

UPCOMING PERFORMANCES

2024



Book by Joe Masteroff with Music by John Kander and Lyrics by Fred Ebb | Directed by Kym Longhi
BA Theatre Arts Program
November 15–24 | Thrust Theatre, Rarig Center

2025

THE EPIC PROJECT

Adapted and Devised by Joe Krienke and the BFA Acting Class of 2026
February 28–March 2
Kilburn Theatre, Rarig Center

UNIVERSITY DANCE
THEATRE
SPRING CONCERT

February 28–March 2
Barbara Barker Center for Dance

WITCH

By Jen Silverman | Directed by Luverne Seifert
BA Theatre Arts Program
February 28–March 8
Thrust Theatre, Rarig Center

TWELFTH NIGHT

By William Shakespeare | Directed by Ben Lohrberg
BFA Acting Class of 2027
March 27–30
Thrust Theatre, Rarig Center

MUCH ADO
ABOUT NOTHING

By William Shakespeare | Directed by Steve Cardamone
BFA Acting Class of 2027
March 28–30
Thrust Theatre, Rarig Center

THE FERRYMAN

By Jez Butterworth | Directed by Bruce Roach
BFA Acting Class of 2025
April 24–27
Park Square Theatre

DRC! A PLAY
WITH MUSIC

Directed by Erin Carik
Presented by the BA Performance Students
April 25–27
Thrust Theatre, Rarig Center



Get tickets, reserve your place, and learn more at z.umn.edu/umtadseason

University Dance Theatre

NGATHER



Choreography by:

Dr. Cynthia Oliver
Shakia “The Key” Barron
Carlo Antonio Villanueva

Supported by the
Sage Cowles Land Grant Chair

Department of
Theatre Arts & Dance
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to Discover®

thought&motion
university of minnesota dance

NO GATHER

**NOVEMBER 22–24, 2024
THE SOUTHERN THEATER**

Director

Laura Selle Virtucio

Rehearsal Directors

jess pretty

Laura Osterhaus Rosenstone

For questions about accessibility, contact:

Qiuxia Welch, (612) 625-5380, huxx0071@umn.edu

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ACTION

The Department of Theatre Arts & Dance is located on Dakota land. As an active acknowledgement of this fact, we direct \$1 per ticket revenue to Dakota organizations that work toward land recovery.

To find out more, please scan the QR code.



SAGE COWLES LAND GRANT CHAIR

Since 1987, through the generosity of Sage and John Cowles, University of Minnesota Dance has annually hosted four to six dance professionals of international renown in residencies ranging from one to ten weeks. The guests teach, choreograph new dance work, rehearse repertory, and lecture in the Department of Theatre Arts and Dance, and the Twin Cities community at large.

The Cowles Land Grant Chair connects nationally and internationally recognized artists and scholars with dance students, exposing them to contemporary artistry, masterwork and new thinking in dance studies. University of Minnesota Dance is unique for its extensive use of renowned professional artists in the education and training of students.

2024–2025 Cowles Artists & Scholars

Shakia “The Key” Barron

Dr. Imani Kai Johnson

Laja Field

Dr. Cynthia Oliver

DANCE PROGRAM FACULTY & STAFF

Director of Dance, Professor

Carl Flink

Professors

Ananya Chatterjea, Joanie Smith

Associate Professor

Cindy Garcia

Assistant Professors

jess pretty, Carlo Antonio Villanueva

Director of Undergraduate Studies

Nora Jenneman

Dance Office Manager

Shae Lingenfelder

Musician in Residence

Michelle Kinney

Technical Coordinator

Mike Grogan

Senior Teaching Specialist, Full Time

Laura Selle Virtucio

Instructional Staff

Teaching Specialist, Full Time

Cheng Xiong

Instructional Staff

Instructional Staff

Deborah Karp Castrenze, Allison Doughty, Andrea DuCane, Alexandra Eady, Kealoha Ferreira, Davente Gilreath, Cecil Neal, Laura Osterhaus Rosenstone, Eve Schulte, Yuki Tokuda, Rebecca Trost, Kristin Vanloon, Kristina Wallum, Arwen Wilder, Taja Will, Silvia Yueh

