

**I** dance at illinois

# pivot

ISSUE 34 • 2019



p4 dancing 50

p5 no debt for dancers

p19 performance calendar

AND MORE INSIDE>



# collaboration as embodied inclusivity

BY JAN ERKERT

Our 50th birthday provided a moment to celebrate and reflect upon how we have endured and changed. Dance at Illinois (DAI) has intentionally built a more diverse community, but now we are turning our attention toward fully dancing together. *Diversity* and *inclusivity* are tired words, overused, misunderstood, and always poking at something deeper, which never seems to be realized. But as I challenge myself and our community to peek underneath the blanket of these words, it is clear that in order to really embrace inclusivity—viscerally, spiritually, and emotionally—we have to confront *everything*, ourselves included. *Everything* means taking a hard look at power, privilege, racism, and bias, which tend to bind us to hierarchical patterns and systems. In order to disrupt these patterns, choreographer and MacArthur genius awardee, Liz Lerman, makes a simple gesture of her forearm from vertical to horizontal. Let's take it a step further...

*Take a vertical line in space. Flip it to the horizontal. Bend it, join the ends to form a circle, then twist it into a three-dimensional figure eight.*

Collaboration, the heart of the creative process, interrupts and subverts the hierarchy of the vertical dimension, forming an elliptical figure 8. Simply put, collaboration is the act of working together—an elliptical figure eight. In the polycentric forms of African diasporic dances, all body parts are equal, and everything flows in multiple directions. This fluidity as applied to both choreography and pedagogy opens new possibilities. For instance, boundaries blur between our traditional notions of student/teacher. In the 50th Year Mash-Up Projects, faculty and alums not only co-created, but a former student, Momar Ndiaye (MFA '17), created a work for Assistant Professor Abby Zbikowski. As we develop the new course, ChoreoLab, we begin with questions rather than the end-goal of performance: destination unknown leads the way. Could *inclusivity* grow beyond its narrow definition of *including* everyone to become a way of knowing and working together across different modes of expression? Not easy to do, but we grapple, adjust, return, try again. The continuous process teaches.

Our 50th year brought an abundance of collaborative projects and pedagogical approaches that highlighted our urge to radically shift dimensions. *Pivot 2019* chronicles these exciting new adventures, including the Mash-Up Projects, the launching of the first annual Choreographic

Platform, new courses, and other multifaceted collaborations. But it is the remnants of one piece performed on the Marquee season at the Krannert Center this year that sits in my memory and that is Professor Cynthia Oliver's *Virago-Man Dem*. This deeply collaborative piece joyfully disrupts normative patterns through an equitable and aesthetically complex confluence of movement, sound, costumes, and visual design. The audience couldn't help but move into a collective standing ovation as we saw a glimpse of just what embodied inclusivity might look like.



Niall Noel Jones (MFA '14), Jonathan Gonzalez, Ni'Ja Whitson, and Duane Cyrus (MFA '05) in professor Cynthia Oliver's *Virago-Man Dem*, photo by Julieta Cervantes

## dancing 50 – looking back/moving forward

### looking back

The 50th Alumni Weekend was a smashing success with 111 alums returning to share their research, teaching, and dancing. Alumna Renée Archibald (MFA '13), currently the Director of Dance at Whitman College, says of her return, "I was overwhelmed by the amount of joy and support bubbling in and around the department. Students were beaming ear to ear at each other and their cells seemed open like sponges." Guest artist Nia Love brought a whole lot of love and delivered a compelling performance of *g1(host): lostatsea*. We launched the first annual Choreographic Platform, a forum for artists and scholars to think about the very nature of creative processes. This year Flatlands Dance Film Festival audiences were treated to *If the Dancer Dances* and *American Tap*, which began a season of tap at the Krannert Center. Cynthia Oliver's *Virago-Man Dem* was performed on the Krannert Center Marquee Series, the first marquee faculty artist in 50 years. We look forward to a second in the 2019–20 season with the performance of *Long Run* by Professor Tere O'Connor's company.



Guest Artist Nia Love in *g1(host): lostatsea*

Guest Artist Nia Love leaves us with this astute insight into our community.

*I am honored to have been a part of such a rich and vibrant department which is at the vanguard of instilling non-hierarchical pedagogical structures into its philosophy. The understanding and acknowledgment of the Africanist presence in modern movement as techniques, ideologies, and methodologies reframe, resituate, and relocate the modern dance canon and thankfully add to the wealth of our earthly achievements and archives. This is not a truth to be seen only in the catalogs of the university's own course descriptions, guidelines, and brochures, but more importantly, I have witnessed this truth in the bodies of students—in their dance, in their gait, in their gathering, in their conversations, and in their ability to hold space trans-laterally in these most turbulent of times! And so I thank you all for the continued sociopolitical and personal ethics here at Dance at Illinois.*

Alums onstage –November Dance 2018



### moving forward

As we move forward into the next 50 years, we will revisit our traditional partnerships with the School of Music and the Department of Theatre through our participation in the productions of *Cabaret* and *Gem of the Ocean*. Former dancer with Batsheva Dance Company Omri Dromlevich will be our guest artist, reconstructing a master work by Ohad Naharin and creating a new film with our students. Students will perform in José Limón's *Psalm*, a revered 20th century classic. *Psalm* will be restaged by native Canadian Roxane D'Orleans Juste, a graduate student at DAI and a member of the Limón Company from 1983–2016. The faculty will also be reviewing the undergraduate curriculum in order to further the ways in which collaboration is embedded into our daily practice.



