TU Dance

presents

The 3-Women Project

with choreography by:
Stefanie Batten Bland
Alanna Morris
and Yusha-Marie Sorzano

The O'Shaughnessy at St. Catherine University
Saint Paul, MN
May 12 & 13, 2023
TU DANCE
EXCELLENCE | BELONGING | CREATIVITY | TRANSFORMATION

Founder & Artistic Director: Toni Pierce-Sands
Executive Director: Abdo Sayegh-Rodríguez
Artistic Associate: Laurel Keen
Production/Stage Manager and Lighting Designer: Garvin Jellison
Costume Designer: Stephanie Karr Smith

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR’S NOTE

As founder and artistic director of TU Dance I have had the opportunity and honor to see work being crafted and developed from the studio to the stage. Through The 3-Women Project I have been reminded of how the craft of choreography can be a conduit for a deep knowing of oneself and the legacy of ancestral guidance. I am forever grateful to Stefanie Batten Bland, Alanna Morris and Yusha-Marie Sorzano who have all shared their artistry and desire to create dances through their own lens as black and brown women.

I hope that you will enjoy The 3-Women Project and find it to be a thought-provoking and moving experience.

ABOUT TU DANCE

TU Dance is known for its diverse artistic performances tackling important questions around gender, race, social justice, history, human resilience, and more. Founded in 2004, TU Dance has received dozens of accolades and awards while touring nationwide. Under the artistic direction of Toni Pierce-Sands, TU Dance continues to be a leading dance company in the Twin Cities. Through celebrated performances of the professional company and accessible dance education at TU Dance Center, TU Dance provides opportunities for everyone to experience the connective power of dance.

The School at TU Dance Center was formed in 2011, realizing the vision for an educational program committed to access and excellence. The School shares TU Dance Center with the professional company, providing unparalleled opportunities for students of all ages to learn from working dancers, seasoned faculty, and distinguished guest artists who are frequently in residence with the company. The School is organized in three divisions: the Children & Teen Program introduces the joy of creative movement and beginning dance technique; the Pre-Professional Program trains aspiring dancers up to age 23 who are considering dance careers; and the Adult/Open Program welcomes everyone to join individual classes in a range of techniques including ballet, modern and African dance.

The School at TU Dance Center has served nearly more than 4,000 students and has provided $719,000 in scholarships through the TU Dance Access Fund and various grants.

For more information, go to www.tudance.org.
These performances are dedicated to Beverly Cottman, our beloved teacher, dancer, artist and storyteller of African fables and African-American folk tales.

“A story that makes you feel as if you can do anything, that you have the ability to reach and surpass your goals, or that you have the wisdom of the ancestors pushing you forward with love, is perhaps the most powerful tool of storytelling.” -Beverly Cottman

**Summon**

Concept by: Toni Pierce-Sands  
Music: Jess Pierce

Gabrielle Abram, Mikaela Brandon, Sa’Nah Britt, Laren Chang, Morgan Cogley, Suzette Gilreath, Kaitlyn Hawkins, Samantha Meryhew, Anna Pinault, Keri Prokopidis, Elliana Vesely

**Look Who’s Coming to Dinner**

Choreographic Direction: Stefanie Batten Bland  
Remount by: Latra A. Wilson  
Music: Paul Damian Hogan  
Costumes based on an original design by Shane Ballard

Gabrielle Abram, Mikaela Brandon, Sa’Nah Britt, Kaitlyn Hawkins, Samantha Meryhew, Anna Pinault, Elliana Vesely

~INTERMISSION~
Fuh Me, You come Fuh Me. Soon Come!

Choreographer: Yusaha-Marie Sorzano, pronounced Ooo-sha

Music Credits:
Back Home by Andre Tanker; Morena Osha by The Marionettes Chorale; Evolving and Original; Composition by Christophe Filippi; Erupting Light by Hildur Guðnadóttir & Jóhann Jóhannsson; Phantom Thread IV by Johnny Greenwood & Daniel Pioro; Interlude by Andre Tanker; Forward Home by Andre Tanker

Gabrielle Abram, Mikaela Brandon, Sa’Nah Britt, Laren Chang, Morgan Cogley, Suzette Gilreath, Kaitlyn Hawkins, Samantha Meryhew, Anna Pinault, Keri Prokopidis, Elliana Vesely

Choreographer’s Note

I would like to thank my mentor and friend Toni Pierce-Sands for the magic she has brought and continues to bring to my life. For pushing me to take leaps I could not yet see myself landing — for showing me what it looked like to soar, with humility, wonder, and reverence for this great art form that we hold so dear.

