

WHAT MOVES YOU?

The Harvard Dance Project
WORLD PREMIERE
HARPER - JOHNSON - ZAMBRANO
APRIL 14 - 17, 2016

In dance, we're committed to the perpetual change of our expression in order to practice and manifest choreographic thinking. We have found that asking a series of questions is one way to foment the invention of a new work. A question that we kept returning to in this process was: What moves you? This question seemed to hold the possibility for us to consider and integrate ideas of movement and mind. In particular because we wanted to examine the complexities of students' lives on campus as well as several complex issues the culture at large is currently facing.

Through insight into the constant evolution of intellect and motion in our creative process and within this piece, we wanted to offer the Harvard Dance Project student dancers deep encouragement to take ownership of their stories, the opportunity for creative agency, and a space that wholly embraced them. As painter Jack Whitten describes, we endeavored to create the conditions for our students that gave them "...structure to feeling."

And so, with a blank page, we asked them to write about what moves them. Their writings were stunning revelations into their inner lives - they wrote about their challenges, worries, pressures, and triumphs. We invited the students to translate their soliloquies into individualized movement phrases, and we had a series of intensive conversations that considered the topics they wrote and danced about. Together with additional phrases we'd generated throughout the term we collaborated with our cast to create a series of trios and improvisational response systems using our accumulation of discussions, texts, and movement phrases.

The collection of motion stories you will see and hear tonight was driven by the voices of the student artists in WHAT MOVES YOU? We are grateful for their courageous and generous collaboration. We hope you might be moved by something in these stories. Thank you for being with us tonight.

Francesca Harper, Jill Johnson, Mario A. Zambrano

Choreography: Francesca Harper, Jill Johnson, Mario A. Zambrano

Music: "I Try" original song written by Kathryn Kearney '17 and Eden Girma '18; "Gently Rest," excerpt from "Considering Matthew Shepard" by Craig Hella Johnson, performed by Conspirare

Lighting Design: Jon Gonda

Poem I: Anna Antongiorgi '19

Poem II: Anna Antongiorgi '19 and Braden Thue '16

Text: Alexandra Caffrey '19, Kayla Chen '16, Julia DeAngelo '17, Karen Huang GSAS '19, La'Toya Princess Jackson HES '18, Kathryn Kearney '17, Laurel McCaull '18, Sofie Rose Seymour '16, Braden Thue '16, Emily Thompson '18

Sound Design: Nick Jabour

Costume Supervision: Yuri Cataldo

Harvard Dance Project: Abigail Alter '19, Anna Antongiorgi '19, Lauren Balbus '17, Emily Ban GSE '16, Alexandra Caffrey '19, Kayla Chen '16, Julia DeAngelo '17, Karen Huang GSAS '19, La'Toya Princess Jackson HES '18, Kathryn Kearney '17, Tiffany Lau '19, Olivia Lee '18, Tessa Markewich '16, Laurel McCaull '18, Talia Rothstein '17, Sofie Rose Seymour '16, Braden Thue '16, Emily Thompson '18

Musical Performance: Kathryn Kearney '17

Speakers: Alexandra Caffrey '19, Kayla Chen '16, Julia DeAngelo '17, Karen Huang GSAS '19, La'Toya Princess Jackson HES '18, Kathryn Kearney '17, Laurel McCaull '18, Sofie Rose Seymour '16, Braden Thue '16, Emily Thompson '18

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ARTIST BIOS

FRANCESCA HARPER

Francesca Harper is an internationally acclaimed multi-faceted artist. She was named U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts, and performed at the White House in 1987. After performing with the Dance Theater of Harlem, she danced as a principal in William Forsythe's Ballet Frankfurt. Her Broadway credits include Fosse, The Producers, All Shook Up, The Frogs, and the Tony Award winning treasure The Color Purple. Most recently she was invited to develop a new character for Sleep No More in New York City, where she sings every week at The McKittrick Hotel as Jazz Vocalist, Cecilia Robertson. Harper has choreographed works for Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ailey II, Tanz Graz, Hubbard Street II, Dallas Black Dance Theater, and her own company, The Francesca Harper Project. The Francesca Harper Project has become the platform for Harper's own artistic vision: classical dance forms deconstructed and fused with cutting-edge text, music, film and video. The company has toured Nationally and Internationally at venues including the Holland Dance Festival, Venice Biennale, NJPAC, Impulstanz, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and The Joyce Theater. www.francescaharper.com

