



Department of Performing Arts Presents

Caught in Motion

photo credit: Johana Austin

Drexel FreshDance

FEB 6th @7:30pm & FEB 8th @2pm

Mandell Theater 3220 Chestnut Street

\$15 General Admission

\$5 Drexel Students



DREXEL UNIVERSITY

Dance

Antoinette Westphal College of Media Arts & Design




<https://drexelperformingarts.universitytickets.com/>



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 shown 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 engagement while at Drexel. We offer students the opportunity to perform in large, organized, and professionally directed ensembles. Our goal is to give dancers 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.

Jennifer Morley, Dance Program Director

Dr. Miriam Giguere, Department Head, Performing Arts

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 twelve professional and student choreographers and their casts worked to bring multiple artistic visions to life. The Drexel Dance Ensemble, comprised of sophomores, juniors, and seniors, is presenting "Imagined Terrains". The seven pieces, choreographed by professional artists and two senior dance majors, explore the worlds of Greek myth, societal pressure, archetypes 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 "Caught in Motion". These five pieces showcase the burgeoning talents of our newest dancers through genres ranging from jazz dance, contemporary, and hip hop 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,

Becky Malcolm-Naib, Director of DDE and FreshDance

FRESHDANCE ENSEMBLE
CAUGHT IN MOTION
WINTER 2025

WHAT WE BROUGHT WITH US

Choreographed by Zachary Kapeluck

Dancers: Raine Crowe, Ruby Fain, Katerina Gutierrez, Kaya Hawthorne, Jordyn Jones, Eva Krewson, Taylor Mann, Ela Nawab, and Allie Scicchitano.

Music: I Am a Man of Constant Sorrow – Instrumental, John Hartford, Norman Blake; Indian War Whoop/Pancake Walk, The Crooked Jades

Costumes: Mae Merkle

Lighting: Dom Chacon

ICON

Choreographed by Imani Gegner

Assistant Choreographer: Lismari Rosario

Rehearsal Assistant: Quincy Hines

Dancers: Angela Avolio, Lexi Brenner, Ruby Fain, Kaya Hawthorne, Sage Lee-Boone, Taylor Mann, Isabella Repetto

Music: Icon, Jaden Smith; ICON, COBRAH

Costumes: Asaki Kuruma

Lighting: Dom Chacon

WHAT COMES BETWEEN

**Choreographed by Molly Reilly
in collaboration with dancers**

Dancers: Haliyyah Badmus, Raine Crowe, Amen Dejene, Eva Krewson, Sage Lee-Boone, Ashton Manna

Music: View between Villages (extended version), Noah Kahan; Love Yourself (Short Reprise), Sufjan Stevens; Saturn, Sleeping at last

Costumes: Asaki Kuruma

Lighting: Dom Chacon

ALL THAT BEALE STREET REMEMBERS

Choreographed by Sasha Sapon

Dancers: Angela Avolio, Lexi Brenner, Neghisti Ghebremedhin, Katerina Gutierrez, Jordyn Jones, Ela Nawab

Understudy: Allie Scicchitano

Music: Agape, Nicholas Britell; Keepers of the Keys and Seals, Nicholas Britell; Ye Who Enter Here, Nicholas Britell

Costumes: Avery Boudreaux

Lighting: Dom Chacon

Set/Props: Chris Titora

LIKE A GIRL

Choreographed by Emilia Daguanno
in collaboration with dancers

Rehearsal Assistant: Emily Uhler

Dancers: Lexi Brenner, Ruby Fain, Katerina Gutierrez, Kaya Hawthorne, Eva Krewson, Ela Nawab, Isabella Repetto, Allie Scicchitano

Music: Heart of Glass, Blondie; I Will Survive, Gloria Gaynor; Edge of Seventeen, Stevie Nicks; Miss You Much, Janet Jackson; Piece of My Heart, Janis Joplin

Text: Cher - Interview, 1996; Lady Gaga-Interview, 2016

Costumes: Mae Merkle

Lighting: Dom Chacon

FRESH DANCE ENSEMBLE

Angela Avolio (Marketing)

Haliyyah Badmus (Nursing)

Lexi Brenner (Criminology)

Raine Crowe (Graphic Design)

Aman Dejene (Neuroscience)

Ruby Fain (Dance - PT)

Neghisti Ghebremedhin (Business and Economics)

Katerina Gutierrez (Dance/PT)

Kaya Hawthorne (Dance)

Jordyn Jones (Materials Science and Engineering)

Eva Krewson (Dance)

Sage Lee-Boone (Undeclared Design & Media)

Taylor Mann (Biological Sciences)

Ashton Manna (Sociology)

Ela Nawab (Dance)


Isabella Repetto (Biomedical engineering)

Allie Scicchitano (Dance)



