

Howard University Department of Theatre Arts  
Virtually Presents

2021 ANNUAL  
SPRING DANCE CONCERT

*Breaking.*  
THROUGH.  
DISCOVERING.  
TRUTH.  
WITHIN.

APRIL 16-18, 2021  
6:00-8:00pm EDT

Visit [theatrearts.howard.edu](http://theatrearts.howard.edu) for more information.



# MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC TEAM

---

While directly referencing the Adinkra symbol/ aphorism developed by the Akan people of Ghana the spelling is a nod to the soon to be reinstatement of the College of Fine Arts. Sankofa as a concept means looking back or acknowledging one's past as we move forward. That simple statement will shape our offerings this year. Our past is filled with immeasurable loss and sorrow but also significant triumphs and (s)heroes that have reshaped the world. The celebrations have sometimes been clouded by missteps but our journey has shaped the ground on which we stand. That history positions all who bear the torch, that Howard University Department of Theatre Arts character, to stand on the front line with our communities presenting our stories, our songs, our dances and our visions for radical change. Causing "Good Trouble" with our Art we offer you the season of SANCOFA.

The 2020-2021 SanCOFA Season is being led by Artistic Director- Eric Ruffin and Assistant Artistic Director- Dominique Douglas Hendricks, with support from T.W. Starnes as the SanCOFA Virtual Technical Director and Kevin Thorne II as Assistant to the Artistic Director. Although coming together physically has presented its limitations, DoTA still plans to wow its audiences, connect with alumni, engage the community and reach the globe. We hope you'll join us!

---

## GENERAL INFORMATION:

Location: 2455 6th Street, NW (on the campus Howard University)

Contact Information: 202/806-7700 | Fax: 202/806-9193

Administration: 202/806-7050

Facebook: HowardUTheatreArts

Twitter & Instagram: HUTheatreArts

Website: [theatrearts.howard.edu](http://theatrearts.howard.edu)



# **NOTES FROM THE AREA COORDINATOR:** *PROFESSOR ROYCE ZACKERY*

---

**Time stops for no one. It is one of the only two constants in existence: the other being death, or... rebirth.**

**How many times do we die in a lifetime? Maybe a less stressful question is, how many times do we die in a day? Does moving forward count as moving forward when energy being used to push through, and grow is negative? How long does it take a human being to realize that his or her evolution and change displayed to the masses as strength is a deflection and misdirection of inner fear? How do we get people of the world to see the power in stillness versus an overwhelming amount of vulnerability? Can the calm of our own storms bring to light, that fully stepping into our vulnerability possesses great power? Now that our being is fully moving with a sense of calm, are we sure each step is being planted with a clear mind?**

**Time stops for no one, filled with creativity of false impressions paying ode and honor to our past and present. Constant rebirth allows the chance to break through and discover our truth within.**





**Dancer: Jordin Greene   Photographer: Hollywood Dance Shoot**





# DANCE ARTS AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY

*“Honesty and vitality mark each phrase of movement. It is this truth and this strength which make the Howard University Dancers a challenging group among youthful performers.”*

**- Dr. Pearl E. Primus**

Howard University has long been a pioneer in the education of African Americans. This holds true today as Howard University is the first Historically Black University to institute an approved Dance Major program (December, 1993) in the College of Arts and Sciences, Division of Fine Arts, Department of Theatre Arts. The structure of curriculum content was built on the foundation work of Mary Rose Reeves Allen, visionary of the Howard University Dance Major Program, whose leadership in the Department of Physical Education for Women was the keystone to this landmark of an approved curriculum in Dance Arts at Howard University.

From 1925-1976, Mrs. Maryrose Reeves Allen served as the head of the Department of Physical Education and Recreation for Women at Howard University. Within this departmental curriculum, she implemented dance to serve as a tool for her female students to enhance their health and beauty. Ms. Allen's promotion of dance in the physical education curriculum served as a catalyst to bring renowned dance artists to the University. Even after the retirement of Ms. Allen, Dance Arts continued to serve as a prominent art form on campus.

Through the years, Dance Arts at Howard University has been positioned as an offering of courses in both the Department of Physical Education and the Department of Theatre Arts. In 1982, growth of Dance Arts at Howard University became the passion and responsibility of Dr. Sherrill Berryman (Miller) Johnson. Johnson was hired as a professor, providing her the opportunity to continue her holistic approach of using Dance training to enrich the educational experience. Her years in the Physical Education Department served as a vehicle for the development of the Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance, the seed for which was sown in 1991, when a major arts residency was established by a grant from the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Arts Partners Program. It provided \$121,300 for the Howard University Pearl Primus Arts Residency, with Johnson serving as Project Coordinator (1991-1992).

In 1991, the Dance Arts curriculum was transferred from the Department of Physical Education to the College of Fine Arts as a Minor. With the support of former Dean of Fine Arts, Dr. Jeff Donaldson, Associate Dean of Fine Arts, Dr. Tritobia Benjamin, Professor Al Freeman, Jr., Department of Theatre Arts and the faculty of Fine Arts, the proposed curriculum was unanimously approved. In 1992, the proposed Dance Major Curriculum was unanimously supported by the faculty of the College of Fine Arts and approved in 1993 by the Board of Trustees making it the first and only Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree in dance offered at a Historically Black College and University until 2013. With advisement from Joan Myers Brown, Founder of Philadanco!, The Philadelphia Dance Company, support for quality development of the dance program continued with the Office of President H. Patrick Swygert and the Howard University Administration's 1998 renovation of the Lulu Vere Childers Hall, Fine Arts building dance area that included a state of the art certified Gerstung dance floor installed and designed by Siegfried Gerstung.

A wide-ranging roster of prominent artists with connections to the professional dance industry have continuously supported the program. Collaborations and partnerships with national arts institutions such as Philadanco, The International Association of Blacks in Dance, The Kennedy Center, Washington Performing Arts Society, Black College Dance Exchange, Dance Place, and other professional presenters and dance companies have been extensive, for many years.



# DANCE ARTS AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Johnson's tenure would bring the legends of the Dance Arts to Howard University to teach and choreograph on the Dance Majors. These legendary artists included but we are not limited to Dr. Pearl Primus, Dr. Katherine Dunham, Delores Browne Abelson, Fabian Barnes, Kim Bears Bailey, Talley Beatty, Pepsi Bethel, Ronald K. Brown, Kadiatou Conte, Pee Wee Dance, Baba Chuck Davis, Krystal Hall Glass, Linda Goodrich, Brenda Dixon-Gottschild, Luther Fontaine, Sandra Fortune Green, Kim Grier, Christopher Huggins, Kevin Iega Jeff, Louis Johnson, Virginia Johnson, Bill T. Jones, Paul Kengmo, Assane Konte, Carmen de Lavallade, Sam LeSane, Dianne McIntrye, Milton Myers, Joe Nash, Walter Nicks, Halifu Osumare, Eleo Pomare, Steve Rooks, Faye Snow, Lee "Aca" Thompson, Charmaine Warren, Melayne Dixon White, and a host of so many others.

Dr. Johnson's determination to establish a BFA in Dance Arts at a preeminent Historical Black College and University was with specific intention as this academic environment would provide her with resources supporting her mission which was unlike many other dance programs within an academic setting. Dr. Johnson was determined to have an African Dance based vocabulary for the foundation of the BFA.

The students majoring in Dance Arts are in an educational environment that strives to present a well-rounded university academic foundation and instructional content/artistic quality equivalent to the demands of major dance companies. The technical and artistic knowledge needed for this efficiency is provided by a highly accomplished artistic faculty proficient in the areas of African, Classical Ballet, Contemporary Movement, Dance Composition, Modern Dance Techniques, Tap, and Traditional Jazz. Theoretical and Applied Studies include: Anatomy/Kinesiology, Methods of Teaching, Dance History, Music Theory, as well as Arts Administration, Design, Lighting and Stage management.

The Dance Arts core courses prepare the student with a physical and mental knowledge of the art form for the global life of work with endless success throughout their professional careers. Whether entering the department as a major or a minor, students are driven through interdisciplinary studies to meet professional goals as a performer, educator, critic, and historian making contributions nationally and internationally. This means nurturing the students' scholastic success as well as artistic excellence. Graduates have a track record of performing with major companies and in the entertainment industry (TV, Film, Broadway, Commercial Dance) including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Beyonce, Black Grace, "Black Nativity", Cleo Parker Robinson Dance, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, Dayton Contemporary Dance Company, Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Garth Fagan Dance, Lady Gaga, Janet Jackson, "Lion King", Lula Washington Dance Theatre, Martha Graham Ensemble, Philadanco, Rennie Harris' Puremovement, "Rent", Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company, "Sarafina", Step Afrika, "Stomp", Walt Disney Productions, Washington Wizards, and many more.

