



Mike Esperanza
Artistic Director
BARE Dance Company

To whom it may concern,

My name is Mike Esperanza and I am BARE Dance Company's artistic director based out of Costa Mesa, CA. One of very few operating dance companies in the Orange County area, we've managed to built a contemporary repertoire that appeals to a broader audience. Over the years we've been fortunate enough to be invited to perform at big venues such as The Ford Amphitheater, Orange County Performing Arts Center, The McCallum Theatre as well as the Barclay Theatre. The company decided to take more of an unconventional route and seek venues that can be transformed in performance spaces. Art galleries, photography studios and warehouses are some we've enjoyed transforming into a dance venue.

Our biggest task was to transform a 90' x 60' sound studio into an interactive theater. The main vision for the production of "Manhattan" was to create dance productions that revolved around a city scene. Jason Kuzia and I spoke after the space at Gothic Moon Studios was solidified to go over all the possibilities and we basically had to take a commercial and film space and bring in equipment, floors and seating for concert dance. At the end, Jason managed to create a consuming space by highlighting the integral details of the structure. Audience member felt so disoriented as they walked into the studio as it resembled a piece of the city. Since the space was so big, the biggest challenge was to make sure all the dance numbers were visible by everyone. Someone sitting on one side of the space wouldn't feel cheated from a production happening on the other side. Jason handled the lighting to create focal points so the eye wondered to the right places. Rachel Levin of Explore Dance called it a "rich world with simple visual and aural cues that succeed in capturing the indescribable ache of modern love".

Jason Kuzia's professionalism is refreshing. He brings ease into the environment that lets me and the dancers feel like we're in safe hands. It's very rare in the dance community to work with someone who can cover so many elements that goes into a production like "Manhattan". I highly recommend Jason for work at any scale.

Best regards,
Mike Esperanza

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Esperanza", written over a white background.