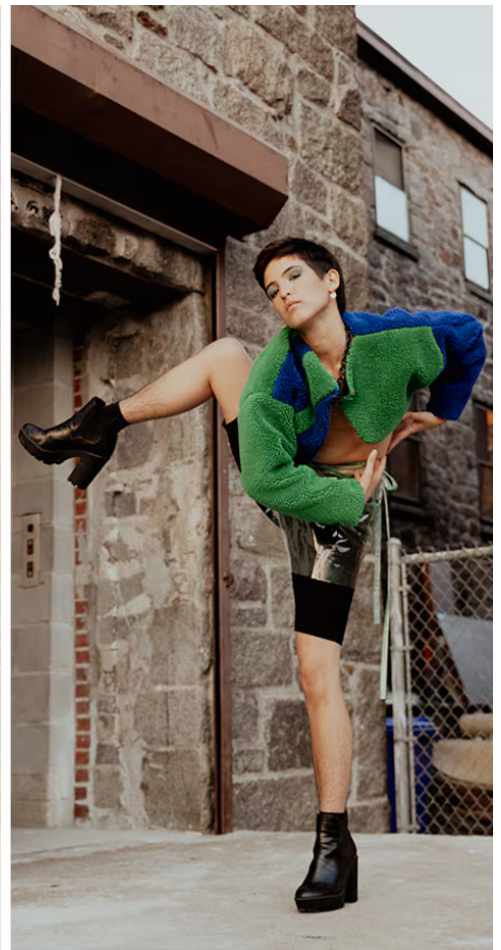


Sustainability with style: 'Lost and Found' blends dance, fashion

Collaborators find common ground in a new performance featuring dancers and models in vintage clothing

By **Arushi Jacob** Globe Correspondent, Updated October 1, 2024, 2:53 p.m.



A composite of models Katrina Conte, left, and Simon Montalvo, right, featured in a 2023 performance. STEPHANIE MCLAUGHLIN

When Eliza Malecki and Mary O’Keefe met in July 2021, they didn’t have much in common besides a love for the arts and a few mutual friends who introduced them. A Cambridge-based dancer, Malecki was settling into the city’s dance scene and working with local companies, while O’Keefe had just received her master’s degree in classical music from the [New England Conservatory](#).

Now, three years later, the duo has found a way to combine their interests: This week, they’ll be hosting their second “dance-fashion show,” which is an interdisciplinary performance that combines the two. In August 2023, the pair collaborated with a makeup brand to produce a 16-minute show, incorporating dance to showcase its products.

“A lot of people were like, ‘Why was it so short? We wanted more,’” said Malecki, adding that she and O’Keefe started looking for ways to create a bigger version of the project soon after.

Titled “Lost and Found,” their newest collaboration will take place Oct. 5 and 6 at the [Boston Figurative Art Center](#) in Somerville and the [New Art Center](#) in Newton.

What makes it both a dance and fashion show? The performance’s structure. The seven dancers and seven models who appear throughout each section (there are six in total) explore the connections between these two forms of movement: runway walking and dancing. In some sections, models will be dancing, while dancers will be walking.

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The sequence of the show resembles the routine of getting dressed in the morning, starting with performers in pajamas, then moving into their undergarments, a section of the dance Malecki considers “more vulnerable.” The rest of the dance is choreographed to move through finding the perfect pair of pants, a shirt, shoes, and finally accessories.

Throughout the performance, Malecki tries to raise questions about identity through her choreography.

“When you look in the mirror for the first time in the morning, what is the first thing you’ve noticed?” she said, referring to the initial stages of the dance. “Is it something loving? Is it something not so loving?”

The clothes on display are provided by [Found Boston](#), a vintage-clothing market based in Cambridge. Ensuring their clothing provider could dress bodies of all sizes and shapes was important to the pair, explained O’Keefe, adding that the pieces used for the show would be available within a week at the store.

“It’s not only a way to promote sustainability, [but about] how we find clothes and express ourselves,” said O’Keefe, who’s a stylist and model as well as an oboist. She wanted to promote secondhand clothing and “protect the planet because fashion is one

of the major polluters in our world.”

Malecki and O’Keefe put together a funk, pop, and house music playlist for the show, which is meant to marry artistic mediums, specifically music, dance, and fashion.

“I’ve been in Boston for a long time now,” said O’Keefe, who moved to the city in 2013. “One of the things I’ve noticed as a student and a working professional is the different art communities of Boston don’t often intersect.”

So far, the show has been a labor of love for the friends, and both Malecki and O’Keefe have learned more about each other’s passions in the process.

“This was born out of a desire not only to figure out how our two communities might intersect, to learn from each other,” O’Keefe said, “but also to figure out how we might be able to spur more contact across different divisions of art in Boston.”

LOST AND FOUND

At the Boston Figurative Art Center, 285 Washington St., and the New Art Center, 61 Washington Park.

Oct. 5 and 6. For tickets and times, visit [tickettailor.com](https://www.tickettailor.com).

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