

THE BIG MUDDY DANCE COMPANY
Artistic Director Kirven Douthit-Boyd

EVOLUTION
WINTER CONCERT



January 11-14, 2024
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For more information about
The Big Muddy Dance Company, visit
thebigmuddydanceco.org

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ERIN WARNER PRANGE



Erin Warner Prange (St. Louis, MO) holds her B.A. in Dance and Spanish from Colorado State University and her Masters of Fine Arts in Arts Management and Leadership from Webster University. Erin gained experience in teaching for the Boston public school district through the Topf Center for Dance Education, Dance Center of Kirkwood, and as the outreach program coordinator for aTrek Dance Collective. In her early career, she danced with Fusionworks II (Providence, RI) and the Slaughter Project (St. Louis, MO).

After 7 seasons as a company dancer for The Big Muddy Dance Company, Erin transitioned full-time into her role as Executive Director for the organization, a position of which she has been honored to serve since 2013. Erin is a published author, speaker, and consultant in nonprofit administration. She holds a certificate in Courageous Communication, and has served many community organizations such as Variety the Children's Charity, St. Louis Forum, Rise Society, Sign of the Arrow, among others. Erin was recognized on the Marquis Who's Who in America List 2021.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

KIRVEN DOUTHIT-BOYD



Kirven Douthit-Boyd (Boston, MA) began his formal dance training at the Boston Arts Academy in 1999 and as a member of Boston Youth Moves under the artistic direction of Jeannette Neil and Jim Viera. Mr. Douthit-Boyd studied as a fellowship student at The Ailey School and on scholarship at the Boston Conservatory. He is a graduate of Hollins University where he earned an MFA in dance.

He began his professional career as a member of Ailey II from 2002–2004 and performed at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival as a member of Battleworks Dance Company in 2003. In June 2004, Mr. Douthit-Boyd joined the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater performing both nationally and internationally for 11 years. During his tenure with the company, he performed leading roles in works choreographed by Alvin Ailey, Judith Jamison, Robert Battle, Ron K. Brown, Geoffrey Holder, Jiri Kylian, David Parsons, Camille A. Brown,

Ulysses Dove, Christopher Wheeldon, Hofesh Shecter, Twyla Tharp, Wayne McGregor and Ohad Naharin. He joined COCA-Center of Creative Arts in 2015 as Co-Artistic Director of Dance with his husband Antonio Douthit-Boyd. In 2016, Mr. Douthit-Boyd joined Ron K. Brown/Evidence, A Dance Company as a guest artist.

In 2010, Douthit-Boyd performed at the White House tribute to Judith Jamison hosted by then first lady Michelle Obama. He has also appeared as a guest artist in ballet and contemporary dance galas in Argentina, Mexico and Canada. He is the 2014 recipient of the "Black Theater Alliance Award" for his performance in Wayne McGregor's "Chroma," the 2015 recipient of the "Next Generation in Leadership Award" from the Freedom House in Boston, the 2016 recipient of the Boston Arts Academy's "Apollo Award" the 2021 recipient of the "Excellence in the Arts Award" from the Arts and Education Council in St. Louis, and the 2022 recipient of the Dance Teacher Magazine Award.

Douthit-Boyd has choreographed workshops for The Ailey School, The Juilliard School, Webster University, Boston Arts Academy, Boston Youth Moves and COCA. He has also choreographed works for Dallas Black Dance Theater and Ailey II. He is an ABT® Certified Teacher, who has successfully completed the ABT® Teacher Training Intensive in Pre-Primary through Level 5 of the ABT® National Training Curriculum and has completed Lester Horton Pedagogy studies under Ana Marie Forsythe in New York and St. Louis. He has served as Distinguished Performing Artist at Washington University in St. Louis, where he taught modern dance in the collaborative MFA program between the University and COCA.

