

SUSAN SGORBATI

Bennington College
One College Drive
Bennington, Vermont 05201

(o) 802-447-4267
sgorbati@bennington.edu
www.emergentimprovisation.org

Director, Center for The Advancement of Public Action, 2015 – present
Barbara and Lewis Jones Chair for Social Activism, 2002 – present
Faculty, Bennington College, 1985 – present
Founder and Co-Director, Quantum Leap Program, 1999 – present
Director, Conflict Resolution Program, Bennington College, 2001 – present
Artistic Director, The Emergent Improvisation Project, 2006 – present
Board, The Fund for North Bennington, 2013 – present

EDUCATION

Bennington College; Bennington, VT
Bachelor of Arts in Dance (1974)
Master of Fine Arts in Dance (1986)

Dr. Stuart Kauffman; University of Calgary, in residence at Bennington College
Complex Systems and Evolutionary Biology (2004 – 2005)

Dr. Gerald Edelman; The Neurosciences Institute (NSI); La Jolla, CA, in residence
Complex Systems and the Brain (2002 – 2005)

Edgar Holmes III, M.D.; Principles of Orthopedics, tutorial (2001)

Ann Hampton, Ph.D.; Anatomy and Physiology, course at CSC (2001)

MEDIATION TRAINING

The Vermont Human Rights Commission (1997 – present)

The Vermont Attorney General's Office (1996 – 2001)

Vermont Law School

Environmental Dispute Resolution (1995)
Negotiation and Mediation (1990)

Prime Family Resources

Family Mediation (1990)

PennAccord

Advanced Work in Environmental Dispute Resolution (1989)

Friends Conflict Resolution Services (1988)

PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE AND ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Barbara and Lewis Jones Chair; Bennington College (2002 – present)

Dance Faculty; Bennington College (1985 – present)

Creator and Director, Quantum Leap; a program that reconnects at-risk youth to their education (1999 – present)

Mediator, Vermont Attorney General's Office and Vermont Human Rights Commission (1999 – present)

Dean of Faculty; Bennington College (1991 – 1994)

Creator and Director, The Governor's Institute on the Arts; Vermont (1983 – 1987)

PROFESSIONAL ARTISTIC PROJECTS AND PERFORMANCES

An Investigation into the Intersection of Life Sciences and the Arts (2011)

Jointly sponsored by The National Science Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts

A select group of artists working in the fields of visual arts, dance, and literature, and scientists working in the fields of behavioral biology, neuroscience, and evolution, for a convening in our nation's capital in early 2011. The purpose of this convening was to encourage innovative collaboration among practitioners across a diverse set of disciplines who share a common involvement in creativity and discovery.

Convergence: The Emergent Improvisation Film (2010)

A collaboration between Elliot Caplan, filmmaker (*Beach Birds for Camera*, *Points in Space*, *Cage/Cunningham*) and Susan Sgorbati, director, *The Emergent Improvisation Project*; a series of experiments in working with emergent dance improvisation and film. Funded by The Wyncote Foundation and private donors.

The Emergent Improvisation Project (2005 – 2006)

A national dance tour sponsored by The Creation Fund of The National Performance Network, The Jerome Robbins Foundation, The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts,

The Neurosciences Institute, The International Conference on Complex Systems of The New England Complex Systems Institute, and Bennington College.

The Flynn Center for The Performing Arts; Burlington, VT (2002 – 2005)
Led improvisation residencies and directed performances

New York City Improvisation Festival; New York City, NY (2004)
Duet with Cori Olinghouse; curated by Miguel Gutierrez

Brooklyn Academy of Art; Brooklyn, NY (2004)
Duet with Cori Olinghouse for the exhibition, *Manufactured Landscapes: The Photographs of Edward Burtynsky*

Williamsburg Arts Nexus; Brooklyn, NY (2003)
Improvised and Otherwise Festival, duet with Eva Karczag

Judson Church; New York City, NY (2000 – 2001)
Movement Research Improvisation Festival; ensemble piece, *In Visible Fields*: directed and performed in collaboration with photographer Jonathan Kline and lighting designer Michael Giannitti.