As a pioneering university in the development of leadership, Howard University can be proud of the guidance and direction towards high quality and standards being offered by the Department of Theatre Arts, Dance Arts Program. Performance opportunities include the Annual Student Choreography Showcase, the Annual Senior Project Performance, the Annual Spring Concert, the Musical Theatre area's professionally directed and produced annual musical, the Annual International Conference and Festival of Blacks in Dance, and D.C. community and performances abroad. As noted by Washington Post critic, Pamela Squires in a review of one of the dance concerts: *"...well-trained American dancers at the Howard University Dance Ensemble Concert...had stamina, precision and stage presence...their sophistication allowed the artist to expand his choreography and let his ideas flow...the students were both willing and able to negotiate the difference in the aesthetics of Senegalese African Dance."*





**Dancer: Gillian Clifford   Photographer: Paul Emerson**



# WEEKEND SCHEDULE

---

## Friday, April 16, 2021

6:00pm – 8:00pm EDT

- 6:00pm – 7:00pm: Master Class with Make Space Artists [Rachel Harris, Ashley Green, Amaria Stern, Jakevis Thomason]
- 7:00pm – 8:00pm: Make Space Artists Panel w/Q&A  
<https://www.instagram.com/makespaceartists/>

## Saturday, April 17, 2021

6:00pm – 8:00pm EDT

- 6:00pm – 7:00pm EDT: Comp Class showing w/Q&A [Moderated by Hope Boykin]
- 7:00pm – 8:00pm EDT: 2021 Spring Dance Concert showing  
[Make Space Artists 24-hour viewing]

## Sunday, April 18, 2021

6:00pm – 8:30pm EDT

- 6:00pm – 6:45pm EDT: Dance Concert Choreographers and Dancers Q&A
- 7:00pm – 8:00pm EDT: 2021 Spring Dance Concert showing
- 8:00pm - 8:30pm EDT: Panel & Q/A with Joshua Keith, Lailah LaRose, Annique Roberts  
Moderated by Hope Boykin

[Comp Class 24-hour viewing]

[2021 Spring Dance Concert 24-hour viewing]



# MAKE SPACE ARTISTS

Friday, April 16, 2021 6:00pm – 8:00pm EDT

## Master Class w/ Q&A



Make Space was started in June 2020 by the Harris Sisters, Jacquelin and Rachel. It is a project devoted to making space for Black artists to explore, understand, and share their craft including dance, music, video production, creative direction, musical theatre, and more. Our homegrown faculty, all of whom were raised in the South, pursued arts at the collegiate level, and are now working professionally in the field, aims to provide representation and mentorship for up and coming artists who look like them. Through launching initiatives such as Weekend Workshops and Artist Talks we aim to expose, support, and empower young Black creatives to work towards their fullest potential and achieve their diverse creative endeavors.

Since its creation last summer, they have raised over \$2,000 for initiatives to protect and advance Black people around the world and spoken for panels such as Jack and Jill of America Inc. and Refuel Chat It Up.



**Jacquelin Harris** began her dance training at Dance Productions. Ms. Harris received a silver ARTS award from the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts and was a Presidential Scholar in the Arts semifinalist. She has studied at Joffery Ballet School and Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival. She graduated with honors from the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program in Dance. In 2016, Ms. Harris was named "25 to Watch" by Dance Magazine and later received a 2017 dance fellowship from the Princess Grace Foundation-USA. She was one of 75 dancers across the globe to perform in the Bessie Award winning Merce Cunningham 'Night of 100 solos:

A Centennial Event' celebration. She was a member of Ailey II and joined Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2014. Harris is currently working from home and has been featured on the 'TETHERED' Four/Four dance series alongside fellow dancers with music by Maddison McFerrin.



**Rachel Harris** started dancing at Dance Productions, under the mentorship of Denise Britzclarke-Clarke in Charlotte, North Carolina. She graduated Cum Laude from the University of Southern California Gloria Kaufman School of Dance where she received her BFA with an Architecture concentration in 2020. While in school, she also trained at Jacob's Pillow, Abraham.In.Motion, and Ailey School summer intensives and was featured in a music video by popular artist Brandy. Upon graduation, Harris joined Zeitgeist Dance Theatre as an inaugural company member and later joined Parsons Dance in July 2020. Harris has choreographed for Windward School in Los Angeles and dance studios alike.

She is also the co-founder of Make Space, a program that provides opportunities to mentor and engage young Black artists. Harris works to maintain her performance and choreographic versatility while integrating environmentally-friendly technology into her practice. Harris is excited to be welcomed to Howard's 2021 Spring Program as the Emerging Choreographer to Watch.



# PANELISTS



**Ashley Green** was born and raised in Charleston, SC where she began dance at a very young age. She trained in a variety of styles including ballet, modern, jazz, tap, and hip hop. Ashley followed her passion for dance at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA, where she performed works by Peter Chu, Aszure Barton, Kyle Abraham, and Garfield Lemonius, to name a few. In April 2020, Ashley graduated from Point Park University earning her BFA in Dance with a concentration in Modern dance. In the fall Ashley will be joining Whim W'him Dance Company in Seattle, WA.



Dallas native **Amaria Stern** is a teaching artist, performer, facilitator, and recent graduate of the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance, where she concentrated her studies on the movement traditions of the African diaspora. Now based in Los Angeles, her primary aim is to encourage artists to explore the intersections of art, culture, and spirituality through conversation, choreography, and collaboration. In addition to performing the work of renowned choreographers like William Forsythe, d. Sabela Grimes, and Dwight Rhoden, she has worked on film projects for both up-and-coming and established artists including Solange Knowles and Brandy. She has developed and contributed to a number of platforms that celebrate black dance and is currently the program coordinator for

UniverSOUL Hip Hop, an organization that provides transformative Hip Hop education programs to K-12 schools throughout California.



**Jakevis Thomason** is from Greenville, South Carolina, and started his training at Dianne's School of Dance. He decided he wanted to keep pursuing his passion for dance during high school and discover more than just the competitive dance industry, eventually leading him to become a graduate of the USC Gloria Kaufman class of 2020. At Kaufman, he learned from faculty and students about the complexities dance offers. He advanced his creativity while becoming more passionate about choreographing and bringing his artistic ideas to life. Jakevis enjoys exploring his teaching skills and choreographic voice in

combination with the hybrid movement and vocabulary that Kaufman introduced to him and sees himself bringing this movement knowledge to the commercial, concert, Broadway, and studio scenes of dance. He has been commissioned to choreograph works that have debuted in Cabo San Jose, Mexico, Santa Barbara, California, and Traverse City, Michigan. Additionally, he has assisted and worked closely with choreographer Frank Gatson, who was the creative director for musical artists such as; Jennifer Lopez, Rihanna, and Beyoncé. He looks forward to performing and teaching as long as he can in his career in hopes of one day being able to choreograph and creative direct for musical artists on tour, Broadway shows, dance companies across the world, and eventually his own company to showcase his works.





**Dancer: Kareenna Mitchell**

**Photographer: Eye Wander Photo**



# Breaking. Through. Discovering. Truth. Within.

## *Howard University Composition III Showcase*

Saturday, April 17, 2021 6:00pm – 7:00pm EDT

### ***Between.***

**Choreographed, Directed, Edited and Filmed by Siani Beckett**

Music by Frank Ocean, "Voodoo (Cassette)", "Cassette Player Play", "Cassette Player 10"; Revel Day, "No Tomorrow" (Instrumental)

Performed by Bre Seals

### ***A Work in Progress***

**Choreographed, Directed and Edited by Keishonna Belcher**

Music by Ciaran Delaney

Performed by Keishonna Belcher

### ***REM***

**Choreographed, Directed and Edited by Zanya Dorfeuille**

Filmed by Aneudy Rodriguez

Music by Sanye, "Comfortable"

Performed by Zanya Dorfeuille and Oliver Burns

### ***Creating. Not Looking Back.***

**Choreographed, Directed and Edited by Tanasia Lane**

Filmed by Jacquille Lane, Tanasia Lane, Tam Jams Ent.

