

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 7th, 2019

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***Two inspiring performances of 'Gravity Defiant' unite circus arts and social justice***

PORTLAND, OR — The Circus Project invites Portlanders to the premiere of *Gravity Defiant*, a circus performance developed by the Voice Project, a troupe of performers who understand what it means to be marginalized, including experiencing homelessness, as queer and trans performers, and performers of color. Expressing their experience through trapeze, dance and acrobatics, tightwire and more, they draw from their lived experiences to explore issues of identity and the invisible forces that shape everyone's lives.

The Voice Project, funded in part by Cirque du Soleil, has rehearsed since early 2019 and *Gravity Defiant* is their capstone performance. Participants meet multiple times a week for group rehearsals, private and duo circus lessons, and also participate in workshops such as storytelling, the history of resistance movements, and Theatre of the Oppressed.

Voice Project participant Tina Marie says, "being a part of The Voice Project has allowed me to find a part of myself where I am courageous and brave. It pushes me and empowers me."

The Circus Project was founded in 2008 to use circus arts as an intervention for youth experiencing homelessness. It has since grown to include a thriving circus school with recreational and pre-professional programs, and partners with other local non-profits to bring the benefits of circus arts education to students who wouldn't otherwise have access.

The shows take place at 7:00 on November 23rd and 24th, at the Circus Project, 1420 NW 17th Ave. Tickets to *Gravity Defiant* are \$5-\$25 (suggested donation), and can be reserved at [gravitydefiant.bpt.me](http://gravitydefiant.bpt.me) Proceeds from ticket sales go to support the Circus Project's ongoing programming. The Circus Project is wheelchair accessible.