

Panther Creek Pictures presents

# TRASH DANCE



*Directed by Andrew Garrison*

USA, 2012, 68 MIN.  
DIGITAL, 1.85:1

**Website:** <http://trashdancemovie.com>

**Press Materials:** <http://bit.ly/tdpress>

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## SYNOPSIS

### SHORT

A choreographer finds beauty and grace in garbage trucks, and rallies reluctant Austin sanitation workers to perform a most unlikely and stunning spectacle. On an abandoned airport runway, two dozen sanitation workers—and their trucks—inspire an audience of thousands.

### LONG

Choreographer Allison Orr finds beauty and grace in garbage trucks, and in the unseen men and women who pick up our trash. Filmmaker Andrew Garrison follows Orr as she rides along with Austin sanitation workers on their daily routes to observe and later convince them to perform a most unlikely spectacle. On an abandoned airport runway, two dozen trash collectors and their trucks deliver — for one night only — a stunningly beautiful and moving performance, in front of an audience of thousands, who are awed to discover how in the world a garbage truck can "dance."

## FESTIVAL AWARDS

Special Jury Recognition, **SXSW Film Festival**

Audience Award, Best Feature, **Full Frame Documentary Film Festival**

Audience Award, Best Feature, **Silverdocs Film Festival**

Best Documentary Feature, **Woods Hole Film Festival**

Best Feature, **Docuwest International Film Festival**

Crystal Heart Award for Documentary, **Heartland Film Festival**

Best of Fest, **Rockport International Film Festival**

Audience Choice, Best Documentary, **Sedona Int'l Film Festival**

## PRINCIPAL FILMMAKERS

Director / Producer / Cinematographer	Andrew Garrison
Editor	Angela K. Pires
Composer	Graham Reynolds
Sound Design	Tom Hammond Soundcrafter Studio
Principal Second Unit Photography	Steve Mims Deborah Eve Lewis Nancy Schiesari

## PRINCIPAL CAST

Allison Orr – Choreographer, Forklift Danceworks

### **“THE TRASH PROJECT” - Featured Performers**

Virginia Alexander (Litter Abatement Supervisor / "Boxer")  
Don Anderson (Crane Operator)  
Tony Dudley, Sr. (Dead Animal Collection)  
Chris Guerrero (Automated Collection / "Soccer Coach")  
Shiron Hill (Litter Abatement / "Store Cashier")  
Lee Houston (Recycling / "Single Father")  
Ivory Jackson, Jr. (Yard Trimmings / "Rapper")  
Orange Jefferson (Sweeper / "Harmonica Player")  
Anthony Phillips (Litter Abatement / "Break Dancer")  
Gerald Watson (Bucket Truck / "Youth Minister")

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I'm fascinated by stories from the everyday lives of people in the process of discovering their own power and voice. I grew up in an extended family of talkative, funny, working class storytellers who could get rapturous over music or food or a painting or a book. They had great anecdotes about the many ways they dealt with life. And from these tales, I learned about different ways to face what life throws at you.

When I began filming TRASH DANCE, I didn't quite know where the story would take me. Before I met Allison Orr, I had heard about her work with non-performers, and how she collaborates in a way that is serious, yet takes itself lightly. When I finally met her, she was starting a new project with employees of Austin's Solid Waste Services, and I asked if I could follow along with my camera.

I liked the concept—putting center stage the people who do the work that most of us do not want to do. We don't think about who picks up our garbage or does much of the other essential daily work that makes everything run.

Orr told me 90% of her job, at first, is to listen to people. Not just observing their movements, but hearing their concerns—about their family, about work and how they view the world. At this point I knew that if she actually *did* that, there would be a film.

The first documentary I remember watching was Edward R. Murrow's HARVEST OF SHAME. It came on television when I was 8 years old, and showed the conditions of migrant workers in America, including in my home state of Florida. I had no idea that this world existed. I was excited, outraged, and impressed. Outraged by the unfairness of what I saw, and excited that a film could give me understanding and make me feel that.

I like unexpected heroes, people who want to challenge what they think is wrong, people who have a sense of humor and love for the world.

**- Andrew Garrison, April 2012**

## CHOREOGRAPHER'S STATEMENT

### **Allison Orr - Choreographer, Forklift Danceworks**

I make dances with all kinds of people—from maintenance men to firefighters, Elvis impersonators to people and their guide dogs. In 2009, I choreographed the biggest dance of my life—a trash truck ballet, entitled THE TRASH PROJECT, featuring 24 employees and 16 large sanitation vehicles from Austin's Solid Waste Services Department. I spent a year creating the dance, starting by riding with employees to gain their trust and crucial buy-in. I went on 6 a.m. trash and recycling routes, helped collect dead animals, went with the overnight crew to clean downtown at 2:30 a.m. on New Year's day, rode to the landfill more times than I can count—all to learn about the day-to-day work of Austin's unsung heroes—the men and women who keep our city clean.

