

THE HARVARD DANCE PROJECT

SPRING 2018
PERFORMANCES

FARKAS HALL
12 HOLYOKE STREET

APRIL 26-28	7 PM
APRIL 29	2 PM

“Dance can offer
visibility toward the
unseen.”
– **Shamel Pitts**

Greetings and Welcome!

Harvard's dancers work hard. They experiment. They risk. Together, we celebrate tradition in one moment; defy it, the next. We dare to do so knowing that each rendering of our work will be the only one of its kind, ever—no downloads, no copies. Live performance is inherently ephemeral, and this is what makes our craft powerful, fragile, and unique. We thank you for being part of it.

Nearly 80 dance luminaries have visited our campus over the past seven years to work directly with student dancers, producing 29 original dance works at Harvard. In residencies this spring, three extraordinary artists were commissioned to make new work for Harvard Dance Project students. The diverse approaches of choreographers Chanel DaSilva, Peter Chu, and Shamel Pitts advance a major component of our Dance Center mission: to offer students the chance to be active participants in the creation of new, original work with the art world's preeminent dance makers.

Controlling ideas in each piece are metaphorically centered around common objects. Tonight, a hat, a mask, and a cloak will each tell a story, and represent our semester-long collaborative inquiry into identity, progress, and the current culture. These performances represent the culmination of months of rehearsal, choreographic exploration, and research. Today, we witness the result of an extensive dialogue between students and some of the world's most innovative choreographers, a dialogue that seeks to redefine the place of dance in contemporary culture. We hope that this performance will inspire and challenge you, and that you will join our ongoing conversation about the future and mission of our craft.

We are grateful for the support of the Blodgett Distinguished Artist Fund, Bromley Innovation Fund for Dance, Office for the Arts, Office for Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, and Provostial Fund for the Arts and Humanities who helped make this evening possible; to Dr. Cornel West for his inspiration, enthusiasm, and advocacy for the arts; and to you, for the vital role you play in our work. Thank you once again for taking the time to be with us this evening.

Jill Johnson
Founder/Artistic Director, The Harvard Dance Project

“I have come to know and believe that as artists it is our duty to use our gifts to pose questions, be provocative, and to challenge the status quo.”

– **Chanel DaSilva**

THE HARVARD DANCE PROJECT

SPRING 2018 PERFORMANCES

Presented by:
Harvard Dance Center
Office for the Arts/Theater, Dance & Media

Thursday-Saturday, April 26-28 at 7 PM
Sunday, April 29 at 2 PM

PROGRAM

Shamel Pitts
WILL

Intermission

Chanel DaSilva
PUBLIC/private

Intermission

Peter Chu
Fitting Out

Today's program is approximately one hour and a half in length including two intermissions.

The Harvard Dance Project

Alexandra Caffrey '19, Julia DeAngelo '17,
Karen Huang GSAS '19, Jackson Jirard HGSE '18,
Michelle Ko '18, Kami Krista '21, Tiffany Lau '19,
Joshua Lee '20, Gavin McDowell '18, Joseph Ong '14,
Daniel Rivera '20, Allenda Witzel '18

Thursday, April 26

A pre-performance talk with the choreographers begins at 6:30 PM on stage at Farkas Hall. Immediately following the performance, audience members are invited to stay for a cypher, led by TDM Teaching Fellow Aysha Upchurch AIE'15 and accompanied by musician Ryan Edwards.

Friday, April 27

A post-performance talk with the choreographers will take place on stage at Farkas Hall.

“A communal experience without social barriers is celebrated when moving and working together—its profound effect on others can heal during times of uncertainty.”

– **Peter Chu**

“My choreographic works are like my journal entries, filled with lots of unanswered questions and snapshots of emotions.”
– **Chanel DaSilva**



Choreography: Shamel Pitts

Music: *Stigmata I*, Tim Hecker; *Stigmata II*, Tim Hecker; *Let's Spiral*, Rustie; *Ode*, Nils Fram; *Rhubarb*, Aphex Twin (written by Richard D James; published by BMG [BMI] obo Chrysalis Music Ltd; used by permission. All rights reserved.)