REHEARSAL DIRECTOR

LEONIDES ARPON

Leonides D. Arpon (Filipino-American born in Israel) started dancing in 1987 under the direction of Rose Kassel at the Bat-Dor Dance School in Israel. He later joined their company in 1998 under the direction of Jeannette Ordman and worked with choreographers such as Luciano Cannitto, Igal Perry, Tamir Ginz and Randy Duncan. He holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree in Dance from Hollins University in partnership with the former Forsythe Company in Frankfurt, Germany, is a recipient of the Princess Grace Award for Modern Dance and the America-Israel Cultural Foundation Scholarships. Upon moving to NYC in 1999 Mr. Arpon was a principal dancer with Armitage Gone! Dance, Earl Mosley's Diversity of Dance, Kevin Wynn, Johannes Wieland, Sean Curran and Avila-Weeks.



From 2016-2022 he worked in Japan coaching students, professional dancers and celebrities as well as choreographed, danced and acted in TV shows and commercials for companies such as NHK, Panasonic, Toshiba, Mitsubishi and Gucci. Mr. Arpon explores creating dance for camera and shares his artistic experiences through community outreach. He has completed the Pre-Primary through Level 3 of the ABT® National Training Curriculum and the Beginner Horton Teacher Workshop with Ana Marie Forsythe.

He assists the Earl Mosley's Institute of the Arts' workshops in NYC and has taught around the world in schools such as the Ailey School, Princeton University, and the Peridance Capezio Dance Center in the U.S. In Israel at the Bat-Dor Dance School, Thelma Yellin School of the Arts and Bikurey Ha'itim. In Japan at the Tokyo and Osaka Schools of Music, Broadway Dance Center Tokyo, Hinton Battle Dance Academy, Avec Grace Ballet and in the Philippines at Ballet Philippines, Philippine High School for the Arts and the University of the Philippines. Mr. Arpon is thrilled to serve as Rehearsal Director and work alongside Kirven Douthit-Boyd, Erin Prange and the dancers of The Big Muddy Dance Company.

GUEST CHOREOGRAPHERS



SIDRA BELL

Sidra Bell is the founder of Sidra Bell Dance New York and a dancer, choreographer, and educator. She has been an artist in residence at University of Oklahoma (Brackett Distinguished Visiting Artist Chair), Visiting Lecturer and Artist in Residence at Harvard University, and an Adjunct Professor at Barnard College. Bell received a BA in History from Yale and an MFA in Choreography from Purchase College. She is the founder of the award winning MODULE Laboratory. Bell has won several awards, notably a First Prize for Choreography at the Solo Tanz Theater Festival in Stuttgart, Germany, a National Dance Project Production Award from NEFA and Creative Capital Wild Futures Award. In 2017 Mayor Thomas Roach named February 3 "Sidra Bell Day" in White Plains, NY. Her work has been seen throughout the United States and in Denmark, France, Austria, Bulgaria, Turkey, Slovenia, Sweden, Germany, China, Canada, Aruba, Korea, Brazil, and Greece. Bell has created over 100 works notably for Nevada Ballet Theater, Nashville Ballet,

BODYTRAFFIC, Ailey II, The Juilliard School, Whim W'Him, Boston Conservatory at Berklee College, River North Dance Chicago, NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Sacramento Ballet, Boulder Ballet, among many others. She was the first Black female commissioned to create work for New York City Ballet where she created works for film and the Lincoln Center stage (Fall Fashion Gala 2021). Her work was performed at The Kennedy Center in Washington, DC for New York City Ballet's engagement in May 2022. She was nominated for a Bessie New York Dance & Performance Dance (Outstanding Choreographer) for SUSPENDED ANIMATION for New York City Ballet. She was Bessie nominated once again as Outstanding Choreographer for the Gibney presented show IN | REP: Introspection. Recent features of her historical work at New York City Ballet include Essence Magazine, NY1, News12, Playbill and Amsterdam News. She has also been featured in press outlets Town & Country, Cero Magazine, Meet the Dance Company Theater Development Fund, Good Company Cleveland WYKC, Dance Magazine, DancePulp, Home4Dance, BIT TV Bulgaria, Turkish TV and CityLights Vancouver. She has been a featured guest speaker on numerous podcasts and at institutions for dance and theater. She was highlighted in an aired feature on TODAY (NBC) "How choreographer Sidra Bell is blazing a trail for next generation" in June 2023. *Photo credit Umi Akiyoshi.*

