city's downtown district, and makes reference to the invisible history of this location. Yerba Center's construction meant the displacement of an entire neighborhood: people had to move away, buildings and their contents—the artifacts of their inhabitants' existence—were destroyed or relegated to obscurity. Haigood's research indicates that the hall in which ZACCHO performs, used to be the site of a movie theater, an apartment building, and a SRO residential hotel. The location is "charged with history."

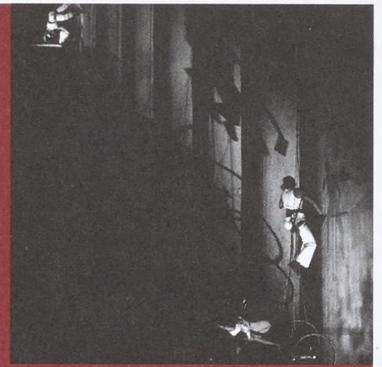
With its haunting title and allusion (though not intended) to the tragic destruction of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers and the loss of thousands of lives, *Ghost Architecture*, according to Haigood, "really speaks to the notion that history is charged and lodged in the material and in the very earth. There are moments when we come to a place where we are overcome by very specific feelings."

Those "specific feelings"—of individual lives, physical spaces, everyday routines, landmarks—were also at the heart of such earlier works as *Picture Powderhorn* (2000) and *Invisible Wings* (1998). In the former, Haigood and her six-member troupe, scaling gigantic grain silos in Minneapolis, performed aerial choreography based on what the neighborhood youth had discovered in their research on the silos. *Invisible Wings*, which took her three years to research, re-imagines the flight of former slaves to freedom using the sanctuaries known as the Underground Railroad.

*Ghost Architecture* uses six performers (in shifts of two) moving through and on the plotted coordinates of the now demolished structures. Wearing harnesses and rigging, they perform both in the air and on the ground. Recreated artifacts of the vanished structures suggest the overlays of histories contained in the same space. In her continuing exploration of the relationship between the environment and man-made structures, she credits Wayne Campbell, her collaborator, father of her son, and a designer of climbing gyms, as "a mentor—because of him I'm beginning to understand Cartesian grids." As well as being her main collaborating partner in *Ghost Architecture*, Campbell is also the set designer.

With its dancers performing aerial maneuvers, Haigood's work suggests the influence of trapeze artistry. Indeed, while studying at a dance conservatory in England in the '70s, she befriended a trapeze performer, who brought her "to circuses quite a bit where we watched a lot of trapeze acts. I saw the Wallendas"—the legendary high-wire family—"perform those incredible feats." Haigood herself has taught movement technique and new approaches to circus apparatus at the Centre du National des Arts du Cirque in France.

In a sense, Haigood is pursuing a calling as an architect of the spirit through movement, and investigating how that movement can mediate between the present and the past—between the visible and the invisible. This implies, as she points out, "a world of much greater dimensions." This emphasis on the larger picture grounds Joanna Haigood's high-flying art in the history of a specific site and infuses her work with the resonance and mystery of what we feel but cannot see. //



JOANNA HAIGOOD / WAYNE CAMPBELL

**Joanna Haigood** was born in Japan in 1957. She earned her undergraduate degree from Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson in 1979. Haigood is currently artistic director of ZACCHO Dance Theatre in San Francisco.

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SELECTED COMMISSIONS AND  
PERFORMANCES

- 2002 *Inverted States*, Luggage Store  
Gallery, San Francisco, CA  
*Picture Red Hook*, Dancing in the  
Streets, New York, NY
- 2001 *IO and Her and the Trouble with  
Him*, Pauline Oliveros Foundation,  
Kingston, NY
- 2000 *Picture Powderhorn*, Walker Art  
Center, Minneapolis, MN  
*Descending Cord*, Axis Dance  
Company, Oakland, CA
- 1999 *Bella*, Tryon Center for Visual Art,  
Charlotte, NC
- 1997 *Invisible Wings*, Jacob's Pillow  
-98 Dance Festival, Becket, MA
- 1997 *Psalm*, Festival D'Avignon, Avignon,  
France
- 1995 *Noon*, San Francisco Arts  
Commission, Art in Transit,  
San Francisco, CA

SELECTED RESIDENCIES

- 2000 Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, MN
- 1994 Theatre Artaud, San Francisco, CA
- 1993 Capp Street Project, San Francisco,  
CA

SELECTED AWARDS

- 2002 Creative Capital Grant
- 2000 James Irvine Foundation
- 1998 CalArts Alpert Award in the Arts
- 1997 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial  
Foundation
- 1995 National Endowment for the Arts

All Images:  
ZACCHO Dance Theatre

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