

Department of Performing Arts presents

RHYTHMS OF LIFE

A Performance by FreshDance

February 8, 2024 7:30pm

February 10, 2024 2:00pm

Drexel Students: \$5

General Admission: \$15



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Dance

Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts & Design

Photo Credit: Johanna Austin

DREXEL DANCE ENSEMBLE AND FRESHDANCE CORE VALUES

We strive to provide a safe environment where students can be imaginative, explorative, challenged, surrounded by pluralistic ideas, and guided to achieve artistic and technical goals. We value hard work, working as a team, and the communal spirit it takes to achieve a fully produced dance performance. This home – and place of artistry – will serve the students. This is a place for dancers to learn, expand, unite, and be.

A LETTER FROM THE PROGRAM AND DEPARTMENT

Welcome to this presentation by the Dance Program in the Department of Performing Arts. Dance is a way to express oneself that can only be expressed through embodiment. It is also a platform for understanding other cultures and people; it is about human connection. We hope that the students involved in this performance feel themselves represented, and at the same time learn about others. We also hope the same for our audience. We want all who come to feel comfortable and enjoy the concert, finding ideas and vocabularies that are familiar to them, as well as new concepts and ways of moving.

Both the Dance Program and the Department of Performing Arts are dedicated to providing rich and meaningful artistic opportunities while at Drexel. We offer them the opportunity to perform in large, organized, and professionally directed ensembles. Our goal is to give them the best experience we can offer while they are here and prepare them for an artistic life after graduation. We prepare and encourage our students to continue with dance whether it be a vocation or an avocation.

We want to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated and talented dance faculty in our Department. These accomplished professionals not only create opportunities to learn and develop, but also share their passion for dance, which is contagious to the students. We are so grateful to them for all they do.

We appreciate your support by being here. On behalf of the students and faculty, we sincerely thank you for attending this performance.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Miriam Giguere" followed by a horizontal line.

Miriam Giguere, PhD

Performing Arts Department Head

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the beautiful Mandell Theater nestled in the heart of Drexel University's campus! The Drexel Dance Ensemble and FreshDance members are excited to entertain you with a kaleidoscope of color, sound, and movement this week!

Our studios have been filled with a flurry of activity over the past four months as thirteen professional and student choreographers and their casts worked to bring multiple artistic visions to life. The Drexel Dance Ensemble, comprised of sophomore, juniors, and seniors, is presenting ***Together We MOVE***. The eight pieces, choreographed by local and NYC professional artists, explore the worlds of film noir, immigration, community, and more through the lens of dance. FreshDance, our company of freshmen, has been working with one professional choreographer and four student choreographers to present ***Rhythms of Life***. These five pieces showcase the burgeoning talents of our newest dancers through genres ranging from post-modern dance to contemporary ballet.

Making dance look easy is hard! Learning how to dance musically, artistically, and authentically takes practice. Memorizing several minutes of continuous movement sequences in specific spatial arrangements and rhythms takes practice. Dancing with others rather than next to them so that relationships are instantly understood takes practice. Taking an audience on a journey that educates, intrigues, and inspires takes practice. So that is what we do here! Each week, the choreographers and casts gather to craft memorable moments through movement that can be repeated consistently. Our dancers take regular technique classes to hone their technical skills so that they can embody the visions of their choreographers. You are about to experience the results!

Thank you so much for supporting our dancers and choreographers with your presence! Take a journey with us and enjoy some fabulous dancing!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Malcolm-Naib, Director of DDE and FreshDance

FRESHDANCE ENSEMBLE

RHYTHMS OF LIFE

WHAT IT IS

Choreographed by Emily Uhler in collaboration with Dancers

Dancers: Sienna Cushing, Sara Kocinsky, Ellie Matus, Chloe Mazza, Sasha Sapon, Madeleine Yurchuk

Music: "Clean" by The Acid & "Sunwater" by Richard In Your Mind

Costumes: Mae Merkle

Lighting: Dom Chacon

Desert Flower

Choreography by Tammy Carrasco

Dancers: Mayrav Bader, Maya Bryan, Catherine Conway, Eowyn Crowley, Isabella Dattilo, Summer Dilworth, Kaitlin Gwanmesia, Madison Handfinger, Dakota Langlitz, Aliyah Primich, Preslie Winn