# dancing 50—the mash-up projects



Professor Kirstie Simson,  
Jessica Cornish (BFA '12),  
and Jason Finkelman in  
*Vibrantly Gentle Explosions*



Isiah Asplund (BFA '17)  
and Charlie Maybee  
(MFA '19) in Charlie  
Maybee's *The Promise  
of Stormy Weather*



nibia pastrana santiago  
(MFA '12) in her and  
Professor Jennifer Monson's  
*Choreographies of Disaster:  
installation 3*, photo by Elliot  
Emadian

Twenty-three alums returned to participate in these projects, performing, and co-choreographing with faculty to create new works for our students that were performed in *February Dance*, *November Dance*, and *Studiodance I*. Special thanks to Richard Erickson whose gift made the Mash-Up Projects a reality and the many generous donors who matched his gift!

*Each visit was equal parts exhausting and inspiring. The students were so much fun, and their daily rigor reminded me how much I loved being a student here. I carried this energy back to New York, invigorating my creative practice with their sense of dogged curiosity.*

**Nico Brown** (MFA '14) co-choreographed *Tragedy, Ecstasy, Doom* with Professor Emerita Renée Wadleigh and performed in Professor Tere O'Connor's *Double Flower Possibility*.

*The time I spent in the studio with Linda was like taking a mini dance vacation. To collaborate, bounce ideas off of one another, and dig deep into our shared influences felt like such a luxury, and ultimately, the highlight of my year. I was deeply impressed with the students' abilities to tackle the movement with aplomb, open-mindedness, and curiosity.*

**Paige Cunningham** (MFA '07) co-choreographed *In Conversation* with Professor Linda Lehovec.

*Returning back for the 50th celebration was nothing short of special. I had the privilege of teaching the current students, and their energy was open and genuine, supportive, and uplifting. To see so many new faces, especially so many new brown faces, made Dance at Illinois feel more like home than I had ever seen. Students are DANCING! To perform with them, to study with them, to rehearse with them, and to be back with some of the amazing faculty and staff was truly a treat.*

**jess pretty** (MFA '16) performed in *Tether* by Professor Cynthia Oliver.

*I first met Endalyn when she came to DAI to teach a master class. I fell in awe with her then, and my love for her artistry, mentorship, and person has only grown over time. When I attended the university, my class was the largest black/African-American class the department had in its known history. That presented unique challenges, and I am grateful that Dance at Illinois is doing work that is often subverted around cultural acceptance and celebration.*

**A. Raheim White** (BFA '11) co-choreographed *Kueendom of the Shade* with Professor Endalyn Taylor and performed in *I Wonder...* by Professor C. Kemal Nance.

# no debt for dancers

The No Debt for Dancers initiative aspires to eliminate college debt and eradicate the notion of the starving artist by raising funds for alumni projects, summer study, and tuition scholarships. No Debt for Dancers supports our mission "...to cultivate imaginative, innovative, and sustainable artistic lives." We are thankful to all our donors who have joined us on this journey!



Jan Erkert, Dulce Issa, Kennedy Cowan,  
Dr. Ahmad Issa, Ibrahim Sabi, Jeremy Taylor

We are pleased to announce a \$1 million gift to Dance at Illinois and the School of Music by Ahmad D. and Dulce G. Issa!

Through their interest in and love for the arts, the Issas are giving back to their alma mater by creating perpetual scholarships in support of exceptionally talented music and dance students. Dr. A.D. Issa is a three-time degree holder in Finance from the University of Illinois, with a BS in 1962, MS in 1963, and PhD in 1967. Dulce Issa holds a degree in Finance from the University of Puerto Rico, a master's degree in Spanish from Southern Illinois University,

and she was awarded a Wall Street Journal scholarship to pursue further studies in Finance at Illinois. Dr. Issa has had a full and prestigious academic career as well as starting his own advisory firm, Integrated Financial Planning, in 1986. His legacy of service, which permeates both his professional career and his active retirement, includes receiving the Alumni Teaching Excellence Award and work for organizations such as the American Association of University Professors negotiation team, the Kalamazoo Humane Society, and the United Holy Land Fund, which he founded in 1968. Dr. Issa is heavily indebted to Professor Paul Van Arsdell, the founder and first chairman of the Finance Department in the Gies College of Business at Illinois, who was instrumental in encouraging him to continue in the PhD program with tuition scholarships and fellowships. He says, "Professor Van Arsdell's unwavering support, generosity, and encouragement opened an un-dreamed of academic career and professional future."

Danielle Mastricola (BFA '19), Mya McClellan (BFA '21), and Nick Hittle (BA and BS '20) in Professor John Toenjes and alum Renata Sheppard's *Patina*





Marc Crousillat, Simon Courchel, Jin Ju Song-Begin in Professor Tere O'Connor's *Long Run*, photo by Ben McKeown

# professor tere o'connor featured in krannert center's 19–20 marquee series

A performance of *Long Run* by Bessie Award-winning Tere O'Connor in the Krannert Center's marquee season is a welcome event this fall. It is in keeping with the years of touring his works to the great cultural centers of the United States and abroad, including the Skirball Center at New York University; Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis; Redcat in Los Angeles; Wexner Center in Columbus, Ohio; Lyon Opera House, France; and the Abbey Theater in Dublin. O'Connor's singular vision and exacting articulations of the choreographic mind have allowed him entry into the great institutions of dance for over 30 years. Through his performances, teaching, mentoring, and writing, he has become an important voice advocating for young dance artists and the general sustainability of the form into the future. His works offer illusory worlds, expressing a range of theatrics from stark abstraction to warmly emotional reimaginings of the human experience. Some of the top dancers from around the globe (including DAI alums and faculty) have performed in Tere O'Connor Dance, offering their unique interpretations to shape the work.



