



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

651 ARTS Presents Premiere of
DELIRIOUS Dances/Edisa Weeks'
3 RITES: Life, Liberty, Happiness

The Epic Performance Trilogy Set to Premiere Its Last Installment
With *Happiness* in November

(**Brooklyn, NY – October 18, 2023**) – 651 ARTS - Brooklyn's premier institution for the African Diasporic performing arts – is presenting the last installment of **DELIRIOUS Dances/Edisa Weeks'** epic performance trilogy *3 RITES: Life, Liberty, Happiness* with the world premiere of *3 RITES: Happiness* in November (Nov. 16-18). Conceived by the renowned Brooklyn-based choreographer, educator and multimedia artist, the series is comprised of three different interactive performance rituals integrating dance, live music, text, visual installations, community discussions and shared meals to explore why life, liberty and happiness were included as unalienable rights in the United States' Declaration of Independence. Produced by curator and Creative Producer **María Wethers**, *3 RITES* seeks to reckon with America's past, present and potential future and each installment centers around what these rights mean today, who has access to them, and how they manifest in the body. The first two installments of the trilogy *3 RITES: Life* and *3 RITES: Liberty* premiered in September and October, respectively.

The final installment - *3 RITES: Happiness* - will premiere at the historic Weeksville Heritage Center in November and will investigate how laughter and pleasure reside in the body. This rite is about self-care, and making time to relax, laugh and recharge for the labor to uphold the values of life, liberty and happiness. The piece will feature four DELIRIOUS dancers and commissioned music from **Nathaniel Braddock** to be played live by the **Occidental Brothers Dance Band International**. The rite begins with the Happiness Fête where the audience is invited to engage in a collective celebration of wellness and joy which includes portrait sketches, massages, fantastical and playful hair designs by Delirious Hair Designs and line dancing. In the spirit of meal sharing, a family-style cuisine will also be provided to patrons catered by **Chef Lex** and the **Brownsville Community Culinary Center**.

“In *3 RITES*, I'm seeking to reckon with America's past, present and potential future, by engaging people in the ideals that are a core part of America's foundation and generating a

dialogue about what needs to be done to ensure these ideals apply to everyone,” said Weeks. “I am interested in bringing diverse groups of people together through dance, song, installations, storytelling, laughter, food and conversations. I truly believe that art revitalizes the everyday to reveal something new about ourselves; and that revelation has the power to change the world.”

"Conceived and created by visionary artist Edisa Weeks, *3 RITES: Life, Liberty, Happiness* takes the audience on a journey through important issues affecting society today,” said Wethers. “From participatory education about environmental (in)justice in *Life*; commenting on challenges to our freedoms and inspiring communal liberatory practices in *Liberty*; and uplifting the transformative power of collective joy in *Happiness*; the *3 RITES* trilogy is a balm for our times."

“For 35 years, 651 has been a champion and nurturer for artists. Not only do we take pride in being a platform for them to present their work, but we are also with them throughout the journey of that work,” said 651 ARTS’ Executive Director **Toya Lillard**. “651 has a longstanding relationship with Edisa and, with *3 RITES*, it is so exciting to be able present the premiere of *Liberty* and *Happiness* and to witness *Life* being performed for the public for the first time. Artists like Edisa are the reason why we do what we do!”

3 RITES is produced by Maríya Wethers and commissioned and presented by 651 ARTS, with co-commissioners Billie Holiday Theater, Kelly Strayhorn Theater, Mount Tremper Arts, and National Performance Network.

3 RITES: LIFE, LIBERTY, HAPPINESS SCHEDULE

3 RITES: Happiness

Date: Thursday, November 16, 2023 & Friday, November 17, 2023 @ 6pm; Saturday November 18, 2023 (Two Performances - 1pm & 6pm)

Location: Weeksville Heritage Center (158 Buffalo Avenue - Brooklyn, NY 11213)

TICKETS: *3 RITES: Happiness* - \$35.00 / \$30.00 Students. For more information, please visit: www.651arts

About Edisa Weeks/DELIRIOUS Dances

Edisa Weeks is a choreographer, educator and founder of DELIRIOUS Dances. She creates multimedia interactive work that merges theater with dance to explore our deepest desires, darkest fears and sweetest dreams. She grew up in Uganda, Papua New Guinea and Brooklyn, NY; and teaches choreography, improvisation, modern technique, and mentors emerging artists at Queens College, CUNY. www.deliriousdances.com

Founded by multi-disciplinary artist Edisa Weeks, DELIRIOUS Dances seeks to erase the barriers between art and life, between performance space and audience space, and between mediums. We are interested in finding ways for the audience to interact with and influence the experience of a work. We believe that art revitalizes the everyday to reveal something new about ourselves, and the revelation is an energy, a spark that has the power to change the world.

3 RITES is a National Performance Network/Visual Artists Network (NPN/VAN) Creation & Development Fund Project co-commissioned by 651 ARTS, Mount Tremper Arts, RestorationART, Kelly Strayhorn Theater, DancePlace and NPN/VAN. 3 RITES is made possible in part through funding from the Brooklyn Arts Council; Creative Capital; Durst Organization; Harkness Foundation for Dance; The New England Foundation for the Arts, National Dance Project which is generously supported with lead funding from the Doris Duke Foundation and the Mellon Foundation; New Music USA; New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature; a PSC-CUNY Award, jointly funded by The Professional Staff Congress and The City University of New York; The Puffin Foundation, as well as through the sponsorship of The Field; and the generosity of individuals.

3 RITES was developed through creative residencies with BRICLab; Chashama Space to Create; ChoreoQuest at RestorationART - Billie Holiday Theater; a remote residency with the Experimental Media and Performance Arts Center at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Dance in Process at Gibney Dance with funds provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation; the Harlem Stage WaterWorks Emerging Artists program, which received support from the Jerome Foundation and the Mellon Foundation; Mabou Mines SUITE/Space program; Maggie Allessee National Center for Choreography; Materials for the Arts; New York State Dance Force residencies at Topaz Arts and at Hobart and William Smith Colleges; Norte Maar @ Socrates Sculpture Park; and Snug Harbor Cultural Center.

About 651 ARTS

Since its founding in 1988, 651 ARTS has become a trusted convener of contemporary African Diasporic artistic expression, a champion and nurturer for emerging artists and their work and a vital cultural resource for its surrounding community. As it moves forward, part of 651 ARTS' mission is to preserve the legacy of Black culture in Brooklyn, celebrate the eclecticism of Black performance and to pioneer new visions of African Diaspora artists. This year – the transition year – is integral for the institution as it continues to lay the framework that will further help to reinforce 651 ARTS' role as a leader of African Diasporic culture while also establishing it an incubator for artistic innovation in the 21st century.

651 ARTS' programs are made possible by gifts from generous individuals and grants from the The Bay and Paul Foundations, Baisley Powell Elebash Fund, The Black Seed, Booth Ferris Foundation, Burberry, Con Edison, Doris Duke Foundation, Ford Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Lambent Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, New England Foundation for the Arts, New York Community Trust Mosaic Network & Fund, and Wallace Foundation. 651 ARTS is supported, in part, by public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in Partnership with the City Council, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature.

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