Music editing and arrangement: James Bean, Shamel Pitts

Logo designer: Idan Epshtein

Special thanks to the Boston Ballet Costume Shop for the loan of select costumes designed by Charles Heightchew.

Dancers: Julia DeAngelo '17, Karen Huang GSAS '19, Tiffany Lau '19, Joshua Lee '20, Daniel Rivera '20, Allenda Witzel '18

World premiere: April 26, 2018, The Harvard Dance Project, Farkas Hall, Cambridge, MA.

"At the time of creation, I was overwhelmed with the many different work engagements/responsibilities that I've committed myself to. The feeling of wearing too many hats—which can potentially dilute or distract from the clarity of offering to the moment—scared me. And, as always, I try to meet fear with bravery. Bravery has a lot to do with surrendering. Hats can hide, as much as they can reveal the collective effort. It's the symbolism of sharing the weight of the moment and a commitment to moving together, within our differences, which are also both hidden and revealed. When there's a will, there's a way.

My proposition with *WILL* is to appreciate the power of slowing down...crawling before we walk, or run in, order to create a work that is not reactionary, but of action."

– Shamel Pitts

"I try to meet fear with bravery. Bravery has a lot to do with surrendering."

– **Shamel Pitts**

PUBLIC/private

Choreography: Chanel DaSilva

Music: Soundtrack from the television series *Game of Thrones*, composed by Ramin Djawadi; excerpt from *Access Hollywood Trump/Bush* tape

Music editing: Antonio Brown

Dancers: Julia DeAngelo '17, Karen Huang GSAS '19, Michelle Ko '18, Kami Krista '21, Tiffany Lau '19, Gavin McDowell '18, Allenda Witzel '18

World premiere: April 26, 2018, The Harvard Dance Project, Farkas Hall, Cambridge, MA.

"Recently, my art and choreography seem to manifest as a reflection of my inner thoughts, feelings, emotions, and ideas about the world around me. **PUBLIC/private** was no different in that it has revealed itself to be a work where I am wrestling with and challenging what has become the outright normalization of the belittling, oppression, and assault of women. Because of the provocative nature of **PUBLIC/private**, I knew that I needed to create this work with a team of artists who are intelligent, honest, and brave human beings that understand the power that art has to foster change in the world. I knew this year with The Harvard Dance Project was the perfect time and place to dig deep and crack open an issue that far too often gets swept under the rug."

– Chanel DaSilva

Note to the audience: This piece includes sensitive material addressing sexual harassment and assault and may bring up varied emotions. We encourage everyone in the audience to take care of themselves and step out if need be. A person providing confidential emotional support is available at the resource table in the lobby for the duration of the performance.

**"We must continue to speak our truths and let our work be a reflection of real life."
– Chanel DaSilva**

Fitting Out

Choreography: Peter Chu

Choreographer's Assistant: Roger Van der Poel

Music: *The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face*, Timmy Thomas; *Hit or Miss*, Odette; *Take Care of Home*, Timmy Thomas; *Why Can't We Live Together*, Timmy Thomas; *Funky Me*, Timmy Thomas; *The Night Me and Your Mama Met*, Childish Gambino featuring Gary Clark, Jr.

Dancers: Alexandra Caffrey '19, Julia DeAngelo '17, Karen Huang GSAS '19, Jackson Jirard HGSE '18, Kami Krista '21, Tiffany Lau '19, Gavin McDowell '18, Joseph Ong '14, Allenda Witzel '18

World premiere: April 26, 2018, The Harvard Dance Project, Farkas Hall, Cambridge, MA.

"Muted behind a mask that is colored with fear and layered with doubt, these silhouettes capture the importance of focusing not on what is different but on what is the same. Playing with curiosity, *Fitting Out* moves through the hidden truths of change, slips into a coat of compassion, soaks in forgotten rhythms, and vacillates between waving emotions. The temporarily stored reactions play with the fragility of character as bodies groove through rhythms that remind us why we move. Rhythms connect humans and helps us to grow. A communal experience without social barriers is celebrated when moving and working together—its profound effect on others can heal during times of uncertainty."

– Peter Chu

"I remind myself to communicate with clarity, with a calm demeanor, to have compassion towards other's needs; finding consistency, and allowing myself to be curious, and adventurous."