Elliot Emadian (MFA '20) and Isiah Asplund (BFA '20) in Charlie Maybee's (MFA '19) *The Promise of Stormy Weather*

## choreographic platform

The Choreographic Platform aspires to create new theoretical constructs regarding the arts, sciences, and humanities, through the convening of artists and educators (students, faculty, and professionals) exploring processes of making new dances, music, poems, and films. The first annual Choreographic Platform was launched in summer 2019 led by Professor Sara Hook and nationally acclaimed choreographer David Parker. Parker's company, The Bang Group, includes DAI alums Amber Sloan (BFA '01) and Nic Petry (MFA '05). The group along with 20 invited dancers from across this region and beyond dove deeply into an investigation of innovative collaborative practices. Dramaturg Betsy Brandt (MFA '12), writers Aumaine Gruich and Emmilea O'Toole, and video artist Charli Brissey (MFA '18) tracked and reimagined the work through their own mediums in an effort to disseminate the nature of choreographic process more broadly.



Hannah Dziura (BA '20) and Rachel Maramba (BA '21 and BS '21) in *Crazy for You* choreographed by Charlie Maybee (MFA '19)



Cassidy Zins (BFA '21), Danner Self (BFA '20), Sydney Hagerman (BFA '21), and Jennifer Smith (BFA '20) in Rachel Rizzuto's (MFA '21) *sorry-reen*

## traditional partners explore new possibilities

### Jupiter String Quartet

It was a magical performance that people are still talking about. Professor Rebecca Netti-Fiol set a work, *Tangos for Jupiter*, on same sex professional ballroom dance couple Alex Tecza and Kato Lindholm. Set to two tangos by Piazzolla, the piece challenged traditional notions of gender roles in a hybrid of tango and contemporary dance, performed with fluid transitions of leading and following by the two champion competitive ballroom dancers. As part of Krannert Center's 50th anniversary, this piece was performed in the Foellinger Great Hall for Sonic Illinois: Jupiter String Quartet. This concert featured Tai Ji master Chungliang Al Huang who performed at the opening of Krannert in 1969.

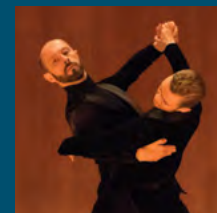


Photo: Alex Tecza and Kato Lindholm in Professor Rebecca Netti-Fiol and guest artists Alex Tecza and Kato Lindholm's *Tangos for Jupiter*

### Musical Theatre—Cabaret

Lyric Theatre in the School of Music has launched a new Bachelor of Musical Arts in Lyric Theatre and a Musical Theatre minor in collaboration with the Departments of Dance and Theatre. This new milestone inspired us to present the musical *Cabaret* in Spring 2020 with a co-equal artistic team—Latrelle Bright (Theatre), Elliot Emadian (Dance), and Julie Gunn (Music)—who will create an exciting new look at this 50-year-old classic.

### Theatre's Production of *Gem of the Ocean* by August Wilson Features Dance!

BY DR. C. KEMAL NANCE

*Gem of the Ocean* is the first installment of what serves as August Wilson's decade-to-decade chronicles of the lives of Black people throughout the twentieth century. In this story, Wilson created a

287-year-old docent, Aunt Esther, who escorts us to the "City of Bones," an imagined city constructed of the bones from enslaved Africans who died during the Middle Passage. When Goodman Theater's Resident Director Chuck Smith attended the 2018 *February Dance* concert with works by myself and Endalyn Taylor, Smith was convinced that he could actualize a new "Gem" in which Aunt Esther takes us to the "City of Bones" through dance. Charged with choreographing an "African Ballet," Taylor and I entered the dance studio with a soundtrack of string instruments and drums and eight DAI students for a weekend in March of intense choreographic brainstorming. Our collaboration resulted in a dynamic rendering of the "City of Bones" that represents a symbiotic pairing of our expertise in ballet and African diasporic forms respectively. Fueled by the usual synergy that is characteristic of our collaboration—the same synergy that brought us *Chalk Lines* in 2015—we danced our way to the center of Wilson's imagination.



# dance at illinois

Jaylen Clay (MFA '21), Jeremy Taylor (BFA '20), William Ervin (MFA '20), Eddie Shellman (BA '19), and Danzel Thompson-Stout (MFA '21) in Professor C. Kemal Nance's *I Wonder...*



*armageddon or sunrise or something* choreographed and performed by Mauriah Donegan Kraker (MFA '19) and Leah Wilks (MFA '19)



Elizabeth Koenig (BS '19), Elyana London (BFA '22), Mary Kate Ford (BFA '20), Erin Harvey (BA '20), Jenny Oelerich (BFA '19), and Jessica Ziegler (BFA '21) in Jenny Oelerich's *by means of cacophony*