And to my parents, Rosslyn and Chester Muirhead, thank you for always keeping and lifting up our caribbean culture in our home. Fuh me, you are the heart!

~ PAUSE ~

Pèlé Pèlé!

Choreographic Direction: Alanna Morris
Choreographer: Alanna Morris and dancers
Assistant to the Choreographer: Canaan Mattson
Sound Editing: Alanna Morris and Canaan Mattson

Music Credits / Composers:
I’m Every Woman by Chaka Khan and Whitney Houston; Ama Ata Aidoo speaking; Reading of the Tao Te Ching by Stephen Mitchell; Vibrant color by Chihei Hatakeyama and Hakobune; Your Voice by Caiiro and AWEN; Eartha Kitt interview with Terry Wogan; Aye by Mikaela Brandon and ensemble

Section 1: I’m +Every Woman [Performance Studies]
Section 2: Mikaela and Laren: Dual Nature
Section 3: Human Nature
Section 4: Your Voice (Anna solo: I am free)
Section 5: Anna and Kaitlyn: Share Me
Section 6: Aye

Gabrielle Abram, Mikaela Brandon, Sa’Nah Britt, Laren Chang, Morgan Cogley, Suzette Gilreath, Kaitlyn Hawkins, Samantha Meryhew, Anna Pinault, Keri Prokopidis, Elliana Vesely
Choreographer’s Note

*Pəlẹ Pəlẹ* is a deep dive through the depths of ourselves through Self study and observance. We invite a practice of internal softness/rigor that is then manifested in our relationships with others and with Spirit.

“Pəlẹ” is a common Yoruba phrase that can mean something like, “sorry” or “condolences” after experiencing an accident or a loss. More deeply, however, this phrase connotes a wish for someone to go easy and gently on themselves when experiencing discomfort or pain.

It is my prayer to cultivate a life that is the embodiment of this value, both within myself and my relationship with others. This piece is dedicated to my eternal love, Kọlápọ Abimbọlá.
Toni Pierce-Sands (Founder & Artistic Director) Prior to co-founding TU Dance, Minnesota native Toni Pierce-Sands performed with Minnesota Dance Theatre, Tanz Forum in Germany, Rick Odums in Paris, and Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, where she was a featured soloist in such signature pieces as *Revelations*, *Cry* and *Rainbow Round My Shoulder*. Her command of the Horton Technique has led to teaching posts throughout the United States and Europe. Toni directs programming and teaches classes at TU Dance Center in Saint Paul. She was a full-time core faculty member at the University of Minnesota for twenty years and also served as Director of University Dance Theatre. Toni has been featured in COSMOPOLITAN Germany and GQ publications, the American Express Alvin Ailey commercial, and the Lester Horton Technique instructional DVD series. She has written columns for Dance Studio Life magazine on various pedagogical approaches for modern dance. Toni was awarded a 2004 McKnight Artist Fellowship in Dance, named the Sage Awards’ “2011 Leadership Training and a panelist for the 2018 Dance Miami Choreographers’ Program. She currently serves as a member of the University of Minnesota’s Northrop Advisory Board.

Laurel Keen (Artistic Associate) received her early dance training from Minnesota Dance Theater, School of American Ballet in New York, Dance Aspen School and Pacific Northwest Ballet School in Seattle. She spent a decade alongside Alonzo King as a company member with LINES Ballet, where she originated 21 roles, toured extensively throughout the U.S. and internationally, earned the Princess Grace Award, the Chris Hellman Dance Award and an Isadora Duncan Dance Award. Laurel returned to Minnesota in 2011 and earned her degree as a physical therapist assistant from St. Catherine University while simultaneously developing her skills as a dance teaching artist in the Twin Cities and with LINES. She served as school director for The School at TU Dance Center from 2015-2021 and since expanding her own family over the past few years has transitioned to Artistic Associate with TU Dance, working closely on professional artistic projects and with *CULTIVATE, A Trainee Program*. She is drawn to working with artists who share the goals of curiosity, discovery and transformation.

