

# *R i v e r / B o d y*

an experiential workshop

with Paula Josa-Jones/Performance Works



*When you arrive in a new place, in just a few days the 70%  
of your body that is water is now from that watershed.*

Andrea Olsen, [Body and Earth](#)

## ABOUT THE RIVER/BODY PROJECT

**RIVER/BODY** began as a site-specific, multidisciplinary, community-engaging dance project inspired by the Housatonic River and watershed, created by **Paula Josa-Jones/Performance Works**. We are now expanding this project to include experiential, educational workshops.

Our intention with workshops and performances of **RIVER/BODY** is to express the relationship between the body of the river and our own wild, fluid bodies - the intense and immediate ways we are inseparably connected. We are water bodies living on a water planet. **RIVER/BODY** is about awakening the heart of that relationship.

We live on a water planet: 70% of the earth's surface is covered with water. We are water beings: 60 - 70% of the human body is water. Our once casual relationships to water and often-unconscious awareness of our own bodies are co-mingled in the growing social and ecological crises.

**RIVER/BODY** is an embodied response to the global rising tide of water-related concerns and connects with all of the water-is-life efforts around the globe. We want to make the precious vulnerability and eloquence of the moving body - an essential part of that conversation.





## ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

Each workshop takes place at a nearby body of water, which could be a river, stream, lake or ocean beach. Using breath, imagery, meditation, movement and discussion, **RIVER/BODY** invites participants to experience the relationship between the “ecosystem of us” and the ecosystem of the water. We focus on discovering a sensory understanding of the inseparability of the fluid systems of the body with those of the earth, deepening our connection with ourselves as we discover a more fluid responsiveness to others and our environment.

We will consider these questions posed by Body-Mind Centering founder Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen:

- What is the relationship between the movement of your body through space, the internal movement through your tissues and the movement of your mind?
- What are the fluid patterns in the movement of your mind?
- Is the source of your movement arising from the effortless flow of fluid through your tissues or is it restricting the internal flow due to hardness, dryness, stagnation or pressured effort?

The class begins with a walking meditation. As we walk, we will explore noticing the environment through different sensory channels and the bodily layers of skin, muscle and bone. We invite participants to share their “water stories”, and some of the ways that they have felt a personal connection to water. Finally, we move into the water (no more than knee deep) to experience moving in the water, and the experience of “being moved” by the water, focusing on the porous nature of inner and outer landscapes. The class ends with time for participants to reflect on what they experienced during the “water dance.”

Participants should wear clothing that is comfortable and can get wet. They will need sneakers or water shoes for going into the water, and should bring a change of dry clothing including shoes, a towel and notebook.

For more information or to schedule a workshop, contact Paula Josa-Jones:

[pjj@paulajosajones.org](mailto:pjj@paulajosajones.org)

508-627-1752

Here is what some of the audience members said after experiencing RIVER/BODY:

*Thank you for your glorious piece. The integrity of your work and the unwavering commitment and embodied practice the dancers brought to the piece, to the river, was glorious and unique. Your invitation into a multi-dimensional experience really changed the way we could see and think about the water. I cannot thank you enough.*

**Kara Gilmour, Senior Director of Community, Training  
and Artist Services at Gibney Dance Center, NYC.**

*"It changed my relationship with the river and the water that flows around and under my home."*

*"We are the river-the river is us."*

*"It made me focus on the power, strength and vitality of the river, and how we are all interconnected to that energy."*

*"I look at it as part of me now."*

