

The Stranger

## Q&A with Ezra Dickinson

Written by Christopher Frizzelle: Mar 6, 2013

Tell me about the dinosaur head.

It's an allosaurus. I copied the face out of a National Geographic. I like the idea of masks. And I like using cardboard a lot—it's a really plentiful material. It's everywhere. And it's light. Papier-mâché is a lot heavier and a lot messier. This is no mess. For me, the dinosaur is childhood—playing with dinosaurs when you're a kid.

And you've been dancing since you were a kid?

My mother is a dance teacher. She put me in dance when I was 4. I started at Pacific Northwest Ballet when I was 8, and I danced there for 12 years on full scholarship. I left PNB when I was 20, and I went to Cornish and got a degree in dance with an emphasis in choreography. Even before graduating, I was supporting myself as an artist.

You're working on an outdoor dance piece about your mom, who's been diagnosed with schizophrenia and was homeless for a time.

Is that right?

Yes. She called me and tried to act like nothing weird was going on. She was like, "Oh, I'm living on the street right now," but she wanted to move on and ask me about what I was doing. And it set my imagination going—both "Oh my god, my mother is living on the street," but also "This is heavy, crazy imagery that's popping into my head now." When your parents are weird and sporadic artists, it lends itself to making art about them. And it's not like I'm making fun of them or want anyone to think less of them, but I'm really inspired by their craziness.

It's called Mother for You I Made This and starts outside the Greyhound station downtown. Right now the performance is scheduled to begin May 6 at 7 p.m., and I'll perform every single day until May 19. Fourteen shows. Or 21 shows, if the 14 go well. I imagine this as maximum of 20 people as an audience. But one day, it could be just for two people. I love the idea of having a super-intense solo performance just for two people, potentially.

What if it rains?

Great. I'm going to be providing the audience with umbrellas. And myself, I'm going to be dancing through it.