Musicians

Tarek Abdelqader, Marya Hart, Joey Hays, Eric Jensen, Toby Ramaswamy, Joseph Strachan, Dameun Strange

UNIVERSITY DANCE THEATRE STAFF

Artistic Director

Laura Selle Virtucio

Rehearsal Directors

jess pretty, Laura Osterhaus Rosenstone

Production Manager

Mike Grogan

Stage Manager

Rebecca Tanner

Crew

Ashley Hemschemeyer, Violet Redstone

MARKETING & FRONT OF HOUSE

Director

Qiuxia Welch

Marketing Associate

Ainsley Betker

Graphic Designers

Nick Nelson, Neil Standerwick

House Manager

Eliana Mitchell

WELCOME NOTES

Welcome to University Dance Theatre Fall Concert Gather Now/Now Gather.

We are thrilled to present our concert here at The Southern Theater, a long beloved space in our dance community.

Choreographers Cynthia Oliver, Carlo Antonio Villanueva, and Shakia “The Key” Barron have fueled the works on our program with joy and purpose. They invited our student artists to boldly reach inside themselves, to connect to lineage, and to dream new futures. Each choreographer’s creative practices, leadership, and centering of community will resonate with our student artists well beyond these performances.

Our student artists have devoted themselves to these works, and have held each other closely in the pursuit. We are so proud of them.

I extend deep gratitude to jess pretty and Laura Osterhaus Rosenstone, for stewarding these works as rehearsal directors, and to all of the designers and collaborators involved in bringing these works to fruition.

This production would not be possible without the careful planning of Cowles Program Coordinator Nora Jenneman, Program Administrator Shae Lingenfelder, Technical Coordinator and Lighting Designer Mike Grogan, Program Director Carl Flink, and the marketing expertise of Qiuxia Welch and her team.

And finally, thank you to The Southern Theater Staff for welcoming us into your space and supporting our production.

We look forward to connecting with you after the performance. Enjoy!

Warmly,

—Laura Selle Virtucio

ARTIST BIOS

Shakia “The Key” Barron is an accomplished choreographer, performer, and educator specializing in African Diasporic dance forms with a focus on Hip-Hop, House, and Funk styles. She currently holds the position of Class of 1929 Virginia Apgar Assistant Professor of Dance at Mount Holyoke College and serves as the Artistic Director of Kia the Key & Company. Barron is known for her passionate teaching and dedication to celebrating the roots and history of these dance forms, helping to make them more accessible within academic spaces. Barron values and aims to create possibilities for embodied connection—using movement and music to generate kinesthetic empathy for both members and guests of the cultural forms she practices and teaches. Barron is known for her passionate teaching and dedication to celebrating the roots and history of these dance forms, helping to make them more accessible within academic spaces. Barron’s performance and choreography experience is extensive. Barron has choreographed and directed more than 50 Hip-Hop, modern, African and lyrical works that have been performed at colleges, universities, and dance institutions, including Bates Dance Festival and Jacob’s Pillow. Barron has toured nationally and internationally, dancing with Face Da Phlave Entertainment, Illstyle and Peace Productions, and as a guest artist with Rennie Harris PureMovement. She was the 2019 Arthur Levitt Jr. ‘52 Artist-in-Residence at Williams College. She is a 2023 recipient of the Excellence in Teaching Award from Bates Dance Festival, and a 2024 Cowles Artist in Residence at University of Minnesota. Barron is currently preparing to showcase her evening-length work, *The Gathering*, in the summer of 2025, made possible by a Public Art for Spatial Justice Grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts.