As a choreographer, I am inspired by practiced and habitual movement that comes from people's everyday life or work experience, for I see dance as being any movement that is performed deliberately in space and time. I am particularly drawn to authentic expressions of highly skilled and virtuosic movement performed by people not labeled as dancers— e.g. firefighters, gondoliers, and in this case, City of Austin sanitation workers.

I see artistry in everyday movement, and I believe that embedded in that movement are stories about who people are and what they care about. With THE TRASH PROJECT, I wanted to make a dance that would show this artistry while also telling the stories of who these people are—the men and women who keep our city clean but whose voices are rarely heard. I wanted to make a dance that offered a more fully human picture of the people who work as “trash men,” and I wanted the audience and the performing employees to feel more connected to each other once the performance was over.

The making and performance of THE TRASH PROJECT had a huge impact on me as artist. To begin, I never dreamed that I would create a modern dance piece that would be seen by 2,000+ people! Choreographing on this massive scale also pushed me to try new ideas and envision a dance much larger and more complex than I had ever previously imaged. I think I also made the strongest dance I have created so far.

On a very personal level THE TRASH PROJECT allowed me to answer a question I've long had—who are the people who pick up my trash? I know who these people are now, for we created real friendships working on this project together. I know my life is richer because I got to make this dance. I also created a beautiful piece of art that touched many different kinds of people deeply. I believe on some level we are all longing to know each other and feel more connected. I feel I am at my most successful as an artist when my work allows people to do just that.

## FILMMAKER BIOS

### **ANDREW GARRISON - Director / Producer / Cinematographer**

Andrew Garrison is an independent filmmaker based in Austin, Texas, who works in both documentary and fiction. His past films include the documentary feature *THIRD WARD TX* (2007) and the narrative triptych *THE WILGUS STORIES* (2000), both of which premiered at SXSW and aired on PBS. Additional films include the award-winning shorts, *FAT MONROE* (1990) and *NIGHT RIDE* (1994). Garrison's work has earned him Guggenheim, Rockefeller, NEA and AFI Fellowships, and his films have screened at Sundance, SXSW, Berlin International Film Festival, Locarno Film Festival, Sydney Film Festival, BFI London Film Festival and the New York Film Festival. He is an Associate Professor of Film and Digital Media Production at The University of Texas at Austin.

Garrison work is often at the intersection of arts, culture and social justice. He was born and raised in Hollywood, Florida, and has been working in independent film since graduating from Antioch College in 1974. That year he co-founded the Dayton Community Media Workshop in Ohio with Academy Award-nominated filmmakers, Julia Reichert and Jim Klein, and four other friends. He was later invited to work at Appalshop, the acclaimed documentary collective in the heart of the coalfields in Eastern Kentucky, where he spent more than a dozen years as a cinematographer, as well as producing and directing his own work. In addition to directing and shooting own work, he continues to enjoy collaborating with other filmmakers as a sound recordist. Garrison has worked for FRONTLINE, MTV, ART 21, Charles Guggenheim, and the BBC, and has been a sound recordist for interviews Martin Scorsese, George W. Bush, Pete Seeger, Michael Cain, Karl Rove, Billy Bragg, Eldridge Cleaver, Eva Longoria, among many others.

### **ANGELA K. PIRES - Editor**

Angela K. Pires was born in Port Alegre, Brazil and has worked as a director and editor in both fiction and documentary, and as a commercial editor. She wrote and directed the short *THE COLOR WHITE* (2001), which won 16 awards, including a Special Mention from the Jury at the Berlin International Film Festival. She was the Associate Producer of the feature narrative *THE OVERBROOK BROTHERS* (2009).

### **GRAHAM REYNOLDS - Composer**

Austin, Texas-based composer-bandleader Graham Reynolds creates, performs, and records music for film, theater, dance, rock clubs and concert halls with collaborators ranging from Richard Linklater to DJ Spooky to the Austin Symphony Orchestra. As bandleader of the jazz-based but far reaching Golden Arm Trio, Reynolds has repeatedly toured the country and released three critically-acclaimed albums. Reynolds also composes film scores for fiction and documentary. His score to the 2006 Robert Downey, Jr. feature *A SCANNER DARKLY* was named "Best Soundtrack of the Decade" by Cinema Retro magazine. His most recent score was for Richard Linklater's *BERNIE*, starring Jack Black.

## CHOREOGRAPHER BIO

### **ALLISON ORR - Choreographer**

From Venetian gondoliers to firefighters, trained dancers to Elvis Impersonators, maintenance men to women over 65, Allison Orr creates award-winning choreography with all kinds of performers. Defying easy description, Orr's work challenges audiences to expand notions of dance and performer while posing the question: who and what can be presented on stage? Orr finds the raw material for her work among the stories and everyday experiences of ordinary people, spending months researching and immersing herself in the community she is engaging. Uncovering that which is essential to the life of a community but often goes unnoticed is central in Orr's work, as she seeks to give voice to people who may be marginalized or frequently overlooked.

