

presented by TAPESTRY DANCE COMPANY

SOUL 24TH FESTIVAL

ANNUAL FESTIVAL

June 19th - 23rd
Austin Texas

S2S Festival Artists

Bril Barrett
Elizabeth Burke
Skip Cunningham
Acia Gray

Tony Merriwether
Sarah Reich
Karissa Royster
Dianne Walker

JUST FRIENDS! FACULTY CONCERT

Saturday, June 22nd @ 8pm

- Rollins Theatre / The Long Center

Performance tickets available at tapestry.org or thelongcenter.org

TAPESTRY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Libbi Toye Sampleton, President

Sandy Stewart, Vice President/Treasurer

Ashley Davis, Secretary

Deirdre Strand

Mark Kazanoff

Though dance, music, and art we empower individuals to take authentic action toward making the world a better place.

Tapestry is a multi-form dance center with a variety of dance classes, performances, and collaborations. We cater to all levels of dancers, patrons of the arts, and all styles of dance. We like to play at the intersections of dance, music, and art around the world and across Austin, Texas. Join our community and start weaving dance into your life.

Rhythm Is Life. Let's Do It Together!

TAPESTRY OPERATIONS

Co-Founders

Acia Gray & Deirdre Strand

Executive / Artistic Director

Acia Gray

Resident Production Designer

Stephen Pruitt



ABOUT TAPESTRY DANCE

As a resident company of The Long Center since 2008, Tapestry is a professional, non-profit dance organization founded in 1989 by rhythm tap dancer Acia Gray and ballet/jazz artist Deirdre Strand for the purpose of developing a foundation in multi-form dance performance and education. Initially, a performing company of three, the organization expanded to a professional company of seven resident artists, a diversified administrative and production support staff and a pre-professional and adult training facility in Austin, TX sharing the unique Strand/Gray training syllabus.

In 2021, COVID shifted the organization into a streamlined production and artistic organization collaborating with global and Austin, TX artists to continue to share its mission. Tapestry Dance Company shares the power of dance, music and theatre through numerous events and programs sponsored by individual contributors, corporations, the National Endowment for the Arts, the City of Austin and the Texas Commission on the Arts as well as its wonderful audiences and touring sponsors. These programs include seasonal multi-form concert premieres, an annual international tap festival, community outreach programs, pop up masterclasses and workshops in dance, theatre and music as well as touring residencies throughout the US and abroad.

Tapestry is also proud to have produced over 69 premiere full length concert works since its inception; produced 34 years of The Annual Soul 2 Sole Festival (previously The Austin Tap Jam – started in 1991) and hosted numerous Austin based as well as international dance and music artists including Fayard Nicholas of the famous Nicholas Brothers, Arthur Duncan of *The Lawrence Welk Show*, Brenda Bufalino, Gregory Hines, Sarah Petronio, Bill Evans, Dr. Harold Cromer, Keith Cross, Dianne Walker, James Clouser, Tina Marsh and the Creative Opportunity Orchestra, many contemporary leaders in the dance, theatre and music fields today as well as dozens of incredible resident artists from the US and abroad as part of Tapestry Dance Company.

As a member of The Texas Commission on the Arts, The Mid-American Arts Alliance and Heartland touring programs over the past 33 years, the multi-form choreographic works and training of Tapestry Dance Company have been lovingly woven throughout the U.S. and abroad to include Cyprus, Britain, Austria, the Czech Republic, Spain, Ireland, Canada and China. The company has been honored by numerous “Best of” awards by *The Austin Chronicle* as well as Best Dance Company, Best Dance Production and Best Ensemble by the Austin Critics Table Awards. The company toured the award-winning National Endowment for the Arts: Masterpiece Dance original production of Acia Gray's *The Souls of Our Feet – A Celebration of American Tap Dance* throughout the USA, Canada and China and shifted to a focus on tap dance from 2008 to 2021.

The organization is proud to return to its founding roots as a multi-dimensional, multi-form performance and educational organization.

OUR 2023/2024 FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT

The City of Austin Cultural Arts Division
The National Endowment for the Arts
COA Creative Space Assistance Program
The Texas Commission on the Arts
The Tapestry Dance Board of Directors
Josie Bruni Knight
Hartbeat Productions / Women in Jazz
Men-Chow Chiang
Zilker Properties

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"This project is supported in part by the Cultural Arts Division of the City of Austin Economic Development Department."