Music: Found sounds & "Synth" by Michael Wall

Sound Design: Tammy Carrasco

Costumes: Julie Padovan

Lighting: Dom Chacon

The Things That I Am Are All So Far Apart

Choreographed by India Scott in collaboration with Dancers

Dancers: Mayrav Bader, Isabella Dattilo, Molly Fernandez, Sara Kocinsky, Ellie Matus, Aliyah Primich, Madeleine Yurchuk

Music: "moon moons" by Anna Meredith & "Inspirit" by Julianna Barwick

Costumes: Asaki Kuruma

Lighting: Dom Chacon

Ripples to Waves

Choreographed by Morgan Cruise

Dancers: Catherine Conway, Eowyn Crowley, Summer Dilworth, Kaitlin Gwanmesia, Sophia Lattanzio, Chloe Mazza, Emma Riddell, Sasha Sapon, Preslie Winn

Music: "Gypsy Moth" by Andrew Bird & "Eros" by Ludovico Einaudi

Costumes: Asaki Kuruma

Lighting: Dom Chacon

Sculpting Resilience

Choreographed by Lismari Rosario

Dancers: Raquel Bach, Maya Bryan, Miguelfi Guzman, Madison Handfinger, Sara Kocinsky, Sophia Lattanzio, Rachel Lee, Ellie Matus, Lyutfiya Yussupova

Music: "You & Me" by Disclosure ft. Eliza Doolittle, "Human Nature" by Sevdaliza & "Milk of the Siren" by Melanie Martinez

Costumes: Allyson Mojica

Lighting: Dom Chacon

FRESHDANCE ENSEMBLE COMPANY

NAME	MAJOR	GRADUATION YEAR
Raquel Bach	Undeclared Engineering	2027
Mayrav Bader	Dance	2027
Maya Bryan	Finance	2028
Catherine Conway	Film	2027
Eowyn Crowley	Civil Engineering	2028
Sienna Cushing	Health Sciences	2028
Isabella Dattilo	Nursing	2028
Summer Dilworth	Dance	2027
Molly Fernandez	Dance	2027
Miguelfi Guzman	Dance	2028
Kaitlin Gwanmesia	Exercise Science	2027
Madison Handfinger	Biomedical Engineering	2028
Sara Kocinsky	Dance	2027
Dakota Langlitz	Computer Engineering	2028
Sophia Lattanzio	Business	2027
Rachel Lee	Nursing	2028
Ellie Matus	Dance	2027
Chloe Mazza	Architecture	2029
Aliyah Primich	Fashion Design	2027
Emma Riddell	Biomedical Engineering	2028
Sasha Sapon	Dance Physical Therapy	2027
Preslie Winn	Interior design	2027
Madeleine Yurchuk	Film and Television	2027
Lyutfiya Yussupova	Computer science	2027

ABOUT OUR PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS

Rebecca Malcolm-Naib (Director) danced professionally with ZeroMoving Dance Company, Karen Bamonte Dance Works, Chamber Dance Company, Freedman/Coleman Dance Company, Claudia Murphey Dance Company, Battery Dance Company, and with several independent choreographers in prestigious venues including the Joyce Theater (NYC), Meany Center for the Performing Arts (WA), Walker Art Center (MN), Jacob's Pillow (MS), Annenberg Center (PA), Salzburg Tanz Festival (Austria), and The Kennedy Center (DC). She was Co-Founder and Co-Director of Travesty Dance Group from 1997-2010. Rebecca's choreography has been performed in Cleveland, Seattle, Philadelphia, Maine, Toronto, Houston, and New York City. She is the 2022 recipient of the Ellen Forman Memorial Dance Award for her choreography. Rebecca has taught full-time at the University of Washington and Kent State University, master classes at several U.S. colleges and universities, at Bates Dance Festival's Young Dancers Workshop, and as adjunct faculty at Bryn Mawr College and Swarthmore College. She is the Director of the Drexel University Dance Ensemble. Her research has been published in *Impulse: The International Journal of Dance and Science, Medicine, and Education*. Rebecca graduated *summa cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa with a Bachelor of Arts from Mount Holyoke College and received her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Washington. She was a member of the Board of Directors for BalletX from 2012-2021 and rejoined the board in 2022.

