

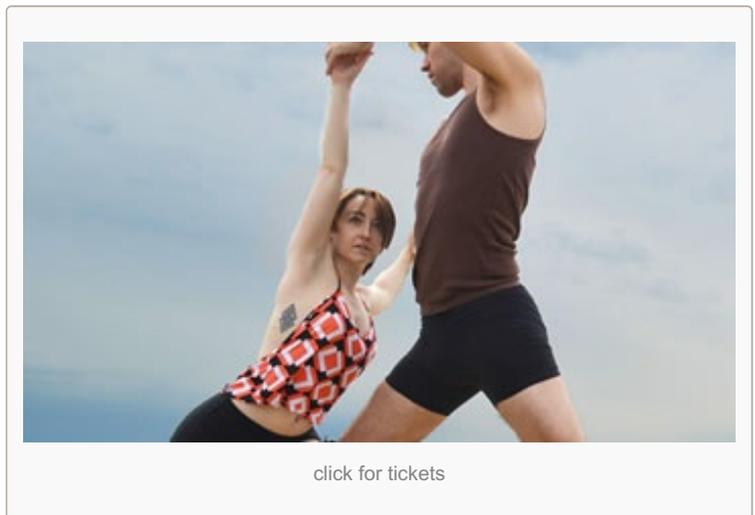
Blue Moon / Red River

T. Chase Meacham

Jane Franklin's bold collaboration with percussionist Tom Teasley is Fringe at its best. *Blue Moon / Red River* reaches wide — part dance and part concert. The pair have managed to combine both new mediums and old to create a unique and innovative storytelling experience, connecting some of our continent's youngest artists with some of our continent's very oldest.

The performance is an adaptation of *American Indian Trickster Tales*, compiled by Richard Erdoes and Alfonso Ortiz. We begin with a stage — bare and expectant, with a tableau of instruments waiting to the side. Teasley enters, the light lowers, and he begins to play. It's a single few notes that bring the stage to life — from a time before our Genesis, to the tumult of freshly forming world.

The dancers enter. They move precisely and with purpose. Franklin's choreography, perfectly matched with Teasley's superb sound design, plays extensively with the geometry of the dancers and the inertia that exists between them. Monologues play throughout — fantastic origin stories of the heavens and the earth (and the wolves and hawks and seas), as the dancers interpret, and react.



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Franklin focuses extensively on relationships, using a few carefully-selected motifs (energies between the palms; five-counts with the hands) to convey both the mystical dynamism of our planet's beginnings as well the light and complexity of the cultures from which these stories originate.

Blue Moon / Red River

by Jane Franklin

Composed by Tom Teasley

50 minutes

at Lang – Atlas Performing Arts Center

1333 H Street NE

Washington, DC 20002

[Details and tickets](#)

Teasley, meanwhile, delivers a powerful performance across a staggering number of instruments. He (and the sound) become characters themselves — at once leading and being led by the bodies enacting the stories. A strong light design (Elizabeth Coco) compliments the performance — from the deep blues of an early, water-logged world, to the rich ambers of a young and hopeful culture. Even the use of projections, so frequently over-used, felt disciplined,

controlled, and deeply respectful of the rhythms and intentions of the dancers on stage.

They behave as seeds. Or perhaps as ghosts. And then there was one and then none — out as it began, with a few wavering notes. At once mournful, and deeply expectant. A very tender relationship between the dancers and the stage (or, as it seems, the earth).

Blue Moon / Red River is a smart and well-executed piece — it may not be the boldest offering at this year's Fringe, but does what it knows it does best. It is tender and charming; it reaches to the edge of its grasp, without seeming too bold or too grand for its audience. It blends artists and disciplines with a sincere reverence for the dancers, stage, and story. And perhaps most importantly, it leaves without a trace.

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