SOUL 2 SOLE 2024

JUST FRIENDS FACULTY CONCERT!

Artistic & Musical Direction

Acia Gray

Production Design

Stephen Pruitt

Sound Engineer

Dylan Goodhue

Stage Manager

Lena Rogy

Festival Onsite Operations Manager

Sandy Stewart

Volunteer Coordinator

Ashley Davis

Assistant Stage Manager / Festival Intern

Anisa Johnson

Public Relations

Motley Crew Media / Sherri Cline

Volunteers

Laura Mattingly, Susan Cisco, Carol-Ann Jellison, The Ansel Family
Audrey Chapin, Libbi Toye Sampleton, Ashley Davis
Mark 'Kaz' Kazanoff, Deirdre Strand, Eliza Parker

PRODUCTION TEAM

Stephen Pruitt - Lighting & Production Designer

Stephen Pruitt is a former engineer who has been working in theater and the arts as a designer, writer, director and performer for nearly twenty years. He is currently splitting his time between Austin, Texas, and Cincinnati, Ohio, where he is the resident technical consultant and production designer for The Requiem Project - an effort to restore the historic Emery Theater. In Austin, Stephen has collaborated with many of the city's most creative theater and dance groups, as the resident production designer for Forklift Danceworks, Kathy Dunn Hamrick Dance, and Tapestry Dance Company; resident lighting designer for Trouble Puppet Theater; a company member with the Rude Mechanicals; and in various design and creative roles for many others. When not designing for theater and dance, he spends his time with photography, hacking printers to create carbon ink prints, kayaking, and making oddball performance art. His current project is 100yr.org - a nonprofit with the mission of creating public art projects that last 100 years. Stephen can be found at www.fluxiondesigns.com

Dylan Goodhue - Sound Engineer

A freelance musician and audio engineer since 2000, Dylan has worked with Low Roar [Iceland], Nina Diaz, Girl in a Coma, Hardproof, Holiday Mountain, Mumia Troll [Russia], T Bird and the Breaks, Royal Dukes Band, Hidden Cameras, Ron Sexsmith, Amy Millan, Ill Scarlett, Coco Love Alcorn, Jason Collett. Monitors for: Bela Fleck, Asleep at the Wheel, Willie Nelson, Rachid Taha and many others.

For More Information - www.tapestry.org
For Tickets - www.thelongcenter.org



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Weaving dance into life since 1989.

PROGRAM

Soul 2 Sole Trio

Masumi Jones (Drums) / **Dylan Jones** (Bass) / **Benjamin Irom** (Piano)

Artist Entrance

Just Friends

Pamela Hart

The Way You Make Me Feel

Tony

Caravan

Karissa

Softly as a Morning Sunrise

Elizabeth

Ain't Misbehavin'

Sarah

Seven Days

Nicholas

Pure Imagination

Acia

Walk On By / with Pamela

Skip

A-Train / *Mr. Bojangles*

Bril

Summertime / *Black Orpheus*

BOW

Just Friends

THE MUSICIANS/VOCALIST

Masumi Jones (Drums)

Voted best drummer by the Austin Chronicle in 2013, Masumi has played with Slim Richey (RIP) and the Jitterbug Vipers since 2009 and Sarah Sharp since 2015 among other numerous musical adventures in Austin and on tour. Masumi is Tapestry's live music backbone (literally) since 2011 with the company's five-week tour of China with *The Souls of Our Feet - A Celebration of American Tap Dance*. www.masumijones.com

Dylan Jones (Bass)

Dylan began his professional music career at the age of sixteen and has since spanned the globe for over 20 years as a performer and instructor of just about every genre imaginable. A student of iconic music pedagogues Dwayne Heggar, Chuck Rainey, Francois Rabbath, Ali kbar Khan and country legend Ruby Allmond (his great Aunt), Dylan has gone on to write, record, perform and collaborate with countless artists, including Grammy Award winner Vishwa Mohan Bhatt. A multilingual, multi-instrumental, self-described "proud nerd", Dylan is also the founder of music education non-profit, Anthropos Arts. www.anthroposarts.org

Benjamin Irom (Piano)

Benjamin Irom is currently Professor of Music and Director of Jazz Studies at Temple College in Temple, Texas. In addition to teaching music theory and both classical and jazz piano, he is the director of the Temple Jazz Orchestra, a 20-piece big band comprised of some of the best jazz musicians in central Texas.