– **Peter Chu**

PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Supervisor & Lighting Designer: **Jon Gonda**

Stage Manager: **Carrie Dirats**

Costume Supervisor: **Ezra Lovesky**

Sound Engineer: **Ari Kaufman**

Production Electrician: **Harrison Pearse Burke**

Stagehand: **Clara Rhee**

The Harvard Dance Project Spring 2018 Performances are supported by the Blodgett Distinguished Artist Program, Bromley Innovation Fund for Dance, Office for the Arts, and Provostial Fund for the Arts and Humanities at Harvard University.

Special Thanks: Maike Isaac and the OSAPR staff, Miriam Rowan, Eliza Mantz, and Emily Miller from the Title IX Office at Harvard.

**“I needed to create
with a team of
artists who are
intelligent, honest,
and brave. Humans
who understand the
power art has to foster
change.”
– Chanel DaSilva**

ARTISTS

Peter Chu, choreographer

Born in the Bronx, NY, and raised in Cocoa Beach, Florida, Peter began his training as a competitive gymnast, later nurturing his artistry at Dussich Dance Studio. Upon graduation from The Juilliard School, he performed with Ballets Jazz de Montréal, EZdanza, Azure Barton & Artists, Kidd Pivot, and in Celine Dion's Vegas spectacular *A New Day*. In 2008, Peter formed a Las Vegas project-based dance company, *chuthis.*, which showcases the work of Chu and his collaborators. Chu has created works for Orlando Ballet Theatre, Hubbard Street 2, Giordano Dance Chicago, Naomi Stikeman's *Çaturn*, Houston MET Dance, New Dialect, SALT Contemporary Dance, Nederlands Dans Theater Summer Intensive, Springboard Danse Montréal, and The Juilliard School, among others. Recipient of the 2010 A.C.E. Capezio Award, Chu was also honored as selected choreographer for the Perry Mansfield New Works Festival (directed by Linda Kent) and choreographed for the ninth and tenth seasons of *So You Think You Can Dance*. Additionally, Chu performed Crystal Pite's works *A Picture of You Falling* and *Betroffenheit* in Canada and Europe. This season, Chu premiered new creations for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and Charlotte Ballet, as well as continuing to develop work with his own company, *chuthis.*

Chanel DaSilva, choreographer

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Chanel DaSilva began her dance studies at The Bernice Johnson Cultural Arts Center and the Creative Outlet Dance Theater of Brooklyn under the tutelage of Jamel Gaines. Her training continued at LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and the Performing Arts, The Ailey School, and Springboard Danse Montréal. She received a BFA in Dance from The Juilliard School under the direction of Lawrence Rhodes. DaSilva has performed works by Ohad Naharin, Eliot Feld, Doug Varone, Jose Limon, Jessica Lang, Alvin Ailey, Robert Battle, Camille A. Brown, and Lar Lubovitch. DaSilva is a 2004 Presidential Scholar in the Arts and a 2011 Princess Grace Dance Honorarium Awardee. From 2008–2014, DaSilva was a member of Trey McIntyre Project where she was the muse for many of Mr. McIntyre's works. She now serves on the dance faculty of her alma mater, LaGuardia High School. In addition to being a dancer and an educator, DaSilva has choreographed works for schools, universities, and dance companies across the country. DaSilva is the co-founder and co-director of MOVE(NYC), a New York City-based arts organization that provides tuition-free dance and leadership education to talented NYC teenagers who are passionate and driven for a career in dance.

Shamel Pitts, choreographer

Born in Brooklyn, NY, Shamel Pitts began his dance training at LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and the Performing Arts and continued, simultaneously, at The Ailey School. Pitts then went on to receive his BFA in Dance from The Juilliard School (receiving the Martha Hill Award For Excellence In Dance) and was a member of Les Ballets Jazz de Montréal and Mikhail Baryshnikov's Hell's Kitchen Dance before joining Batsheva Dance Company, under Ohad Naharin, where he danced for seven years. Pitts is a teacher of Gaga, Naharin's movement language, and has taught for both Batsheva Dance Company and The Young Ensemble. Pitts has been on faculty for Movement Invention Project, Springboard Danse Montréal, Nederlands Dans Theater Summer Intensive, SUNY Purchase, and The Juilliard School. Pitts has collaborated in the creation of several performance art works including a Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art commission of *Black, White, and RED and BLACK VELVET: Architectures and Archetypes*. Pitts created a poetic dance performance installation entitled *BLACK BOX: Little Black Book Of RED*. Currently, Pitts is an adjunct faculty member at The Juilliard School and is performing with Sharon Eyal and Gai Behar's L-E-V Dance Company. He is also staging Ohad Naharin's repertory on many companies around the world.

