

Program Notes

The Harvard Dance Project aims to cultivate invention and foster the courage of artistry. The Project was launched in September 2013, and is a new faculty-led ensemble course which focuses on performance research, collaboration, composition, and links choreographic thinking to other fields.

This course gives students a first-hand, immersive experience in art-making with artists who are practicing in the field of dance today. Project goals, amongst many, are: to offer unprecedented opportunities to learn through and contribute to creative processes, to dance in original and repertory works in world premieres, to enable students to have an active role in advancing dance literacy on campus, expand their embodied knowledge, and to engage a deeper understanding of the reflective, cognitive and intricate aspects of creating a work of art.

Created via improvisational technologies and crowdsourcing, *SEESAW* used artifice and agnosia as thematic points of departure and texts from Confucius and René Daumal to generate movement phrases and provide governing ideas for improvisational passages in the piece.

"You cannot stay on the summit forever; you have to come down again. So why bother in the first place? Just this: What is above knows what is below, but what is below does not know what is above. One climbs, one sees. One descends, one sees no longer, but one has seen. There is an art of conducting oneself in the lower regions by the memory of what one saw higher up. When one can no longer see, one can at least still know."
-- René Daumal

"[The task of self-cultivation] might be compared to the task of building up a mountain: if I stop even one basketful of earth short of completion, then I have stopped completely. It might also be compared to the task of leveling ground: even if I have only dumped a single basketful of earth, at least I am moving forward."
-- Confucius

An Invitation

- Audience members may be asked by the dancers to move location, and are encouraged to individualize their experience by moving around the venue and viewing the piece from a variety of perspectives. Please wander.
- You are encouraged to take non-flash photography of the event.
- Feel free to share your photos and thoughts with us: dance@fas.harvard.edu | Twitter: HarvardDance | Facebook: Harvard Dance Program
- Please do not place personal items on the floor.

Credits

Choreography: Jill Johnson in collaboration with the dancers

Lighting Design: Jon Gonda

Stage Design: Jill Johnson

Costume Supervision: Mary McCarthy

Technical Supervision: Jon Gonda

Teaching Fellow: Timothy McCormack PhD '16

Music: Thom Yorke: *FeelingPulledApartByHorses*

Thom Willems: *Pas/Parts*

Simon Fisher Turner/Espen J. Jørgensen: *Tristfull*

Simon Fisher Turner/Espen J. Jørgensen: *Sur*

Thom Willems: *Yasu, Paris*

Aram Khachaturian: *Sabre Dance from "Gayaneh"*

Johann Sebastian Bach: *Prelude & Fugue No. 22*

in B-Flat Minor, BWV 867: Fugue

Thom Willems: *Room as It Was*

Dancers: Lauren Balbus '17, Irineo Cabrerros '13,

Melanie Comeau '13, Stella Gaitani MIT '10, Aru Gonzalez '14,

Bex Kwan '14, Megan Murdock '14, Sofie Rose Seymour '15,

Tsung-yun "Jamie" Tzeng EXT '13, Rossi Walter '14

Special thanks to: Katherine Agard, Eric Antoniou, Diane Borger, Patricia Breen, Maria Corniel, Deborah Foster, Anna Frappalo, Jeannette Hawley, Suzie Kardiff, Mario Leon, Jose Montecinos, Ben Philips, Matthew Plaks, Edna Powers, Amanda Reilly