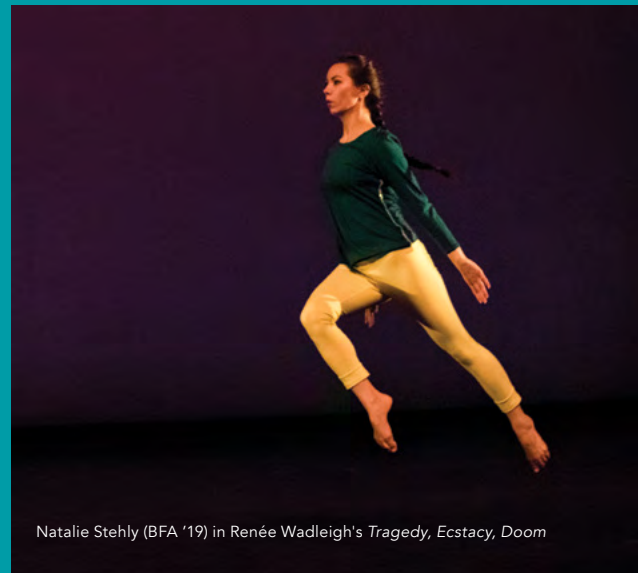
Mary Kate Ford (BFA '20), Professor Linda Lehovec (MFA '96), Jenny Oelerich (BFA '19), Michelle Burns (BFA '20), Daisy Rueda (BFA '19), Jenna Soldati (BA and BS '19), and Natalie Stehly (BFA '19), photo by Eddie Shellman



BA class of 2019: Eddie Shellman, Alexis Van Skyock, Jenna Soldati, and Colleen Brown. Not pictured: Jaelin Heavisdas

## DAI celebrates the first BA symposium!

2019 BA students engaged our community in their research, exploring intersections between dance and education, arts integration, architecture, film, and psychology in our first BA symposium. The BA in Dance was designed for students who want to explore interdisciplinary approaches to art-making, and/or simultaneously pursue a minor or major in another discipline. Students study three core areas in Dance (Physical Practice, Creative Process, and Dance Theory) and identify at least one other key area of interest such as Musical Theatre, Kinesiology, Business, Film, or Gender Studies.



Natalie Stehly (BFA '19) in Renée Wadleigh's *Tragedy, Ecstasy, Doom*



Madeline Mellinger (BFA '20) and Jessica Ziegler (BFA '21) in Professor Linda Lehovec and alum Paige Cunningham's *In Conversation*

# awards and scholarships

These awards and scholarships support dance research and/or study for undergraduate and graduate students seeking to further their creative, performance, and/or scholarly work. Students are selected based on their achievements, rigorous inquiry, and individual voice.

**Vannie L. Sheiry Memorial Scholarship** (est. 1994) in recognition of outstanding performance  
**Elliot Emadian (MFA '20)**  
**Danzel Thompson-Stout (MFA '21)**

**Moe Family Dance Award** (est. 1996) for unique contributions to the profession  
**Charlie Maybee (MFA '19)**

**Wanda M. Nettl Prize for Student Choreography** (est. 2002)  
**Mauriah Kraker (MFA '19)**  
**Leah Wilks (MFA '19)**

**Patricia Knowles Graduate Travel Award** (est. 2006)  
**Rachel Rizzuto (MFA '21)**  
**Danzel Thompson-Stout (MFA '21)**

**Beverly Blossom and Carey Erickson Alumni Award** (est. 2007)  
**24 Alums in the Mash-Up Projects!**

**Lisa Carducci Memorial Award** for an overall outstanding student. Established in honor of Lisa Carducci by her family.  
**Mary Kate Ford (BFA '20)**  
**Jeremy Taylor (BFA '20)**

**Mary Elizabeth Hamstrom Award for graduate summer study**  
**Elliot Emadian (MFA '20)**

**Senior Magnolia Award for the most development throughout their four years**  
**Colleen Brown (BA '19)**

**Outstanding Undergraduate Performance Award**

**Angel Anderson (BFA '21)**  
**Jenny Oelerich (BFA '19)**

**Dance Partner Project Awards** (est. 2010)  
**Michelle Burns (BFA '20)**  
**Lindsey Jennings (BFA '20)**  
**Emily Schwartz (BFA '20)**  
**Faith Stanton (BFA '21)**

**Leadership Award** (est. 2018)  
**Danielle Mastricola (BFA '19)**

**Ahmad D. and Dulce G. Issa Dance Scholarship for overall outstanding achievements**  
**Jordyn Gibson (BFA '23)**  
**Kennedy Cowan (BFA '22)**  
**Jeremy Taylor (BFA '20)**

**Larry Scholarship for overall outstanding achievements**  
**Mary Kate Ford (BFA '20)**

**William McClellan Memorial Scholarship for exceptional talent in performance and/or choreography**  
**Faith Brown (BFA '21)**

**Courtney B. Kellogg Memorial Scholarship** (est. 2015) for an outstanding sophomore undergraduate dance student. Established in honor of Courtney B. Kellogg Wojcik, a 2000 BFA graduate from Dance at Illinois.  
**Jessica Ziegler (BFA '21)**

**A. Raheim White Scholarship** is a merit-based award for an underrepresented/minority first-year student. This scholarship is named in honor of alumnus Aaron Raheim White (BFA 2011), who has cultivated an imaginative, innovative, and sustainable artistic life.  
**Alyssa Teijeiro-Ficht (BFA '23) for 2019–20**



Charlie Maybee (MFA '19), Danielle Mastricola (BFA '19), Leah Wilks (MFA '19), Lindsey Jennings (BFA '20), Rachel Rizzuto (MFA '21), Jessica Ziegler (BFA '21), Colleen Brown (BFA '19), Emily Schwartz (BFA '20), Elliot Emadian (MFA '20), Michelle Burns (BFA '20), Mary Kate Ford (BFA '20), Angel Anderson (BFA '21), Jeremy Taylor (BFA '20), Alexandria Kinard (BFA '22), Danzel Thompson-Stout (MFA '21), Faith Stanton (BFA '21), Kennedy Cowan (BFA '22), Faith Brown (BFA '21). Not pictured: Jenny Oelerich (BFA '19), Mauriah Kraker (MFA '19), Jordyn Gibson (BFA '23), Alyssa Teijeiro-Ficht (BFA '23).