The Vision Festival; New York City, NY (1999)
Duet with musician/composer Arthur Brooks

Tiny Trips; Vermont (1999)
Founded and performed in collaboration with Tony Carruthers

Materia Prima; (1997 – 2002)
Created and directed improvisation ensemble with dancers Paul Matteson, Hope Clark, Lionel Popkin, and Jonathan Kinzel; performed at the Movement Research Improvisation Festival (New York, NY) and Temple University (Philadelphia, PA).

Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church; New York, NY (1998)
Choreographed and performed in *The Remember Project 98, Dancers Responding to AIDS*

Middlebury College; Middlebury, VT (1998)
Performed with Terry Creach, Penny Campbell, and Peter Schmitz

Work in the Performance of Improvisation; Bennington College (1996 – 2005)
Co-created summer workshops and performances in improvisation

The Vets; Vermont (1996 – 1998)
Performed in improvisation ensemble

Middlebury College; Middlebury, VT (1995)
Collaborated and performed with Penny Campbell

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival; Becket, MA (1992 – 1994)
The Housatonic River Project; commissioned and choreographed as a seven-site project along the Housatonic River

David Ehrlich and Tom Farrell (1990)
Collaborated and performed with film animator and composer

The Warren Street Performance Space; New York City, NY (1990)
The Giants of Sciants, an improvisation ensemble

The Farm Series; Vermont (1989)
Directed and choreographed performances on several regional farms

The Factory Series; New England (1988)
Directed and choreographed performances for five factories in New England

The Vermont Dance Festival; Burlington, VT (1986)
Choreographed in Juried Program for The Flynn Theater Original Choreography

The Governor's Institute on the Arts; Castleton State College, VT (1983 – 1987)
Founded, directed, developed, and led summer residential program in the arts for adolescents

David Moss and Tommy Guralnik (1975 – 1980)
Collaborated and performed with composers

MEDIATION EXPERIENCE

Quantum Leap; Bennington College (1999 – present)
Founded and co-directed an organization that promotes student-centered education for elementary, middle, and high school students who are truant, at-risk, or have dropped out of school, and reconnects them with their education through individualized education plans; this resulted in systems change, handing over three programs to the Mount Anthony Union High School: Quantum Leap Classroom, Project Leap, and Academic Mentoring, and one program to Mount Anthony Union Middle School: Quantum Leap.

Vermont Attorney General's Office; Montpelier, Vermont (1999 – present)

Small Claims Court; Bennington, Vermont (1999 – present)

Vermont Human Rights Commission; Montpelier, Vermont (1999 – present)

Bennington Community Justice Center; Bennington, Vermont (1999)
Vice-President

Green Heron Associates in Conflict Resolution and Collaborative Projects; Vermont
(1996-present)
Founder and Director

BRIDGES: Bennington College Conflict Resolution Program; Bennington, Vermont
(1996 – present)
Train high school students as peer mediators

Vermont Mediator's Association; Vermont (1996 – 1998)
President

HONORS

Top 10 Performances of 2006; *Emergent Improvisation Project at The Neurosciences Institute*
(2006)
San Diego Union-Tribune

The 1st Annual David G. Rahr Award for Community Service; The Vermont Community
Foundation (2003)

Barbara and Lewis Jones Chair for Social Activism; Bennington College (2002)

PUBLICATIONS AND REVIEWS

Contact Editions; *Emergent Improvisation: Where Dance Meets Science on Spontaneous
Composition*, Chapbook (Summer 2013)

The Bakery, Berlin, Germany; *Essay on Order for Free: Emergent Improvisation as a System for
Composition and Communication from Idea in Action*, a collection of essays (2012)