NORBERT DE LA CRUZ III

Born in the Philippines and raised in Los Angeles, California, Norbert De La Cruz III received a BFA in Dance from the Juilliard School and an MFA in Dance from Hollins University. He is a NY and LA based freelance artist. He was a soloist with Ballet Torino, Aszure Barton, the Metropolitan Opera, Complexions, and was casted as dancer for Warner Bro's "In The Heights" movie. He has been commissioned by Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, Tulsa Ballet, Barak Ballet, Hubbard Street, BalletX, Peridance, Grand Rapids Ballet, the Juilliard School, and Olympic Ballet Theater. Norbert was a finalist of Hubbard Street's National Choreographic Competition, a Princess Grace Foundation-USA award recipient, Alvin Ailey New Directions Choreography Lab, Joffrey Academy of Dance's Winning Works, the National Choreographic Initiative, and a recipient of the the New York City Ballet's NY Choreographic Institute. He was a former teaching dance faculty at the Juilliard School. His honorable mentions include the Asian Arts Alliance Jadin Wong Award, McCallum Theatre Choreography Festival Award, and was featured in Dance Magazines Top 25 to watch.



www.NorbertDeLaCruziii.com

IG: @Norbert.DeLaCruz.iii

JESSICA LANG

A celebrated choreographer of her generation, Jessica Lang has created over 100 original works on companies worldwide including American Ballet Theatre, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Sarasota Ballet and her eponymous company Jessica Lang Dance. Additional commissions include The Kennedy Center, The Harris Theater & Chicago Architecture Biennial, and the Dallas Museum of Art. For opera, Lang directed Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* at Glimmerglass that was presented at Lincoln Center's White Light Festival, 2017. She choreographed Francesca Zambello's production of *Aida* premiered by San Francisco Opera, revived at Washington National Opera, Seattle Opera, LA Opera, and in 2024 Lyric Opera of Chicago.



Lang was Artistic Director of Jessica Lang Dance from 2011-2019. The company performed in over 85 cities presented by venues including Lincoln Center, LA Music Center, The Kennedy Center, NYC Center, Tel Aviv Opera, Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival, BAM Fisher and Helikon Opera.

She is the recipient of a Bessie Award, Arison award, Martha Hill Mid-Career Award, fellowships at NY City Center and NYU's Center for Ballet and the Arts, and named a Caroline Hearst Choreographer-in-Residence at Princeton University.

Lang, a graduate from The Juilliard School, is a former member of Twyla Tharp's company, THARP!
www.jessicalangchoreographer.com, *Photo by Rosalie O'Connor*



BRADLEY SHELVER

Bradley Shelver (South Africa) is a Dancer, Teacher, Choreographer and Author. He has danced with Ailey 2, Elisa Monte Dance, Complexions Contemporary Ballet, Ballet Hispanico, The Francesca Harper Project, Limón Dance Company, Phoenix Dance Theater (UK) and in projects with Bill T. Jones /Arnie Zane, Lar Lubovich Dance, The Universal Ballet, Radio City Music Hall and in productions with the Mark Morris Dance Group and is in his 14th season with The Metropolitan Opera Ballet. He has created works for; Graham2, Joffrey Ballet Concert Group, Ailey 2, Richmond Ballet, Ballet Austin, Lustig Dance Theater, Compania Rio Danca, Cape Dance Company, Cedar Lake 2, Dance Lab New York, as well as creating works for the Royal Danish, Central Ballet School, Royal Swedish Ballet Schools, Joffrey Ballet School, The Ailey School, Boston Conservatory and Long Island University.