Music by Vendla, "October 22nd"

Performed by Tanasia Lane

### ***Waiting***

**Choreographed, Directed and Edited by Geneva White**

Filmed by Arika Johnson, Geneva White, Jay'Kayla Winford

Costume Design by Geneva White

Spoken Word by Geneva White

Music by Nicolas Britell, "Agape"

Performed by Geneva White







**Dancer: Nia Betty    Photographer: Vihao Pham**



# Breaking. Through. Discovering. Truth. Within.

## *Spring Dance Concert*

Saturday, April 17, 2021 7:00pm – 8:00pm EDT

### Order of Performance

#### ***Energy Moving Forward and Through***

**Choreographed, Written, and Directed by Hope Boykin**

Edited by Hope Boykin

Composed by Ali Jackson

Performed by Keishonna Belcher, Cameron Harris, Colby Johnson, Karena Mitchell, Kennedy Raynor, Dominique Ross

*Movement is the process causing, or producing motion. Energy, displayed as strength and direction, forces an evolution. As we evolve and change, our feelings toward ourselves, we react through growth. We cannot be afraid to use our energy to move forward and through. We will not stop.*

#### ***All in Bloom***

**Choreographed by Keishonna Belcher**

Artists / Music by ASA - Chang & Junray, "Hana"

Edited by Keishonna Belcher

Performed by Siani Beckett, Camryn Brown, Destiny Smith

#### ***DANSA***

**Choreographed by Assane Konte**

Music by Ismaël Lo, "Dibi Dibi"

Edited by Denise and Darrin Thompson

Performed by Nia Betty, Camryn Brown, Tori Carter, Jamia Croft, Cameron Harris, Ilyana Hughes, Colby Johnson, Karena Mitchell, Kennedy Raynor, Dominique Ross

#### ***Stillness in Calm***

**Choreographed by Hope Boykin**

Music performed by ABIAH, "Wild Is The Wind"

Filmed by Hope Boykin and Terri Ayanna Wright

Edited by Terri Ayanna Wright

Performed by Tanasia Lane

*The world, our world, often moves and moves faster than we grasp. Our job, our main commitment to ourselves, is to find our own calm. Understanding calm does not always mean standing still, or waiting but clearing our minds to see and appreciate what it has to offer.*



# Order of Performance Continued

## ***On.going***

**Choreographed by Rachel Harris**

Edited by Terri Ayanna Wright

Music composition and production by Devan Monroe; excerpts from "SOUL!" and an interview between James Baldwin and Nikki Giovanni taped in London, UK (1971).

Performed by Tori Carter, Gillian Clifford, Kendall Dennis, Jordin Green, Ja'Myra LaSalle, Rayna Richardson, Geneva White, Jay'Kayla Winford

*This piece is the story of becoming; of stepping into your most vulnerable and powerful self.*

*The constant process of learning and unlearning in our personal evolution has been the focus both physically and verbally between myself and the dancers. An ode to honor and appreciate our past, present, and future phases of our lives.*

---

# Breaking. Through. Discovering. Truth. Within.

## ***Spring Dance Concert***

**Sunday, April 18, 2021    6:00pm – 8:30pm EDT**

### ***6:00pm- 6:45pm EDT***

Choreographers and Dancers Q&A

Moderated by Hope Boykin

### ***7:00pm- 8:00pm EDT***

Encore Presentation of the Spring Dance Concert

### ***8:00pm- 8:30pm EDT***

Panel discussion and Q&A

Panelists Joshua Keith, Lailah LaRose, Annique Roberts

Moderated by Hope Boykin







**Dancer: Ja'Myra LaSalle   Photographer: Freddie Brimmer**



# MEET THE CHOREOGRAPHERS



**Hope Boykin**– educator, creator, mover, and motivator, was born and raised in Durham, North Carolina. She was a three-time recipient of the American Dance Festival’s Young Tuition Scholarship and while attending Howard University in Washington, DC, she continued to pursue her desires to dance working with choreographer Lloyd Whitmore and his New World Dance Company. In New York City, Hope studied at The Ailey School and worked as assistant to choreographers Milton Myers and the late Talley Beatty.

Hope was an original member of Complexions, and joined PHILADANCO, where she received the acclaimed “Bessie”, a New York dance and performance award. Just completing her 20th and final season with the

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, she continues to build and create work as a 2019-20 Urban Bush Women Choreographic Center Fellow. Hope is also a recipient of an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Bubble Residency Grant for the Boykin Bubble 2021, culminating in a live-stream performance at the Annenberg Center in Philadelphia, PA.

She has choreographed for numerous dance company’s including PHILADANCO, Minnesota Dance Theater, and Dallas Black Dance Theatre. In 2016, Hope presented her third work of choreography for the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater called r-Evolution, Dream., and most recently, in 2018 for DEMO, commissioned by Damian Woetzel and the Kennedy Center. Hope had the honor to choreograph, write, and perform with New York City Ballet Principal dancer Lauren Lovette in MomentsUponMoments which was redesigned for Vail Dance Festival in 2019. Most recently she created a work for BalletX and Guggenheim Works And Process Virtual Commissions program, has her words and work displayed at Kaatsbaan Cultural Park, and has been an annual keynote speaker for Lincoln Center Activate, a national education forum.

Serving as Artistic Lead for the Kennedy Center Dance Lab (KCDL), a two-week summer dance program for high school students, Artistic Advisor for Dance Education for the Kennedy Center, Artistic Advisor for the Howard University Dance Department, and Artist-In-Residence at USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance is all confirmation of the mission of HopeBoykinDance, which includes leading young and aspiring artists to a secure foundation and a concrete understanding, which develops a confidence and an assurance that will be unmatched.

**THERE ARE NO LIMITS.**

Photo credit: Steve Vaccariello



# MEET THE CHOREOGRAPHERS



**Rachel Harris** started dancing at Dance Productions, under the mentorship of Denise Britzclarke-Clarke in Charlotte, North Carolina. She graduated Cum Laude from the University of Southern California Gloria Kaufman School of Dance where she received her BFA with an architecture concentration in 2020. While in school, she also trained at Jacob's Pillow, Abraham.In.Motion, and Ailey School summer intensives and was featured in a music video by popular artist Brandy. Upon graduation, Harris joined Zeitgeist Dance Theatre as an inaugural company member and later joined Parsons Dance in July 2020. Harris has choreographed for Windward School in Los Angeles and dance studios alike. She is also the co-founder of Make Space, a program that provides opportunities to mentor and engage young Black artists. Harris works to

maintain her performance and choreographic versatility while integrating environmentally-friendly technology into her practice. Harris is excited to be welcomed to Howard's 2021 Spring Program as the Emerging Choreographer to Watch.



**Assane Konte**, a national of Senegal, West Africa, is one of the original founders of KanKouran West African Dance Company. He also serves as the company's Artistic Director, choreographer, and costume designer. Mr. Konte began his dance training at age 12 and has studied with many prominent traditional dancers and musicians from Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, and Senegal.

His career as a professional dancer began at age 15 with "Ballet Africaine de Diebel Guee" of Dakar, Senegal. During his ten years with the company, he electrified audiences with his highly energetic performances, while simultaneously developing his own unique movement style. In 1978, following a tour in Cote d'Ivoire where he worked and performed as a guest consultant for a locally-based dance company, Mr. Konte came

to the United States to pursue a career as an independent performer. He worked with numerous organizations as a musical arranger and guest choreographer.

Mr. Konte left Africa with the dream of establishing his own dance company in Washington, D.C., the nation's capital. Thus, in 1983, along with his childhood friend and master drummer, Abdou Kounta, he founded KanKouran West African Dance Company. Mr. Konte assumed the responsibilities of Artistic Director of the company. Since that time, his lifelong dedication to preserving and sharing Africa's rich culture through dance and music has made him a goodwill ambassador, promoting cross-cultural appreciation and understanding in the many performance venues in which he and the company have



# MEET THE CHOREOGRAPHERS

appeared. For his tireless work, innovative choreography, and outstanding contribution to the community, Mr. Konte has been the recipient of several prestigious awards including numerous Outstanding Community Service Awards. In 2019 Assane was awarded a Dance/USA Fellowship to Artists, through the generosity of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation (DDCF).

His choreography and costume designs have enhanced not only KanKouran's stage presence, but also that of countless local and national dance companies as well. Through his careful and meticulous choreography, Mr. Konte has taken U.S. based African dance to another level. Simultaneously, he has challenged his company's dancers and drummers to achieve impressive levels of virtuosity and technical ability. Although Mr. Konte choreographs primarily for his own company, his ingenious creativity and spirit is always in demand at home and abroad. Consequently, he conducts annual programs in Poland, Hawaii, Japan, and St. Croix. Konte has held faculty positions in the dance departments of several prestigious universities in the Washington, D.C. area including Georgetown, George Washington, American and George Mason Universities. He presently serves on the faculty at Howard University.

Mr. Konte's awareness of African dance as a universal language has allowed him to reach out to other artistic traditions. As a result, KanKouran has performed with symphony orchestras, chorales, church-based dance groups, tap-dance companies, ballet companies, theatrical productions and other drum and dance companies from around the world.



**Keishonna Belcher** is a Junior double major studying Dance and Biology with a Chemistry minor at Howard University from Tampa, Florida. Keishonna has trained in Ballet, Horton, Graham, Jazz, Tap and African techniques. She has performed in several shows at Howard which include Dimensions, Spring Dance Concert, and HUES. Throughout her dance careers she has had the opportunity to work with a multitude of artists including Frederick Earl Mosley, Rennie Harris, Tommie Waheed-Evans, Darrell Moultrie and Mark Morris. Keishonna is super excited to have two of her choreographic pieces in the show as well as being featured in Hope Boykin's piece! Lastly, Keishonna would like to thank her mom, all of the Dance teachers and the creative team for their support throughout this process.





