The mission of the Department of Dance at the University of Illinois is to contribute to dance’s positive impact on the world, as a distinctive generator of new knowledge and as a vital cultural agent and signifier. We activate the power of dance to root out historically unbalanced, hierarchically oppressive perspectives and are committed to investigating the dynamic intersections between research and teaching in academic, professional, and community settings.

We promote ethical, anti-racist, and progressive practices, operating from a deeply held belief that diversity and inclusion are critical for the advancement of the artform and for humankind. Utilizing a range of experimental and canonic approaches, we generate choreographic, pedagogical, performative, and scholarly research that centers dance in global discourse. We aim to forge innovative and sustainable lives as artist educators and to model that practice widely, compelled by our collective, passionate dedication to dance as a transformational process.
the light is still on!

By Professor and Head Jan Erkert

It was a primal, eerie moment. Many years ago a fire ripped through my home. It was in the middle of winter ... I was alone in the darkness. I returned to the house, to a room filled with empty blackness. The shades were open, and the sun was shining. It was a moment of absolute stillness. And I felt a sense of sadness, and a sense of loss. But also a sense of hope.

As we left our studios way too soon, there was much to mourn, but let’s not go there yet, because what we ultimately lost before birth, a beloved sweater that had been hugged by a slew of boyfriends until it really was the ugly hip-hop sweater. This year we returned to the Department of Dance, tradition of presenting historic masterpieces. Our guest artists, Omri Drumlevich and Zina Zinchenko, former members of Batsheva Company, demanded an internal, visceral commitment from our students, as they reconstructed José Limón’s CABARET. The work is a clear homage to Limón’s rhythmic, spiritual, and expertly performed propulsive, spiritual, and expertly performed rhythm, it does not preach, it seduces. Through inflected dance forms in general. Through rhythmic, it does not ask, it demands. It is

Uncertainty reigns, but we will dig away at what is important. What we do know for certain is that dance will happen—whether online, in small groups, or together. We are bringing in new students, and bringing back alumni, and making the most of our time. We are creating a model for the future, a model that is able to adapt to the changing landscape of dance.

We will present work to others whether it is in the form of a dance for camera, a solo for a neighbor, an online series of workshops, or live concerts streamed globally. We will use technology to every advantage, to build a new curriculum for the 21st century that will be at the forefront of the field.

We will focus on health and well-being, joining our Theatre and Music departments to network with artists all over the world, and we will get the world dancing. Due to the tremendous strain from the pandemic and the continued assaults on black bodies, we will focus on creating a model for the future, a model that is able to adapt to the changing landscape of dance.

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Decadance, known as a masterpiece of our time, was choreographed by Ohad Naharin for the Batsheva Dance Company. As Artistic Director for the company from 1990–2018, Naharin has created immensely physical, provocative, and community-based choreography influenced by his Israeli heritage. Decadance is a collection of 16 excerpts, spanning over 21 years of the choreographer’s creative past. DAI’s version of Decadance was restaged by Omri Drumlevich and Zina Zinchenko, both former Batsheva dancers. Their embodied expression and memory of Decadance throughout the reconstruction process was integral to our learning. Drumlevich and Zinchenko are also instructors of the movement language called Gaga, created by Naharin using improvisation to research movement expression and mind-to-body exploration. All members of our cast participated in Gaga class throughout fall semester, diving deep into movement improvisation, both individually and with each other. We found how to be one with the community, while being one with our true selves.

As a cast member of Manifesting Our Movement; Manifesting Our Dance, it was truly an honor to be a part of this process and masterwork by Danzel Thompson-Stout. The creation of the piece spanned over a year and included education and training in house dance, including its history and vernacular. From a blank slate and an empty cup, Thompson-Stout poured a wealth of knowledge into all of us and created something unique utilizing the strengths of his cast. The material was brilliantly placed together by strategically layering one section of movement onto another, leaving a sea of joy and energy. For the dancers, it was more than just a dance. It was a way to invite the audience to indulge, immerse, and understand the liveliness, complexity and nuance of the street dance community.

Psalm was choreographed by José Limón in 1967 and later reconstructed in 2002 by former artistic director of the Limón Company, Carla Maxwell. November Dance 2019 is the second time Psalm has been shown on a Krannert stage. In 1996, former Limón dancer Rosa-Drummond restaged the work as DAI students, a cast which included current Associate Professor Linda Lehovec (MFA ’96) and Assistant Head Anna Sapozhnikov (MFA ’02, BFA ’98). In the most recent restaging of Psalm: A Suite, past Limón Company dancer and MFA candidate Roxane D’Orléans Juste led a cast of 15 women. Psalm is a magnificent work to take on: Its musical score is constantly changing between intricate rhythms, dancers come and go, and out of the work while complicated spatial patterns unfold. It’s a real test of endurance. I was empowered by the support and strength I constantly felt from the group of fierce women dancing with me.

