

City Arts Magazine

## Ezra Dickinson Takes to the Streets with an Emotional Tribute to His Mother

Written and photographed by NATE WATTERS: May 16 2013

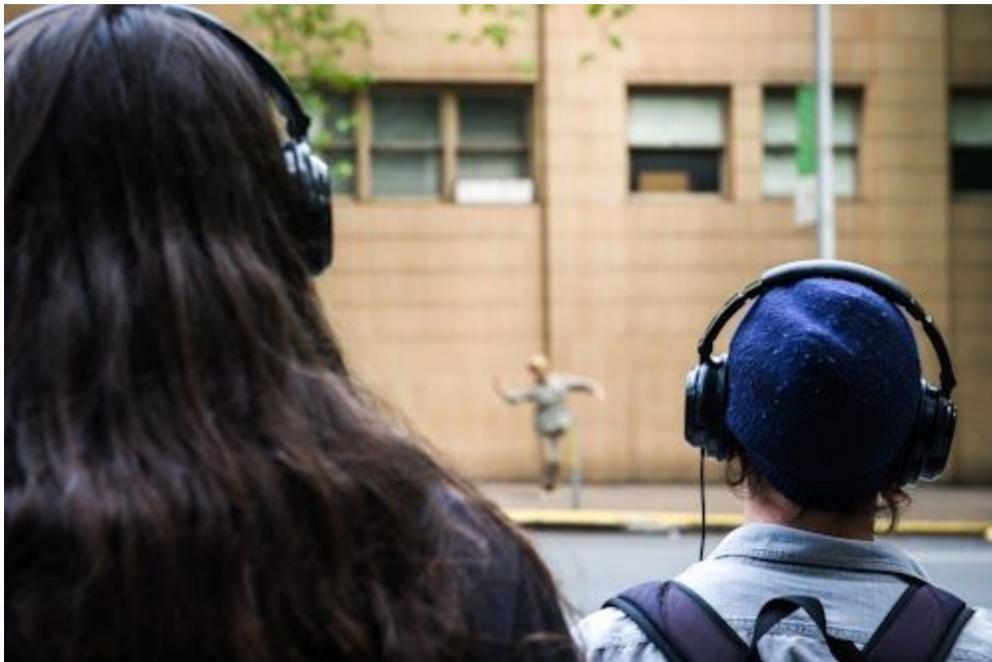


I'm no expert on dance, but I love to photograph it. Sometimes it's over my head, and other times it's incredibly moving – as was the case earlier this week with Ezra Dickinson's latest solo work, *Mother for You I Made This*. The perfectly timed piece (Mother's Day and the UK's Mental Health Week) integrates music, conversation, and video as a commentary on not only the dysfunctional mental health care system in our country, but Dickinson's relationship with his mother, who lives with schizophrenia.

*Mother for You I Made This* is viewed as a tour through part of downtown Seattle. Audience members meet at 800 Stewart, across from the Greyhound station, where the performance begins and is led by three ushers who help guide the audience through the streets.



Audience members wear headphones which play music beamed from an iPhone as the soundtrack to Dickinson's performance.



Interactions with the public occur throughout, with varied reactions from onlookers, who only see a person dancing in the street being followed by a group of people wearing large headphones.





At one point Dickinson walks the streets wearing a mask and with a blanket draped over his shoulders with the image of a woman (presumably his mother) printed on it – most likely representative of his mother and her time spent living on the streets, and perhaps an empathetic gesture towards others who walk the streets with mental illnesses. We may not always know exactly who or what we're looking at during a brief encounter on the sidewalk and shouldn't be so quick to pass judgement.



Dickinson stops in front of the courthouse to wrap a ribbon of a seemingly-infinite length around trees. The ribbon has words that read, “America wants you to take pills now” and “Who will make a home for my mother who lives with imbalance”.



The performance ends in a local park, Dickinson wearing a large dinosaur mask and the final moments of the performance being heard by the audience as emotional conversation between a much younger Dickinson and his mother.