From 2013-2016, Shelver was the Artistic Director of the STEPS Repertory Ensemble. He is currently the Artistic Director of The Joffrey Concert Group in NYC. He is on faculty for many prestigious dance conservatories worldwide including The Ailey School, Joffrey Ballet School, STEPS on Broadway to name a few. He is an Adjunct Ballet Professor at Montclair State University and has taught the companies of Matthew Bourne's, "Adventures in Motion Pictures", The Lion King on Broadway, The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and Elisa Monte Dance (Emerge 125). As an author, his book, "Performance Through the Dance Technique of Lester Horton", is available worldwide.

EVOLUTION

PROGRAM A: Thursday, 1/11 and Friday, 1/12

CLOUD 9

Premiered in October 2022

Choreography: Norbert De La Cruz III
Costume Design: Shevaré Perry
Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky
Music: Apparat, Big Hands, Eric Christian, Max Cooper
Dancers: The Company

"Cloud 9" is about overcoming adversity and difficulty; rescuing oneself through the strong bonds and connections we have with one another whilst prolonging momentary experiences of joy.

-- INTERMISSION --

THE CALLING

Premiered in November 2023

Choreography: Jessica Lang
Costume Design: Elena Comendador
Lighting Design: Nicole Pearce
Music: "Song Title: O Maria, Stella Maris" by Trio Mediaeval
Dancer, 1/11 Performance: Molly Rapp
Dancer, 1/12 Performance: Jorrell Lawyer-Jefferson

The Calling was originally created on Kanji Segawa in 2005, and acquired into the Ailey II repertory in 2006 under the Artistic Direction of Sylvia Waters.

-- PAUSE --

DANCE

Premiered in October 2022

Choreography: Kirven Douthit-Boyd
Costume Design: Shevaré Perry
Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky
Music: Anna Clyne
Dancers: The Company

- I. When You're Broken Up
- II. When You've Torn The Bandage Off
- III. In the Middle Of Fighting
- IV. In Your Blood
- V. When You're Perfectly Free

-- INTERMISSION --

PLAYFOLK

Premiered in November 2023

Choreography: Bradley Shelver

Lighting: Zak Metalsky

Costumes: Shevaré Perry

Music: Boban Markovic Orkestar, Balkan Beat Box, Jeri Southern, C.W. Stoneking

Dancers: The Company

PlayFolk is a celebration of humanity. It is a showcase for all the multiple facets and depths of how we play in and with life. It's fun, it's a little dark, it's goofy and it's a little tragic. It is the sum total of our experiences.

Thank you for joining us!

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EVOLUTION

PROGRAM B: Saturday, 1/13

NEW RITUAL

World Premiere

Choreography: Sidra Bell
Assistant to the Choreographer: Kimie Parker
Costume Design: Shevaré Perry
Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky
Music: Various
Dancers: The Company

I. Compulsion
II. Disaffection
III. Held

-- INTERMISSION --

THE CALLING

Premiered in November 2023

Choreography: Jessica Lang
Costume Design: Elena Comendador
Lighting Design: Nicole Pearce
Music: "Song Title: O Maria, Stella Maris" by Trio Mediaeval
Dancer: Lily Cong

The Calling was originally created on Kanji Segawa in 2005, and acquired into the Ailey II repertory in 2006 under the Artistic Direction of Sylvia Waters.

-- PAUSE --

DANCE

Premiered in October 2022

Choreography: Kirven Douthit-Boyd
Costume Design: Shevaré Perry
Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky
Music: Anna Clyne
Dancers: The Company

I. When You're Broken Up
II. When You've Torn The Bandage Off
III. In the Middle Of Fighting
IV. In Your Blood
V. When You're Perfectly Free

-- INTERMISSION --

CLOUD 9

Premiered in October 2022

Choreography: Norbert De La Cruz III

Costume Design: Shevaré Perry

Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky

Music: Apparat, Big Hands, Eric Christian, Max Cooper

Dancers: The Company

"Cloud 9" is about overcoming adversity and difficulty; rescuing oneself through the strong bonds and connections we have with one another whilst prolonging momentary experiences of joy.