ABOUT OUR PROFESSIONAL ARTIST

Rebecca Malcolm-Naib (Director of Drexel Dance Ensemble and FreshDance Ensemble) (she/her) has a robust background of dance experience, including having danced professionally with ZeroMoving Dance Company, Karen Bamonte Dance Works, Chamber Dance Company, Freedman/Coleman Dance Company, Claudia Murphey Dance Company, and Battery Dance Company, and co-founded Travesty Dance Group where she held the title of Co-Director from 1997-2010. She has also worked with several independent choreographers and performed 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 Hobby Center (TX). Rebecca's choreography has been performed in Cleveland, Seattle, Philadelphia, Maine, Toronto, Houston, and New York City, and was the 2022 recipient of the Ellen Forman Memorial Dance Award for choreography. Rebecca has taught full-time at the University of Washington and Kent State University, master classes at several U.S. colleges, at Bates Dance Festival's Young Dancers Workshop, and as adjunct faculty at Bryn Mawr College and Swarthmore College. Rebecca graduated summa cum laude with a Bachelor of Arts from Mount Holyoke College and received her Master of Fine Arts from the University of Washington. She also served on the Board of Directors for BalletX from 2012-2021 and 2022-2024.



Abby Toll (Producer & Stage Manager) (she/her) 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, including positions at Delaware Shakespeare, Inus Nua, and Azuka. As well as working in the arts, Abby is a preschool teacher, passionate about introducing the magic of the arts to young minds.

Alisia Lipsey (Assistant Director of FreshDance) is a passionate and innovative dance professional from Queens, NY, specializing in Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling. She graduated from Drexel University in 2022 with a Bachelor of Science in Dance earning her Master of Arts in Dance/Movement Therapy and Counseling from Drexel in 2024. Currently, Alisia works as a Creative Arts Therapist for Charlie Health, a virtual intensive outpatient program, where she utilizes movement and creative expression to help clients navigate their emotional challenges. She also serves as a school-based outpatient therapist with Child Guidance Resource Centers, providing essential support to students and families in need. Alisia is excited to return to her alma mater as the Assistant Director of Drexel Dance's FreshDance company, where she aims to inspire and mentor the next generation of dancers.

Britt Whitmoyer Fishel (Assistant Director of Drexel Dance Ensemble) (she/her) is an award-winning choreographer, screendance creator, educator, author, and scholar. Her work examines the 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. Britt is the leader and Artistic Director of Britt Fishel and Artists, a collaborative, contemporary dance company in Philadelphia. In addition to BF and Artists, she is the director and curator of Opine Dance Film Festival, an annual, international Screendance festival in its 10th season. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance from East Carolina University and a Master of Fine Arts in Dance (Screendance) from the University of Michigan. She has led company tours throughout New York City, Philadelphia, D.C., Richmond, VA, Asheville, NC, Charlotte, NC, Atlanta, Chicago, London, Italy, and France. Her screen work has been shown at 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, and MashUp Dance's IWD Festival, as well as several gallery exhibitions across the country. In 2021, Britt and BF and Artists received the "Lorenzo il Magnifico" International Award for Performance from the Florence Biennale, and in 2022, she authored *The Screendance Practitioner's Workbook: A Pre-Production Guide for Creativity and Organization*. Fishel has presented research at the Dance Studies Association's Annual Conferences and currently sits as Co-Chair of DSA's Dance and Technology Working Group. She resides in Philadelphia where she is on the dance faculty at Drexel University.

Dom Chacon (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer and production manager based in Philadelphia, and has been working in Philadelphia since 2002, after graduating from the University of Iowa. Dom also received a Master of Fine Arts from Temple University and has since been involved in many projects around the east coast. In Philadelphia, Dom has designed lighting for Walnut Street Theatre, Azuka, People's Light, and outside of Philadelphia, his work has been seen at Capital Fringe, Edinburgh Fringe, Bowery Street Theatre and Long Wharf Theatre. He is also an adjunct professor at Drexel University and the lighting coordinator for the Lang Performing Arts Center at Swarthmore College. Dom 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 Planned Parenthood, The Trevor Project, and the ACLU. To find out more, check out his website domchacon.com

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

Chris Titora (Production Manager and Scenic and Prop Designer) (he/him) is the Technical Director/ Production Manager for the Mandell Theater at Drexel University. Outside of his work at Drexel, Chris is a freelance designer, director, performer and technician. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and a Master of Arts in Arts Administration from Rowan University.

Mae Merkle (Costume Designer) is a costume design major within the custom designed major program at Drexel. This show will be their 11th as a production scholar working with the costume team. Mae is looking to pursue a career in costume design and is currently branching out to theater in the Philadelphia area to do so. They thank the team at Drexel for all of their hard work and collaboration and are thrilled to be working with FreshDance for this concert.

Avery Boudreaux (Costume Designer) (she/they) is a senior fashion design major and has been involved in Drexel's performing arts community since their freshman year. They have been a part of the costume design team for several shows at Drexel including I Love You You're Perfect Now Change, Director's Lab, Songs for a New World, The Lightning Thief, the 2024 Mantua Theatre Project, and the Spring 2024 Student Works Dance Concert. Avery is excited to have designed costumes for two FreshDance concert pieces, working closely with the student choreographers to bring their creative visions to life.