Abby Toll (Producer & Stage Manager) is a graduate of Drexel University with a Bachelor of Science in Entertainment and Arts Management. Since graduating in 2018, she has worked as a freelance Stage Manager and Arts Administrator in Philadelphia and the surrounding areas. She has worked for Delaware Shakespeare, The Kimmel Center, Azuka, and many more. When not working in the arts, Abby is an Early Childhood Educator, working with kids ages 3-5. She loves introducing the magic of the arts to young minds.

Mary Elizabeth Stickney (Assistant Director) is a graduate of Drexel University with a Bachelors of Science in Dance and a Masters of Science in Elementary Education with a Special Education certificate. As a teacher of 6 years, this is her third year as a case manager and special education teacher at Pastorius-Richardson Mastery Charter School in Philadelphia. Mary is an alumnus of ArtistYear, an AmeriCorps teaching artist fellowship program; she completed her service year in 2017-2018 teaching movement fundamentals and choreography for South Philadelphia elementary students. Mary enjoys freelance performing and choreographing; she choreographed for the Philadelphia Youth Ballet's 2015 Spring Concert. Mary has studied and worked with global and local artists including David Parsons, Boris Charmatz, Tania Isaac, Leah Stein, Antoinette Coward-Gilmore, Beau Hancock, and Caroline O'Brien.

Britt Whitmoyer Fishel (Assistant Director) is an award-winning choreographer, screendance maker, educator, author, and scholar. Her work examines relationships between the ephemeral nature of live performance and the permanence of dance in the digital sphere, with a research focus on the rhizomes of feminism, gender gap, access, and community. In addition to *BF and Artists*, she is the director and curator of *Opine Dance Film Festival*, an annual, international Screendance festival in its 9th season. She holds a BFA in Dance Performance from East Carolina University and an MFA in Dance (Screendance) from the University of Michigan. Fishel has led company tours throughout New York City, Philadelphia, D.C., Richmond, Asheville, Charlotte, Atlanta, Chicago, London, Italy, and France.

Her screen work has been seen in Greensboro Dance Film Festival, Y'allywood Film Festival, Detroit Dance City Festival, EnCore Dance on Film Festival, DanceBARN, Dance for Reel, FilmFest by Rogue Dancer, Women in Dance Leadership Conference, FringeArts, MashUp Dance's IWD Festival, as well as several gallery exhibitions across the country. In 2021, Fishel and *BF and Artists* received the "Lorenzo il Magnifico" International Award for Performance from the Florence Biennale and in 2022 Fishel authored *The Screendance Practitioner's Workbook: A Pre-Production Guide for Creativity and Organization*.

J. Dominic Chacon (Lighting Designer) is a Lighting Designer and Production Manager based in Philadelphia. He has been working in Philadelphia since he arrived here in 2002. He is an Adjunct Professor at Drexel University and the Lighting Coordinator for the Lang Performing Arts Center at Swarthmore College. In Philly he has designed for Walnut Street Theatre, Azuka, People's Light and many more. Outside of Philly his work has been seen at Florida Studio Theatre, Bowery Street Theatre and Long Wharf Theatre. He is dedicated to making theatre a collaboration as well as a learning experience. In addition to his theatre work he is very passionate about his civic duties volunteering for nonprofits in and around Philadelphia. Some of his favorite collaborations have been Peter and the Starcatcher (Walnut Street Theatre), Blood Wedding (PAC), Dido+ (Curtis Opera). To find out more check out his website domchacon.com

