

Hawaii's premier dance ensemble, IONA Contemporary Dance Theatre (formerly Iona Pear) is renowned for its harmonious and innovative blend of Eastern, Western and indigenous influences. IONA's visionary Artistic Director, Cheryl Flaharty, has been mesmerizing audiences for over a decade with her one-of-a-kind performances. From the company's adored classic, 'The Mythology of Angels,' to Flaharty's tour de force, 'Destiny,' IONA masterfully moves the heart through storytelling and symbolism. The 20 member troupe melds luxuriant costumes and staging, witty spoken text, and the power of music to create a consummate experience that reaches beyond dance to total theatre.

Raised in Hawaii, Ms. Flaharty received a B.A. in Dance from the University of Hawaii and performed as a principle dancer with Betty Jones' and Fritz Ludin's Dances We Dance Company. Flaharty's choreographic vision has been equally influenced by her work with butoh master Poppo Shiraishi, with whom she performed as a principle dancer in New York from 1985-1990, in his Go Go Boys company. Ms. Flaharty's experience with these two differing dance forms has brought forth the unique synthesis of Eastern and Western movement and spirituality that her IONA Contemporary Dance Theatre is known for.

From its very inception, IONA began to develop a visual vocabulary all its own. Departing from the somber underpinnings of classic butoh, Flaharty sought to elevate the awareness of audiences to beauty, reverence, and uplifting components of existence. Flaharty's affinity for story, allegory, psychology and world mythology shaped IONA's work as narrative yet non-literal, ancient in content but contemporary in interpretation, and ultimately poetic.



Photo: Sergio Goes

"Dancer/choreographer Cheryl Flaharty has evolved a hybrid style that resonates with the tension between her Western-trained body and her Eastern-trained mind. Her works are as provocatively original a fusion of Western exhibitionism and Eastern introversion as one can possibly imagine"

Honolulu Advertiser



Since her 1990 return to Hawaii, Ms. Flaharty has become a major force in the local dance community. She is the recipient of six Hawaii State Dance Council choreographic awards, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts' Individual Artists Fellowship, and the Baci Award for cutting edge work. Flaharty's vision has expanded beyond the realms of contemporary dance with the creation of work for Sal Murillo's YES International Revue in Waikiki, and collaborations with Hawaii Opera Theatre in Macbeth and The Tales of Hoffman. An influential and inspiring teacher, Ms. Flaharty has taught numerous classes and workshops throughout the state of Hawaii and in New York, and served as guest instructor at the University of Hawaii, Mid-Pacific School for the Arts, and the University of California, San Diego.

“... a visionary coup de theatre... the production casts a genuine spell.”

Los Angeles Times

“Honolulu’s Best Dance Company”

Readers Choice Awards - Honolulu Weekly

“The program was performed beautifully.

The costumes were superb, the dance movements impeccable”

The Whittier Daily News

“Flaharty was earned a well-deserved reputation in the Performance

Art world as a maverick, highly innovative choreographer . . .

whose dances are alternately - and even simultaneously - dark,

funny, perplexing, mystical, and always provocative.”

The Honolulu Advertiser

“Lights, music, to say nothing of the mask that transforms Flaharty’s face

into a hieratic image, add to the strangeness - and force -

of this earth mother’s ritual.”

Dance Magazine

“... a visually stunning, visceral and provocative opera of movement.”

Honolulu Star Bulletin

DESTINY

THEATRICAL ENGAGEMENT

IONA 
CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE



“Destiny is great theatre and worthy of any stage in the world”

The Maui News

“... a visually stunning, visceral and provocative opera of movement.

Honolulu Star Bulletin

‘Destiny’, IONA’s most exuberant work, speaks of the maternal strengths of the Earth and the forces of change. The evening-length production



draws content and imagery from a magical “garden of eternal truths”, Eastern and Western religions, gods, goddesses, healing, and peace. In an all-encompassing work, Artistic Director Cheryl Flaharty merges dance with video, spoken text, and a captivating musical score to reveal the creative structures that define our spiritual beliefs and shape the destiny of humanity.



Photos Carl Hefner

FREE PROMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!

Electric Blue

THEATRICAL ENGAGEMENT

IONA 
CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

'Electric Blue' is abundant with delicious imagery and stunning aerial acrobatics. A magical statement about the beauty, mythology, and future of our earth and oceans, 'Electric Blue' presents viewers with provocative messages amidst a setting of sand; which flows, flies, and drops on the dancers. IONA embraces techniques that test the realm of illusion in this boldly original and intelligently gripping multi-media production, enhancing the melody of the songs, sweetening the spontaneity of an intelligent script, and magically projecting audience members from the community beach performances onto giant screens. In 'Electric Blue' imagination and reality merge and dance together on the stage.



"Flaharty's latest work, 'Electric Blue', has been stunning audiences on local beaches since December, 2005"

Dance Magazine



Photos: Carl Hefner, Mary Farkash

"An explosion of visual effects, sound and media . . . an abundance of riches. The lush, full-bodied movement of the dancers, the architectural structure of the choreography, and the poignancy and drama of the relationships are equally captivating. 'Electric Blue' offers so many outstanding moments, including a magical finale, that it comes recommended to anyone who loves theatre and dance."