Rebecca A. Ferrell, photo provided

Anna Saphozhnikov, photo by Ross Gordon

transitions

Congratulations to Philip Johnston who was promoted to Associate Teaching Professor.

A fond farewell to Becky Ferrell who served five years as our Assistant to the Head, Lecturer, and Director of the Flatlands Film Festival. Becky is now the Executive Director of Dance Metro DC, was recently featured in Dance Teacher Magazine's 'Women in Leadership' article, and was named the 'Best New Addition to the DC Dance Scene' by the Washington City Paper in their Best of DC issue. We know with Becky in charge, the DC-area dance scene will be rocking.

Anna Saphozhnikov (BFA '98, MFA '02) will be our new Assistant Head for Academic Program Administration and Engagement! Anna is a teacher, choreographer, and performer with roots based in the Chicago land area. She founded the dance program at York High School in Elmhurst and is the Founder and Artistic Director of MOYAMO DANCE and Codirector of Sweetie Pie Productions.

Laura Chiamonte, DAI Media Coordinator, will be the new Director of Flatlands Dance Film Festival.

Betty Allen will be the Director of Children's Dance Saturday program and teach Creative Dance for Children. Betty comes to us with years of experience teaching in the public schools. A shoutout goes to Mauriah Kraker who infused the Children's Dance program with magic and imagination for the last three years!

We say goodbye to Ryan Luzzo, Space Coordinator/DRK Manager, who kept us organized this year.



Jessica Ziegler (BFA '21) in Lindsey Jennings's (BFA '20) underneath fog, then something bright

in memory

Colleen Mulvihill (1952–2019), (BFA '72), passed away on March 2, 2019. An Olympic gymnast, gymnastic coach, and choreographer, she also danced with Margaret Jenkins Dance Company and David Gordon Pick Up Company, as well as performing her own work with composer and life partner J.A. Deane. She developed her own teaching practice called The Body Speaks which she taught at her home studio in Longmont, Colorado.

Erick Gonzalez (BFA '98) passed away on January 7, 2019, in El Salvador. Our first and only student from El Salvador, Erick danced with El Teatro de Danza Contemporanea de El Salvador for two years after completing his BFA and returned to Illinois as an MFA candidate. He was dancing and teaching at Escuela Nacional de Danza "Morena Celarié" at the time of his death.

Leslie Campbell (1978-2019), (BFA '02), passed away on June 9, 2019, in St. Louis University Hospital, after battling complications of liver failure. After earning her BFA degree in Dance at Illinois, Leslie began studying Pilates and completed her Romana's Pilates Certification in 2005. She enjoyed a successful career as a Pilates instructor in Champaign-Urbana and the St. Louis area. She loved to dance and was always happiest when performing. A creative spirit, she enjoyed sewing and crafting with her daughter Vega Dei Driesner.



Graduate Class of 2019: Charlie Maybee, Mauriah Donegan Kraker, and Leah Wilks, photo by Rebecca A. Ferrell

graduate student news

This year's cohort of graduating MFAs is a particularly close-knit group. They shared their distinct and diverse areas of research to support breadth and depth in their creative and scholarly research. They each shaped our community with compassion, sensitivity and artistic brilliance. As they head out into the world, they will continue to make valuable contributions as artists, teachers, and scholars. Their work will shape the field of contemporary dance in vital and exciting ways.

Charlie Maybee moved to DC to continue making work with his company Polymath Performance Project as well as doing a multitude of other things, including teaching and dance class accompaniment. We have a feeling a PhD in Performance Studies is in his future.

Mauriah Donegan Kraker continues to be an advocate for practices of slow travel: walking around the block and through the city as a means of attending to choreographic unfolding. She and Leah will be presenting their thesis duet, armageddon or sunrise or something, as well as collaborative dance workshops in North Carolina, Florida, and other locations.

Leah Wilks is headed to NYC to pursue performance and choreographic opportunities as well as continuing the collaboration with Mauriah.

DAI awards 13 students with bfa and ba degrees

Dance at Illinois graduated 13 undergraduates in 2019: eight Bachelor of Fine Arts and five Bachelor of Arts degrees. The 2019 graduates are a diverse and proud group, including in- and out-of-state students, transfer students from other universities, students who returned to complete their education after a long hiatus, and a first-generation Latina student. Our BFA students will be spreading out across the US from New York to Los Angeles and from Chicago to Atlanta, drawing upon the knowledge, training, and experience gained at DAI to pursue performing and/or teaching careers. Our graduates are passionate about giving back as artists and teachers, showing how vital dance can be to the cultural life of their communities. Those that went through DAI's new yoga certification program will be teaching yoga right out of school, video crew students with fantastic film editing skills will be offering their services to the dance field, and one graduate is intent upon using what she learned here to become the next international superstar! So, watch out, world, the class of 2019 is comin' at ya!



Undergraduate Class of 2019: Tia Pruitt (BFA), Daisy Rueda (BFA), Starlotta Milam (BFA), Jenny Oelerich (BFA), Jenna Soldati (BA and BS), Colleen Brown (BA), Alexia Van Skyock (BA), LaTosha Pointer (BFA), Emmaline Rapier (BFA), Natalie Stehly (BFA), Danielle Masticola (BFA). Not pictured: Jaelin Heavisides (BA), Eddie Shellman (BA).