Asaki Kuruma (Costume Designer and Costume Shop Manager) originally from Japan, is a multi-disciplinary artist who has been working professionally with many theater companies and artists in the Philadelphia area. Design credit: Percy Jackson the Lightning Thief, Songs for the New World (Drexel Theatre), Cymbeline (Delaware Shakespeare), Death of a Driver, 72 Miles to Go..., Man of God (InterAct Theatre), Backing Track (Arden Theatre), The Taming!, Pericles (Shakespeare in Clark Park), Kissing the Witches (Ursinus College), House of Desire, A Midsummer Nights Dream (Villanova Theatre), Boycott Esther (Azuka Theater), Las Mujeres (Power Street Theatre Company), Tiger Style! (Philadelphia Asian Performing Artists), Romeo & Juliet, Complete History of America, Abridged, Measure for Measure (Commonwealth Classic Theatre Co). Asaki is also the Costume Shop Manager at Drexel University. MA -Villanova University. Next up: The Lehman Trilogy at Arden Theatre Co."

Chris Totor (Production Manager and Scenic and Prop Designer) is the Technical Director/ Production Manager for the Mandell Theater. Outside of Drexel, Chris serves as the Vice President of the Board of Directors for the Vineland Regional Dance Company. He holds a BA in Theatre and a MA in Arts Administration from Rowan University.

Mae Merkle (Costume Designer) is so grateful for the opportunity to design for the Drexel Dance Ensemble! Mae is a Theater Production Scholar at Drexel University and has costumed and assisted in costuming various projects, including the Mantua Theater Project in 2022. Most recently, they worked with puppets on Drexel's production of The Lightning Thief, and served as the costume designer and an ASM for Drexel Night Live.

Allyson Mojica (Costume Designer) is a designer and seamstress new to the Philadelphia arts scene from North Carolina. Currently, she holds the title of Costume Supervisor at Sesame Place in Langhorne, PA. Previously, she has done freelance design for musical theatre and dance including shows such as *Kinky Boots*, *School Girls: The African Mean Girls Play*, and *Urinetown*. Outside of theatre, she has done Bridal alterations, Interior design production, and general crafts. She would like to give thanks to her mentor Cybele Moon for this opportunity to be introduced to the Philadelphia theatre and dance community.

Cybele Moon (Costume Designer) is a costume designer, educator and visual artist. As a costume designer she has worked with theater and dance companies, live events and film, as well as colleges and universities, to design and create costumes for over 150 productions. Her work has been seen onstage in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, New Orleans and many other locations across the United States. As a visual artist, Moon works with textiles, cut-paper collage and multi-media Installations. Her work has been exhibited at galleries, public events, and with community organizations in Pennsylvania, California, Connecticut, and Illinois.

Moon has held full-time Academic appointments with Wesleyan University and East Carolina University, in addition to adjunct positions with Temple University, the University of the Arts, California Institute of the Arts, and Austin Community College. She has given numerous guest lectures at higher education institutions in Pennsylvania, California, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, and Illinois. Moon has truly enjoyed designing and creating for the Drexel Dance Ensemble once again, and looks forward to future creative collaborations in Philadelphia, and beyond, this year.

Julie Padovan (Costume Designer- she/they) is a costume designer and theater technician. Her previous credits include: Costume Designer- *Disney Descendants* at Wolf Performing Arts Center (2023) , Drexel Dance Ensemble & FreshDance Winter and Spring Concerts (2022). Wardrobe Supervisor- *This is The Week That Is* (2023) at 1812 Productions, *The Play That Goes Wrong* (2023) at 1812 Productions.

Tammy Carrasco (Choreographer) is a dance-artist-educator based in Philadelphia. She is both a nomad and an avid nester and has lived, created, and taught in Raleigh-Durham, New York City, Columbus, OH, Rochester, NY, and St. Pete, FL, and currently finds her heart and home in Philadelphia. She is a recipient of two Tri-Co Philly Grants, the DanceForce Western New York Choreography Initiative Award sponsored by New York Council on the Arts, Drescher Diversity and Inclusion Program Award, and Columbus Dances Fellowship. Choreography credits include: Boston Contemporary Dance Festival, Dumbo Dance, Jennifer Mueller/The Works, Triskelion Arts, Movement Research at Judson Church, among Fringe Festivals in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Rochester, NY. Tammy has performed professionally in her own work and with Heidi Brewer, Robbie Cook, Cara Hagan, Dana Katz, Melinda Mcguire, and Helen Simoneau, to name a few. Tammy has taught and staged work at colleges nationally and internationally, and is currently a Visiting Assistant Professor and Interim Director of Dance at Bryn Mawr College. She holds an MFA in Dance from The Ohio State University, BFA from University of North Carolina School of the Arts, and is a Walnut Hill School for the Arts alum. She is a devoted mother and partner, lover of green spaces, city skylines, and iced coffee. For more about Tammy and her creative work, visit tammycarrasco.org

