

# Blood Baby

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creation and direction **Meg Foley**  
performance **Charli Brissey, Meg Foley, Zara Martina Lopez, Kristine Manuel, Majesty Royale-Jackson, Fox Whitney**  
scenic design **Rabbit aL Friedrich**  
fiber **Jesse Harrod**  
video and installation **Carmichael Jones**

light **Valerie Oliveira**  
costume **Noël Puëlle**  
dj **Elisandra Rosario**  
project advisors **Sylvan Oswald, Michèle Steinwald**

*Original text written and assembled by Sylvan Oswald based on interviews with Meg Foley, Dr. Shaunna Morrison and Jason Young, used by permission, interpreted and altered by Foley.*



premiere **September 2023, Velocity Dance Center, Seattle**

***Blood Baby* is an iterative performance quadriptych exploring the intersectional experiences of gender performance, queer motherhood and parenthood, queer sexuality, and belonging.**

*Blood Baby* embraces performance, dance and somatics as expansive, extending beyond a discrete theatrical moment. Four unique events—**Carpet Womb**, **Communion**, **Primordial** and **Touch Library**—can be presented together or accorded apart, each embracing a distinctive aspect and materiality of the experience of parenting queerly through choreography, sculpture, and drag.

Created and performed by a community of queer artists, *Blood Baby* enlists the perspective of queer parents to extend the physical materiality of gestation and gender into performance. Developed alongside a series of Queer Parent Convenings, *Blood Baby* utilizes multiple materials and performative formats to unhinge the intersectionality of gestational experience, queer experience, and parenthood and bring distinct parts into relief.

*Blood Baby* is broad in its approach to unpacking queer parenthood. It does not culminate in a single performance but a series of intimate, public events. The whole project becomes a prism, bridging visual and experiential art, participatory workshop, and dance, using text, foam, fabric, carpet and site-responsive, durational, participatory, drag, performative sculpture devices.

- **Carpet Womb:** An environment of overwhelm and totality. A dance amongst viewers inside a small constructed room entirely covered in carpet so that every surface provides tactile feedback, designed by Friedrich.
- **Communion:** A spare theatrical environment, an alternative re-situating of our physical selves in the universe that embraces an extended lineage and immediate sensory noticing, and a soft somatic journey, enacted by both audience and performers, led by Foley's facilitation.
- **Primordial:** Alternative drag performance as a fabric rock, performed in various environments and presented through a visual installation by Jones. A durational, devotional somatic process of inserting oneself into environments, exploring one's body, warmth, wild, and edge pressed into an earthly or architectural other.
- **Touch Library:** A participatory somatic experience with the sculptural and prop materials to share the choreographic practices of *Blood Baby*.

We also host **Queer Parent Convenings** to share experiences of family-building in relationship to gender, sexuality, community, and what parenting queerly means. *Blood Baby* connects queer parents and communities, aligning the

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modular form with each venue's vision and capacities, building temporary communities towards a larger national network.

## Timeline & Partners

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**2020–2024: Residencies and Community Engagement Convenings**—Kinsey Institute (Bloomington, IN); National Center for Choreography at The University of Akron; ONE Archives (Los Angeles); Redline Gallery (Denver); SPACE Gallery (Portland, ME); Velocity Dance Center (Seattle).

**2022–2024: Presentations**—Kinsey Institute (Bloomington, IN); Kelly Strayhorn Theater (Pittsburgh); ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives, USC (Los Angeles); Painted Bride Art Center (Philadelphia); Velocity Dance Center (Seattle); Visual Arts Center of Richmond (VA); and other locations to be confirmed.

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## About Meg Foley

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For the past 20 years, I have made performance projects with the self as subject, crafting body-based explorations of identity, belonging, and time from a queer perspective. In a loving tumble with formalism in dance and what constitutes performance and influenced by my identity as a queer mom in a trans family, I work on a continuum of research that centers the 24-hour body and asks how identity is occupied: an all-the-time, ever-shifting self, a sacred site, a portal, a prism, bloody, sweaty, sexual, mundane. It is an active mapping of oneself from the inside.

I danced wherever I was every day at 3:15pm for four years. I developed *action is primary*, an improvisational performance practice that trains a hyper-articulate interiority in direct dialogue with shape/form/feeling/being as choreography (2010–2017). In 2016, I began using fabric, foam, and carpet to extend embodied space through interactive objects and installations, affording somatic life to objects and “feeling back” on my body.

My dances have been presented by TanzFabrik Potsdam, Art Stations Foundation at Malta Festival, Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, Summerworks Festival in Toronto, DraftWork at Danspace Project, CATCH! at Invisible Dog Art Center, and Philadelphia Fringe Festival (curated). A 2012 Pew Fellow in the Arts, my visual art work has been shown at Moore College of Art and Design, Pilot+Projects, and Vox Populi. Grants include: Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, Independence Fdtn, Dancemakers Centre for Creation, and a Foundation for Contemporary Art Emergency Grant. I have taught across the US and abroad, most recently in the graduate UCLA Department of World Arts and Cultures/Dance. I was named one of Dance Magazine's *25 to Watch 2017*, called “a dancer of extraordinary power.”

### Images (from top):

*Blood Baby* work-in-progress showing, Vashon Island, WA, August 2023. Photo: Erin Johnson  
*The undergird* (2018). Photo: Gema Galiana



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