Jon Gonda, lighting designer

Jon Gonda is a freelance lighting designer, programmer, and production manager based in Boston, MA. He studied computer science and electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he also designed sets and lighting for dance theater productions. He has provided moving light programming services for commercial, theater, dance, galas, and corporate events including Boston Ballet, Doug Varone and Dancers, High Output, Childsplay, and New England Conservatory.

Jill Johnson, founder/artistic director

Jill Johnson is Dance Director, Senior Lecturer on TDM, and Founder/Artistic Director of The Harvard Dance Project at Harvard University. She is a 30-year veteran of the dance field; choreographs for film, television, and the stage; has danced in over 50 tours on five continents; was a soloist with the National Ballet of Canada; and a principal dancer and researcher in William Forsythe's company Frankfurt Ballet. Johnson stages Forsythe's work worldwide, including Paris Opera Ballet, La Scala Theatre Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theater, American Ballet Theater, and Batsheva Dance Company. She is a founding collaborator of The Movement Invention Project in New York, and a master teacher at the YoungArts Foundation. She has served on the faculties of and created choreographic work for Princeton University, Columbia University, The Juilliard School, and NYU; and has created twelve new works at Harvard since 2011. Recent collaborations include those with the Harvard Choruses, Boston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Dries Van Noten film for the Louvre – Musée des Arts Decoratif, Ryuichi Sakamoto, and a new duet by William Forsythe entitled *Catalogue (First Edition)*.

“Hats ... the symbolism of sharing the weight of the moment and a commitment to moving together, within our differences, which are both hidden and revealed.”

– **Shamel Pitts**

“The color red could
signify shame, but it
could also signify pride
and power.”
– **Chanel DaSilva**

“Fitting into and
out of coats evokes
compassion and
understanding.”
– **Peter Chu**

DANCE AT HARVARD

ADVANCING DANCE LITERACY ON CAMPUS
AND FOR THE WORLD.

ROOTED IN TRADITION, COMMITTED TO INNOVATING.

CLASSICAL. CONTEMPORARY. CHOREOGRAPHY.

COLLABORATION.

CHOREOGRAPHIC THINKING.

DANCE IS A SOURCE OF TRANS-DISCIPLINARY INQUIRY.

PHYSICS. APPLIED SCIENCE. NEUROSCIENCE.

MUSIC. PHILOSOPHY. POETRY.

VISUAL ART. HISTORY. DESIGN. ARCHITECTURE.

CIVIC HUMANITIES. PUBLIC POLICY. AGENCY.

CIVIC LEADERSHIP.

SYNTHESIZING WORLD ISSUES AND EVENTS.

DANCE AND CHOREOGRAPHY ARE FIELDS OF PRACTICE.

10,000 HOURS OF PRACTICE.

CHALLENGE ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT WHAT

CHOREOGRAPHY IS,

WHAT DANCE IS, WHAT DANCING IS. WHAT IS DANCE NOT?

DANCE IS NOT ONLY PERFORMATIVE.

WHAT LONG-HELD BELIEFS ABOUT DANCE ARE USEFUL?

WHAT OPINIONS HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF DANCE?

WE DON'T YET KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT

DANCE.

DANCE IS NOT A FINISHED PROJECT –

IT DOESN'T LIVE IN A MUSEUM.

RESEARCH. INVESTIGATION. COMPARATIVE STUDY.

WHAT ELSE MIGHT DANCE LOOK LIKE?

PHYSICAL THINKING. TECHNOLOGIES.

CORPOREAL MODALITIES FOR GENERATING AND

MODIFYING MOVEMENT.