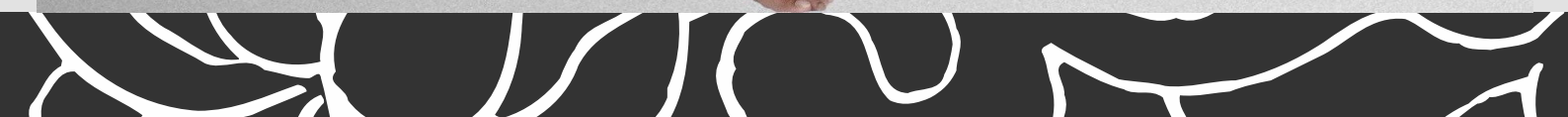
**Dancer: Riché Williams**

**Photographer: Kinte Taylor**



**Dancer: Jay'kayla Winford**

**Photographer: Geneva White**





# MEET THE GUEST DANCE ARTS FACULTY



## **Kim Y. Bears-Bailey, Courtesy of Philadanco!**

A Bachelor of Fine Arts (B.F.A.) graduate of The University of Arts, Kim joined PHILADANCO in 1981. Kim had a successful twenty-year performance career as a lead dancer with the company before retiring from the stage. A 1992 "Bessie" Award recipient, (The New York Dance and Performance Award), Kim represented PHILADANCO at the 1988 American Dance Festival as a soloist where she performed two works by Dr. Pearl Primus. An assistant to Primus, Kim restaged several Primus works at Howard University, an institution committed to the repository preservation of Primus' works (created for political and social change) and legacy. Under the guidance, direction and coaching of Ms. Pat Thomas,

Kim also reconstructed historic works by legendary choreographer Louis Johnson. Ms. Bears-Bailey is currently an Associate Professor of Dance at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. For more than thirty-five years she has had the privilege of being under the tutelage of Master Teacher Pat Thomas, groomed as a student, performing artist and teaching artist. Additional mentors include; (Horton) James Truitte, Faye Snow, Milton Myers, (Primus) Dr. Pearl Primus, Sheron Trotman (Dunham), Katherine Dunham, Joan Myers Brown, Theo Jamison and Ruby Strete, just to name a few. Kim is one of few artists granted permission to remount the works of many world-renowned choreographers including Talley Beatty, Pearl Primus, Gene Hill Sagan and Louis Johnson. Kim travels across the globe as a teaching artist and artist-in-residence. Ms. Bears-Bailey produced, reconstructed and directed two evening length showcases; "Celebrating the Legacy of African-American Dance Pioneer Pearl Primus" and "Celebrating Master Choreographer Louis Johnson", both with performances and panel discussions as part of An American Masterpieces project at the University of the Arts. In 2011, she received the prestigious Mary Louise Beitzel Award for Distinguished Teaching and the distinguished 2016 Silver Star Alumni Award both from the University of the Arts. 2017 Kim created new works for the Towson University Youth Ensemble & Dance Majors and the Katherine Smith Contemporary Ensemble. Bears-Bailey instructed two week-long residencies for the Jones Haywood School of Dance Summer Intensive in Martha's Vineyard and recently completed her second year as a Modern Dance Instructor for Pennsylvania Ballet's 'Let's Dance Summer Program'. Kim is a humbled recipient of the 2017 'Bring it to the Marley' Icon Award and the 2018 'Legacy Award' from DCNS Dance. Ms. Bears-Bailey is the proud mother of Nia Yvonne Bailey.

# MEET THE GUEST DANCE ARTS FACULTY



## **Tracy M. Vogt, Courtesy of Philadanco!**

Originally from Erie, Pennsylvania, Tracy attended the School for the Performing and Visual Arts where she was given scholarships to study at the Erie Civic Ballet School (Lake Erie Ballet) and the Erie Bayfront Ballet. She received scholarships to the PA Governor's School for the Arts, Jacob's Pillow Modern Intensive, Point Park Summer Dance and attended the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA. She was also a scholarship student at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center in New York, NY, where she was personally chosen to demonstrate Graham technique by School Director, Denise Jefferson.

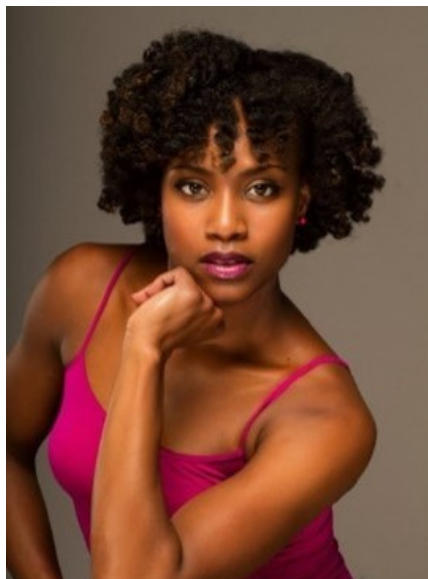
Her professional experience includes Assistant Rehearsal Director, Principal Dancer and Masterclass Instructor with the Philadelphia Dance Company (PHILADANCO) for twelve years, Rehearsal Director and Principal Dancer for the Wylliams Henry Contemporary Dance Company in Kansas City, MO, Cleveland Contemporary Dance Theater and Verb Ballets in Ohio, under the direction of Hernando Cortez. Ms. Vogt has demonstrated technique classes for Master Teachers including Yuriko Kikuchi, Mary Hinkson, Pat Thomas and Milton Myers. She received the Philadelphia Rocky Award for Dance Excellence, and has performed lead roles in works by Martha Graham, Paul Taylor, David Parsons, Gene Hill Sagan, Elisa Monte, Talley Beatty, George Faison, Bill T. Jones, Dianne McIntyre, Christopher Huggins, Dwight Rhoden and many other diverse contemporary choreographers.

Ms. Vogt has taught at the National Regional Dance America, Southeastern and Northeastern Regional Ballet Festivals, as well as numerous schools, summer intensives and Universities both nationally and abroad, most recently in Uganda, Rwanda and Guinea, Africa for NGO MindLeaps, that creates educational programs for refugee and children and post conflict developing countries. She was Dance Director for North Atlanta High School in 2009 and on faculty at Tri-Cities High School, Atlanta Ballet and the South Carolina Governors School for the Arts and Humanities from 2012-2020. Ms. Vogt was also the Director of the Body Positivity program to encourage a healthy and holistic approach to body image.

Tracy's choreography was selected and performed at RDA SE festival in 2011 and 2019, and her contemporary choreography placed 1st, 2nd and numerous top twelve finishes at Youth American Grand Prix in Atlanta, Winston-Salem and YAGP Finals in NYC. She has also choreographed works for Dance Canvas Atlanta, Rockford Dance Company, Erie Contemporary Ballet as well as the Regional High School Dance Festival in Norfolk, VA. She is currently the Artistic Director of the Roswell Dance Theatre Modern Company in Atlanta and teaches at Foothills Dance Conservatory and the International Ballet in Greenville, South Carolina.



# MEET THE GUEST DANCE ARTS FACULTY



## **Shaness D. Kemp**

Kemp is a native of Nassau, Bahamas and holds both a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and a Master's of Fine Arts degree from Temple University. She is a freelance dancer, choreographer and dance educator and is currently on faculty at the University of Maryland Baltimore County. She is a certified Umfundalai teacher and has taught at various institutions, festivals and intensives. Kemp has trained and performed with several notable artists and professional dance companies, including Deeply Rooted Dance Theater, Kariamou & Company: Traditions, Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers, Eleone Dance Theatre, Philadanco! The Philadelphia Dance Company, Urban Bush Women, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Rennie Harris Puremovement, The Katherine Dunham Seminar and The

American Dance Festival. She was the 2015-2016 recipient of the Ellen Forman Memorial Award and her work continues to be presented nationally and internationally; most recently presenting at the 2020 37th annual Choreographer's Showcase where she tied with another choreographer for the Audience Choice award, the 2019 International Association of Blacks in Dance Conference as a choreographer and in the 2019 Women In Dance Leadership Conference as a performer and instructor. Shaness is thrilled about working with the students at Howard University and looks forward to the artistic exchange and experience.



## **Janine Beckles, Courtesy of Philadanco!**

A native of New York City, Janine started dancing at the age of six at Dance Theatre of Harlem, where she stayed for eight years under fellowship scholarship. She then continued her training at LaGuardia High School of the Performing Arts and the Ailey School (performing "Memoria," "Hymn," and "Revelations,") both on full scholarship. Janine received a BFA in Dance Performance and a BA in Sociology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX. Janine was a National Foundation of the Arts award recipient in Modern Dance. A former member of Dallas Black Dance Theatre for five years. Janine has participated in some commercial work and also the 2016 MTV Video

Music Awards as a dancer for Beyonce. Janine is also a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She was selected to be one of the 2018-2019 Visiting Teaching Fellows for the School of American Ballet. Janine is currently a lead dancer and company Graham teacher going into her 10th season with Philadanco. She teaches Masterclasses while on tour at such places as USC Kaufman, UMASS Amherst, UNC and other universities and colleges. She just completed the Martha Graham Teacher Workshop this past June. Janine is a new board member of the Philadelphia Volunteer Lawyers Association (PVLA). She is currently in graduate school studying to obtain her MBA with a concentration on Leadership.