Cynthia Oliver is a St. Croix, Virgin Island reared dance maker, performer and scholar. Her scholarly work is focused in the Anglophone Caribbean and her dance theatre constructions incorporate textures of Caribbean performance with African and American aesthetic sensibilities. She has toured the globe as a featured dancer with contemporary companies David Gordon Pick Up Co., Ronald K. Brown/Evidence, Bebe Miller Company, and Tere O’Connor Dance and as an actor in works by Laurie Carlos, Greg Tate, Lone, Ntozake Shange, and Deke Weaver. She earned a PhD in performance studies from New York University, is a New York Dance and Performance (Bessie) Award winning choreographer, a 2016 Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography Mellon Fellow, a 2017 University of Illinois Center for Advanced Studies Associate (and now CAS Professor), and 2007 University Scholar awardee. Formerly Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation in the Humanities, Arts and Related Fields at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, she is currently Special Advisor to the Chancellor for Arts Integration. Cynthia is the Gutgsell professor in Dance with affiliations in African American Studies and Gender and Women’s Studies. Oliver is a widely published author with articles in a variety of journals and edited volumes. Her single authored book is titled, *Queen of the Virgins: Pageantry and Black Womanhood in the Caribbean* (2009). Her last evening-length performance work, *Virago-Man Dem*, premiered at Brooklyn Academy of Music’s (BAM) Next Wave Festival 2017 and toured the country. She is a 2021 United States Artist, 2021 Doris Duke Artist, and a 2022 John Simon Guggenheim Fellow. www.cynthiaoliver.com IG: @olicynt

Carlo Antonio Villanueva (he/him, b. 1986) is a Filipino American performer, choreographer, and scholar. He is at home in Lenapehoking (New York, New Jersey), and newly in Bde Óta Othúnwe/Gakaabikaang (Minneapolis). Carlo’s contemporary dance work is driven by the egalitarian spirit of Judson-era postmodern dance, toward ever-deepening questions about training, aesthetic, and embodiedness in the Information Age. He currently focuses his attention on choreographic process, studio practices, performance coaching, and improvisation. Carlo holds close in his work notions of *indeterminacy of composition and performance* in his mission to de-center “the choreographer” and expand notions of dance performance labor as a mode of authorship. This season, Carlo continues international touring with choreographer Faye Driscoll’s *Weathering*. Past experiences of note include performance projects with Miriam Gabriel, Moriah Evans, Christopher Williams, and Doug Elkins; freelance stage/production management for dance; and performing, touring, and teaching as a member of the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company. Additional past credits at carloantoniovillanueva.com. Carlo is an Assistant Professor of Dance at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and a 2024–2026 OMNIVERS Artist with Red Eye Theater. He is authorized to teach Cunningham Technique by the Merce Cunningham Trust. MFA: University of Maryland; BFA: Rutgers University.



Scan to read collaborator and performer bios

Tether (Premiered 2019)

Choreography	Dr. Cynthia Oliver
Rehearsal Direction	jess pretty
Percussion and Laptop Electronics Composition and Arrangement	Jason Finkelman
Lighting Design	Mike Grogan
Costume Design	Rebecca Gardner
Dancers	Lucy Bowman, Dasani Dixon, Sophie Houdek, Nakeema King, Ella Quinn, Cayenne Ramirez, Monet Slade, Francesca Wanamaker

* This work contains mature language.

From the Choreographer:

This work is inspired by many things. First and foremost it is an acknowledgement of the sophistication of Africanist practices in the “new world.” It is inspired by double dutch—a form I did not grow up with in the Virgin Islands, but one I encountered as a young person visiting friends and relatives in the continental United States every summer I would visit. I see it as life strategy training disguised as fun. I see it as a system for fine tuning how we talk to and about one another—how we encourage and chide one another, let each other know our values, what’s at stake and who earns badass status and who might need more practice. I am interested in failure also—can what we aim for actually be done? Duration and repetition address some of these interests, but they also gesture towards divine practices and spiritual worship. These are layered, deeply structural Afro world systems that are all a part of my world and I am all for them. I invite these beautiful dancers and the audience (as I do myself) to commit to them and see what happens as we all emerge the other side.