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After the cancellation of the Spring Senior Concerts, alternative forms of the seniors’ original thesis projects were reborn over Zoom, including documentaries, dance for cameras, and video documentations. Pictured is Mary Kate Ford’s Peoria.

Creative Dance for Children moved their platform online. Three seniors, Taylor Adams, Nina Crouchelli, and Lindsey Jennings, helped children find their creative voices and keep them moving.

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This spring, in celebration of 50 years of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, Dance at Illinois embarked on a historic collaboration with Illinois Theatre and Lyric Theatre at Illinois. Cabaret provided a vehicle for director Latrelle Bright, music director Dr. Julie Jordan Gunn, and me to harness the talents of 17 performers from the three programs in addition to a host of student designers and technical crew.

Creating something totally new and wholly reverent of the time and place—1930s, Weimar-era Berlin, on the precipice of the Nazi rise—I set out with assistant choreographer Emily Schwartz (BFA ‘20) to create a dynamic and challenging vocabulary that would be in conversation with real-life performers of the time. We confronted a different sense of reality: the fact that our imagined rendering of these people—those fringe folx who might have become the iconic artists of the time but were ripped from the earth by a terrorist regime—is perhaps the only “record” that exists of many of them. In our diverse cast of students and creators, we found unsettling resonance in watching the rise of extreme right-wing ideology, and we were constantly forced to ask ourselves, “What would *we* do?”

As described by Chuck Smith, previous dramaturg for the world premiere of Gem of the Ocean in 2003, the City of Bones scene within the play always seemed to be missing something. Smith finally decided to attempt a dance version of the scene and chose to premiere the first of its kind in partnership with the Departments of Theatre and Dance at Illinois. Participating as one of the first City of Bones dancers in August Wilson’s Gem of the Ocean was nothing short of amazing. Choreographers Professors Kemal Nance and Endalyn Taylor took this project seriously, educating the cast about the African American history of slave trade that exists within the play. This ultimately allowed me to intertwine the work with my own ancestral heritage as an African American woman, thus allowing me to dive into a more personal realm of performance. Through historical reference, Africanist movement explorations, and the stories of our ancestors on our backs, the City of Bones scene finally came to life and left a profound impact on both the cast and audiences alike.
Nia Khan (BFA ’22), Mya McClellan (BFA ’21), Jacob Henss (MFA ’22), and Symone Sanz (BFA ’20) in Ohad Naharin’s Decadance.

Nia Khan (BFA ’21), Symone Sanz (BFA ’20), Aliah Teclaw (BFA ’23), and Rachel Maramba (BA ’21) in Cabaret.

Michelle Burns (BFA ’20) and Cassidy Zins (BFA ’21) in Rachel Rizzuto’s (MFA ’21) Period Piece.
Joan and Alex Murray. Upon completion of my Alexander Technique under the direction of Professor Philip Johnston by Professor Kirstie Simson 14 years were spent dancing and directing in Norway before one year in Chicago, and the past 26 years in Urbana, where I originally taught for six years. I was fortunate to have lived. I have learned a great deal of our diverse voices without having to Elections, compilation, or compromise my own viewpoint. I will always remember life on the Prairie and the creative energy that is at the heart of the planet teaching and performing in a variety of classrooms, studios, and stages in multiple countries. I came of age as an independent artist.

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For our 17 graduating seniors (13 Bachelor of Fine Arts and four Bachelor of Arts degrees), 2019–2020 was a very special year in more ways than one! They experienced joy during the fall semester when they grew in their dancing and creative abilities and produced a wonderful Senior Thesis concert. In the spring semester, the second Senior Thesis concert was canceled due to the pandemic. Not to be defeated, the seniors pulled together and presented a virtual Senior Thesis concert online, which broadened their creative outreach and expanded their skills. Our graduating BA students also presented their research in an online BA Symposium. The Dance faculty is extremely proud of these graduating students, who have faced many challenges in completing their undergraduate studies through a very difficult time. They will surely be successful artists through a fighting spirit that will serve them well as they go out into the world. Our students have shown that they will fulfill their dreams of dancing professionally, opening dance studios, becoming choreographers and media artists, and continuing our graduate school. We are looking forward to watching them change the world with their creative energy and indomitable spirit!