# MEET THE GUEST DANCE ARTS FACULTY



## **LauraBethany Strong**

A native of St. Louis, Missouri LauraBethany Strong began studying dance at the tender age of three. She started her professional career at 16 years old as an Actor's Equity member with the St. Louis Municipal Opera, performing in shows like: "Guys and Dolls", "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Singing In The Rain". Continuing her dance training, led her to Howard University, where she became a dance major. While attending Howard she was hand-selected and cast in The Kennedy Centers Performing Arts presentation of "PURLIE", directed by Tony Award winner George Faison and choreographed by the legendary Louis Johnson. She also performed in the American Premiere of "KING", (the musical for President Clinton's Inauguration). In addition, she became a Washington Wizards cheerleader. After her stint in D.C., LauraBethany moved to New York City and was a scholarship recipient at the prestigious Alvin Ailey School. Along with being a New York Knick City and Liberty cheerleader, she was cast and performed as a principal dancer in the 25th Anniversary of "The Wiz." In 2001, LauraBethany relocated to Los Angeles to further propel her professional career. After landing several high-profile jobs, she began to

make a name for herself as a dancer, movement coach, and choreographer. She has worked with artists such as Babyface, Christina Aguilera, Janet Jackson, Beyonce, Jennifer Hudson, Natalie Cole, Lady Gaga and the list goes on. She's also no stranger to TV/Film, appearing in commercials, TV shows, and films like Will and Grace, Idlewild, The Great Observer, The Comebacks, Bring It On Again, and a list of award shows. You have also seen her as a straight-talking judge on Laurieann Gibson's Born To Dance. In 2017, LauraBethany was nominated for a British Arrow Award for her choreography in a NIKE campaign. She is extremely grateful for the wealth of knowledge that has been gained from traveling around the world and learning the business from Icons.





**Dancer: Tori Carter    Photographer: Vihao Pham**



# MEET THE GUEST ARTISTS PANELISTS



**Joshua Keith** began his official training at Howard University, earning a B.F.A in Musical Theatre, a Minor in Dance and becoming a member of the Actors Equity Union and a professional Actor his Senior Year of college. With several theatre credits and a North American National Tour, Joshua has performed not only in the United States but even in Europe. Co-starring on the FX hit Show POSE in the role of Tre in Season 2, Joshua is the first African American Male To receive the GRATZ Full Scholarship, and to complete the program. Now a full time Pilates Instructor, creator of JKPIILATES, an Actor, Dancer, Singer, Model and most importantly, he is excited to have this conversation with you.



San Francisco native **Lailah LaRose** is a 2015 graduate of Howard University where she holds a BFA in Dance Arts. She owes her first experiences in dance to Destined 2 Dance Studio and Performing Arts of Oakland, CA. She has had the privilege to perform several works by many esteemed artists, notably, principal dancer, and mentor, Hope Boykin, of The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Lailah has had the opportunity to perform alongside legendary Operatic Soprano, Kathleen Battle, at the Winspear Opera House (Dallas, Texas) in 2018. She was a 2-year member of DBDT: Encore! where she was able to guest with the main company in various works, and is now overjoyed to be in her fourth season with Dallas Black Dance Theatre.



**Annique Roberts** originally from Atlanta, Georgia, is a veteran dancer and the rehearsal director for Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company and joined Evidence in 2010. She was also a senior dancer with Garth Fagan Dance for 6 years. Roberts was nominated for a 2013 New York Dance & Performance (Bessie) Award for Best Performer and is a 2020 Bessies Honoree for Sustained Achievement. She is currently an Adjunct Professor of Dance at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. She earned a BFA in Dance from Howard University and an MA in Arts Administration from Savannah College of Art & Design.

From 2011-2016, she co-founded and directed the Atlanta Spring Dance Series, an annual one-day dance workshop event that raised money to assist young dancers with professional development opportunities.







**Dancer: Ilyana Hughes**

**Photographer: Scott Robbins**





# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## SENIOR DANCE MAJORS & MINORS



**Siani Beckett** is a New Castle, Delaware native. In 2014, she became a member of Eleone Connection, Eleone Dance Theatre's second company. Currently a senior at Howard University, Siani is eager to earn her B.F.A. in Dance in May. Throughout her college career, Siani has had the opportunity to work with artists such as Kim Bears-Bailey, Tommie-Waheed Evans, Maleek Washington, and Sidra Bell. Siani has been a member of Breathe Dance Project (BDP) throughout her four years at Howard. She is also an aspiring choreographer and a strong advocate for the arts. Siani's work as social media manager for the Department of Theatre Arts Marketing Team and management in the dance program at Howard has driven her to pursue a career in arts administration. She is currently an intern at The International Association of Blacks in Dance in the Programs Department.



**Gillian Clifford** is a 21-year-old Graduating Senior Dance major and Strategic, Law, and Management Communications minor attending Howard University. Throughout her years of dancing, she has trained with multiple well known companies and organizations such as NYSSSA (New York State Summer School of the Arts), Joffrey Ballet, Alvin Ailey, Anthony Burrell, Contemporary West Dance Theatre, Deeply Rooted Dance Theatre, Dallas Black Dance Theatre, and the Radio City Rockettes. During her time at Howard, she has performed in four showcases with pieces choreographed by both students and guest choreographers, including Tommie Waheed-Evans, Brian Flynn, and Edward Franklin. Currently, she is a company member with Company E in Washington, D.C.



**Ajané Davis** is a 22-year-old Howard University Graduating Senior Sports Medicine Major, Chemistry and Dance Arts Double Minor from Chicago, Illinois. Ajané formally began her dance training at age 5. She trained with Studio Dance Theatre and The Joffrey Ballet Exelon Strobel Step Up program. During her time at Howard University, she became a member of the Howard University Bisonette Dance Ensemble and has used her formal training to gain a deeper understanding of the dancers' anatomy and functions. Ajané is looking forward to attending graduate school and further pursuing a career in pediatric medicine.





# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## SENIOR DANCE MAJORS & MINORS



**Naomi Kimberly Johnson** is a Senior attending Howard University studying Dance and Journalism. Naomi, a New York native, began dancing at 5 years old with the dance ministry at her church. Her love of dance led her to join the Restoration Dance Theater Company (RDTC) where she ultimately received her pre-professional dance training in the dance disciplines of Ballet, Modern and West African dance under the instruction of Ronald K. Brown. Throughout college, Naomi has served in many leadership roles during her time at Howard University, including but not limited to; social media manager of WHBC Howard University Radio and the Howard University Royal Court Coordinator. This past summer Naomi interned at the National Football League with the Events and Business department. Most recently Naomi has started her own company, “BombButterfly LLC”, which, is a fierce and powerful community of

women driven by love; challenging each other to maximize their potential by inspiring them to become the best versions of themselves through workshops, events and conversations about us, designed by us, and powered by us.



**Semira Paul** is a Senior Photography major and Dance minor from Bowie, Maryland. From a young age, she admired dance and finally began to study the art form during her Freshman year at Howard University. Through her studies at Howard, she has been able to nurture her love of dance. She is incredibly appreciative to all of her dance instructors and mentors and would like to thank Professors Patricia Thomas and Royce Zackery for welcoming her into the Dance department and continuously supporting her throughout her dance journey. Semira is so grateful for her loving family who has always provided their unwavering support and encouragement. Even as her collegiate study of dance comes to a close and graduation approaches, she continues incorporating dance in her life and aspires to create a career of both dance and photography.

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## SENIOR DANCE MAJORS & MINORS



**MaKenzie T. Smith** is a graduating Senior Public Relations major, Dance minor, from Saginaw, Michigan. Her love of the arts stems from her 18+ years of dance training, stage performance and her prior involvement as a Dance major in the HU Dance Arts Dept. In May of 2021, she will complete her undergraduate studies in Strategic, Legal & Management Communications. Her matriculation through the Cathy Hughes School of Communications has enhanced her professionalism while increasing her knowledge of, and passion for, creative social engagement. In the future, MaKenzie plans to incorporate her knowledge of communications with her interests in promoting arts advocacy and the increased representation of Black women in the arts. MaKenzie T. Smith's background in theatre and dance arts serves as a motivating force for the impactful Public Relations work she has done, and will continue to do.



Brooklyn-native **Geneva White** is a graduating senior from Howard University. Geneva began dancing at the age of 15 at Abundance Academy of the Arts. She trained in Ballet, West African, Jazz, Contemporary, Modern, Singing, and acting. During Geneva's matriculation at Howard, she has taken master classes from various teaching artists and has choreographed her first of many choreographic works. While continuing her training after college, Geneva plans on going back to school to get her certificate to become a physical therapist assistant. Through hard work and determination, Geneva is pushing past her limits. Her tenacious attitude is leading her to pursue her dreams of becoming a professional dancer.