Pamela Hart (Vocalist)

Pamela Hart is highly regarded as one of Austin, Texas' finest vocalist. She is noted by Austin Women's Magazine as "Austin's First Lady of Jazz." Pamela is keen on keeping jazz vocal music alive. In 1994, Pamela and Kevin Hart founded the Women in Jazz Association, Inc. with a mission to keep jazz alive. The organization has been growing ever since providing concerts, vocal workshops, and youth programs geared towards jazz education and performance. With her performances, the Women in Jazz Association, Inc., vocal performance workshops, and vocal coaching, Pamela is making a difference in the Austin jazz scene. Pamela Hart was inducted in the Austin Jazz Society Hall of Fame in 2018. Pamela's appreciation for the great masters of jazz is apparent in her intonation, grace and style. Professional, unique, & captivating. Pamela Hart performs locally, regionally, and nationally for Concerts, Festivals, Weddings, Corporate Events, Banquets, & Night Clubs. She has also performed in Europe with the James Polk Texas State Jazz Band. She has repeatedly opened shows for, and shared stages with, many popular artists including Miss Nancy Wilson, Dianne Reeves, Nat Adderley, Jr., Kirk Whalum, Rachelle Ferrell, Norman Brown & Richard Elliot. Her passion for jazz extends to jazz education programs for youth and young female singers. www.pamelahart.com



THE FESTIVAL FACULTY ARTISTS

Skip Cunningham

Entertainer Skip Cunningham was born on April 24, 1936 to Geneva Davis and William Henry Cunningham in Chicago, Illinois. He graduated from Morgan Park High School and attended the University of Illinois at Navy Pier, before transferring to Woodrow Wilson Junior College where he received his A.A. degree in 1956.

In 1941, at the age of five, Cunningham started tap lessons at the Sadie Bruce Dance School in the Bronzeville area of Chicago. Starting at the age of eight, he performed throughout the city and won several dance competitions. He visited California in 1956, where he won a talent contest that earned him a week-long engagement performing at the Moulin Rouge on the Sunset Strip in Los Angeles. In 1957, while still in Los Angeles, he was drafted into the U.S. Army and completed basic training at Fort Lewis in Tacoma, Washington. He was stationed at Fort Gordon in Georgia and Fort Banks in Winthrop, Massachusetts, where he found a talent agent and joined the American Guild of Variety Artists. In 1959, Cunningham completed his military service. He returned to Chicago, where he secured a role performing in *the Billy Williams Revue*. Over the next two years, the group toured Canada, New York, New Orleans and Las Vegas, where they established a six-month residency, before returning to New York City in 1961. Cunningham left the group and secured General Artist Corporation as his agent. During this period, he made appearances on television shows like *On Broadway Tonight*, *The Merv Griffin Show*, and *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*. As an entertainer, he performed with Tony Bennett, Nat King Cole, Bob Hope, Jerry Lewis, Richard Pryor, and Frank Sinatra. He was also a recording artist for such labels as Kapp Records, Coral Records, and Motown.

In 1968, Cunningham moved to Los Angeles, where he began performing on cruise ship circuits and making various television and movie appearances. Cunningham was featured on episodes of *Sanford and Son* and *The Richard Pryor Show*. He also performed briefly in *Eubie!* on Broadway and in a production of *Evolution of the Blues* at the Drury Lane Theater at the Water Tower Place in Chicago in 1980. In 1984, Cunningham worked on the films *The Cotton Club* and later *Tap* in 1989. Cunningham also worked for the Los Angeles Unified School District to teach performance arts and African American history. In 2002, Cunningham was cast in the David Whitfield production of *Forgotten Treasures* with Marla Gibbs and Lou Myers. Cunningham was then selected to perform for the 2003 *Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon*, along with Fayard Nicholas, Arlene Kennedy and Arthur Duncan. Cunningham appeared with Century Ballroom Presents *The Masters of Lindy Hop & Tap*, before "retiring" from the stage in 2009.

As a tap master, Cunningham was awarded the Chicago Human Rhythm Project Juba Award, Rhythm Tap Hall of Fame Master Tapper Award, and the Los Angeles Tap Festival Leonard Reed Longevity Award.