Special Thanks:

To the UMN team—Nora, Laura, Shae, and Carl, for a wonderful residency to teach in the community and set this work. And Ananya and Carlo and the beautiful musicians who played for my class when I was in residence. My fabulous assistant jess pretty who held it down in my absence and kept things moving in my presence and absence. You are a godsend, a brilliant artist and thinker in your own right, and I adore you! To the fabulous dancers who have committed to a work that is not easy but surrendered themselves to it and my process and have made something together. And of course, to the original cast who shone so brightly in its earliest form and continue to inspire me.

PAUSE

on and on our way (2024)

Direction, Choreography	Carlo Antonio Villanueva
Rehearsal Direction	Laura Selle Virtucio
Sound Composition	Kaya Morris
Sound Design	Frederick Kennedy
Lighting Design	Mike Grogan
Costume Design	Carlo Antonio Villanueva with the cast
Performance, Choreography	Maia Bergren, Lucy Bowman, Alena Corniea, Mia Grim, Lindsey Hart, Lola LaFond, Meghan Morgan, Max Nieman, Angelina Pizarro, Ella Quinn, Olivia VanArk, Meredith Weston

From the Choreographer:

I value playfulness, in life and especially in performance. Dance is more than learning the moves and executing them successfully. Among other things, *dancing* is an opportunity to express desire and enact change. In *on and on our way*, my first work for University Dance Theatre, I devised a playground for students to make many choices as they perform. In the piece, I've given the performers some control over the choreography that plays out. Watch the performers' eyes and body language closely. Watch them sweep across the space in curved pathways around and through one another. See them seeing you, or giving you a look. Can you tell how and when they make new decisions? Again, there is more to this dance than the steps. It's chance and choice at play: indeterminacy of composition and performance. It's not all fun and games, though. Exercising choice in performance is a preparation for dynamic decision making beyond the studio and stage. In a world that does not always play fair or in our favor, and especially in times of crisis, we must be aware of the circumstances unfolding around us and ready to act and move accordingly. I once asked choreographer Raja Feather Kelly how he trains, to which he replied: "I want to be ready to run."

Special Thanks:

To the cast, thank you for your willingness to take on a performance as compositionally volatile and demanding of your attention as this work is. You bring so much of yourselves to this work in the face of newness, ambiguity, and uncertainty. It is inspiring to see you fly and to see a sparkly new dance with each run. You are stars. Thank you to Fred, Rebecca, and Mike for your support, generosity, and teachings in this process. Deepest thanks to Kaya for your warm dramaturgy and thought-partnership, and to Laura for your kind and dynamic assistance in the process.

PAUSE

ELEVATE (2024)

Choreography	Shakia "The Key" Barron
Rehearsal Direction	Laura Osterhaus Rosenstone
Music	"Get On" composed by Joshua Holmgren, "(Don't) Fade the Bells (Kia the Key Edit)," "More Fire (Kia the Key Edit)," and "Till the Drums Speak (Kia the Key Edit)" composed, performed, and produced by Jake Messina Meginsky—DJ mix by Jake Messina Meginsky
Lighting Design	Mike Grogan
Costume Design	Rebecca Gardner
Dancers	Ray Chè, Dasani Dixon, Katie Dimock, Daisi Gomez, Mia Grim, Lindsey Hart, Sophie Houdek, Nakeema King, Lola LaFond, Max Nieman (Superstudy), Cayenne Ramirez, Macy Reckward, Brett Rogers, Olivia VanArk, Francesca Wanamaker

From the Choreographer:

From the underground, we elevate—elevate these dance forms and the culture and people they come from, elevate each other, and elevate through music to the highest versions of ourselves. Beyond this moment, beyond this room.

Special Thanks:

Thank you to the University of Minnesota for the opportunity to visit, share, and create! Gratitude to Laura for being my collaborator, spending countless hours with me preparing and putting the work on these students. And a special thanks to the dancers for their commitment to learning, being challenged, and expanding!