**Jay'Kayla Winford** is a Senior Dance Major. She has studied dance for 17 years in various styles such as Dunham Technique, Ballet, Jazz, African, HipHop, and Contemporary dance. After graduation she is eager to continue her journey of dance with hopes of working as a professional dancer in concert dance and the commercial dance world. She lives by the quote, "Remember to celebrate milestones as you prepare for the road ahead." - Nelson Mandela.

# ABOUT THE ARTISTS

## SENIOR DANCE MAJORS & MINORS



### **LauraBethany Strong**

A native of St. Louis, Missouri LauraBethany Strong began studying dance at the tender age of three. She started her professional career at 16 years old as an Actor's Equity member with the St. Louis Municipal Opera, performing in shows like: "Guys and Dolls", "Jesus Christ Superstar" and "Singing In The Rain". Continuing her dance training, led her to Howard University, where she became a dance major. While attending Howard she was hand-selected and cast in The Kennedy Centers Performing Arts presentation of "PURLIE", directed by Tony Award winner George Faison and choreographed by the legendary Louis Johnson. She also performed in the American Premiere of "KING", (the musical for President Clinton's Inauguration). In addition, she became a Washington Wizards cheerleader. After her stint in D.C., LauraBethany moved to New York City and was a scholarship recipient at the prestigious Alvin Ailey School. Along with being a New York Knick City and Liberty cheerleader, she was cast and performed as a principal dancer in the 25th Anniversary of "The Wiz." In 2001, LauraBethany relocated to Los Angeles to further propel her professional career. After landing several high-profile jobs, she began to

make a name for herself as a dancer, movement coach, and choreographer. She has worked with artists such as Babyface, Christina Aguilera, Janet Jackson, Beyonce, Jennifer Hudson, Natalie Cole, Lady Gaga and the list goes on. She's also no stranger to TV/Film, appearing in commercials, TV shows, and films like Will and Grace, Idlewild, The Great Observer, The Comebacks, Bring It On Again, and a list of award shows. You have also seen her as a straight-talking judge on Laurieann Gibson's Born To Dance. In 2017, LauraBethany was nominated for a British Arrow Award for her choreography in a NIKE campaign. She is extremely grateful for the wealth of knowledge that has been gained from traveling around the world and learning the business from Icons.





**Dancer: Rayna Richardson    Photographer: Vihao Pham**



# CONTINUING DANCE ARTS STUDENTS

**Keishonna Belcher** is a Junior double major studying Dance and Biology with a Chemistry minor at Howard University from Tampa, Florida. Keishonna has trained in Ballet, Horton, Graham, Jazz, Tap and African techniques. She has performed in several shows at Howard which include Dimensions, Spring Dance Concert, and HUES. Throughout her dance career she has had the opportunity to work with a multitude of artists including Frederick Earl Mosley, Rennie Harris, Tommie Waheed-Evans, Darrell Moultrie and Mark Morris. Keishonna is super excited to have two of her choreographic pieces in the show as well as being featured in Hope Boykin's piece! Lastly, Keishonna would like to thank her mom, all of the Dance teachers and the creative team for their support throughout this process.

**Nia Betty** is a Sophomore dance major at Howard University. Born in Toronto, Ontario, Nia began her dance training at the age of 10 and soon began dancing professionally in local performances of "The Nutcracker", "Don Quixote", "Frost", and "Coppelia." Nia began choreographing at the age of 12 with her first piece featuring company members for Toronto's City Connect dance festival. Also at 12, Nia was accepted to train at various summer intensives including the Alvin Ailey Intensive and the Joffrey Ballet School Intensive. Later that year, she moved to Los Angeles to spend her summer training with the Joffrey Ballet School. Two years later, Nia accepted an offer to continue her training, full time, with Joffrey in New York City. Now, Nia is continuing to foster her love for dance while advancing her technique through Howard University's Theatre Arts BFA program.

**Camryn Brown** is a sophomore dance and sports medicine double major from Houston, Texas. She has been training for the past 10 years in Modern, Ballet, Contemporary, Jazz, and Hip Hop. Camryn began her training at the age of 9 at City Dance Studio with Sherese Campbell then trained at The Movement Lab with Kevin Ferguson. Once she got to high school, she began training at Dance Zone with Sheila Milner and this is when she started attending dance conventions which gave her the opportunity to be taught by so many successful dancers from all across the country. Since she's been in Houston for the past year, she has been continuing to train at Dance Zone and devotes her time to growing as a dancer.

**Aja Bussey** is a Junior Nutritional Sciences Major, Dance Arts and Afro-American Studies double Minor from Montclair, New Jersey. At a young age, her passion for dance was set into motion. Aja's dance training began at Premiere Dance Theatre--founded by the late James Wiggins and Shirlise Mckinley--located in Montclair, NJ. She has had the opportunity to perform and choreograph in liturgical performances at her church and Dance Company Concerts at Montclair High School. Aja is very appreciative and thankful to the Howard University Dance Program. She is learning how to develop her dance abilities, professionalism, and skills as an artist. With the many challenges remote learning presents, Aja continues to try her best, staying engaged and involved on and off-campus. She aspires to give back to her community and people by educating others on the importance of nutrition and health through dance.



# CONTINUING DANCE ARTS STUDENTS

**Tori Carter** began her dance training in Dallas, TX at Dallas Black Dance Academy and Ozsoy's School of Ballet. She was a member of the Allegro Performing Ensemble during the 2018-19 season, under the direction of Katricia Eaglin at Dallas Black Dance Academy, and graduated first in her class as the Valedictorian of Grand Prairie Fine Arts Academy in 2019. She is in her second year of pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Arts with a minor in Afro-American Studies here at Howard University. Since starting her degree in Fall 2019, she has performed with the dance department in two student choreography concerts (2019 & 2020), at The International Association of Blacks In Dance Conference (2020), and more. She is looking forward to expanding and refining her artistic and academic skill sets throughout her matriculation at Howard University and intends to pursue a professional career as a performing artist.

**Jamia Croft** is a freshman dance major from Louisville, Kentucky. She is trained in Ballet, Modern, Jazz, African, and House dance. Throughout her years of dancing, Jamia has trained with many dance programs such as Ballet Magnificat!, Louisville Ballet, duPont Manual's Youth Performing Arts School, Denver School of the Arts, and University North Carolina School of the Arts.

At four years old, **Kendall Dennis** fell in love with the dance art form and training at different local dance studios. At seven, she futhered her training with Debbie Allen at the Debbie Allen Dance Academy and starred in all ten of Debbie Allen's "Hot Chocolate Nutcracker." Since then, she was placed under her elite dance group called the Redbirds and offered amazing opportunities from performing at the Oscar Concert alongside Jill Scott, the White House for Michelle Obama, the 62nd Grammy Award show with Misty Copeland and Common, traveled across the US and outside to Havana, Cuba for an International Ballet Festival, Principal Dancer as the Sugar Plum Fairy for the "Nutcracker", Special Olympics Opening Ceremony, and many others. Along with performing with different celebrities, Kendall also trained under the Ailey School and LINES Ballet. As a Freshman Dance Major, she looks forward to exploring new opportunities and dance adventures.

**Loren Dooley** is a Sophomore Television and Film major, Dance Arts minor from Tuscaloosa, AL. She has been dancing for thirteen years, training mainly in Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, and Hip-Hop. Loren has traveled across the South Eastern region competing at dance conventions, winning class and company scholarships to schools such as AMDA College and Conservatory of the Performing Arts. She is also an inaugural faculty member of her hometown studio in 2018, teaching children ages 3-11 years old in Jazz and Hip-Hop. Loren is very grateful to continue her training in the Howard University Dance Arts program and plans to intertwine her love for television and film with dance.

**Zanyah Dorfeuille** is a Junior Dance Major currently studying at Howard University and is from Boston, MA. She started dancing with OrigNation Cultural Arts Center in Boston, MA. She is thankful for them and eager to continue on her training with Howard University and can't wait to see it take off.



# CONTINUING DANCE ARTS STUDENTS

**Jordyn Driver** began her dance training in Houston, TX at Center Stage Dance and Gymnastics Company under the direction of Natasha Smith-Dargin. She has trained in various styles since the age of three, including Ballet, Jazz, Tap, Lyrical, Contemporary, African, Graham, and Hip-Hop. Her training includes attending the Debbie Allen Dance Academy Summer Intensive Program and working closely with multiple choreographers, while participating in several dance conventions and competitions. She has received much recognition and many scholarships for her solo and group performances. Jordyn currently teaches Ballet, Jazz, Tap, and Lyrical to students between the ages of three and sixteen while also choreographing performances for the competition team at her home studio. Jordyn is in her second year of pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Sports Medicine with a minor in Dance here at Howard University.

**Deirdre Dunkin** is a Junior Dance major, Spanish minor from Greenwood Lake, NY. She has performed in several Howard University Dance shows including "Hues", "Dimensions", and the 2019 Spring Dance Concert. Deirdre made her choreographic debut with her piece "RECLAMATION," in the Fall 2020 showcase, "Good Trouble." She would like to thank everyone who has supported her in her journey!