Honolulu Advertiser

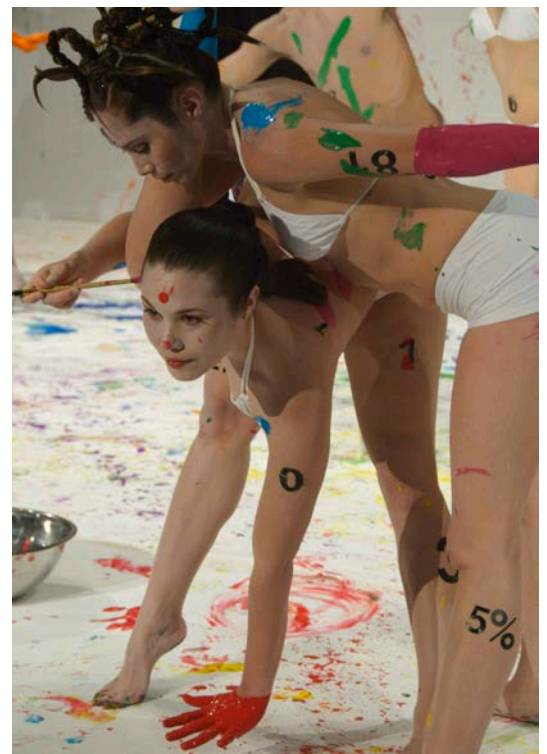
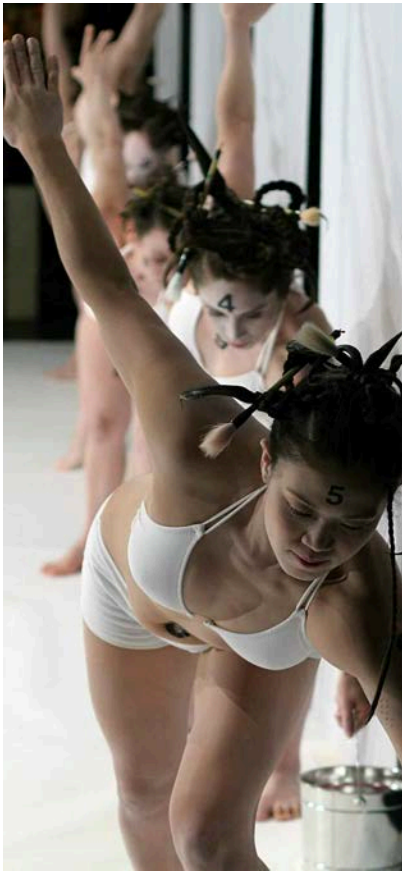


FREE BEACH PROMO PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!

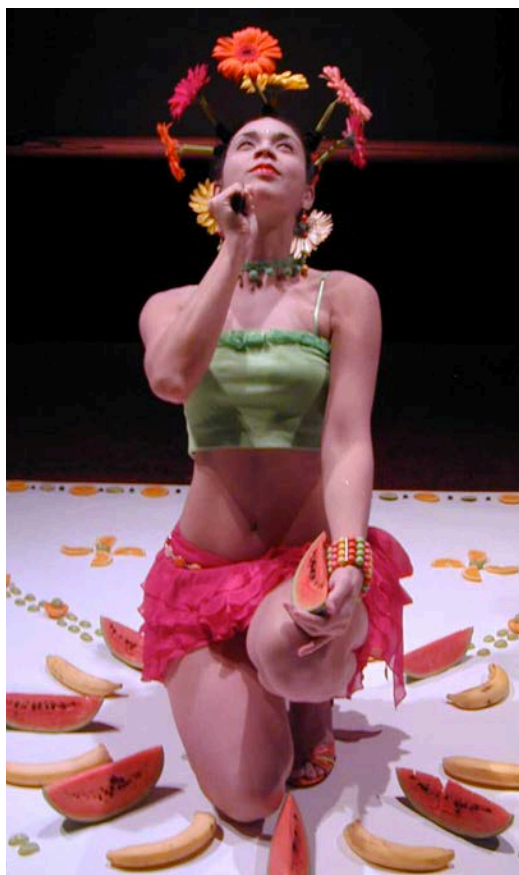
Paint by Number

SALON SERIES

A star in IONA's Salon Series, 'Paint by Number' features 10 dancers and live music by jazz fusion band 'The Quadraphonix'. Dancers representing emotions and themes of humanity such as peace, jealousy, union, and chaos develop relationships through movement, swipes, splashes, and strokes of paint that fill the once white space. As the themes develop, the white space becomes a spectacular canvas filled with layers of color that evoke the duality and meshing of Paint by Number's themes.



FREE PROMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!



IONA's Salon Series takes dance, theatre and visual arts out of the traditional venue and places it in a versatile environment where boundaries between performer and audience are removed and, often, an interactive element emerges. 'La Madonna' is an installation performance for galleries, alternative venues, festivals and special events. One hour in length, the performance features 8-14 dancers in living works of art that depict traditional and contemporary goddesses.