Stefanie Batten Bland (Choreographer) 2023 Creative Capital Awardee and 2022 BAM NEXT WAVE commissioned artist, Stefanie Batten Bland a global maker exhibits a unique blend of African American flamboyance and European sensibility. She situates her work at the intersection of immersive & dance-theatre in live and cinematic settings. Based in New York City, she founded Company SBB in France in 2008 and is a longstanding Baryshnikov Arts Center artist in residence. KOLONIAL, her 2021 dance film, has won 13 film festival awards and was nominated for three Bessies. SBB is Casting, and Movement Director for Emursive’s McKittrick productions, serves as Performance and Identity Consultant for Sleep No More, Movement Director for Eve’s Song, Public Theater. SBB was Head Choreographer of the Paris Opera Comique. As a performer, Batten Bland has danced for Pina Bausch Tanztheater Wüppertal, PunchDrunk, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, Compagnie Georges Momboye, Compagnie Linga and Pal Frenak. SBB received her MFA in interdisciplinary arts (concentration performance creation) from Goddard College, is an Assistant Professor at Montclair State University's Department of Theatre and Dance, and lives in SoHo with her family.  

* Dance Magazine  
* Inclusive Immersive Theatre Matters

Alanna Morris (Choreographer) is a Dancer-Choreographer, Educator, and Artist Organizer. Morris danced with TU Dance in St. Paul, Minnesota under Artistic Directors, Toni Pierce-Sands and Uri Sands from 2007–2017. They were featured in works by Kyle Abraham, Gioconda Barbuto, Camille A. Brown, Ronald K. Brown, Gregory Dolbashian, Katrin Hall, Francesca Harper, Dwight Rhoden, and Uri Sands over their career. In 2020, Alanna served as the company’s Artistic Associate and is a founding teaching artist at the School at TU Dance Center. In 2018 Alanna was named Dance Magazine’s “25 to Watch!” In 2019, Minneapolis’ City Pages’ *Artist of the Year* and *Best Choreographer* for their solo, “*Yam, Potatoo an Fish!*** They have received fellowships from the McKnight Foundation for Dance (2015) and Choreography (2021) and Springboard Danse Montreal.
Darius curated Leaders Division recipient founding Barbara Brown’s Project. (2022). Morris is the Artistic Director of I.A.M. Arts, founded in 2017 to support critical dance performance, wholistic arts education, and community life. Morris is currently developing a thesis around the divinity of black-ness and the eternal validity of the soul, Black Light, a methodology, praxis and a performance art project being researched in phases over multiple years through collaborative solo performance, teaching and residency. Morris is currently touring Let The Crows Come, dir by Ashwini Ramaswamy. She is a Visiting Professor of Dance at Carleton College and a graduate of the Juilliard School and LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and the Performing Arts (NYC).

Yusha-Marie Sorzano (Choreographer) Originally from the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Yusha-Marie Sorzano is a relentless performing artist, choreographer, educator, and mentor who has worked in concert dance, theater, television, and film. She received her primary instruction from New World School of the Arts, Armour Dance Theatre, and The Dance Theater of Harlem. A YoungArts Foundation winner in dance, Ms. Sorzano went on to attend the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program and in her junior year was invited to join Ailey II. She has been a member of Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Morphoses, TU Dance, and BODYTRAFFIC. She has also performed as a guest artist with Benjamin Millepied’s LA Dance Project. Ms. Sorzano is currently a member of Camille A. Brown & Dancers, where she is part of the original cast of the Bessie-nominated Black Girl: Linguistic Play, and Ink, the 2nd and 3rd installments of Brown’s acclaimed trilogy on race, culture, and identity. As a choreographer, Ms. Sorzano has created works for dance companies including The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Ballet Idaho, Santa Barbara Dance Theater, Festival Ballet, Moving Arts, and Zeitgeist Dance Theatre, where she is a founding Co-Artistic Director. She is currently a part of the creative team for Jeannette, a new musical and the choreographer of famed American rapper RZA’s, Ballet Through Mud. Ms. Sorzano has been the recipient of an Alvin Ailey Organizations New Directions Choreography Fellowship, a National YoungArts Foundation Dance Artist Fellowship, a Watermill Center Fellowship, and a Jerome Robbins Dance Division Research Fellowship at the New York Public Library. In 2021, she was nominated by a panel of leaders in the concert dance world, including artistic directors Virginia Johnson of Dance Theatre of Harlem and Lourdes Lopez of Miami City Ballet to join the 2021 cohort of ‘Female Choreographers of Color in Ballet‘ — a collaboration with Dance Lab New York and The Joyce Foundation. Deeply passionate about the powerful role that educators play in the lives of young artists, Ms. Sorzano enjoys teaching and mentoring aspiring artists around the world. She currently serves as the Interim BFA Program Director in the School of Dance at California Institute of the Arts (CalArts).

