



Kate Weare Brings Intellectual, Modern Dance to WinterFest

Say you're one of those people who gets dragged, kicking if not screaming, to dance events who would rather lie down on a bed of nails listening to a Sarah Palin speech than sit through an evening of contemporary dancing. Kate Weare might change your mind.

Check out her New York-based [Kate Weare Company](#) perform in its inaugural visit to the Florida Dance Association's winter dance series, WinterFest, which runs through January 29. On Saturday, Weare and her four dancers -- Adrian Clark, Leslie Kraus, Marlena Penney Oden, and California-born but Florida-raised Douglas Gillespie, who got his BFA from Florida State University -- will bring to life two of her most recent works: last fall's *Bright Land* and 2008's *Bridge of Sighs*.

When *Bright Land* premiered in Manhattan's Joyce Theater, the piece had a live band, The Crooked Jades, perform their old-time, soulful rhythms to accompany the dancers. For Florida, Weare has planned something a bit different. "Touring with the band obviously can't always happen, so we're reworking *Bright Land* into a pure dance piece with recorded music, and I'm actually really excited to see how it transforms," Weare tells Cultist from New York City a few days before heading down to South Florida. "I think it's going to be a really potent, cohesive dance, and I'm excited to see this version when it is condensed in its purest, most refined form."

WinterFest's director, Bill Doolin, has been following Weare's work for some time, and always comes away impressed. "Her work is beautiful, incredibly intellectual," says Doolin. "She takes a lot of time to develop it. She digs really deep, so it's very much about relationships between the people on stage."

And what happens on stage is bound to grab your attention. *Bridge of Sighs*, for example, shows the act of slapping in a brand new light. But you'll have to see that for yourself. "I care more, I'm more drawn, to people who live fiercely and sometimes make mistakes and show flaws and have problems and maybe have bodies that don't always obey," explains the Oakland, California-born choreographer and artistic director, who founded her company in 2005. "The viscerality, the rhythm, is a big part of my work."

Now, about dance being inscrutable... Here's Weare explanation: "If you are engaged, if you find yourself having a physical, sensation-based response, if you're leaning forward, if you're tightening your hands, if you're feeling moved, all of that is what dance can do when it's effective," says the artist. "And if you're having any of those experiences, then you are interpreting that dance well."