Orr was named Best Choreographer of 2003 and 2008 by the Austin Critics Table. Her most recent large-scale work, *The Trash Project*, was named the #1 Arts Event of 2009 by *The Austin American Statesman*, the #1 Dance Event by *The Austin Chronicle*, and was awarded Most Outstanding Dance Concert of 2009 by the Austin Critics Table. Her work has been funded by the City of Austin, the Texas Commission on the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Austin Community Foundation, and the City of Venice, Italy. In 2005 she received a commendation for her work with visually impaired people from the City of Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities. In 2010 she served as a guest artist at the American College Dance Festival South-Central Regional Conference and was commissioned to choreograph the kick-off event for Austin's Fusebox Festival involving over two hundred two-steppers on the steps of the Texas State Capitol.

Orr's choreography has been featured in documentaries in film and book form, including *BRAINDAMADJ'D... TAKE II*—a film about a man's recovering from a disabling car accident; *LEFT TO OUR OWN DEVICES*—a film exploring art-making and disability; *VENICE DANCE*, a soon-to-be published photography book showcasing dancers in Venice, Italy; and *DOGS WITH JOBS*—a program on the National Geographic Channel showing Orr's choreographic work with guide dogs.

Orr is on the dance faculty of Austin Community College. She has taught a wide variety of students, including children, adults over 65, and people with disabilities. Before founding Forklift Danceworks, Orr taught dance and studied with MacArthur Award winner, Liz Lerman, and performed with Robert Moses and Janice Garrett in the Bay Area. Orr received an MFA in Choreography and Performance from Mills College.

# PRODUCTION CREDITS

## TRASH DANCE

Director / Producer / Cinematographer	ANDREW GARRISON
Editor	ANGELA K. PIRES
Composer	GRAHAM REYNOLDS
Sound Design	TOM HAMMOND
Principal Second Unit Photography	STEVE MIMS DEBORAH EVE LEWIS NANCY SCHIESARI
Assistant Camera	PAAVO HANNINEN
Additional Location Sound	KARLO MONTAÑO VIRGINIA BENEVIDES SARA MASETTI
<i><b>Performance Crew</b></i>	
Production Coordinator	DIANE WEIDENKOPF
Additional Photography	AMY BENCH TIM TSAI JESSICA GARDNER TRAVIS BENN ROY RUTNAGAMALUG JEEHYUN DONG KIM HALL KEITH WILSON
DSLR Team	BEN POWELL ANDREW MILLER
Data Wrangler	ROGELIO SALINAS
Data Assistants	TOMAS WERNER JAIME CANO
Key Grip	ED AKIRA RADTKE
Dolly Grip	DREW XANTHOPOULOS
Grip Best Boy	HAMMAD RIZVI
Gaffer Best Boy	PATRICK WILLIAM SMITH
Production Assistants	VIRGINIA BENEVIDES SARA MASETTI SAM GARRISON RENEE STAIRS JORDAN GARCIA NICOLE LICEA



	JAMES LU
Event Assistants	REBECCA BINGMAN KATE ALLEN
Performance Composer	GRAHAM REYNOLDS
Musicians in Live Performance	HECTOR MORENO GRAHAM REYNOLDS LEAH ZEGER
<b><i>Forklift Danceworks Tech Crew</i></b>	
Sound Engineer Lighting Design	WILLIAM MEADOWS STEPHEN PRUITT
Performance Safety	DAVID MORRIS
<b><i>Post Production</i></b>	
Sound Editorial Assistants	NATHAN EFSTATION RUI SILVA
Sound Intern	SARAH DEUEL
Color Correction	JAIME CANO
Post Production Supervision	SUSANNE KRAFT JEREMY GRUY
Music Supervisor	DOMINIQUE PREYER <a href="http://HearItClearIt.com">HearItClearIt.com</a>
Editor, Trailer #1	ED AKIRA RADTKE
Assistant Editors	SHANE GIBSON VIRGINIA BENEVIDES ELIZABETH SKERRET CHELSEA HERNANDEZ
Color	JAIME CANO ANDREW GARRISON
Titles	DANIEL STUYCK
Premiere Publicist	MATTHEW JOHNSTONE
Consulting Producer	JOEL HELLER

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Errico, Lee Oskar  
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"Do What You Feel"  
Written by Paul Christopher Bailey  
Performed by P Bailey  
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Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP)

"I'm Not a Good Ballet Dancer At All"  
Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
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"Boxing"  
Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP)

"You're Not Rid of Me Yet"  
Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP)

"Do What You Feel"  
Written by Paul Christopher Bailey  
Performed by P Bailey  
Published by PCB Publishing

"Skate Rink"  
Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP)

"Leave Your Trucks On"  
Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP)

"Ivory's Rap"  
Written by Ivory L. Jackson, Jr.,  
Graham Reynolds  
Performed by Ivory Jackson  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP), Ivory L. Jackson, Jr. (BMI)

"We Left a Lasting Impression"  
Written & Performed by Graham Reynolds  
Published by Rickety Fence Music (ASCAP)

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