Latra Ann Wilson (Choreographer’s Assistant) credits include: Primary Stages (NY) Here Arts Center (NY), The Public Theatre (NY), Taylor 2 (NY), Opera Theatre of St. Louis (MO). Ms. Wilson is a Teaching artist at Alvin Ailey Arts in Education, MMAC & Kansas City Ballet School. Ms. Wilson Assistant credits: Eve’s Song with Stefanie Batten Bland, Dance Lab New York with Josh Prince. Ms. Wilson is the Co-founder of TheDynamiteExperience Dance Project. Ms. Wilson has a BFA from University Missouri of Kansas City and recently Certified as a L1 Gyrotonic Instructor

Canaan Mattson (Choreographer’s Assistant) is a transdisciplinary artist with a practice rooted in movement performance and photography. Mattson trained at Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists and is an alum of the school at TU Dance in 2017. During his time in the school at TU Dance, Mattson received a full-scholarship to attend the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Summer Intensive in 2016. Mattson has choreographed and performed work in Choreographers’ Evening 2014: Curated by Kenna-Camara Cottman, as well as co-choreographing and performing works in Body Prayers: Choreographers’ Evening Special Edition curated by DejaJoelle, and Choreographers’ Evening 50th Anniversary: Curated by Judith Howard and Alanna Morris. In addition Mattson has performed works by Uri Sands, Alanna Morris, Laurel Keen, Darius Strong, SHAPESHIFT, Meridian Movement Co., and Nicholas Villeneuve.
Jess Pierce (Musician) is a dedicated advocate on behalf of youth. JESS believes that it is important for young people to feel heard and empowered. Nurturing her clients artistic expression helps generate a sustainable living. When not on the front line advocating and assisting young people, she is making music. Drummer + Singer + Songwriter. Jess-Pierce.com

Garvin Jellison (Production Manager/Lighting Designer) is a freelance production manager and designer. A former dancer himself, clients include James Sewell Ballet, Minnesota Dance Theatre, Katha Dance Theatre, Black Label Movement, and Ballet Minnesota. Nationally, Garvin has worked in production management and lighting with Wild Kratts Live, Innovations Arts & Entertainment, Hubbard Street 2, Alonzo King LINES Ballet, and Joffrey Ballet. Garvin holds a BFA in lighting design from The Theatre School at DePaul University, and is Head Electrics at The Cowles Center for Dance.

Stephanie Karr Smith (Costume Designer) is a former professional dancer with Minnesota Dance Theater and Ballet of the Dolls. She is a recipient of the McKnight Dancer Achievement Award in 1999. Soon after she started costume collaborations, construction and design for the Dolls, Avada, Glamorama, James Sewell Ballet and now happy to collaborate with Toni Pierce-Sands for TU Dance.

Sarah Bellamy (Moderator) is a nationally renowned racial healing coach and facilitator. Her methods are holistic, profound, and bring a wealth of scholarship, strategic acuity, and deep compassion to consultative and coaching relationships. Her writing focuses on memoir, personal essays, plays, and short stories. She is a stage director and the president of Penumbra, a center for racial healing that houses one of the nation’s oldest and largest African American theatre companies. Sarah is a graduate of Sarah Lawrence College and holds an M.A. in the Humanities from the University of Chicago. She has taught at Macalester College, the University of Minnesota, and served as Visiting Professor of Theatre and Culture at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. She is a skilled and dynamic public speaker offering audiences fresh, big-hearted, and courageous perspectives on a wide range of topics. She is especially recognized for her work on racial healing, authenticity, and leadership. Sarah has been awarded the Hubert H. Humphrey Public Leadership Award, a Bush Foundation Fellowship, and served on the Board of Directors for Theatre Communications Group. She currently serves on the Board of Directors for The Jerome Foundation. She lives in St. Paul, Minnesota with her husband and two small children. More at www.sbellamy.com