JILL JOHNSON

Jill Johnson is Director of Dance, Senior Lecturer, and artistic director of the Harvard Dance Project, at Harvard University. She is a 27-year veteran of the dance field; choreographs for film, television and the stage; has danced in over 50 tours on 5 continents; and was a soloist with the National Ballet of Canada and a principal dancer and researcher in William Forsythe's company Frankfurt Ballet. She stages Forsythe's work worldwide, including for Paris Opera, La Scala, Batsheva Dance Company, Norwegian National Ballet, Lyon Opera, Netherlands Dance Theater, and American Ballet Theater. Johnson is a founding collaborator of The Movement Invention Project in New York, and was recently appointed as 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 10 new works at Harvard since 2011 including, Paper Wing, Degrees of Difference, and dance installations RE: RE: RE:, and LOOK UP. Recent collaborations include those with the Harvard Choruses, Mahindra Humanities Center, Boston Ballet, San Francisco Ballet, Bravo Television in Canada, Rover UK, Crossing opera with the American Repertory Theater, Dries Van Noten film for the Louvre - Musee des Arts Decoratif, Ryuichi Sakamoto, and Mikhail Baryshnikov.

MARIO ALBERTO ZAMBRANO

Mario Alberto Zambrano is a current writer and choreographer. He danced as contemporary ballet dancer with Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Nederlands Dans Theater, Ballet Frankfurt, and Batsheva Dance Company. He graduated from The New School as a Riggio Honors Fellow and the Iowa Writers' Workshop as an Iowa Arts Fellow, where he also received a John C. Schupes Fellowship for Excellence in Fiction. Loteria, his first novel, was a Barnes and Noble Discover Great New Writer pick for Fall 2013, a finalist for the 2014 Writers' League of Texas Book Award, the 2014 John Gardner Fiction Award, The Texas Institute of Letters Book Award 2014, and the 2014 International Latino Book Award. Loteria was hailed as a best book of 2013 by Booklist, The Village Voice, School Library Journal, and San Antonio Press. His writing has appeared in Five Chapters, Guernica, Brooklyn Rail, and has been anthologized in Best Gay Stories 2014 and Narrative 4's How To Be A Man project. He has been awarded fellowships from MacDowell Colony, Yaddo, The National Endowment for the Arts, as well as Hawthornden Castle in Scotland. He is currently working on a new novel. www.marioalbertozambrano.com

ABOUT US

THE HARVARD DANCE PROJECT

The Harvard Dance Project (HDP) cultivates invention and fosters the courage of artistry. This faculty-led performance company 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 and choreographic composition, and links choreographic thinking to other fields. It is a studio-based course which includes at least 12 performances at major venues on campus each year.

OFA DANCE PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

Rooted in tradition, committed to innovating, the OFA 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 OFA Program is a part of the concentration in Theater, Dance & Media; 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.

THEATER, DANCE & MEDIA

Harvard's newest concentration invites students to become art makers and researchers ranging across theater, dance, and performance-based media. Using Harvard's immense resources, from the Theatre Collection to the Dance Center and the American Repertory Theater, students will learn to hone their creative instincts, work collaboratively in small groups, and participate in professional departmental productions. Our courses range from physical movement, directing and design to creative writing, aesthetics and digital humanities and emphasize the combination of theory, history and practice. Equally invested in technical skills and a broad liberal arts education, the concentration aims to launch a generation of graduates who will use their experience in storytelling, performance, and media for careers inside and outside the arts.

HARVARD MUSIC DEPARTMENT

The Harvard University Department of Music is devoted to the study and practice of music, and exists to provide a first-rate musical education that gives students advanced skills in music as well as knowledge of music history and repertory. The Music Department offers both an undergraduate and a graduate program. Undergraduates receive an A.B. with a concentration in music. Graduate students complete a PhD program in historical musicology, ethnomusicology, theory, composition, or cross-disciplinary music studies.

STAFF & CREW

Dance Director, Dance Program (OFA)/Theater, Dance & Media:
Jill Johnson
Administrative Manager for Dance: Erick R. Lopez
Program Assistant for Dance: Elizabeth Epsen
Production Manager: Jon Gonda
Stage Manager: Jackie Fulton
Teaching Fellow, The Harvard Dance Project: Whitney Cover