Dance Program & Production Staff

Dance Director: Jill Johnson

Assistant Dance Director: Christine Bennett

Dance Associate: Marin Orlosky Radow

Costume Supervisor: Mary McCarthy

Tech Assistants: Xiomara Forbez, Jun Shepard, Selina Wu



About the Artists

Jill Johnson, Director of Dance; Senior Lecturer, Department of Music. Johnson is an innovative and accomplished dancer, choreographer, educator, and producer. She has appeared in over 50 tours and taught for dance companies and colleges, on five continents. An honors graduate of the National Ballet School, she was a soloist with The National Ballet of Canada and principal dancer and researcher with Ballet Frankfurt. A protégé and 23-year close collaborator of William Forsythe, she stages and produces his ballets on companies worldwide, including The Paris Opera Ballet, The Norwegian National Ballet, Alterballetto, Netherlands Dans Theater, Scottish Ballet, Finnish National Ballet, The National Ballet of Canada, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Boston Ballet, Batsheva Dance Company, La Scala, and American Ballet Theatre. Recent choreographic work includes *The Copier* for Cedar Lake Contemporary Ballet, which received honorable mention in *Time Out New York's* Best in Dance in 2008; and works for NYU, Movement Invention Project, Columbia University, Princeton University, and the Juilliard School. At Harvard, Ms. Johnson has choreographed original works for students including *The Art of Survival*, for Harvard's 10th Anniversary Observance of September 11th and a collaboration between the Mahindra Center for Humanities and the American Repertory Theater, in 2011, *RE: RE: RE: a dance* installation in 2011/12, and works which were a part of the curricular course The Choreographic Process of William Forsythe (Music 103r): *The Sound of Distance in Itself* in 2012, and *Dog in a Sweater* in 2013. Johnson has served on the faculty of Princeton University, Columbia University, The Juilliard School, The Joffrey School, The Ailey School, The New School University, and NYU. She is a founding collaborator of the *Movement Invention Project* in New York City. Recent projects include collaborations with Mikhail Baryshnikov and William Forsythe on a solo for Mr. Baryshnikov, and with New York City Ballet principal dancer Wendy Whelan, serving as an artistic advisor on Whelan's new solo project *Restless Creature*.

Jon Gonda is a freelance lighting designer, programmer and production manager based in Boston, MA. Recent designs include gala evenings and corporate events for companies such as Boston Ballet, New England Conservatory and High Output. He also attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he designed sets and lighting for dance and theater productions. In addition to design work, he has provided moving light programming services for a number of groups and designers including Boston Ballet, Doug Varone and Dancers, and Childsplay.

Mark Your Calendars for 2013-14

Fall 2013 Emerging Choreographers Showing

Thursday & Friday, November 14 & 15, 2013

7:00pm at Harvard Dance Center

Featuring new works by selected student Emerging Choreographers: *W(Here) We Were* by Amymarie Bartholomew GSAS, and *Ailanthus* by Rossi Lamont Walter '14. Free and open to the public.

Mikko Nissinen: Master Class

Thursday, February 6, 2014

5:00-6:30pm at Harvard Dance Center

Ballet Master Class with Boston Ballet Artistic Director Mikko Nissinen, in Studio 1. Intermediate and advanced dancers welcome. Free and open to the public.

Boston Ballet Dance Talk

Friday, February 7, 2014

7:00pm at Harvard Dance Center

Excerpts from Boston Ballet's spring performance season. Boston Ballet artistic staff will discuss the works presented. Free and open to the public.

Dance Program Spring Performances 2014

Thursday, Friday & Saturday, March 27, 28 & 29, 2014

8:00pm at Farkas Hall

The Dance Program presents an evening of contemporary dance premieres. Featuring works by three choreographers, including Jill Johnson and Blodgett Distinguished Artist-in-Residence Azure Barton.

Spring Credit Courses in Dance

Music 103r: Dance Masterwork Process: Forsythe

W/F 3:00-5:00pm at Harvard Dance Center. Jill Johnson.

A comprehensive study of a William Forsythe master work culminating in a collaborative, original dance work. A trans-disciplinary course of study that will expose students to all aspects of a master work by a preeminent American dance innovator.

Music 12hfr: The Harvard Dance Project

T/Th 3:00-6:00pm at Harvard Dance Center. Jill Johnson.

The Harvard Dance Project cultivates invention. This new faculty-led, student performance company gives students the opportunity to be original cast members and collaborators in two or more diverse dance works created by 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 at least six performances at major venues on campus.

About the OFA Dance Program

Rooted in tradition, committed to innovating, the Dance Program supports studies in dance composition, improvisation, performance, choreographic design and history of dance with an emphasis on collaboration and trans-disciplinary inquiry. The Program offers a secondary field of concentration in drama with a focus on dance; for-credit courses; co-curricular dance courses at all levels, plus opportunities to perform repertory, commissioned work, and installations. The Dance Program provides mentorship and support for student-led dance companies, a vibrant community of Harvard dancers who represent over twenty dance traditions from across the globe. The Program 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.

"If dance only does what we assume it can do, it will expire."

-- William Forsythe