Dianne Walker

Dianne "Lady Di" Walker, a pioneer in tap dancing's resurgence, has a 45-year career spanning Broadway, Television, Film and International Jazz Concerts and Tap Festivals. Savion Glover and his contemporaries affectionately call her, "Aunt Dianne," acknowledging her unique role as mentor, teacher and confidante. Dianne performed in both the original Paris Production of *Black and Blue* as well as the Broadway Production, where she was a featured dancer, Dance Captain and Assistant to the Directors. Film credits include the movie *Tap*, the PBS special, *Great Performances: Tap Dance in America*, *JUBA! (WTTW)*, and *Songs Unwritten*. Dianne has been dubbed the "Ella Fitzgerald" of Tap Dance.

For two years, Dianne directed the Tap Program at Jacob's Pillow and is presently Artistic Advisor to the Program. Holding a Master's Degree in Education, Dianne has taught at numerous universities including Harvard, MIT, Wesleyan, Bates, UCLA, and Williams College. Dianne is a participant on many educational task forces and sits on numerous boards throughout the dance community. In 1998, Dianne received the "Living Treasure in American Dance" Award from Oklahoma City University, The Flo-Bert Award (NYC), The Hoofers Award (NYC), The Gregory Hines Humanitarian Award (Los Angeles), and was the 2008 USA Rose Fellow. Most recently, Dianne received the prestigious Dance Magazine Award, presented to her at the Alvin Ailey School in New York, adding to a long line of awards and lifetime tributes recognizing her contribution to the art form and excellence in teaching. Grant awards include The National Endowment for the Arts, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Jacobs Pillow, The New England Foundation for the Arts, and American Masterpieces Program.

Dianne has been generously mentored by many musicians and Tap Dance legends throughout her career, notably Leon Collins and Jimmy Slyde. Dianne has worked with Savion Glover, Jimmy Slyde, Buster Brown, Gregory Hines, Honi Coles, Cholly Atkins, Tina Pratt, Bunny Briggs, Barry Harris, Max Roach, Alan Dawson, Major Holley, Paul Arslanian, Andy McGhee, John Lockwood, Ruth Brown, Nicholas Brothers, Peg Leg Bates, Arthur Duncan and many others. Leon Collins passed away in 1985, leaving Dianne to continue as one of the Directors of his school in Boston. It is with a great sense of pride that Dianne continues to share this rich legacy with her students.

Bril Barrett

Bril is a dedicated tap dancer, whose mission is to preserve and promote tap dance as a percussive art form, foster respect and admiration for the history and culture of tap, and continuously create opportunities for the art form and its practitioners. As the founder of M.A.D.D. (Making A Difference Dancing) Rhythms, director of The Chicago Tap Summit and founder of The M.A.D.D. Rhythms Tap Academy, his performance opportunities have included *Riverdance*, *Tap Dance Kid*, Derrick Grant, Aaron Tolson's *Imagine Tap*, The Kennedy Center, Jumaane Taylor's *Supreme Love*, the Democratic National Convention and many others.

Television appearances include The Oprah Winfrey Show, Steve Harvey Show, Jenny Jones Show, NBC's *Someone You Should Know* and ABC's *Windy City Live*. Bril has taught and/or performed in Prague, Canada, Germany, Finland, Turkey, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, Albania, Amsterdam, Brazil, the Bahamas, the U.K. and across the United States.

He was named A Chicagoan of the Year and has his very own Ted Talk. Bril has started many outreach programs in Chicago's public schools, Park districts and even a performing arts high school in Gary, Indiana. He ran an After School Matters Youth Tap Program for more than 10 years and has provided after school and summer jobs for more than 300 youth from underserved communities.

As a Taptivist, Bril has spent many years creating an alternative to the school to prison pipeline that exists for many black and brown youth. A child can go from novice to professional without ever leaving our headquarters inside the historic [Harold Washington Cultural Center](#) in Chicago's Bronzeville neighborhood. Bril is determined to make a difference in his community by using tap and its history to expose our youth to the art form that saved his life!

