



Photo Credit: Brenda Ladd

SALLY JACQUES

Artist, Dancer, Choreographer

Inside the Springs, 1991

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The Springs feed one's soul. I used to lie under the trees, swim in her waters and wonder how many others had done this before me. How many conversations had the trees listened to, and the waters healed? And then I would wonder and hope that this ancient wonder would remember me.

Barton Springs is a phenomenal and wondrous treasure; a place to be with family, friends and the community. Happiness breathes all around. The energy is vibrant and powerful and whatever age you are offers up its poignant beauty and mysterious cooling waters. One can sit under the trees, read, contemplate life, reflect on a poem, fall into a soothing sleep and talk with strangers. The Springs feed one's soul. I used to lie under the trees, swim in her waters and wonder how many others had done this before me. How many conversations had the trees listened to, and the waters healed? And then I would wonder and hope that this ancient wonder would remember me.

Inside the Springs is a performance that took place at Barton Springs pool in 1991 in support of the Save Our Springs Alliance (SOS) campaign fight to stop massive development over the fragile Barton Cree watershed. At that time the Austin City Council had voted against a watershed ordinance designed to protect the underground aquifers that lead into the springs. Over 900 citizens spoke at the council chambers, a vast majority of them in favor of saving the Springs. When the vote was heard, which came down against the SOS ordinance, the community felt betrayed as many of the Council members had stood in front of the Springs during their election campaigns promising to protect and take care of this natural resource. At one of the City Council hearings the video of Inside the Springs was played.

SALLY JACQUES CONT'D

Following is a description of the dance Inside the Springs:

First Movement

The performance opened with Esther's Follies. Their role was to portray excess and extravagance. Dressed in opulent outfits, fur coats, pearls, high heels, smoking cigarettes, they paced up and down the walkways on their cell phones while wheeling and dealing their fortunes. Each of them was given a gold goblet and a movement sequence which included lifting the goblet in tribute to wealth. Eventually the performers dived into the Springs with the chant "Who needs water when you can drink wine."

Second Movement

Thirty-six oil drums were placed along the edges on both sides of the Springs with 18 on each side. 18 dancers were inside full-length black bags huddled together in the formation of a heart, breathing as one, rising and falling breath, simulating a heartbeat. Eventually the dancers break apart and begin to roll down the walkways, each of them to an oil drum. Their movements were raising and lowering their torsos as they rolled. Once they reached an oil drum the dancer climbed into it. The oil drum was placed on top of a second bag which was white. The dancers pulled the white bag over the oil drum and themselves, while simultaneously removing the black bags from their bodies. At the same time another group of dancers appeared on the hillsides dressed in black moving slowly holding plates of dead fish and plastic. When at the edges of the walkway facing the Springs, they sat in a meditative pose between the oil drums.



Photo credit: Alan Pogue



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Third Movement

As well as a dancer inside each of the oil drums, there was a dove and a bouquet of wildflowers. The dancers held the flowers through the opening of the white bag. The choreography was the visual of their arms moving and swaying while letting the flowers fall gently to the ground. They then dropped the white bag to their waistlines and in their arms were the doves in hand-made cages. They opened the cages and released the 36 doves to the spacious skies, as the

song of Imagine was playing.

"Holy, Holy, Holy Water. When I speak of 'original blessing', I am speaking of those blessings of healthy soil, living forests, singing birds, clean waters. These blessings form the basis of a true living economy, they constitute our essential wealth" -Matthew Fox