SAVE THE DATES!

Picture Studies, Collaboration with SLSO: March 16-17, 2024

Tour de Dance: April 11, 2024

Identity: May 16-19, 2024

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EVOLUTION

PROGRAM C: Sunday, 1/14 at 2:00pm and 7:30pm

SOMETHING ABOUT A DREAM

Premiered in November 2023

Choreography: Kirven Douthit-Boyd

Costume Design: Shevaré Perry

Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky

Music: Duke Ellington, Parry Music, Buddy Rich, Lionel Hampton, Maynard Ferguson

Dancers: The Company

*"Hold fast to dreams, for if they die, life is a broken-winged bird that cannot fly." -Langston Hughes
Something About a Dream is a blend of robust sound with exciting contemporary movement that pays tribute to the Jazz roots of the company while honoring the vision for the future.*

-- INTERMISSION --

THE CALLING

Premiered in November 2023

Choreography: Jessica Lang

Costume Design: Elena Comendador

Lighting Design: Nicole Pearce

Music: "Song Title: O Maria, Stella Maris" by Trio Mediaeval

Dancer, 2:00 Performance: Nyna Moore

Dancer, 7:30 Performance: Keenan Fletcher

The Calling was originally created on Kanji Segawa in 2005, and acquired into the Ailey II repertory in 2006 under the Artistic Direction of Sylvia Waters.

-- PAUSE --

NEW RITUAL

World Premiere

Choreography: Sidra Bell

Assistant to the Choreographer: Kimie Parker

Costume Design: Shevaré Perry

Lighting Design: Zak Metalsky

Music: Various

Dancers: The Company

I. Compulsion

II. Disaffection

III. Held

-- INTERMISSION --

PLAYFOLK

Premiered in November 2023

Choreography: Bradley Shelver

Lighting: Zak Metalsky

Costumes: Shevaré Perry

Music: Boban Markovic Orkestar, Balkan Beat Box, Jeri Southern, C.W. Stoneking

Dancers: The Company

PlayFolk is a celebration of humanity. It is a showcase for all the multiple facets and depths of how we play in and with life. It's fun, it's a little dark, it's goofy and it's a little tragic. It is the sum total of our experiences.

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MEET THE COMPANY

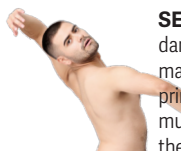
DANCERS



MAGGIE BATTERMAN (they/them, Madison, WI) developed a love of dance as a member of JoJean Retrum's Dance Wisconsin, and continued their dance education in Chicago at the Joffrey Academy from 2016-2018. After a year in the scholarship program at Hubbard Street's Lou Conte Dance Studio, they joined the Alonzo King LINES Ballet Training Program, from which they graduated in 2021. Throughout their dance training, they have performed works by Alice Klock, Jiří Kylián, Crystal Pite, Sidra Bell, Erik Wagner, and Gregory Dawson. Maggie joined the Big Muddy in 2021, and enjoys teaching and working creatively in the St. Louis community.



WILL BRIGHTON (He/Him, Ann Arbor, MI) graduated summa cum laude from Western Michigan University in 2020 with a B.F.A. in Dance and a B.A. in English. While at WMU, Will had the privilege of performing in concerts alongside Taylor 2 and Peridance Contemporary Dance Company, as well as performing in works by Yin Yue, Christian Denice, BAIRA, George Balanchine, Paul Taylor, Antony Tudor, and many others. After graduating, Will moved to Saint Louis, MO to join The Big Muddy Dance Company. He has also performed with Saint Louis Ballet as a guest artist in their 2021 production of Alice in Wonderland by Brian Enos. In 2020, Will was selected as the winner of Young Dancers Initiative's Emerging Choreographer Project, and in 2021 was selected as an Emerging Choreographer for Eisenhower Dance Detroit's NewDANCEfest.