THE ARTISTS

Gabrielle Abram (CULTIVATE Trainee) is a Gary, Indiana native, and a 2020 Momentum New Dance Works Fellow. She is a self-taught, multi-lingual Hip Hop artist who has received training in Ballet, Modern, West African, and Jazz at The Perpich Center for Arts and Education, TU Dance Center, and received a scholarship to attend the ARENA Dances Summer Intensive. Abram attended Columbia College Chicago for one year then returned to the Twin Cities to work as a professional Dancer, Choreographer, and Producer. She has performed works by local and international choreographers including Mathew Janczewski, Alanna Morris, Orlando Hunter, Marciano Silva Dos Santos, and Nildinha Fonseca (Brazil). She has danced at The O'Shaughnessy, The Southern Theater, and The Cowles Center for Dance & Performing Arts. An active artist in the Twin Cities' Hip-Hop community, Abram has danced in productions including Mixtape Volumes 1-5, and Rooted: Hip Hop Choreographers' Evening. Abram made history as the first black woman to teach American Jazz Dance at the University of Minnesota in September of 2020. Gabrielle is a member of STRONGMovement, directed by Darius Strong, and Atlantis13 Dance Collective, directed by Peace Madimutsa and Johnathan Van Arman. In 2018, Abram co-produced “Listen.” at The Lab Theater—a
collective of 9 choreographers sharing Pan-African perspectives and personal stories of black identity. In November of 2021, Abram made her choreographic debut with “Release” set on The Threads Dance Project as a Tapestries Choreographer. Gabrielle along with business partner Rayna Howard created BGC Productions; a film and media production company dedicated to creating, collaborating, and producing art that elevates and inspires black and POC Artists. Abram continues to produce, dance, and create work in the Twin Cities.

Mikaela Brandon is a performing artist (SAG-AFTRA) originally from Warren, NJ. She is a graduate of the Ailey/Fordham BFA Program, Hubbard Street Professional Training Program (HSPro), and is in the process of completing Sonic Yoga NYC’s 300Hr Yoga Teacher Training Program. Additionally, she has studied at Dance Lab New York, Springboard Danse Montréal, TL Collective, Ballet Hispánico, and Debbie Allen Dance Academy. Mikaela has worked closely with choreographers such as Helen Simoneau, Jennifer Archibald, Bradley Shelver, Adam Barruch, and Cleo Mack, amongst many others. She has performed works by Alvin Ailey, Robert Battle, Matthew Rushing, Amy Hall-Garner, Rena Butler, Fernando Melo, Gregory Dolbashian, Darshan Bhuller, Khensani Mathebula and more at the following venues: Ailey Citigroup Theater, David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center, Usine C, NJPAC, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Studebaker Theater, and Logan Center for the Arts. Mikaela has worked as an actor for 15+ years within TV/film, commercials/music videos, industrials, and site-specific projects. She has also been a choreographer/educator with the following organizations: The Ailey School, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Hubbard Street Dance Center, Mckoy Dance Project || MDP, and Coalesce Dance Collective. During COVID-19, Mikaela volunteered with Dance Artists’ National Collective (DANC) to help provide equitable, sustainable working conditions for dancers within the field. Currently, Mikaela continues to explore her body through various movement/somatic practices, concepts of philosophy/psychology, as well as poetry/spoken word. She enjoys investigating herself as an energetic being in space, using the breath as a tool for expression, connection, and understanding. For more, please visit www.ms-b.me.

Sa’Nah Britt (CULTIVATE Trainee), born in the Twin Cities, began her journey at The School at TU Dance Center as a student in 2014. She graduated from the Perpich Arts High School in 2020 and has continued to pursue and shape her passion at TU Dance as a pre-professional student and most recently as a teaching artist for the school, where she strives to inspire and encourage other young artists. During her time at TU Dance, Sa’Nah has performed in various works by Marcus Jarrell Willis, Gregory Dolbashian, Ronald K. Brown, Laurel Keen, Alanna Morris, Abdo Sayegh-Rodriguez, Darrius Strong, Maurya Kerr, Leila Awadallah, Alia Kache, and Yusha-Marie Sorzano. Her training has included a variety of techniques including African, ballet, modern, jazz, improvisation, krump and contemporary. Sa’Nah is known for her ability to embrace a choreographers’ vision and present it in a way that is both unique and captivating. She looks forward to other opportunities where she can continue to grow and develop as an artist.

