



Theory: Tori Sparks

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Tori Sparks is a rock star of sorts in the contemporary dance world. Her work will quiet your thoughts, allowing a flood of emotions to have their way with you. It is mysterious and sly, or joyful and smiley. Either way, it is damn potent.

Sparks as an artist is a do-er. Her work doesn't stop with the stage. She uses the camera to take dance, as an established art form, out of the traditional venues and into a new era of expression. This weekend, Sparks presents this other form of visual choreography at the Bushwick Starr. "Trilogy of Two" is three movement-based videos featuring music by Towers of Hanoi and Antler.

Sparks was recently featured in TRACE's Sporting Life issue along with a portfolio of six other dancers making quality work. Check out her reel for examples of brilliant performance work, or, for those of you nowhere close to Bushwick this evening, view some of her vids [here](#) and keep an eye out for her.

Trilogy of Two, three movement-based music videos by Tori Sparks, [The Bushwick Starr](#), Bushwick, Brooklyn. April 4 & 5th, 8pm. \$12

TRACE: Describe the work that you're presenting this weekend.

Tori Sparks: I am presenting a series of movement-based music videos we at sharpelbow have been crafting, called "Trilogy of Two." I use the term "music videos" lightly as they are not your typical formula, but they are not straight-up dance films either. I have been working in movement and costume design with the concept of "twinning" and the pitfalls of seeking individual sovereignty. With that in mind for the concept, I then juxtaposed music from independent bands like Towers of Hanoi (Gainesville) and Antler (New York).

T: *What is Sharpelbow?*

TS: "Sharpelbow" is a blanket term for all I get myself involved in, with all the great talents and collaborators, and all the places and people, be it dance, video or photography. My collaborators have been dancer Einy Aam, Jessye McDowell and Matt M. Morrow as videographers, my brother, Tyler Sparks on post production, Marie Reedy who always has the answers, my beau, Darren Kucera with music, even my mom and Eric Jackson Bradley on costume construction. Sharpelbow is guerilla-styl: Hopping fences in Florida, suffering a blizzard in the Adirondacks, traveling here and there on our own dime to shoot on less than desirable equipment. The real treasures are the adventures we have to tell.

T: *Tell me about the pleasure you find in using video as a medium?*

TS: Dance is usually ephemeral. With video it has longevity, therefore reaching more people. Video allows you to document the spontaneity of improvisational movement, but the editing allows you to escape the linear, real-time constraints. It has a new intimacy as the camera can get closer than the eye usually can in live performance.

T: *With dance, each performance is slightly different, making it unique. Do you embrace those slight deviations in your video work, allowing them, or do you aim for a certain something like other film directors?*

TS: I can't say I know exactly what I want before shooting. What I do know are the elements or details I want included and how to get them together to respond to one another. The piece then unveils itself in the editing process, which I find very much like choreographing.

T: *Are these videos documenting dance works, or are they works in themselves? In other words, was the music, movement, cinematography, brought together for the larger idea of creating this video?*

TS: Works in themselves. Everything was constructed for the purpose of making a video. There were no live performance pieces these works were derived from. But now, however, I am working with Eric Jackson Bradley, at the New School, to have one of his dance students perform her interpretations of my videos as a performance study.

T: *You collaborate on many fronts. What is the joy of the collaborative process?*

TS: Ideas can go further. I may have the idea, and someone else may have the answer, or vice versa. Life's always more interesting with partners in crime.

T: *Describe genius.*

TS: Cinnamon toast. Others might argue pizza.

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