SERGIO CAMACHO (He/Him, Hemet CA) formally started dance training in 2016 and continued his dance education at the University of California, Irvine. He graduated in 2022 with a BFA in Dance Performance and BA in Philosophy. Sergio has performed works by Juilliard choreographer, Charlotte Griffin, principal dancer with the San Francisco Ballet, Vítor Luiz, and Lar Lubovitch. Some of his professional musical theater credits include: Newsies, West Side Story, and White Christmas with Southern California theater company, Theater Royale.



LILY CONG (She/Her, Yuma, AZ) began her training under the mentorship of Jon and Kathleen Cristofori at Yuma Ballet Academy. She then attended the University of Arizona, receiving her BFA in Dance and two minors in Mathematics and Global Education in the spring of 2023. Some of her notable performances during university include works by Paul Taylor, Gerald Arpino, Hayley Meier, and Tamara Dyke-Compton. Lily also had the opportunity to participate in programs with the Limón Dance Company, Countertechnique, DanceWorks Chicago, Donald Byrd Workshop, and Oklahoma City Ballet, amongst others. This is her first season with The Big Muddy Dance Company!



KEENAN FLETCHER (He/Him, Kingston, Jamaica) began his formal dance education at the Vickers Dance Studio based in Kingston, Jamaica. He was then awarded a scholarship to train the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) Modern Ballet programme in partnership with Scottish Ballet based in Glasgow, Scotland from 2016-2018. In his final year, he performed on tour with Scottish Ballet in Peter Darrell's The Nutcracker before landing a coveted spot in the highly acclaimed Matthew Bourne's "Swan Lake". Choreographed by Sir Matthew Bourne OBE, "Swan Lake" toured multiple theatres throughout the U.K. including a run at the Sadler's Wells theatre for 2 months. The production then toured internationally China, Japan and South Korea and the U.S. becoming the cover Prince. In 2021-2022, he performed with Matthew Bourne's Nutcracker! on their U.K. tour. Keenan also performed at Plie for the Arts Jamaica International Dance Festival Gala in July 2023.



AJ JOEHL (she/her, Dallas, TX) trained, competed, and performed as a company member at Dance Industry Performing Arts Center. AJ recently graduated with a BFA in Dance from the USC Gloria Kaufman School of Dance. During her time there, she had the opportunity to explore movement ideas with William Forsythe, Jermaine Spivey, and Barak Marshall, as well as the ability to perform repertoire from choreographers such as Jiří Kylián, Ohad Naharin, and Kyle Abraham. Along with her collegiate training, AJ has also attended various intensives such as Orsolina28 and Chuthis Movement Intensive, where she was exposed to works by renowned artists Marco Goecke and Peter Chu. This is AJ's first year with the Big Muddy Dance Company, and she is honored to be a part of the Becoming season.



DAJUAN JOHNSON (He/Him, Saint Louis, MO) DaJuan started his training at Best Dance and Talent Center. He attended Central Visual and Performing Arts High School and Alexandra Ballet. In 2017 DaJuan received his BFA with a Dual emphasis in Modern and Ballet performance techniques from the UMKC Dance Conservatory Program. DaJuan graduated from the Alonzo King LINES Training Program in San Francisco in 2019, and was then offered the opportunity to join the TU dance company in Minnesota. In collaboration with TU, DaJuan performed alongside Bon Iver, the indie pop star, for the production of Come Through traveling throughout the U.S. DaJuan has performed works by Michale Utoff, Ray Mercer, Sabrina Madison Cannon, Deanna Hiett, Gary Abbott, Kevin Iega Jeff, Sidra Bell, Maurya Kerr, Gregory Dawson, Gregory Dolbashian, Arturo Fernandez, Uri Sands, and Bridget Moore.