Emilia Daguanno (Choreographer) (she/her) is a fourth-year communication major at Drexel with a concentration in public relations and a minor in dance. She grew up in the suburbs of southeast Michigan, where she began dancing when she was two years old. She fell in love with performing at a young age and has remained passionate about the art of movement throughout her life. "Like A Girl," her debut choreographic work, explores feminism and its place in the genre and history of rock and roll music. Emilia expects to graduate in the winter of 2026 with a Bachelor of Science in Communication and is currently working towards a yoga teaching certification.

Imani Gegner (Choreographer) is a senior dance major at Drexel University, excited to be remounting her piece "Icon" on FreshDance. Her piece showcases the fierce inner battle many dancers struggle with within the performing arts sphere, navigating the competitive nature in the world of dance while remaining confident, and demonstrating the relentless pursuit of becoming an icon.

Zachary Kapeluck (Choreographer) hails from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he received his early training at Southwest Ballet and Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre. He trained at The Juilliard School and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago's Summer Intensives, and in the summer of 2011, he worked as a guest artist with Mary Miller Dance in Pittsburgh in a project titled "Confluence." He graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from Point Park University in 2013 and subsequently joined BalletX in Philadelphia that summer. He spent 9 years with BalletX, partaking in over 60 world premiere creations by choreographers including Matthew Neenan, Trey McIntyre, Cayetano Soto, Gustavo Ramirez Sansano, Nicolo Fonte, and Annabelle Lopez Ochoa. Zachary left BalletX in 2022 to pursue a new chapter in choreography and teaching. Since then, he has had the pleasure to create works for companies including First State Ballet Theatre, Flight Path Dance Project, Hudson Ballet Theatre, Philadelphia Dance Theater, Idyllwild Arts Academy, and many others. In 2024, he was awarded "Outstanding Choreographer" at YAGP - San Francisco. That same year, he co-produced with two peers the inaugural performances of Sonder Space, a new performing arts project in Philadelphia. He has also spent time restaging works for fellow choreographers as well as assisting in new creation processes. Currently, Zachary serves as the Contemporary Dance Manager at The Rock School for Dance in Philadelphia, overseeing the non-classical curriculum at both the Philadelphia and West Chester locations.

Molly Reilly (Choreographer) (she/her) is a junior dance major on the physical therapy academic track, setting her first piece on Drexel Dance. Outside of the Drexel Dance Ensemble, Molly studies how movement can help people rehabilitate and heal from injuries and bodily trauma as dance has helped her in the past. This work, along with the works she hopes to create in the future, share journeys of self-discovery, focusing on the healing art of movement. Molly sets her work on the FreshDance artists with specific intention but invites the audience to absorb whatever message or emotion they feel fits the work, allowing them to take what resonates after watching the movement for themselves.

Sasha Sapon (Choreographer) is a sophomore double-majoring in dance and biology, debuting her first piece on Drexel's FreshDance. Sasha's piece is inspired by James Baldwin's *If Beale Street Could Talk*, a novel that has captivated her since she first read it. She encourages each dancer to embody the narrative, crafting choreography based on the themes of love and resilience portrayed in the story, and hoping the audience can connect with Baldwin's work and his powerful message. In addition to dance, Sasha is passionate about orthopedic medicine and plans to pursue a career in medicine after graduation, treating dancers and other patients. Her personal experiences with injuries have motivated her to give back to the dance community, significantly shaping her journey as a performing artist.

ENSEMBLE STAFF

Ensemble Director: Rebecca Malcolm-Naib

Producer: Abby Toll

Assistant Directors: Alisia Lipsey & Britt Whitmoyer Fishel

THEATER STAFF

Mandell Theater Managing Director: Caroline Leipf

Mandell Theater Technical Director: Chris Tatora

Audience Services Coordinator: Liv Shoup

Assistant Technical Director: Alan Stelmukh

Stage Manager: Abby Toll

Deck: Rick Conner, Rachel Burton, Sophie Rutan

Master Electrician: Dana Taylor

Assistant Master Electrician: Jason Adams

Sound Technician: Will Lazor

Costume Shop Manager: Asaki Kuruma

PRODUCTION STAFF

Lighting Designer: Dom Chacon

Scenic/Prop Design: Chris Tatora

Costume Designers: Asaki Kuruma, Mae Merkle & Avery Boudreaux

Graphic Design: Erin Ford

Social Media Manager: Nova Schreiner

Program Design: Dakota Langlitz, Raine Crowe & Emilia Daguanno

DEPARTMENT OF PERFORMING ARTS

Department Head: Dr. Miriam Giguere

Department Administrator: Hannah Burke

Administration Coordinator: Ellie Ebby

Ensemble Production Assistant: Lauren Tracy

Dance Program Director: Jennifer Morley

Music Program Director: Luke Abruzzo

Theatre Program Director: Nick Anselmo

Graduate Assistant: Cecelia Hill

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Drexel Performing Arts would like to thank Senior Vice President for Student Success, Dr. Subir Sahu, for his continued support of Performing Arts at Drexel.

SUPPORT GREAT PERFORMANCE

Performing Arts Dance, Music, and Theatre are a vital, central part of the Drexel academia and student life. Donations support performing arts ensembles and programs, as well as the operation of our performing arts venues, including the Mandell Theater and URBN Annex Black Box Theater.

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