Due to Covid-19, all MFA Thesis concerts were canceled just a few weeks before they were scheduled to perform. The graduating MFA cohort pulled together to present their research in an online Oral Thesis Presentation at the end of April. As Dance students and staff witnessed over Zoom, Evvie Allison, Elliot Reza Emadian, William Ervin, and Kaitlin Fox graciously shared their findings on their process, creative research, and their hopes and future plans after graduation. We have no doubt that they will continue finding their way through life with strength and compassion.

undergraduate news
by Professor John Toenjes

In years to come, our graduates will be telling their grandchildren about this convocation. We were excited to unveil a special parting gift created by graduating BFA student Mary Kate Ford—a portrait of graduates to be installed in the Dance Administration Building—as a way of remembering this class in perpetuity. Our convocation was graced with a surprise alumna guest speaker Leslie Cuyjet, New York Dance and Performance Bessie Awardee, who gave a moving speech to our students about the beauty and perseverance of dance artists. Graduate Jeremy Taylor and Elliot Emadian presented heartfelt words about the journey of the 2020 class, and we ended with a toast by Professor Philip Johnston, who will be retiring and moving to Ireland.

graduate news
by Anna Sapozhnikov (MFA ’02, BFA ’98)

Convocation

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Art reimagines. Art articulates and implicates. It is free of conventions. It has no rules. And when we choose to show up, art demands we meet it. And so you must reimagine and you must articulate and you must implicate. And, no pressure, but we’re counting on you.

—Leslie Cuyjet (BFA ’03)
Moving Forward Grants and Scholarships

Student awards & scholarships

Travel Award (est. 2006)
Alexandria Kinard (BFA '22)
Angel Anderson (BFA '21)

Alumni Award (est. 2007)
Catherine MacMaster (MFA '22)
Elliot Reza Emadian (MFA '20)
Leslie Cuyjet (BFA '03)
Lindsey Jennings (BFA '20)

Dance Partner Undergraduate Scholarship (est. 2010)
Jenna Dike (BFA '24)
Jordyn Gibson (BFA '23)
Ahmad D. and Dulce G. Issa Dance Project Awards
A. Raheim White Scholarship (est. 2015) for an outstanding sophomore dancer at the University of Illinois/Urbana-Champaign.

Moe Family Dance Award (est. 1996) for an outstanding junior dancer.
Isabella Saldana (BFA '24) for 2020–2021

Sr. Santina经历 Award for overall outstanding student. Established in honor of Sr. Santina经历, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, in 1886.
Abby Zbikowski

Senior Magnolia Award for the most unique contribution to the profession.
Jan Erkert

Dance Education Excellence in Research Award.
Cynthia Oliver

Moe Family Dance Award for an overall outstanding senior student.
Jan Erkert and Bernt Lewy

Jenna Dike (BFA ’24), who has cultivated an artistic life.

Jerry Wray. We send applause and virtual hugs and thanks to our donors and Dance Partners who gave so generously.

Endalyn Taylor

...fine and Applied Arts, working to enhance the research synergies of

Michael Lambert, Dirk Hutchison, Jennifer Monson, Wanda Nettl, The Vannie L. Sheiry Memorial

Dance and Movement Studies.

Fernadina Chan Scholarship by DAI alum Fernadina Chan to help make dance more affordable for student dancers at the University of Illinois.
Michelle Burns (BFA ’20) in her solo, an echo of a rerun of artist Richard Serra’s comment, “We go to museums to

be alone together…” I’d help them transition to this format where each student was in each frame. Some were

as we did a group exercise. I realized that there could be more of a coaching sensibility in the class. I’d get out some “technique” goals for each class and after the barre, we could all come up close and talk about achievement. It was very much a coaching style. “You know you need to be more up here.” “And that was

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an echo of a rerun

virtual world of Zoom happened in what felt like the blink of an eye. No time for preparation. No time for closure.

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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 help what dance can contribute to society. Your generosity provides 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.

For information on how to donate online, visit: dance.illinois.edu/support/donate

To make a gift by check:
- Designate the desired fund (“Scholarships” or “Production & Enrichment”)
- Make payable to the University of Illinois Foundation/Department of Dance
- Mail to University of Illinois Foundation P.O. Box 734500, Chicago, IL 60673-4500

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 our performances, and we are eternally grateful for your support.

Now through July 1, 2021:
- Madeline Mellinger (BFA ’20) in Jose Limón’s Psalm
- Jeremy Taylor (BFA ’20), Jan Erkert, Jerry Carden (DPAC member), and Omri Drumlevich at First Views: Decadance
- Bryn Maxwell (BA ’22), Jeremy Taylor (BFA ’20), Helena Gorgol (BFA ’22), and Mya McClellan (BFA ’21) in Ohad Naharin’s Decadance

**dance partners**

We also recognize and appreciate the following Dance Partners for their support, and are eternally grateful for your support.