Laren Chang (CULTIVATE Trainee) is a contemporary dancer from Afton, Minnesota. Dance is and will always be Laren’s first love. Her passion began at the age of three with Phipps Dance Center for the Arts. For high school, Laren attended Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists while also attending The School at TU Dance Center full time. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance from the University of Iowa where she graduated with high distinction. Laren was also a receiver of the ICA talent scholarship and toured in the pre-professional University of Iowa Dancers in Company. Most recently, Laren finished a post graduate professional program with Copenhagen Contemporary Dance School where she got to work with choreographers all over Europe while also touring with Copenhagen International Dance Festival. This summer Laren had the pleasure to be invited to participate in workshops at B12 Contemporary Dance Festival in Berlin. Laren is thrilled to be back in the wonderful community at TU Dance as a founding member of CULTIVATE and cast member of The 3-Women Project.
Morgan Cogley is a Twin Cities based performing artist who began her dance training in Sioux Falls, SD. She graduated from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in the spring of 2022, holding a BA in Dance and a BS in Psychology. During her time in school, she spent 2 years dancing and choreographing for Crash Dance Production's pre-professional company, CDP2. Since graduating, Morgan has joined on as a company member with Crash Dance Productions, where she has contributed as a dancer, teacher, and choreographer. In addition, she has had the pleasure of working with various artists around the Twin Cities, including Hatch Dance, Honeyworks, Shapiro & Smith Dance, and Corpus Callosum Dance Project. Morgan has also worked in collaboration with dance artist, Kaitlyn Hawkins, choreographing and producing, “Down to the Bone”, which premiered in the Twin Cities at the Southern Theater in 2022. This is her first project with TU dance.

Suzette Jornae Gilreath (CULTIVATE Trainee) is a twin cities native. Born and raised in Minnesota, she is currently a dance artist based in MN. As of May 2020, she received her B.A. in Dance and American Sign Language from the University of Minnesota - Twin Cities. Jornae is a virtuosic, versatile, and curious mover. She began her dance training at Saint Paul Conservatory for Performing Artists and TU Dance at the age of 16. She is classically trained in Classical Ballet, Contemporary Ballet, Modern and African, with experience in street style Hip-hop, and Heels. As an alumna from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities’s Dance Program, she has been taught under the instruction of Carl Flink, Toni Pierce-Sands, Ananya Chatterjea and Erin Thompson. Through her dance training, she has obtained a greater understanding of the relationship dance has with the world, globally and internationally. Over the past five years, Jornae has gained professional dance experience by training and performing with Twin Cities-based companies Contempo Physical Dance and STRONGmovement. She has also performed works by Kenna Cottman, Sidra Bell, Gregory Maqoma, Leslie Parker and Robert Moses. She had chosen to learn American Sign language as a second language requirement and fell deeply in love with D/deaf culture and the language. ASL has shifted her artist praxis, how she interacts with the world, ethnically, culturally, and spiritually. Jornae’s work is approached through an intersectional lens. Through aligning her multitude of identities and practices, she cultivates composition and projects that focus on enlightening the world to see who they are, and how we are all connected to the source. Her mission is to transform, inform, and inspire through art and human exchange.

Kaitlyn Hawkins graduated with a BFA in Dance and a BS in Health & Wellbeing Sciences from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities in 2022. Kaitlyn is a company member with Shapiro & Smith Dance and Christopher Watson Dance Company. She has been a performance artist with Honeyworks, Contempo Physical Dance, Alexandra Bodnarchuk Dance Projects, Black Label Movement and the 2022 Live @ the SHED performance directed by Honeyworks and Hatch Dance. In addition to her modern, contemporary, and ballet training, she has had the opportunity to participate in the Limón Dance Company Summer Intensive, Gallim Winter Intensive and the New York GagaLab. This is her first project with TU Dance.

Samantha Meryhew (CULTIVATE Trainee), a Saint Paul native, began her dance journey in 2011, where she started her training towards her professional career as part of the first generation of The School at TU Dance Center. After Graduating in 2019 from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, with a Bachelor of Art in Dance and Art, Samantha joined TU Dance as an Apprentice. She danced with the company in renowned works such as Night Creature, choreographed by Alvin Ailey, that was restaged by Ronni Favors for TU Dance in 2019. She has also been a guest artist with Shapiro and Smith Dance performing in their production of "Bolero" in the Spring of 2017 and 2018. She joined the company in 2021 and has performed in the works Ferdougandali, Moonlight, and Burning Air. In the spring of 2022, she returned to TU Dance as a Guest Artist in Sensible Existence, choreographed by Marcus Jarrell Willis. She also has performed in works by Garth Fagan, Brian Brooks, and Kjara Staric Wurst. She is proficient in classical and contemporary ballet, modern, and
African dance. Noted often as a hard worker and a quick learner, she strives to delve deep into the physicality and emotional nuances of the movement presented to her.

