

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Uncovering Reel Magic With CatNat Dance Films

Our Friends · Tuesday, November 28th, 2023

To experience this amazing new national dance festival is to love it

One sunny California afternoon, Cathy Taister received a bolt of inspiration. She began bravely creating *CatNat Dance Films* as the arts world recovered from pandemic closures and began figuring out how to embrace the new now. Her unique corner of the internet offers compelling and stunning dance works from choreographers who may not be known in your area. So, what defines *CatNat Dance Films*? Who is the powerhouse behind this new social media gem? What makes this festival important and different from the tons of content whizzing by us daily?

CatNat Dance Films offers an unforgettable virtual dance experience which streams pre-recorded dance works in June and October. This event highlights a collection of compelling dance films featuring talented artists from across the country. The festival curates a bold, beautiful line-up sharing a variety of viewpoints. CatNat is purrrfect for dance enthusiasts, music lovers, film buffs, and anyone curious about the mesmerizing dance genre.

The first *CatNat* event premiered Oct. 29th, 2023 creating a positive buzz. Featuring Luminario Ballet, Taso Papadakis, Cathy Taister, DV Indaial, Chriselle Tidrick, Alice Lousen, Commuovere Dance, Gaynelle Gosselin, MoreDances Contemporary Dance Company, and HBY Ensemble, CatNat took audience members on an intriguing emotional journey. Audience member El Post reminisces about “how much we enjoyed each performance. The creativity, dancers time, and effort, story lines, background/stages, music chosen for each piece. Everyone deserves (to be) applauded even the background sets and video techs.”



Beginning her extensive career by earning a BA in Dance from George Washington University, Cathy Taister became a force in the Washington DC and Michigan dance communities. Starting off, Cathy worked for an entertainment company and shared her skills at corporate events. The weekends saw her leaving the house as a clown, fortune teller, or even a singing gorilla. On the serious side, Mrs. Taister directed CathyAndCompany, a modern dance ensemble performing from 1994-2021 and enjoyed artistic adventures in both DC and Detroit. In DC, CathyAndCompany took their company publicity shots in an abandoned amusement park which set the tone for their brand of quirky, community-oriented performances. In Michigan, CathyAndCompany's adventures included dancing in a 6-foot-wide alley and dancing in a small house reimaged as a theater. Other places Mrs. Taister presented work include the Figment Festival in New York and Chicago, the Fringe Festival in Providence, Dancing with Arlington Stars in Arlington, and the Kennedy Center Open House in DC. In 2021, Cathy Taister became an Orange County, CA artist. Since moving from the Detroit suburbs, she created pieces for NACHMO and Emerge.

Mrs. Taister reflects on how her background inspired the creation of *CatNat*:

Detroiters are a resilient entrepreneurial folks. If the system is not offering what you are looking for, create your own. Each week opportunities come across my desk which are not actionable. From funding opportunities with yearlong application processes to performance opportunities whose process only works for large budget institutions.

CatNat Dance Films set out to address a couple of needs in the dance community. Providing a more equitable playing field and good experiences for choreographers inspired Cathy to create this festival. CatNat wishes to amplify the voices of artists at all phases of their career. At the same time, *CatNat* works to create a free, high-quality viewing experience. The festival wishes to remove obstacles for audience members and hopes to reach viewers who never attend dance concerts. *CatNat Dance Films* presents an exciting adventure of discovery.

How do I participate in *CatNat Dance Films*?

Choreographers and company directors can email cathytaister@att.net. Please put “ CatNat application request” in the subject line. Artists on the email list receive advanced access to the application form. Consider also connecting with Cathy Taister at www.facebook.com/ctaister

How can I attend *CatNat Dance Films*?

Check out our premiere festival at https://youtu.be/ORZOb17EGL8?si=U2yGZQeN7Qs_63YJ

Future events air at [Cathy Taister – YouTube](#)

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