

## DANCE



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Choreographer Kim Epifano pitches in for *Island City Waterways* by RCW.

### Dancing on the Bridges of Alameda

Like many people living on the mainland, Oakland choreographer Kim Epifano knew very little about the little town across the water. Alameda had pretty Victorian houses, was nice and flat, good for biking, and the weather was OK. But it was just too much trouble to get there, fighting the traffic through the tube and across the bridges. No longer, as Epifano—and scores of new residents have found out. Alameda is a rather special place—either to live in or to visit.

So when Janet Koike, founder and artistic director of Rhythmix Cultural Works, asked Epifano whether she would be interested in a public art project, *Island City Waterways*, celebrating Alameda's centenary, she couldn't refuse. "I admired what she has done with this community arts center, and I had worked with her as a musician."

Koike is a renowned Taiko drummer and world music artist with Maze Daiko.

So the two women took a walk along the tidal canal between the Fruitvale and Park Street bridges and came up with a plan drawing on Epifano's specific experience

creating site-specific performances and events. For the last 13 years, she has organized San Francisco's *Trolley Dances*, for which audiences board a streetcar for a ride with periodic stops to watch dance performances. These exceedingly popular events are one of the easiest ways to see dance, plus they are such a fun way to get to know neighborhoods, familiar or not.

In Alameda you have to walk or ride a bike. *Island City Waterways* is a multidisciplinary event including art, dance, music, and storytelling which starts with an art-making project near the Fruitvale Bridge, home of a group of peregrine falcons, and ends with audiences joining performers in a celebration of the opening of the tidal canal, which made Alameda what it is: an island city. Epifano will work with 10 dancers, including deaf jazz artist Antoine Hunter whose movement vocabulary includes signing

*Island City Waterways*, May 21-22, 10:30 p.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:30 p.m.; free; meet at the foot of the Fruitvale Bridge at Blanding Avenue, and reservations encouraged at [IslandCityWaterways.org](http://IslandCityWaterways.org).

—Rita Felciano ●