CHANGING PARADIGMS. ENGAGEMENT. EXCELLENCE.

APPROPRIATE, SHOULD, SUPPOSED TO BE:

ARE ANTITHETICAL TO ART MAKING.

THE ARTIST AS CITIZEN.

RE-FRAME HOW DANCE IS SEEN ON CAMPUS.

CHALLENGE CONVENTIONS.

HELPING TO SHAPE DANCE EDUCATION FOR

THE 21ST CENTURY.

MAKING AN INCURSION INTO THE CULTURE.

USING THE WORLD AS INSPIRATION.

ARTICULATING THE IDEAS FOR WHICH

THERE ARE NO WORDS.

Advancing dance
literacy on campus and
for the world.

HARVARD DANCE PROJECT

The Harvard Dance Project cultivates invention and fosters the courage of artistry. This faculty-led ensemble gives students the opportunity to be original cast members and collaborators in two or more diverse dance works created by preeminent professional choreographers. The project focuses on performance research, collaboration, choreographic composition, and links choreographic thinking to other fields. It is a studio-based course which includes performances at major venues on campus.

THEATER, DANCE & MEDIA

Dance studies in the TDM interarts concentration are rooted in tradition, and committed to innovating. Courses support studies in dance composition, improvisation, performance, choreographic design, and history of dance with an emphasis on collaboration and trans-disciplinary inquiry. Opportunities to perform wide-ranging repertory, commissioned work, and installations are a focal component of coursework, and digital technology is leveraged to devise new methods for making and capturing the form. Guest artist faculty teach master classes, courses, hold residencies, and create original work each academic year, fostering exceptional opportunities for students to work with luminaries and innovators who engage diverse and dynamic perspectives in the field and in disciplines linked to dance.

HARVARD DANCE CENTER

The Harvard Dance Center's mission is artistic, academic, and civic leadership. It is a site that leads through equality and dignity for all, aims to foster agency through dance for students, and promotes the arts as agents of social change in the world.

The Dance Center is the primary venue for dance on campus. Dance offerings include curricular courses led by Dance faculty in Theater, Dance & Media, as well as non-credit Harvard community dance classes which span a wide range of genres for all levels of experiences without financial barriers. The Dance Center regularly hosts guest artists and choreographers who teach master classes and hold residencies throughout the academic year, fostering exceptional opportunities for students to work with luminaries and innovators in the field and in disciplines linked to dance.

The Dance Center partners with departments and organizations across campus to provide workshops and dialogues that address important campus and cultural issues. It provides mentorship, support, and residency opportunities for student emerging choreographers, as well as for student-led dance groups which represent over 20 traditions from across the globe.

For information on dance credit courses, non-credit classes, master classes, cyphers, performances, and more, visit:

ofa.fas.harvard.edu/dance

tdm.fas.harvard.edu/dance

DANCE STAFF AND FACULTY

Dance Director, Senior Lecturer, TDM: **Jill Johnson**
Lecturer, TDM: **Mario Alberto Zambrano**
Administrative Manager for Dance: **Liz Rosenthal**
Program Assistant for Dance: **Elizabeth Epsen**
Teaching Fellow/Rehearsal Assistant: **Whitney Cover**
Dance Intern: **Sherry Gao**

THEATER, DANCE & MEDIA

Interim Chair 2017-2018: **Sylvaine Guyot**
Chair (on leave 2017-2018): **Martin Puchner**
Dir. of Undergrad. Studies; Senior Lecturer: **Deborah Foster**
Department Administrator: **Emily Warshaw**
Production Manager: **Andrew Gitchel**
Production Coordinator: **Dana Knox**
Production Technician: **Joe Short**
Staff Assistant: **Sheryl Chen**

Harvard University encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation or have questions about the physical access provided for any Dance Center programming, please contact 617.495.8683 or dance@fas.harvard.edu in advance of your participation or visit.

For free and confidential crisis support contact:
Office for Sexual Assault and Awareness, (617) 496-5636
Boston Aea Rape Crisis Center, (617) 492-8306
Victims of Violence (VOV), (617) 591-6360

Please visit our resource table in the lobby for more information from our partners.

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