**Jordin Greene** is a junior dance major and native to the DMV area. She has trained in a multitude of styles since the age of eleven, including Ballet, Tap, Jazz, Horton, Graham, Dunham, Contemporary, and Hip-Hop. Jordin has performed in a number of HU Dance Arts showcases and concerts and is currently an apprentice with the DC based company SOLE Defined. She is thankful to the department for all the continuous opportunities they've directed her way and is excited for what's to come next.

**Cameron Harris** is a first-year dance major from Richmond, VA. At 3 years-old, Cameron's foundation in dance began with a strong root in ballet. At the age of 13, she attended Interlochen Arts Academy, finding freedom in improvisation and modern dance. In 2017/18 Cameron attended Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Summer Intensive, deeply improving her technicality and professionalism. Cameron took on Bates Dance Festival in 2019, developing her compositional skills whilst experiencing an array of dance styles including Gaga and House dance. Also in 2019, Cameron was a member of the inaugural class of The Kennedy Center Dance Lab led by Hope Boykin. Here she trained under influential artists such as Darrell Moultre, Alicia Graf Mack, Jamar Roberts, Roxanne Lyst, Lorraine Graves, and Renee Robinson. As her passion for dance grows, she is continuing her training at the illustrious Howard University, studying to receive her B.F.A in dance.

**Ilyana Hughes** is from Dayton, OH and began dancing at age three at the Roberta Lynn School of Dance. She has also trained at Dayton Ballet and Dayton Dance Conservatory. Her most influential training is the time she spent training under DeShona Pepper Robertson at Stivers School for the Arts from 2013 until she graduated in 2019. Hughes is currently a sophomore dance major at Howard University, taking classes from Pat Thomas, Royce Zackery, Assane Konte, and a number of guest teachers and choreographers.



# CONTINUING DANCE ARTS STUDENTS

**Colby Johnson** is a freshman dance major from Atlanta, Georgia, attending Howard University in Washington, D.C. With fifteen years of experience in ballet, her training is supplemented through other genres of dance in modern, jazz, African, and hip hop. Her involvement in social organizations such as YAALI and the Newman Club represent her impeccable leadership skills and dedication to helping others, mirroring her dedication to Howard's dance program. As a first year student, she has solely had a virtual experience both academically and artistically at the university due to the coronavirus pandemic, but continues to pursue a future in the dance arts with relentless perseverance.

**Tanasia Lane** is a junior dance major from Jamaica Queens, New York. As a global ambassador, she is often inspired by people and their culture. Though this isn't her first Dance Arts show, she is grateful to be given the opportunity along with the other performers. Given the circumstances that we find ourselves in today, it is her hope that, through the art of dance, you are brought joy.

**Ja'Myra LaSalle** is from New Orleans, Louisiana. She began her dance training in 2014 (13 years of age) at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts. There she trained in ballet, modern, jazz, tap, and hip-hop. In 2017, she furthered her training at the University of the Arts summer intensive training in the release of modern technique, improvisation, house dance, and contemporary dance. She has had the opportunity to perform with Ronald K. Brown/EVIDENCE, A Dance Company in their "On Earth Together" cast (2017), Excerpt of Urban Bush Woman's "Bitter Tongue" (2019), and Tommie-Waheed Evans' "Catch Me, Carry Me, Save Me" at The International Association of Blacks in Dance (2020). She is currently a Sophomore at Howard University studying to get her B.F.A in Dance.

**Nia Mapp** is a Junior Dance major from Queens, NY. Her training includes Devore Dance Center and Howard University. She also has a background in competitive dance, claiming multiple titles in the tri-state area. Nia would like to thank God, her family, and the entire Theatre Arts Department for their continuous support.

**Karena Mitchell** has been dancing for more than nine years. She began her training under Rebecca Acosta at Baton Rouge Magnet High School and also learned from other artists at the Dancers Workshop, an arm of the Baton Rouge Ballet Theatre. In her free time, she has performed in several community dance productions, including New Venture Theatre's "Love, Whitney" and "Black Nativity." She was also a featured dancer in the EBR Fine Arts Showcase, headlined by Broadway singer Jennifer Holliday. She is studying accounting and dance arts at Howard University in Washington D.C., training under celebrated instructors such as Patricia Thomas and Royce Zackery. Along with her studies, Karena is currently working in her first season as a company dancer in Of Moving Colors, a Baton Rouge contemporary company directed by Garland Goodwin Wilson.





# CONTINUING DANCE ARTS STUDENTS

**Samya Mosely** grew up in East Oakland, California, also known as the BAY AREA. Throughout high school experience she didn't have much interest in dance formally but growing up she always did improv in her room when no one was watching (her mom always caught her at night because the music would be too loud). Samya actually wanted to become a women's basketball player. Many things changed for her once she transferred to Antioch High School mid-sophomore year. She joined the Varsity Dance Team, that's when she instantly fell in love with the arts. Once accepted into the Howard University Theatre Arts Dance Program, Samya knew that she was made to dance. There's still many areas that need improvement but that's what life is all about, improving and fixing your inner art and inner self.

**Rayna Richardson** is a sophomore student at Howard University majoring in Psychology and minoring in Dance Arts. She began her dance training at the Dance Theatre of Harlem under Robert Garland, Rachel Sekyi, Nikki Wilson, and Augustus Van Heerden. She has also trained at Alvin Ailey and Petrov Ballet, where she performed in multiple productions including "Pinocchio", "Snow White", "Giselle", and "Don Quixote". Rayna is classically trained in Ballet, Pointe, Graham, and Horton and has attended summer intensives at Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts, Valentina Kozlova's Dance Conservatory, and Point Park University. In 2019, she performed in Howard University's Student Showcase, "Dimensions."

**Kennedy Raynor** is a sophomore dance major and painting minor from Springfield, MA. She started her training at Shooting Star Dance Center studying ballet, jazz, tap, Horton, lyrical, contemporary, acrobatics, and hip hop. She performed as a competitive dancer for her studio while also working closely with the Massachusetts Academy of Ballet for several years. Kennedy was also able to work with Dance Theatre of Harlem and Deeply Rooted Dance Theater. During her time at Howard University, Kennedy has had the opportunity to perform in the fall 2019 showcase "Dimensions" while receiving training from a remarkable group of instructors. Kennedy is very excited and thankful to be a part of this showcase and hopes her dancing brings joy to all viewers.

**Domenique Ross** is a sophomore Dance major and Strategic Legal Communications minor at Howard University, from Pittsburgh, PA. Dancing has been a passion of hers and something she has grown to love since the age of 9. Domenique attended Hill Dance Academy Theatre, Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Reed Dance II, and Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts 6-12. These institutions have aided her in being professionally trained in ballet, modern, contemporary, and African, along with many other styles of dance. In addition, she has performed in The International Associates of Blacks in Dance Conference, Howard University's Fall Dance showcase, and other various shows. While dancing is her main passion, she has also partaken in content creation by creating choreography for Cross Colours LA's social media platforms. Domenique is committed to evolving into a professional dancer. In the future, Domenique seeks to showcase her passion through dance professionally, alongside a company and or the commercial industry.



# CONTINUING DANCE ARTS STUDENTS

Dance has always been one of **Jenea Rutty's** favorite forms of expression. She firmly believes that dance and passion go hand in hand and further, that dance without passion or emotion framing its movement can never embody a dancer's true definition. Jenea seeks to fine-tune her technique physically, as well as spiritually by seeking to discover how personal experiences can be brought to bodily expression with intention – and therefore be a means of release to all. Her movement mantra is 'to translate the becoming', which speaks to giving all of life's pains, rejections, and fears a space to speak until they cannot speak anymore. It is in this freelance that she wishes for everyone to find their face and their story in Life's journey of Becoming. It is Jenea's hope that God will faithfully shape her growth and her dreams as she continues to immerse herself within the art.

**James Smith** is a New Jersey native and is 20 years of age. He began dancing at Premiere Dance Theatre where he trained in Ballet, Horton, Jazz, Hip-Hop, and Tap. He is currently a sophomore dance major at Howard University. While studying at Howard, James has performed with Marcia Griffiths and in The International Association of Blacks In Dance under Tommie-Waheed.

**Jade Stewart** has been dancing for 12 years beginning at her small local home dance studio to the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. There, Jade acquired her High School Diploma with a special concentration in Contemporary Dance. Jade currently attends Howard University's Dance Arts Program. She has trained in Counter, Cunningham, Release, Limón Techniques; West African, Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, Lyrical, Hip-Hop, Tap, and Liturgical dance. Jade has performed in works by various choreographers such as "Trying on the Space" by Juel D. Lane, "Something that was Once Familiar" by Ashley Lindsey, "Missa Brevis" by José Limón set by Sean Sullivan, "Lemayuz" by Ming-Lung Yang, "Chance Study" based on Merce Cunningham repertory set by Jamie Scott, and many more. Jade has performed in multiple students' pieces and other repertory showcases and stays active in her community by teaching liturgical dance to younger children.