Morgan Cruise (Choreographer) A 3rd year Artist, Dance/Movement Therapy major, Entrepreneur (@yarn.over.ladybug), a graduate of The Baltimore School for the Arts, and Creator from Baltimore, MD. My artistic journey revolves around a fusion of Ballet techniques and Modern/Contemporary vocabulary. As a choreographer, my work aims to highlight and explore both my voice as a dancer and the unique qualities of the talented individuals within my piece. Through my studies, I hope to further explore my role as a choreographer and the power/intention of movement. I want to thank each dancer in my cast for their dedication and energy in this process, as this is my first time choreographing for Drexel's Ensemble. Good Luck dancers and thank you for bringing my ideas to life.

Lismari Rosario (Choreographer) Women are constantly under the scrutiny of society being told what is deemed acceptable. From being sexualized, underestimated, degraded and harshly judged, women have learned to fight and prove themselves constantly. Throughout the piece, femininity and sex appeal are explored, as well as the multitude of stereotypes that have been crushing women. There is also an exploration of the incomparable power and rage that women hold within their person daily. "Sculpting Resilience" is an homage to the endurance, grace and quiet power inherent in the daily lives of women despite the ridicule.

India Scott (Choreographer) is a movement-based artist who focuses on performance and choreography. In her works she deals with broader issues of womanhood and identity, and often adapts this to her own personal experiences. For nearly a decade she has been honing her own artistic voice through choreographic practices, and deeply values the experience of working with other artists and dancers in a performance realm. Her process is deeply relative to the cast she works with, and the experiences they can bring to a rehearsal space. In addition to resetting this work on FreshDance, India is developing a work for Drexel Dance Ensemble

Emily Uhler (Choreographer) is a senior dance major on the Dance/Movement Therapy track. Though she is pursuing Dance/Movement Therapy and will begin Drexel's Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling graduate program in fall 2024, her interests also lie in performance, choreography, screendance, and teaching. In addition to resetting this piece on FreshDance, Emily is building a work for Drexel's Dance Ensemble. She received public dance education from 3rd to 12th grade that profoundly impacted her understanding of dance and the role of art in schools and community.

ENSEMBLE STAFF

Ensemble Director: Rebecca Malcolm-Naib

Producer: Abby Toll

Assistant Directors: Mary Elizabeth Stickney & Britt Whitmoyer Fishel

THEATER STAFF

Mandell Theater Managing Director: Caroline Leipf

Mandell Theater Technical Director: Chris Totoro

Assistant Technical Director: AJ Bloomfield

Audience Services Manager: Liv Shoup

Stage Manager: Abby Toll

Deck: Sophie Rutan, Vivien Ho & Tim Egenton

Master Electrician: Alan Stelmukh

Assistant Master Electrician/Swing: Ta'Liyah Thomas

Sound Technician: Amelia Hooker

Costume Shop Manager: Asaki Kuruma

Assistant Costume Shop Manager: Mae Merkle

PRODUCTION STAFF

Lighting Designer: Dom Chacon

Costume Designers: Asaki Kuruma, Cybele Moon,

Allyson Mojica, Julie Padovan, Mae Merkle

Graphic Design: Bridget McLaughlin

Program Design: Sage Warmund, Piper Filaault,

Emma Zoe Polyak

DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS

Interim Department Head: Brent White

Department Administrator: LaShanetta Harris

Department Assistant: Galen Blanzaco

Performing Arts Ensemble Production Associate:

Lauren Tracy

Interim Dance Program Director: Jennifer Morley

Music Program Director: Luke Abruzzo

Theatre Program Director: Nick Anselmo

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Performing Arts

Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts & Design