Elizabeth Burke

Elizabeth Burke is a New York City based tap dancer, performer, choreographer, and educator who hails from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She has worked full time with MacArthur Fellow Michelle Dorrance's company, Dorrance Dance, since its inaugural 2010-2011 season, and serves as their dance captain and rehearsal director. Prior to her work with Dorrance Dance, she spent 11 years under the mentorship of Gene Medler in the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble; she's also an alumna of the School at Jacob's Pillow. Elizabeth also teaches, choreographs, and performs across the country, and collaborates with fellow North Carolinian Luke Hickey. @elizabethrburke

Acia Gray

As a musician, soloist, choreographer and master teacher, Ms. Gray has toured extensively across the U.S. and abroad and in 1989 co-founded Tapestry Dance Company in Austin, TX with Deirdre Strand and currently serves as Producing Artistic Director & Artistic Director of The Soul 2 Sole International Tap Festival here in Austin. A graduate of The American Academy of Dramatic Arts/NYC, Ms. Gray has shared the stage with legends of the form including Donald O'Connor, Fayard Nicholas, Arthur Duncan, Savion Glover, Jimmy Slyde, Sarah Petronio, Dianne Walker and many others in such productions as *The Great Tap Reunion*, *Tap Do/Wop*, *Just Friends*, *Masters of Tap*, *Chicago on Tap* and *Women in Tap* at UCLA among others. She was chosen to work with legend Charles 'Honi' Coles in America's first creative residency for tap at The Colorado Dance Festival and again with Jimmy Slyde and was featured in the documentary *A Class Act: The Magic of Honi Coles*.

She served on the Steering Committee of The National Tap Plan of The International Tap Association and served as its director from 2008-2018. She has also danced, choreographed and taught for numerous academic institutions and festivals around the world including courses at UT Austin and ACC in tap pedagogy. Her book *The Souls of Your Feet - A Tap Dance Guide for Rhythm Explorers* has been translated in the Czech Republic and China and debuted as an Amazon.com Bestseller in its category in 1998.

Her numerous awards include the "Hooper Award" by The New York City Tap Festival, nominated for a Princess Grace Award in the early 1990's and honored at the 2018 Dance USA Conference among numerous tap festival honors. She has produced and choreographed for over 96 original full length works for Tapestry Dance Company many of which have toured the US and abroad including her work *The Souls of Our Feet - A Celebration of American Tap Dance* that was chosen as an NEA American Masterpiece production and toured throughout the US, Canada, and China from 2009-2012.

Ms. Gray has also received numerous local "Best Of" awards by the Critics Table in Austin and she can also be seen in *Gotta Move - Women in Tap*, *Tap or Die*, *Thinking on Their Feet - Women of the Tap Renaissance* and *Passing it Forward* produced by the PBS series Arts In Context based on Tapestry Dance Company's 2015-2016 Season and performance and mission legacy.

Ms. Gray is proud to be a premiere member of the Austin Arts Hall of Fame, a 2019 Austin Creative Alliance Honoree and is a current member of the Austin Arts Commission.

Tony Merriwether

Tony Merriwether was initially inspired during an in-school outreach program conducted by Acia Gray and her company, Tapestry Dance Company (TDC), of Austin, TX. Tony grew through the ranks of Tapestry, beginning in the Academy and the company's pre-apprentice training program, Visions in Rhythm (VIR). As a member of VIR, his performance credits include Lane Alexander's Chicago Human Rhythm Project, Acia Gray's Soul 2 Sole Festival, Barbara Phillips' Third Coast Rhythm Project, as well as the productions of VIR. Throughout his training, he has had the honor of working with inspirational master artists such as Derick Grant, Jason Samuels Smith, Jason Janas, Fayard Nicholas, Harold "Stumpy" Cromer, and many others. As a result of his hard work, love, and dedication to the art form, Tony auditioned and was accepted into Tapestry Dance Company. This brought him to the company's national touring show, *The Souls of Our Feet - A Celebration of American Tap Dance* where Tony was given the privilege of performing alongside masters Dianne Walker, Sarah Petronio, and Arthur Duncan, known from the Lawrence Welk Show. Among many Tapestry original productions, Tony also performed in Sarah Petronio's *Tribute to Jimmy Slyde* at the New

York City Tap Festival in Ayodele Casel's and Sarah Savelli's production of *Wonderland* a tap tribute to Stevie Wonder and *Thank You, Gregory*, a tribute to the late Gregory Hines. He is currently the Artistic Director of True Sound Rhythm Productions.

Sarah Reich

Sarah Reich (Performer, Choreographer, Instructor, Composer) has emerged as one of the new leaders in the Art Form of Tap Dance. This Los Angeles native has been sought after to perform, choreograph, and teach in over 40 countries. "I want to continue to bring tap into mass media with great respect and quality," she says, focusing on "reprogramming the minds of the general public on their perception of tap dance." (Dance Magazine 2017)

Sarah has become one of the art form's pop culture ambassadors, thanks to her appearances in videos with Scott Bradley's Postmodern Jukebox. Her videos with them (A Star Wars-themed tribute, *The Tap Awakens*, & *Thriller*, a Michael Jackson cover featuring Wayne Brady) have garnered millions of views on YouTube, all receiving rave reviews. She has toured the world with Postmodern Jukebox playing prestigious venues such as Radio City Music Hall, Walt Disney Concert Hall and the Sydney Opera House as well as a televised PBS special filmed in Las Vegas.

