

With thanks to Claudia Moore for the opportunity to present this piece at Older and Reckless, to John Lauener for his generosity in helping document this production, and to Rick Sacks for his invaluable help with the music.

The documentation process

Deciding how to record choreography requires an understanding of what is important about the piece.

For *femme assise*, the origins of the imagery in the artwork of Kienholz and Moore are key. The character's thought process is individual to each dancer, but understanding the motivation behind each physical action provides a pathway to interpretation. It's a theatrical piece that requires communicating an inner dialogue



to the audience, without words. In return, each viewer will find a personal meaning.



The choreographer's intentions are recorded using written notes, film and images so that the piece can be remounted with artistic integrity for future generations to experience.

- Natasha Frid, documenter

To make a charitable donation towards the documentation of *femme assise* email: marijo@chartierdanse.com

Images of Marie-Josée Chartier and Sylvie Bouchard in rehearsal by Natasha Frid

Documenting Marie-Josée Chartier's



photo of Marie-Josée Chartier by Steven Wasney

femme assise/ seated woman

“Chartier ... in command of the little gesture with a big punch.”

- The Globe and Mail

femme assise/seated woman

premiere: Toronto, 1990 for Dancemakers' And/Or Festival
performed by: Carmen Jerome

subsequently performed by: Marie-Josée Chartier in:

Vancouver, Dancing on the Edge (1991)

Toronto, DanceWorks (1992)

Ottawa, Canada Dance Festival (1992)

Gent, Belgium, Café Québec (1995)

and by Sylvie Bouchard in Toronto, Older and Reckless (2013)

music: *Towards White* by Rodney Sherman

original lighting: Patrick Matheson

costume/accessories: Michael J. Baker and Marie-Josée Chartier

A brief history of *femme assise/seated woman*

The Wait by Edward Kienholz,



In 1989 I came across some drawings by Henry Moore at the AGO: a series of seated figures. A few months later, in one of my art books, I found the installation piece *The Wait / Das Warten* by Edward Kienholz.

This piece struck me very deeply, and, combined with the initial trigger of Henry Moore, came the full concept for *femme assise*.

I was dancing for Dancemakers at the time and artistic director Bill James invited me to create a piece for his And/Or festival at the Dancemakers studio on Dupont Street in Toronto.

I set the work on Carmen Jerome because I wanted to focus on minute details and for this it would be best to create the work on another dancer. I also collaborated with Michael J. Baker to build the headpiece and the necklaces of jars which include some personal objects.



Photos of Marie-Josée Chartier
by Chris Randle

In 1991 I presented *femme assise* at the Dancing on the Edge Festival, where Sylvie Bouchard attended one of the performances. She was very moved by the work, and in 2012 she asked me if I would agree to remount the work on her. I immediately said yes, as it is a wonderful opportunity to revisit the work and I knew that Sylvie would be simply beautiful in her interpretation of this solo.



Combined with the invitation to present this piece at Older and Reckless, it seemed more than fitting to reconstruct the piece and document the process. I have made several changes, as our lives have changed and so the work has evolved as well.

- Marie-Josée Chartier

Why document dance?

Dance is unique among the art forms: it is ephemeral.

Dances are passed on from one person to another, and inevitably evolve along the way. In contemporary dance, the emphasis is on the new — but what about our lineage?

A choreographer's lifetime of work, passion and knowledge can not be forgotten.

Our goal is to record, share and give these dances a long life, one step at a time.