Anna Pinault was raised in Minnesota, she has worked as a dance artist and educator in New York City for the past decade. At the end of 2022 she moved back to the Twin Cities to pursue the next season of her creative work. Anna’s most recent work includes the premier of Ashwini Ramaswamy’s Invisible Cities, as well as projects with TU Dance Company, Joe Chvala’s Flying Foot Forum, Rovaco Dance Company, and the Des Moines Metro Opera. Her work as an educator has included Dance Theatre of Harlem, The Neighborhood Playhouse, Daya Yoga Studio, the NYC Public School System, Zenon Dance School, Hothouse Minneapolis, and the TU Dance Center, among others. Anna also practices Thai Bodywork, and is studying for her MS in Human Movement Science. Her passion for bodily education spills into both her teaching and artistic work. Her current creations explore the creation of imagery and architecture by transposing rhythm and other musical languages onto the body. Website: www.annapinault.com  Instagram: @anna_pinault

Keri Prokopidis graduated from Point Park University with a BA in Dance. After graduating, she participated in OPUS 1 – 8th international competition of young dance performers, in Slovenia, where she became a winner of the production award and was invited to perform in Murska Sobota for 11th Front Festival. She had a 3 month residency in Slovenia where she created, taught and traveled the country exploring dance. She has performed in theaters and museums around the world including the Getty, Museo Agua and Museu Coleção Berardo. She has also performed site specific works in Los Angeles for Mecca Vazie Andrews and Jay Carlon. Throughout Southern California, she has also danced with Maura Townsend, Irishia Hubbard and Jet Dagdag.

Elliana Vesely is a Twin Cities, MN based dance artist who grew up in a small town in Northern Wisconsin. As of May of 2020, she holds a B.A. in dance from the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. She complemented this degree with studies in biology and health & wellness promotion, receiving minors in both. While at the U of M, Elliana was cast in works by acclaimed artists; Leah Nelson, Joan Smith, Robert Moses, Eko Supriyanto, Kjara Wurst and Carl Flink. While in school, she also had the pleasure of working with Crash Dance Company, Shapiro and Smith Dance and performed in the 2018 North-Central American College Dance Association Gala. Elliana is honored to have been a recipient of the Beth Hope Suran Scholarship (2016-2020) and the Jean Congdon Scholarship (2019-2020). She is ecstatic to be dancing with Shapiro and Smith Dance, Black Label Movement, and ARENA Dances as a company member. Elliana has most recently toured with Burning Air by Shapiro and Smith Dance and run with me by ARENA Dances.

ABOUT CULTIVATE, A TRAINEE PROGRAM

Inspired by the next generation of dance artists, CUL-TI-VATE is a program designed as a bridge for dancers with advanced training between their educational perspective and envisioning themselves in the professional field. Through classes, workshops, choreographic processes, mentorship, community engagement, teaching, performance and more, dancers will connect and share experiences as a collective as well as expressing and gaining momentum towards their individual interests and goals beyond their time in the program. CUL-TI-VATE will embrace and support each dancer while fostering their unique artistic path centered in TU Dance’s values of excellence, belonging, creativity and transformation.
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Rafina Larsen (Treasurer), Sara McGrane, Neeraj Mehta (Vice Chair), Anne Parker (Secretary), Toni Pierce-Sands (Ex-Officio), Abdo Sayegh-Rodriguez (Ex-Officio), Andrew Troup (Chair), Joseph Zachmann

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Executive Director: Abdo Sayegh-Rodriguez
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TU Dance is grateful to the following institutions and foundations for their invaluable support:

![Logos of various foundations and institutions]

**The Bob and Kathie Goodale Legacy Foundation**

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**The 3-Women Project** is sponsored by KFAI Radio

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We are very grateful for the generosity of individuals for their support of TU Dance. To view a list of our donors please [click here](tudance.org/giving). For information on how you can support TU Dance, please visit tudance.org/giving or contact Abdo Sayegh Rodriguez at 651-724-9708 or abdo.sayegh@tudance.org. TU Dance is a non-profit organization participating in the Thrivent Choice Dollars, PayPal Giving Fund and Amazon Smile programs.