- Laura Mkleo
- Jean and Franklin Minney
- Raymond Miller
- Marylou Holts
- Rebecca Nettl-Fiol and Stephen Fiol
- Nancy Morse
- Jeffrey Nowak and Sandy Gurr
- Lesley and Barry Ginther
- Mary and George Perlstein
- Jonathan and Darcie Morris
- John and Pamela Rozehnal
- Lisa Simons
- John and Stephanie Tharp
- Renee Wadleigh
- Beverly Washington
- Jerry Wray
- Jerald Wray and Dirk Mol
- Elizabeth Wymore and Sheldon Smith
- Basia Yakaitis
- Sarah Young
- Jin-Wen Yu

**dance partner advancement committee**

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.

- Jan Erkert
- Jerry Carden
- Tim Temple
- Jenny Carden
- Michael Lambert
- Chele Kimi
- Tom Tangle
- Jerry McCoy

**dance partners**

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- Chele Kimi
- Tom Tangle
- Jerry McCoy
2020–2021 performance calendar

Flatlands Dance Film Festival
September 4–5
November Dance
November 5–7
February Dance
February 4–6
Studiodance II
March 4–6
Senior Concert
April 30–May 1

Audition Dates

*November 4–7 Open House and Audition
November 6–7 Open House and Audition
*February 5–6 Open House & Audition
*Feb 10-11
*all dates subject to change

2019–2020 faculty/staff list and magazine credits

Dance Faculty
Emily Allen, Lecturer; Creative Dance for Children Director
Marita Cynthia Anderson, Lecturer and Media Coordinator
Sara Bank, Lecturer and Head and Professor
Philip Johnston, Associate Teaching Professor
Patricia Knowles, Professor Emerita
Laura Marks, Associate Professor
Jennifer Merson, Professor and Graduate Program Director
Rebecca Meier-Farr, Professor and Undergraduate Director
Deborah Mistal, Professor and Undergraduate Director
Artz Washington, Lecturer
Patricia Tan, Associate Professor
Enid Baldwin, Associate Professor
John Semken, Associate Professor and Undergraduate Director
Beverly Wadlington, Professor Emerita
Aly D'Orléans, Assistant Professor

Artistic Faculty
Jane Diamond, Professor; Department of Anthropology
Lisa Gay Dean, Associate Professor; Department of Theatre
Cathleen DeGea, Assistant Professor
Nancy Galvin, Associate Professor
Janet DeWitt, Associate Professor
Sarah Boyer, Assistant Professor
Dieter Determann, Assistant Professor
Dale Warren, Associate Professor; School of Art and Design
Mary Kenyaxis, Assistant Professor; School of Music

Accompanists
Katy Beck
Tyler Carey
Jaesslynn Daukas
Lori Egan
Codi Jense
Amni Avne

Translation
Taylor Adams
Fred Brown
Marchita Deve
Nina Gesenius
Liliana Groenfeldt
Ron Suchomel
Melissa Warburton
Suzanne Yase
Erin Gollitter
Jessica Zeiger

Guest Artists
Ditte Drages, U.S.
Zoe Zuckerman

Teaching Assistants
Lenore Persall, Dr. Kingston
Amber Elate
Pamela Criscione
Melissa Cameron
William Grice
Kallie Gisell
Laurie Kalvinder
Colleen Noonlander
Sarah McDonald
Barbara Gomez
Dorothy Thompson-Gould

Special Thanks to the Dance Partners: Adrienne and Corey Carden

Magazine Credits

Anna Sapozhnikov, Editor
Natalie Fiol, Photographer, unless otherwise noted
Anne Jackson, Copy Editor
National Fair, Community Services and Marketing at the College of Fine and Applied Arts, Design

Cover image: Doris Thompson-Gould’s1 inspiring image of movement, documentation, and dance

22 years of pivot dance at illinois

Taylor Adams (BFA ’20) in her solo, 3:33
Rachel Rizzuto (MFA ’21) and Jennifer Monson in Monson’s gorge, idling gorge, idling gorge just, just idling, just
Rachel Rizzuto (MFA ’21) in Monson’s gorge, idling gorge, idling gorge just, just idling, just
Rachel Rizzuto (MFA ’21) in Monson’s gorge, idling gorge, idling gorge just, just idling, just
William Ervin (MFA '20) in his solo, \textit{I will, I-Will, I-WILLLL}