"La Madonna Full of Delight. . . Expect the unexpected as La Madonna comes alive . . . IONA dancers are objects d'art - creating a gallery of performance artworks".

Honolulu Advertiser

"Because IONA dancers train physically and spiritually, they execute moves intended to move you inside and out. To be in their eyebeams is to give in to this extraordinary sensibility."

Honolulu Star Bulletin



Bookings Contact:

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FREE PROMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!

AKASHA

THEATRICAL ENGAGEMENT

IONA 
CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

When the four elements of earth, air, fire and water come together, they create AKASHA, the Sanskrit word for ether and also the inspiration for IONA's newest work. The elements are woven into a 70 minute program showcasing IONA's fusion of modern dance and Japanese butoh technique with aerial movements and stunning costumes. The new show melds several fan favorites from past shows, including Electric Blue, Destiny, and The Mythology of Angels with five new works celebrating our human connection to nature. Akasha seamlessly incorporates video and animation footage with live dancers to create a larger than life effect that conveys the strength and beauty of each of the elements.



Photos: Carl Heifner, Mike Pryor, Kaveh Karban

“Elements of nature dazzle in Akasha! It presents a universal theme combining mythology and our connection to nature, promising to provide a fantastic evening of thought-provoking and captivating entertainment”

The Honolulu Advertiser



FREE PROMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!

WORSHIPPING SUN

THEATRICAL ENGAGEMENT

IONA 
CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

Originally premiered in 1995, the awe-inspiring ‘Worshipping Sun’ has been received again and again with sold-out houses. Majestic and viscerally provocative, this evening-length work in six highly distinctive sections celebrates solar imagery from across the globe, revealing light’s essence as a universal spiritual principle.

“From the mesmerizing opening of dancers in priestly garb circling the stage in measured ecstasy, to the work’s culmination in blinding apotheosis, with the company resplendent in gold body paint, ‘Worshipping Sun’ takes the viewer on a journey from cosmic reaches to Earth and back out again.”

Honolulu Advertiser



Photos: Carl Hefner

“As always with Flaharty’s creations, the whole assemblage is unlike anything you’ve ever seen before, asserting her and her company once again as one of the most innovative forces in Hawaii today.”

The Honolulu Advertiser



Representing metaphors of the Sun as consciousness, light, energy, birth, God, fire, time, death, and rebirth.



FREE PROMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!

The Mythology of Angels

PRODUCTION

IONA 
CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE

“Flaharty and her troupe did not disappoint. For 90 minutes they delivered a strange, sumptuous vision of angels from around the world that earned standing ovations...”
Honolulu Advertiser



Photos: Carl Heffner

IONA'S signature piece, 'The Mythology of Angels' is an evening-length suite in six sections exploring divine guardianship, the tensions between good and evil, and the veil between body and soul. The rich heritage of angelic lore worldwide is depicted in brilliant color, culminating in a dazzling portrait of the extra-terrestrial as metaphor for the 21st-century angel. Brilliant and heart warming, 'The Mythology of Angels' has been presented annually in Hawaii and has toured to Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, and Park City, Utah.

FREE PROMOTIONAL PERFORMANCES ARE INCLUDED WITH BOOKINGS!



FREE COMMUNITY PERFORMANCES

IONA has appeared in dozens of free public performances, from beaches to shopping malls to city streets, each time leaving a life-affirming mark on all who see them. These community performances have become the cornerstone of IONA's audience building work over the past twelve years. They are offered to presenters with theatrical bookings as a way to garner publicity while educating and inspiring a community.

IONA is, above all, a message about the healing elixir of art. As the company's physical language is one of evolution and spontaneity, IONA has a strong affinity for working with diverse populations within the community, and the community at large.

All theatrical bookings include outreach activities ranging from visitations by angels to hospitals and prisons, to master classes, to free promotional performances.



Photos: Sergio Goes

*"This was an experience not a performance."
"My God it's so beautiful, even in the prison."*

Women's Community Correctional Center, Hawaii



MASTER CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

IONA's Artistic Director Cheryl Flaharty conducts a variety of master classes and workshops that inspire and educate. Lecture demonstrations explore the merging of eastern and western traditions in dance and theatre, the use of imagery and color toward content in choreography, and the role of dance in the community.

VISIONS OF ANGELS

IONA's 'Visions of Angels' community outreach program brings angels from 'The Mythology of Angels' to prisons, hospitals, hospices, senior centers, youth at risk, and populations in crisis. Without exception, these audiences have responded with tears and smiles, and the dancers themselves have evolved from theatrical performers into truly angelic beings in body and spirit.

CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCES

IONA has adapted versions of their evening-length productions to awe and inspire children of all ages. Educational tools included in presentations bring awareness of dance as an art form, costume construction, cultural mythology, and meditation as a focusing tool. Performances can be intimate, taking place in classrooms, or 45-minute productions at the theatre. Magical, funny, and heartwarming, an IONA children's performance is a treasured experience to keep forever.