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LYRICS: *Fuh Me, You come Fuh Me, Soon Come!*

**BACK HOME**

I went away I leave an I come back home
I come back to stay
I must see me way

I went away I leave an I come back home
I come back to stay
I must see me way

I went away looking for another home
I try to run away, run way from my destiny
In another world, a world that was strange to me
I try to change myself, change my identity
But strong is the power of love, and the power of freedom
The power of blackness fills my heart yeah

Strong is the power of love, the power of freedom
The power of blackness fills my heart yeah

I went away I leave an I come back home
I come back to stay
I must see me way

I went away I leave an I come back home
I come back to stay
I must see me way

I went away looking for another home
I try to run away, run way from my destiny
In another world, a world that was strange to me
I try to change myself, change my identity
But strong is the power of love, and the power of freedom
The power of blackness fills my heart yeah

Strong is the power of love, and the power of freedom
The power of blackness fills my heart yeah.

Oh shoe, eh shoe falling...
MORENA OSHA
By Andre Tanker

There's a beautiful woman always dressed in black
She just went for water around a winding track
She's a spirit of beauty, strong yet gentle being
She walks on this planet like some kind of queen.

Then Morena Osha, aye, aya
She moves like the wind so free over land and rolling sea
Sweet Morena Osha, aye, aya
Always with her rhythmic beat moving down the street.

Morena Osha, aye, aya, Morena Osha, aye, aya
Morena Osha, aye, aya, sweet Morena Osha, aye, aya.

See the fall of evening, feel a cooling breeze
Red and yellow drifting west, green and golden trees
Hear the sound of drummers cracking through the night
Hear them sing the song for Osha 'round a firelight.

Then Morena Osha, aye, aya
She moves like the wind so free over land and rolling sea
Sweet Morena Osha, aye, aya
Always with her rhythmic beat moving down the street
Morena Osha, aye, aya, Morena Osha, aye, aya
Sweet Morena Osha, aye, aya, Morena Osha, aye, aya.

Interlude
"I went away, I leave an I come back home is about self realization. It's not really about going anywhere. It's about being educated out of your environment and um, and rediscovering yourself, the things around you, the older people." ~Andre Tanker

FORWARD HOME
By Andre Tanker (1941-2003)

The lyrics below were transcribed from the version released in the 1996 album, "Children of the Big Bang". That version was expanded and there are differences, for example, “forward” is used instead of “come back”.

I went away looking for another home
I try to run away, run way from my destiny
In another world, a world that was strange to me
I try to change myself, change my identity
But strong is the power of love, the power of freedom
The power black music fills my heart yeah
I forward to stay.
Chorus:
I went away, I leave and I forward home
I forward to stay, I must see mih way.
I went away, I leave and I forward home
I forward to stay, I must see mih way.

I went away through clouds and through falling mist
Multinational galaxies floating on inflated bliss
Through timeless loops, distortions and harmonies
And people like octo melodies, some with double agent strategies
And strong is the power of love, the power of freedom
The power black music fills my heart, yeah, yeah
I forward to stay.

Chorus:
I went away, I leave and I forward home
I forward to stay, I must see mih way.
I went away, I leave and I forward home
I forward to stay, I must see mih way.

[I went away] Yes, I pack my bundle
[I went away] Forward in the concrete jungle
[I went away] Was so cold!
[I went away] Early in the morning, no one to hold your hand
No one to understand. Yeah, yeah
When the blues gets you down
When the blues gets you down, down, down.

I had to forward home [Forward home]
Yes, I forward home [Forward home]
Yes, I forward home [Forward home]
And when I clear the airport and I make the highway
And I heard the sound of drums coming from the hills
I follow the sound of drums, I went into a yard
A lady told me, she say, "Son."
Point me to the four corners of the universe
And she rubbed my head with oil
And I knelt down and give thanks now.

Aye ayure, ayana o le le, aye ayure, ayana o le le
[Aye ayure, ayana o le le, aye ayure, ayana o le le]
Aye ayure, ayana o le le, aye ayure, ayana o le le

Chorus:
I went away, I leave and I forward home
I forward to stay, I must see mih way.
I went away, I leave and I forward home
I forward to stay, I must see mih way.
[Forward home, forward home]
[Forward home, forward home]

[Strong is the power of love, strong is the power of love]
[Strong is the power of love, strong is the power of love]

[Forward home, forward home]
[Forward home, forward home]