Previously she was seen on FOX's *So You Think You Can Dance* under companies by Chloe Arnold and Jason Samuels Smith. With her own company, Tap Music Project, she has choreographed and performed at the Ford Amphitheatre, UCLA's Jazz Reggae Music Festival, Blue Whale jazz club, and the televised LA County Holiday Celebration. Sarah was also a performer at Madison Square Garden for the opening of the NY Knicks 2013-2014 season. She was sought out to perform at Jazz at the Lincoln Center for a tribute to Duke Ellington in New York City in 2017.

In addition to her vast international travels and countless television appearances, Sarah has had the honor to perform at some of the most prestigious venues back home in Los Angeles such as The Hollywood Bowl, the Greek Theater with Mexican Pop-Star Cristian Castro and the Dolby Theater with the great Herbie Hancock. She is currently on tour with NUVO Dance Convention sharing her passion of tap dance with kids across the country. With her Tap Music Project intensives in various cities, Reich teaches tap dancers how to dance with more musicality, communicate with musicians and write music. Using a live band in class, she instructs students on how to "scat" rhythms or transcribe choreography with rhythm notation, among other skills.

Sarah is developing new, and exciting works with her company Tap Music Productions, including her debut Tap Jazz Album titled *New Change*. This album is originally produced, composed from percussive tap rhythms, and performed by a great selection of musicians to create a unique sound. She hopes this is just the beginning: "I want to be the first tap dancer to win a Grammy Award!"

Karissa Royster

Originally from San Antonio, Karissa Royster is a graduate of NYU where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree in History and was a Jackie Robinson Foundation scholar. Through her passion for carrying on the beautiful tradition of tap dance, she combines her unique background with more than twenty years of training to equip her students with exceptional technique, musicality, and the ability to develop their own unique voice. Karissa enjoys connecting with students of all ages and dance backgrounds through her workshops at various institutions across the United States including UCLA, NYU, and the Debbie Allen Dance Academy.

Her formation as an artist and practitioner began under the tutelage of Barbara Phillips and Third Coast Rhythm Project. While continuing her studies in NYC, Karissa had the opportunity to perform as part of Dormeshia's "Sophisticated Ladies" at the historic Cotton Club and also appeared with Emmy Award winner Jason Samuels Smith's A.C.G.I. In April 2016, she made her Broadway debut as the Dance Captain and as a member of the dance ensemble in Tony Award-nominated *Shuffle Along, or, the Making of the Musical Sensation of 1921 & All That Followed*, choreographed by Savion Glover and directed by George C. Wolfe.

Karissa also performed in ABC's national broadcast of *Taking the Stage: Changing America*, produced by Quincy Jones and in celebration of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History. More recently, she served as Co-Choreographer with Justin Peck for a new developmental work following his completion of Steven Spielberg's *West Side Story*.

In May 2023, Karissa graduated from Columbia University with a Master's in Social Work. Currently, Karissa resides in Los Angeles where she serves on the dance faculty at the Colburn School. In addition to producing her own choreographic work, Karissa is in the process of developing a movement-based, trauma-informed therapy practice.

Nicholas Van Young

Nicholas Van Young is a dancer, musician, choreographer, and a 2014 Bessie Award recipient. He began his professional career at age 16 under Acia Gray and Deirdre Strand with Tapestry Dance Company in Austin, Texas, eventually rising to principal dancer and resident choreographer. Since moving to New York, he has performed with Manhattan Tap, RumbaTap, Dorrance Dance, and Beat the Donkey. He has toured as a drummer for Darwin Deez and he spent almost a decade performing with STOMP, where he performed the lead role and acted as rehearsal director. Young tours both nationally and internationally teaching and performing at various tap festivals and founded Sound Movement dance company and The Institute for the Rhythmic Arts (IFTRA). Nicholas also served as the Associate Artistic Director of Dorrance Dance and co-created *ETM: Double Down* and the Guggenheim Rotunda Project, both collaborative efforts with Michelle Dorrance the company's founder and Artistic Director.

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