

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Terence O'Donnell

Clasp, Unravel, Let go

by Megan Mizanty

What's a good death

This question and others overlap and echo through the soundscape. Black-suited pallbearers walk somberly onto the stage.

Who do you want to go through your belongings after you die

A masked face covered in black roses. Let your hair down. Take my hand.

What songs do you want on your funeral playlist

Joi Cox, a poised and gravity-defying aerialist, grips a piece of long white fabric. Clad in sheer white lace, her sinewy frame ascends and twists, extends and flexes. Her physique is its own ensemble. Raveling and unraveling, an intricate pretzel of silk. An upside down split, a celebration of what a body can do while it can.

Do you want to be buried or cremated

A cellist sits behind a sheer curtain. He plays "Hallelujah" slowly and I think about how one of its cover singers, [Jeff Buckley](#), perished too soon.

If you're buried, what do you want your outfit to be

Tattoos. A woman covered in them is lifted by the rose-faced man, accepting her fate with a smile.

What would be your preferred death

In blackness. A guitarist strolls into the space, sits, strums, and tells us, lovingly, funnily: *we're all going to die*. A

looseness, a lightness.

How would you prefer not to die

The full ensemble of about six artists sway and smile. The audience chimes in. Taboos dissipate. We're tenderly led to confront the truth we all know, but sometimes forget.

Do you have any regrets

[Edith Piaf](#) doesn't. Her voice rings out between vignettes, and the whole work echoes her call: enjoy it while you can. *Non, je ne regrette rien*. Tend to the ritual of life. Don't miss it.

Do you want to grow old

Old enough to go home, open enough to go home, lean into a loved one, and ask:

[Insert your own question about death]

[The Death Circus](#), Joi of Dance, September 19-21, Icebox Performance Space, Philadelphia Fringe

Homepage Image Description: *Joi Cox, a muscular female dancer, reaches and looks toward the ceiling from which thick white cotton fabric hangs.*

Article Image Description: *Joi Cox, a muscular female dancer, reaches and looks toward the ceiling from which thick white cotton fabric hangs.*

By Megan Mizanty

September 24, 2025