Contact Quarterly; *Emergent Improvisation Project: Embodying Complexity*; vol.32, no.1; article
(Winter/Spring 2007)

San Diego Union-Tribune; *Locals Go Global to Reach Out and Present Someone: 2006 Top 10
Performances*; article (Janice Steinberg) (2006)

National Performance Network 2007 Directory; *NPN Partners*; dance photo (Paul Kyle)
(December 2006)

National Public Radio/KPBS; *Dance and the Brain*; The Dana Foundation's Gray Matters
Radio Series; interview with Susan Sgorbati, Dr. Gerald Edelman (Director of The
Neurosciences Institute), Katie Martin, and Jake Meginsky; interview (Marjorie Sun)
(November 15, 2006)

Royal Academy of Dance/Dance Gazette; *The Applianc* of Science; issue 3; article (David
Jays) (October 2006)

Dance Magazine; *By Chance or Design?*; article (Janice Steinberg) (June 2006)

**Contredanse/Nouvelles de Danse 53: Scientifiquement Danse: Quand la danse puise aux
sciences et réciproquement; *L'improvisation émergente***; editor (Florence Corin); article
(May 2006)

College Campus News; *Dance Project Unites the Arts and Science at International Conference*;
article (Brie Della Rocca). (May 2006)

Bennington: The Alumni Magazine; *Emergent Improvisation Takes Flight*; article (Joan
Taylor) (Spring/Summer 2006)

WCAX-TV / Burlington, VT; *Emergent Improvisation Project at the Flynn Theater* (March 29,
2006)

Bennington Banner; *Mad science, dance style*; article (Hinda Mandell) (March 16, 2006)

The San Diego Union-Tribune; *Improv marries dance and science*; article (Janice Steinberg)
(February 7, 2006)

The Dana Foundation: Brain in the News; *Improv marries dance and science*; The San Diego
Union-Tribune; article (Janice Steinberg) (February 2006)

ESSAYS

**Order for Free: Emergent Improvisation as a System for Composition and
Communication; *The Bakery, Berlin, Germany*** (2013)

How Deep and Broad are the Laws of Emergence?; co-authored with evolutionary biologist
Bruce Weber; presentations include:

6th International Conference on Complex Systems; hosted by the New England Complex Systems Institute (Summer 2006)

Conference on Emergence; hosted by the Star Island Institute for Science in the Age of Religion (Summer 2006)

Essay on Emergent Improvisation; published in *Contredanse/Nouvelles de Danse* (2006) and *Contact Quarterly* (2007)

PROJECTS

Convergence: The Emergent Improvisation Film (2011-2014)

Emergent Improvisation Project (2006 – present)

Projects in collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, New England (2012, 2013, 2014)

Street Lamp LED project for Village of North Bennington (2014)

Coral Reef Conservation Project, Grand Cayman Islands (2014)

Vermont Department of Health Project, Bennington, Vermont (2014 – present)

Center for The Advancement of Public Action Leadership Institute (2014 – present)

RESIDENCIES

Arava Institute for Environmental Studies, Kibbutz Ketura, Israel (2013)
Sponsored by U.S. State Department grant

ITU, MIAM University, Istanbul, Turkey (2013)

Dartmouth College (2006)

The Neurosciences Institute (2002 – 2005)

The Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (2001 – 2005)

GRANTS

For *Convergence: The Emergent Improvisation Film*

The Philadelphia Foundation
The Wyncote Foundation and private donors

For the Emergent Improvisation Project

The Creation Fund of The National Performance Network (2006)
The Bumper Foundation (2006)
The Jerome Robbins Foundation (2005 – 2006)
The Flynn Center for The Performing Arts (2004 – 2006)
New Works Grant of The Vermont Council of the Arts (1990)

For Quantum Leap:

The Vermont Agency of Human Services
The Leir Trust
The Velmans Foundation
The Henderson Foundation
The Vermont Community Foundation
Southwest Vermont Supervisory Union