

Blossoming 'Through Winter with Helen Goodrum

Submitted by [hilary \(/users/hilary\)](#) on March 16, 2015 - 11:07am

As the snow begins to melt and the creatures stir from their winter cocoons, Helen Goodrum prepares for her departure from [Earthdance \(/about\)](#) in Western Massachusetts where she danced through the freezing months.



Photo: Earthdance ©Helen Goodrum

First drawn to the internationally renowned Earthdance, while attending Axis Syllabus [Nomadic College](http://www.nomadiccollege.org) (<http://www.nomadiccollege.org>), Helen returned to the Berkshire Hilltown dance center to spend her winter in research. A leading acrobatic stilt performer and core member of the globally acclaimed [Carpetbag Brigade Physical Theater](http://www.carpetbagbrigade.com) (<http://www.carpetbagbrigade.com>) Company, Helen contributes to evolving their unique acrobatic stilt technique through her teachings, training, collaboration and performance. Helen has toured intensively for the past two years, performing and teaching world-wide in Canada, Hong Kong, Colombia, UK, Mexico and USA.



Photo: 'Callings' by Carpetbag Brigade. Helen Goodrum & Aurelia Cohen © Jewel Fraser ISDA

Finding time to research and explore new innovative skills presents a challenge when touring intensively and finding crucial studio time to train is essential to the evolution of the form. Earthdance, with its two grand dance studios and innovative arts programs presented a perfect location and community for Helen to work and nurture her technique over the past three months. Together with the director of Carpetbag Brigade Jay Ruby, they have been evolving the stilt form through ground research incorporating the dance forms axis syllabus, modern dance and contact improvisation. Acrobatic stilts require precise technique to prevent damaging the body; we are not built to dance/move with 2 foot, 5 pound aluminum extensions of the lower limbs. The stilts change the stilter's center of gravity, pelvis relation to the spine and legs and the stability of the foot arch to name but a few. Having such research periods, where concentrated trainings are dedicated to the biomechanics of the body allows the Carpetbag Brigade to continue to explore the possibilities of stilts, pushing the form while maintaining healthy boundaries.



Photo: Helen Goodrum at Axis Syllabus Workshop hosted by [Electric Fish](http://electricfishstudio.com) (<http://electricfishstudio.com>) ©[Anna Maynard](http://www.annamaynard.com) (<http://www.annamaynard.com>)

Earthdance is a hub for Contact Improvisation and is integral to the community's identity, where improvisation is used as a means of artistic expression and community practice. Helen's own experiences in contact improvisation and using the practice in combination with acrobatic stilts has allowed her to integrate into Earthdance and assist its growth as an US arts organization.

Being in community with leading CI practitioners has exposed Helen to new possibilities and ideas, which she now takes with her as she continues on her journey. Helen's time at Earthdance has been fruitful; new friends, colleagues and contact improvisation jams have enabled her to continue her growth as a performer and artist. As Earthdance's Marketing and Development Assistant, Helen has enriched her own arts organization administration skills, as well as implemented new initiatives to assist the success of the establishment.

This spring Helen is returning to the United Kingdom to teach and share her acrobatic stilt research through professional workshops in England and Scotland and a community performance project in Yorkshire. She will be touring with The Carpetbag Brigade in Mexico and Colombia and conducting [Global Stilt Congress](https://carpetbagbrigade.wordpress.com/global-stilt-congress/registration/) (<https://carpetbagbrigade.wordpress.com/global-stilt-congress/registration/>) at Arcosanti, AZ; an annual international stiltling residency where Helen will be incorporating much of the research she has explored during her time at Earthdance.

Attachment	Size
Image 1 - Helen Goodrum.jpg (http://www.earthdance.net/sites/default/files/image_1.jpg)	55.91 KB
Image 2 - Helen Goodrum.jpg (http://www.earthdance.net/sites/default/files/image_2.jpg)	33.89 KB
Image 3 - Helen Goodrum.jpg (http://www.earthdance.net/sites/default/files/image_3.jpg)	31.16 KB

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