Lila Snaidauf (BA Finance '19), Emma Schwartz (BS Health '19) and Alyssa Trelz (BFA '20) in Emmaline Rapier's Where We Left Off



Professor Abby Zbikowski in Momar Ndiaye's (MFA '17) *sous la peau d'un autre*



## newsflash—faculty, students and alums excel in professional and academic arenas

*Radioactive Practice* is the newest work by Juried Bessie Award-winning Assistant Professor Abby Zbikowski, commissioned by New York Live Arts, to be premiered during their 2019–20 season. This genre-bending dance for ten performers breaks down the physicality, sociocultural functions, and psychological states of an eclectic range of movement forms as a means to expose and challenge the cultural and aesthetic collisions intrinsic in the practice of dance in the contemporary world. This work pushes its collaborative team from the United States, including alumnus Alex Gossen (BFA '17) and dancers from Taiwan, Senegal, and Canada, beyond perceived limits as they create a new tradition built from the inner workings of established forms, including West African dance, hip-hop, modern, and basketball.

*I Wonder...* by Dr. C. Kemal Nance and *Here We Go Again* by Elliot Emadian (MFA '20) were selected to be performed in the Gala Concert at the ACDA Central Region at Missouri State University.

New York's *River to River* Festival featured Professor Jennifer Monson's work *Ditch* with current DAI students Madeline Mellinger (BFA '20) and Kaitlin Fox (MFA '20), as well as Michelle Boulé's (BFA '99) new work, *White*.

Michelle Boulé (BFA '99) received the *Distinguished Legacy Award* from the University of Illinois, College of Fine and Applied Arts.

MFA alums Niall Jones (MFA '14), Angie Pittman (MFA '15), Jessie Young (MFA '16), Kathleen Kelley (MFA '13), Kendra Portier (MFA '18) and jess pretty (MFA '16) presented work in NYC, garnering considerable press attention. pretty and Leslie Cuyjet (BFA '03) also performed in *What Remains*, a collaboration with Will Rawls and Claudia Rankine.

nibia pastrana santiago (MFA '12) was invited to perform in the Whitney Biennial.

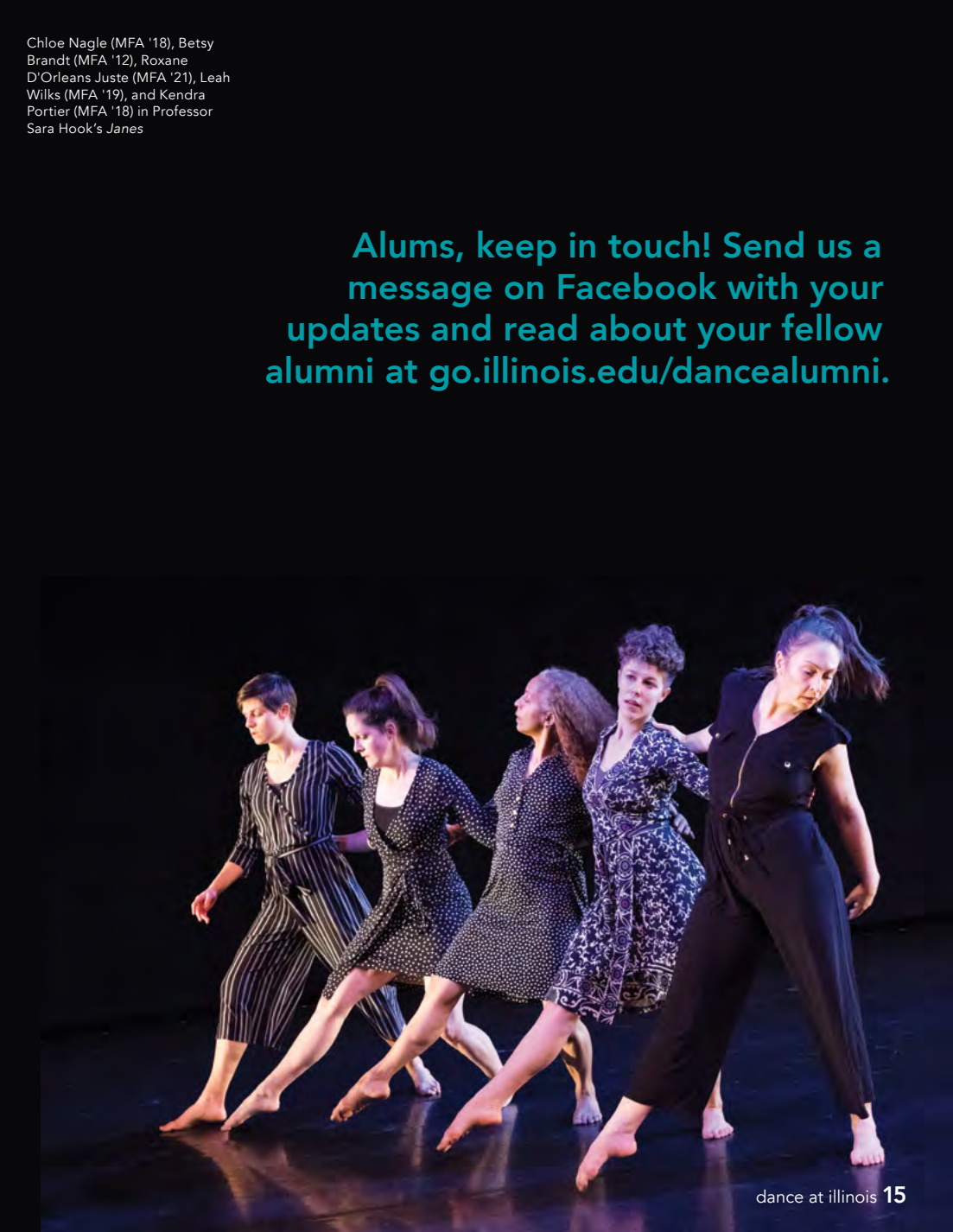
Thomas Welsh—Huggins (BFA '17) performed with RoseAnne Spradlin in *Y*.

