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World-renowned vertical dance pioneers, BANDALOOP, bring awe-inspiring artistry back to Library Square for the Festival's 50th Anniversary

June 1, 2026: SALT LAKE CITY, UT — As the Utah Arts Festival celebrates its landmark 50th anniversary in 2026, the Festival is thrilled to welcome back one of its most spectacular performers: BANDALOOP, the internationally acclaimed pioneers of vertical dance. In a fitting tribute to five decades of boundary-pushing artistry, the Oakland-based company will once again transform the striking 240-foot-high curving glass façade of the Salt Lake City Main Library into a breathtaking stage for aerial choreography—a site-specific spectacle that has become one of the Festival's most beloved and talked-about experiences.

"Smile-Busting Delight and a Touch of Terror"

BANDALOOP's performances at Library Square have become iconic moments in Festival history, drawing thousands of spectators witnessing human bodies moving through vertical space with grace, precision, and fearless artistry. Past performances have left spectators transfixed—the National Endowment for the Arts described how "spectators' faces showed gaping wonder, smile-busting delight, and a touch of terror." The *Utah Review* has praised the company for raising "the vertical dance bar" for artistic excellence, noting that for Utah audiences, BANDALOOP's appearance connects them to "some of the state's most cherished assets: the deep-rooted culture of Salt Lake City."

Connecting to a Uniquely Utah Issue

In connection with Utahns wrestling with the plight of the Great Salt Lake, BANDALOOP's current work 'FLOCK' traces the pathways of bird and human migration, waterways, and the lifelines that connect us all. They explore what it means to belong to a place and to each other with an athletic and poetic dance that plays with gravity, transforming walls, and embodying architecture with open air into landscapes of awe. "Emotional, kinetic, and breathtakingly alive, this work asks how spectacle can bring us into considered intimacy with ourselves, our communities, and our ecosystems," according to the artist statement. Co-directed by Melecio Estrella and Damara Vita Ganley, they lead an ensemble of extraordinary BANDALOOP dancers, Jose Abad, Rose Huey, B Dean, Jessica Swanson, Sarah Keeney, and Wailana Simcock, and feature original musical compositions by Ben Juodvalkis, Destani Wolf, Kevin Farrell and Kate Diaz.

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A Perfect Anniversary Reunion
BANDALOOP first headlined the Utah Arts Festival in 2005 and then again in 2013, captivating crowds with an 18-minute performance on the library's dazzling glass facade. Their return in 2018 featured twice-daily shows throughout the Festival weekend—performances that the *Salt Lake Tribune* memorably described as dancers "jumping off the top of the Salt Lake City Library and dancing down its side."

Executive Director, Aimee Dunsmore, said, “As the Utah Arts Festival celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2026, I’m thrilled to have our boundary-pushing friends from BANDALOOP return to commemorate this milestone in the Festival’s history, which has included bringing world-class experiences to our community.”

"The Sky is Not the Limit" is more than BANDALOOP's tagline—it's the visceral experience they deliver. For over 34 years, the company has activated more than 300 locations worldwide, from skyscrapers in Shanghai to natural rock formations in national parks. Yet the Salt Lake City Main Library holds a special place in their performance history, its modernist architecture uniquely suited to showcase the intersection of human movement and urban design.

Performance Schedule
BANDALOOP will perform on the Salt Lake City Main Library's south-facing facade:

- Thursday, June 18 at 7pm
- Friday, June 19 at 5:30pm and 7:30pm
- Saturday, June 20 at 5:30pm and 7:30pm
- *(Please note, they will not be performing on Sunday, June 21)*

BANDALOOP will be in dress rehearsals prior to the Festival opening for possible pre-Festival on-site interview opportunities. ***If you are a member of the media, please email marketing@uaf.org for details.***

About the Company
"At BANDALOOP, awe is an everyday occurrence," says Artistic Director Melecio Estrella. Founded by visionary choreographer Amelia Rudolph with dancers and climbers who "imagined a new way of moving through the world—one that invited curiosity, courage, and joy into vertical spaces," the company continues to redefine what dance can be. Recognized as a global innovator of vertical artistry, BANDALOOP celebrates the human spirit, nature, and communities through dance that expands and challenges what is possible. @BANDALOOPING

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About the Utah Arts Festival
Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2026, the Utah Arts Festival is Utah's premier outdoor arts experience, presenting world-class visual, performing, and culinary arts to the Salt Lake City community each June. For five decades, the Festival has been at the heart of the city's cultural vibe, bringing boundary-pushing artists and unforgettable experiences to audiences of all ages. More info at uaf.org.

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