**Riché Williams**, born and raised in Savannah, Georgia, is a sophomore dance major at Howard University. Ever since she could move, she's loved to get up and dance! But, it wasn't until the age of twelve that she started her training at Garrison School of Arts. There she was introduced to ballet, Horton technique, jazz and pointe. She furthered her training in contemporary ballet, Grahame, and pointe at Savannah Arts Academy where she performed in shows such as Cinderella (2019), Aladdin (2017), and Sleeping Beauty (2015). During the summer of 2018, Riché had the incredible opportunity to train with Dance Theatre of Harlem, and won the "Most Improved" award! She has danced with the Columbia City Ballet in their showing of The Nutcracker, Ballethnic's Flyin West, and performed as a swing for a dance choreographed by Tommie Waheed Evans entitled, Catch Me, Carry Me, Save Me. Riché believes that dance is a way to share your heart with the audience, and she hopes to continue to share her heart in the future.





**Dancer: Domenique Ross    Photographer: Eric Blackwell**



# **DANCE ARTS PROGRAM FACULTY**

---

**JOCELYN E. COX**                      **ASSANE KONTE**  
**TIFFANY L. QUINN**                **DA'SHOWN RAWL**  
**PAT THOMAS**                        **ROYCE ZACKERY\***

*\*Area Coordinator of the Dance Arts Program*

## **DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

---

**DR. OFOSUWA M. ABIOLA**

## **ARTISTIC TEAM**

---

**ERIC RUFFIN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

**DOMINIQUE HENDRICKS, ASST. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

**TONY STARNES, SEASON TECHNICAL DIRECTOR**

**KEVIN THORNE II, ASST. TO THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

## **STUDENT PRODUCTION TEAM**

---

**NIA BETTY**                              **CAMRYN BROWN**  
**JORDYN DRIVER**                      **DEIRDRE DUNKIN**  
**JORDIN GREENE**                        **RAYNA RICHARDSON**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The performers and staff of Breaking. Through. Discovering. Truth. Within. would like to extend sincere gratitude to the following for their overall assistance and support: Office of Procurement and Contracting; Office of the General Counsel; HU Communications; The Hilltop; Office of the Provost, Dr. Anthony Wutoh, Provost, Cecil Trotman; Accounts Payable; HU Graphics and Printing; Dr. Rubin Patterson, Dean, and the Associate Deans of College of Arts and Sciences; Benita King, COAS Executive Assistant and Program Manager; Olcan Hollister, COAS Assistant Dean for Finance & Administration; Dr. Lisa Farrington, Associate Dean, and the Staff of the Division of Fine Arts; and Faculty, Staff, and Students of the Department of Theatre Arts.

## **Additionally, we would like to acknowledge:**

Graphic Design- Derrick Riley, Pneuma Design

HopeBoykinDance LLC Creative/Administrative Team

Terri Ayanna Wright, Editor

Photographer- Jason Flakes, Visual 14

Supervising Producer- Denise Saunders Thompson, President/CEO

The International Association of Blacks in Dance

## **SPECIAL THANK YOU TO...**

Brooke Audenette, Founder, Whistle.io

Justin Solis, Co-Founder, Head of Sales, Whistle.io

Paul Pivovarov, Whistle.io

Ravi Teja, Whistle.io

Professor Royce Zackery (Dance Area Coordinator)

Professor Pat Thomas (Rehearsal Director)

Darrin Thompson

Friends of Theatre Arts and Dance at Howard University

The International Association of Blacks in Dance

Theatre Arts/Dance Alum for continued support



# PRODUCERS

**The Department of Theatre Arts**, led by Interim Chair- Dr. Abiola, is committed to the training of knowledgeable theatre and dance artists, theorists, historians, and teachers in the theatre and dance arts. The Department is dedicated to the principle of developing the highest quality of theatre and dance art, and to the serious investigation and perpetuation of the experiences and aesthetics of Black theatre and dance. The artistic programming offers not only entertainment, but also a forum for ideas and discussion.

[www.theatrearts.howard.edu](http://www.theatrearts.howard.edu)

The mission of the **Friends of Theatre and Dance at Howard University** is to lead community support and service for the Department of Theatre Arts and its programming. Our efforts focus on scholarship fundraising, production support, and advocacy. Founded in 2015, Friends of Theatre and Dance at Howard University, Inc., is a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation that serves as a support organization to the Department of Theatre Arts and its programs, fostering a distinctive program for the study of the performing arts, benefiting the development of emerging artists, cultivating social engagement, and connecting with established professionals in the arts community. Contributions make it possible for Friends of Theatre and Dance at Howard University, Inc., (FOTD@HU) to expand its offerings and provide scholarships to great students. [www.fotdhu.wix.com/fotdhu](http://www.fotdhu.wix.com/fotdhu)

**The International Association of Blacks in Dance (IABD)** preserves and promotes dance by people of African ancestry or origin, and assists and increases opportunities for artists in advocacy, audience development, education, funding, networking, performance, philosophical dialogue, and touring. IABD has become the Mecca for Blacks in Dance such as administrators, artists, choreographers, dance companies, dance-related personnel, directors, educators, scholars, students, teachers, and those interested in artistry, black dance issues and performance presentations. The Association provides a network, formal newsletters, choreographers directory, published papers and is the raison d'être for the Annual Conference and Festival. The Association also responds to and initiates dialogue around issues that impact the Black Dance Community as well as the Dance community at large. IABD has developed national prominence and allowed the Black dance community to come together on issues important to them. [www.iabdassociation.org](http://www.iabdassociation.org)



**Dancer: Kendall Dennis    Photographer: Micheal Higgins**



# OVATION SOCIETY

---

The Ovation Society of the Department of Theatre Arts honors those who have given funds in support of the Department's students, programs, faculty, and facilities. Such funds enable the Department to move into the future with a sense of confidence and artistic vision. We want to take this opportunity to recognize and thank our largest contributors for their tremendous commitment.

Support the Department of Theatre Arts in its mission to empower the next generation of emerging Artistic Leaders by making a contribution today.

## **Executive Producer**

\$50,000+

## **Producer**

\$25,000–\$49,999

## **Director**

\$10,000–\$24,999

## **Star**

\$5,000–\$9,999

## **Angel**

\$250–\$4,999

## **Thespian**

\$1–\$249

## **Executive Producer**

Reginald Van Lee  
Mrs. Sevara C. Freeman

## **Producer**

\$25,000—\$49,999

## **Director**

The McNeil Family Foundation

## **Star**

The Dr. Andrew Allen Scholarship

## **Fund**

Debbie Allen and Phylicia Rashad  
American Family Care  
Louise and John Beard  
Performing Arts Training Studio, Inc.  
Larry and Brenda Thompson

## **Angel**

Mr. Frank Luncheon  
Mr. Wally Ashby

Find us...



YouTube

**HELP US FILL OUR THEATRE SPACE WITH LIVE PERFORMANCES.**

For 60 years, theatre has been present on the campus of  
Howard University.

With your help, we can train the next 60 years of students!

Please email [Dominique.Douglas1@howard.edu](mailto:Dominique.Douglas1@howard.edu) for more information.

# FRIENDS OF THEATRE AND DANCE AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY

---

---

The mission of Friends of Theatre and Dance at Howard University is to lead community support and service for the Department of Theatre Arts and its programming. Our efforts focus on scholarship fundraising, production, support and advocacy.

## BOARD OFFICERS

---

---

**Chair**

Denise Saunders Thompson

**Vice- Chair**

Charles A. Coward

**Treasurer**

William A. Jackson

**Secretary**

Camille Kashaka

## AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS

---

---

Tamela Aldridge

Victoria Murray Baatin

Marcus Gardley

Janet Johnson

Jamil Jude

Ronald Lee Newman

G. Edwin Robinson

## DONATE

---

---

**Programs like this are made possible with the generous support of FOTDHU!**

**You can support our future artist by joining and/ or contributing to**

**Friends of Theatre and Dance at Howard University at:**

**VENMO: @FOTDHU | CASHAPP: \$FOTDHU1867**

**WEBSITE: <https://fotdhu.wixsite.com/fotdhu>**

**CONTACT/ FOLLOW:**

**EMAIL: [fotdhu@gmail.com](mailto:fotdhu@gmail.com) | FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/FOTDatHU>**

**INSTAGRAM: @FOTDHU | TWITTER: @FOTD\_HU**



Howard University Department of Theatre Arts  
Virtually Presents

2021 ANNUAL  
SPRING DANCE CONCERT

*Breaking.*  
THROUGH.  
DISCOVERING.  
TRUTH.  
WITHIN.

APRIL 16-18, 2021  
6:00-8:00pm EDT

Visit [theatrearts.howard.edu](http://theatrearts.howard.edu) for more information.