Laina Carney (BFA '15) graduated with an MFA in Dance from ASU, and has taken a position as Assistant Professor of Dance and Diversity at Illinois State University.

## study abroad

Madeline Mellinger (BFA '20) studied at the Institute of the Arts in Barcelona, Spain; Taylor Adams (BFA '20) studied dance at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance and Hebrew at the Rothberg International School at Hebrew University in Israel; and Symone Sanz (BFA '20) danced at the Western Australia Academy of Performing Arts in Perth, Australia.

Chloe Nagle (MFA '18), Betsy Brandt (MFA '12), Roxane D'Orleans Juste (MFA '21), Leah Wilks (MFA '19), and Kendra Portier (MFA '18) in Professor Sara Hook's *Janes*



**Alums, keep in touch! Send us a message on Facebook with your updates and read about your fellow alumni at [go.illinois.edu/dancealumni](https://go.illinois.edu/dancealumni).**



be a pivotal force—  
donate now

Donors play a pivotal role in the realization of the department’s ambitions to become a national center for the development of dance artists and leaders. The collaborative work generated in our program has been spreading across campus and out into the world, and we can do even more to share what dance can contribute to our society. Dance Partners—our generous donors—provide the core strength for our students, our creative work, and our vision for advancing the art of dance.

We hope you will join us in our mission to cultivate imaginative, innovative, and sustainable artistic lives.

To make a gift, please designate the desired fund on your check, made payable to the University of Illinois Foundation/Department of Dance, and mail to UIF, P.O. Box 3429 Champaign, IL, 61826-3429.

For information on how to donate online, visit giving.illinois.edu.

Angie Pittman (MFA '15) in Professor Cynthia Oliver's *Tether*



Jennifer Monson in her and nibia pastrana santiago's (MFA '12) *Choreographies of Disaster: installation 3*, photo by Elliot Emadian

dance partners

We take this opportunity to recognize and thank all Dance Partners for contributing to the vibrancy of Dance at Illinois. Your gifts are reflected in all of our performances, and we are profoundly grateful for your support. Listed below are the donors from July 1, 2018–June 30, 2019.

Deborah Allen and Howard Schein  
Anonymous  
Fran and Marc Ansel  
Art and Motion Dance Studio, Inc.  
Diane Baker and William Worn  
Christine and Paul Bauer  
Mary and W. B. Bobosky  
John Brix and Bette Rosenstein  
Roselee Bundy in honor of A.D. Issa  
Jerry Carden and Tim Temple  
Anne and Michael Carducci  
Jacquelyn Carducci  
Carnow Family  
Erin Callahan  
Carolyn Casady-Trimble and Ralph Trimble  
Lynda and Robert Cavanagh  
How-Ching F. Chan and Albert Wong  
Andrea Chim  
Edwin and Peili Lo Chim  
Gary and Mary Devore  
Paul and Peggy Drane  
Richard Erickson  
Jan Erkert and Bernt Lewy  
Stephen Fiol and Rebecca Netti-Fiol  
Margaret Fisher-Krugman  
Joan and Paul Germano  
Bruce and Debra Gillingham  
Charles Guse and Lydia Holt  
Alicia and Mathew Harvey  
Timothy Hutchison and Michael Lambert  
Alexandra Hutton  
Image Factor, Inc.  
Roger Ingalsbe  
Kate Insolia  
Ahmad and Dulce Issa  
Deborah and Michael Kellogg  
Tony Klugh  
Frank and Patricia Knowles  
Janice Kovar  
Linda and Peter Krivkovich  
Andrea and Virgie Lewis

Faith Brown (BFA '21) in *Blackbird*



Arthur Lieb  
Ella and Mark Magruder  
Lily Mao  
Donna Mastricola  
Regina McClellan  
Greg and Laurie Merriman  
Laura Michelini  
Jane and Norman Milsap  
Dirk Mol and Jerry Wray  
David and Nancy Morse  
Eric Nagle  
Bruno and Wanda Netti  
Cindy Olsen (in memory of Lisa M. Carducci)  
Terrance O'Connor  
David and Elizabeth Olmsted (on behalf of Mrs. Beth McClurg Olmsted) \*In memory of Kate D. Kuper\*  
Donna Ortman  
Carol Palmiotto  
George and Mary Perlstein  
Grady and Marilyn Phillips  
Janet and Kip Pope  
Laura Reed  
Mark Rhodes  
John and Pamela Rozehnal  
Deborah and Stephen Rugg  
Anna Sapozhnikov  
Michelle and Robert Shafer  
Lisa Simons  
Mark and Regina Taylor  
Joy Thornton and John Walter  
Chad and Tricia Trimble  
Beverly Washington  
Richard Wilson  
Ann Wojcik  
Todd Wojcik  
Elizabeth Wymore  
Basia Yakaitis  
Jin-Wen Yu

dance partner advancement committee (DPAC)

We are mentors and bridge-builders between the Dance Department and the community. We promote, support, celebrate, and engage the public, students, and faculty/staff by making connections, forging opportunities, and diversifying audiences.

