DIRECTOR’S STATEMENT

My first feature length film, A GOOD MADNESS is a personal interpretation of the artist and her work - documentary in its source material, subjective in its filmic expression.

This film seeks a visceral and visual understanding of Rachel Browne, through her body of dance work, through the bodies and souls of the artists who have and continue to dance her work. Through Rachel’s voice herself, the voices of her three daughters and those of many “dance daughters”, we find a curious, outstanding, private human being worthy of the lens turned toward her.

A GOOD MADNESS is a subjective illustration of the woman described as “a moral force in Canadian dance. Singular in her courage, her intrepid determination, her discipline, and in what at times has been sheer bloody-mindedness, throughout her dance career in Canada she has been a trailblazer.”

* from the biography,

*Dancing Toward the Light*, by dance writer Carol Anderson, published in 1999

Rachel Browne passed away suddenly on June 8th 2012 while attending the Canada Dance Festival in Ottawa. The company she founded, the Winnipeg’s Contemporary Dancers, celebrates half a century of existence in 2014-2015.

A personal curiosity and a sense of collective responsibility tugged at me to make this film. I straddle the worlds of dance and film, with a long-standing connection to the Winnipeg dance community that afforded me their confidence to undertake a project such as this. I danced in this community as well as in others, and always felt Rachel’s presence in Winnipeg. I feel indebted to her because of her spirited contribution to dance and to feminism.

I took her presence for granted. And I may not stand alone in this as there was no film about Rachel Browne to date, and the recordings of her choreography are for the most part, strictly sparse documentation. Thankfully, an effort at preserving and disseminating Rachel’s work has begun with the Rachel Browne Trust. I am pleased to know that this humble film will contribute to Rachel Browne’s legacy as a significant Canadian dance artist and pioneer, a stand-alone creative force in Canada.