Fran Ansel  
Diane Baker  
Jerry CardenTim  
Hutchison  
Michael Lambert  
Dirk Mol  
Mark Rhodes  
Tim Temple  
Ella Van Wyk  
Jerry Wray

Nicholas Hittle (BA and BS '20) and Ibrahim Sabbi (BFA '21) in Professor Rebecca Netti-Fiol and alum Melanie Bales' *Picked Up Pieces*





## audition dates

### Undergraduate Program

October 14, November 9, January 25\*, February 17  
(\*Chicago audition at Dovetail Studios)

### Graduate Program

February 12–13



Jenny Oelerich (BFA '20) in professor Jan Erkert and alum Juli Hallihan-Campbell's (BFA '84, MFA '92) *Antigamente*

## 2019–2020

### performance calendar

#### Flatlands Dance Film Festival

August 30–31

#### Studiodance II

October 3–5

#### Gem of the Ocean

Oct. 17–19 and Oct 24–27

#### November Dance

November 7–9

#### Tere O'Connor Dance, KCPA Marquee Series

November 21

#### Cabaret

February 27–29 and March 5–7

#### Studiodance Extended

March 27–28

#### Studiodance I

April 2–4

#### Studiodance Extended

April 10–11

#### Senior Concerts

December 6–7, April 24–25

## 2018–2019

### faculty/staff list and magazine credits

#### Dance Faculty

Laura Chiaramonte, Lecturer and Media Coordinator  
Jan Erkert, Department Head and Professor  
Rebecca A. Ferrell, Lecturer  
Sara Hook, Professor  
Philip Johnston, Assistant Teaching Professor  
Patricia Knowles, Professor Emerita  
Linda Lehovec, Associate Professor  
Jennifer Monson, Professor and Graduate Program Director  
C. Kemal Nance, Assistant Professor  
Rebecca Netti-Fiol, Professor and Undergraduate Co-Director  
Tere O'Connor, Professor  
Cynthia Oliver, Professor  
Kirstie Simson, Associate Professor  
Endalyn Taylor, Assistant Professor  
John Toenjes, Associate Professor and Undergraduate Co-Director  
Renée Wadleigh, Professor Emerita  
Abby Zbikowski, Assistant Professor

#### Staff

Ken Beck, Specialist in Music  
Rebecca A. Ferrell, Assistant to the Head  
Natalie Fiol, Photographer  
Kimberly Hardin, Physical Therapist  
Ryan Luzzo, Space Coordinator/DRK Manager  
Cindy Masko, Office Manager

#### Interns

Faith Brown	Madeline Mellinger
Michelle Burns	Isabella Rosanova
Nina Crouchelli	Daisy Rueda
Mary Kate Ford	Symone Sanz
Lindsey Jennings	Emily Schwartz
Rachel Maramba	Natalie Stehly
Danielle Mastricola	Jessica Ziegler
LaTosha Pointer	

#### Guest Artists

Nia Love  
Aaron McGloin

#### Alumni Guest Artists/Mash-Up Projects

Isiah Asplund (BFA '17)  
Melanie Bales (MFA '83)  
Betsy Brandt (MFA '12)  
Nico Brown (MFA '14)  
Jessica Cornish (BFA '12)  
Paige Cunningham (MFA '07)  
Leslie Cuyjet (BFA '03)  
Charles Gowin (BFA '15)  
Juli Hallihan-Campbell (BFA '84, MFA '92)  
Grant Hill (BFA '18)  
Lauren Mendelson (BFA '18)  
Alexis Miller (BFA '18)  
Chloe Nagle (MFA '18)  
Momar Ndiaye (MFA '17)  
Angie Pittman (MFA '15)  
Kendra Portier (MFA '18)  
jess pretty (MFA '16)  
Renata Sheppard (MFA '07)  
nibia pastrana santiago (MFA '12)  
Randi Townsend (BFA '17)  
James Washington (BFA '18)  
Aaron Raheim White (BFA '11)



Mary Kate Ford (BFA '20) in *Honey Heart*

#### Accompanists

Sarah Chang  
Beverly Hillmer  
Cody Jensen  
Charlie Maybee  
Aaron Wilson

#### Teaching Assistants

Evvie Allison  
Jaylen Clay  
Elliot Emadian  
William Ervin  
Kaitlin Fox  
Roxane D'Orleans Juste  
Mauriah Kraker  
Charlie Maybee  
Rachel Rizzuto  
Danzel Thompson-Stout  
Leah Wilks

#### Magazine Credits

Editing: Mark Kate Ford and Rebecca A. Ferrell  
Copy Editing: Anne Jackson  
Photography: Natalie Fiol unless otherwise noted  
Design: Natalie Fiol, Communications and Marketing at the College of Fine + Applied Arts  
Cover Image: LaTosha Pointer (BFA '19), Stephanie Shaw (BFA '21), Faith Brown (BFA '21), A. Raheim White (BFA '11), Mya McClellan (BFA '21), and Jaylen Clay (MFA '21) in Professor Endalyn Taylor and alum A. Raheim White's *Kueendom of the Shade*



*Danzel Thompson-Stout (MFA '21), Roxane D'Orleans Juste (MFA '21),  
and Nina Crouchelli (BFA '20) in Juste's The Absence of We*

**DANCE.ILLINOIS.EDU**

**I ILLINOIS**

**Dance**

**COLLEGE OF FINE & APPLIED ARTS**

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
907½ West Nevada Street  
Urbana, IL 61801-3810