JORRELL LAWYER-JEFFERSON (He/Him, Copperas Cove, TX) holds both his B.A. in Music and his M.F.A. in Dance from Sam Houston State University. He has performed works by Joshua Peugh, Shen Wei, Gabrielle Lamb, Joshua Manculich, Thang Dao, Elizabeth Corbett, Marcus Jarrell Willis and Kirven Douthit-Boyd among others. After debuting as a featured dancer in Houston Grand Opera's 2019 production of *Florencia en el Amazonas*, Jorrell has gone on to work with powerhouse directors Eric Sean Fogel, Francesca Zambello, Rob Ashford, Robert Wilson and Phelim McDermott. Most recently, he was invited to the Glimmerglass Festival's 2023 season to collaborate with contemporary opera director Louisa Proske on her new production of *Rinaldo* in which Jorrell served as associate director and as the festival's first Young Artist Choreographer. This will be Jorrell's second season with The Big Muddy.



NYNA MOORE (She/Her, Denver, CO) began her training at the Cleo Parker Robinson Dance Academy as a part of the youth ensemble under the direction of Bashir Page-Sanders. In 2022, she graduated Summa Cum Laude with her BFA in Dance from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, under the direction of Donna Faye Burchfield. While at Uarts, Nyna worked with many notable artists, including Tommie-Waheed Evans, Kim Bears-Bailey, Michael Sheridan, Symone Holliday, Sidra Bell, Alfred Dove, Andrea Weber, and Mark Caserta. She is very excited to begin her first season as a member of The Big Muddy and continue to use dance to inspire others just as many have done for her.



MEGAN RANCOUR (She/Her, Saint Charles, IL) spent most of her life in the Chicagoland area training at Ambition Dance & Performing Arts, the Lou Conte Dance Studio, and Visceral Dance Center. She went on to graduate with a BFA in Dance from Western Michigan University in 2017 and moved to St. Louis shortly after to take part in The Big Muddy Dance Company's Trainee Program. Megan joined the main company in 2019 and has performed notable works by Norbert De La Cruz III, Joshua Peugh, Marcus Willis, Elizabeth Corbett, and Geoffrey Alexander, among others. She also serves as the company's Studio Manager. Megan was ecstatic to take part in her first Musical Theatre production as a Featured Dancer in the Center of Creative Arts' (COCA) 2023 summer musical, *Pippin*. Outside of dancing, Megan has earned her Full Certification through STOTT PILATES and teaches Pilates throughout the St. Louis area.



MOLLY RAPP (She/Her, St. Louis, MO) began her dance training at Lucille Rapp Dance Studio, Inc. and continued her dance education at Webster University, where she graduated summa cum laude in 2017 earning a BFA in Dance; emphasis in Ballet and a BA in Business Management. While attending Webster University, Molly performed works by Jose Limon, Monica Newsam, Neja Yarkin, Alicia Graf-Mack, and Michael Uthoff. In 2015, she was invited to perform with Kansas City Ballet, in Artistic Director, Devon Carney's, "Waltz of the Flowers." She worked to develop Newsam Aerial Dance from 2017-19; assisting in the creation of codified aerial curriculum and implementation into local studios. Molly joined The Big Muddy Dance Company's Trainee Program for the 2017-18 Season, where she also worked as the company's Development Intern. She joined the company in 2018 and has performed works by Shannon Alvis, Elizabeth Corbett, Norbert De La Cruz III, Marcus Jarrell Willis, Dexandro Montalvo, and Joshua L. Peugh. Molly also serves as the company's Director of Operations and is a proud mom to her son, Rusty.



RANDI REINERT (she/her, Halstead, KS) attended Wichita State University and received a Bachelor's Degree of Fine Arts in Dance Performance in 2020. Through Wichita State University, she has had many opportunities to perform works by guest artists Charolette Boye-Christensen, Jammie Walker, and performed multiple featured roles in works by Darrell Grand Moultrie. While at Wichita State University, Randi also had the opportunity to travel and perform with Wichita Contemporary Dance Theatre to Veracruz, Mexico. Following graduation, Randi joined the Big Muddy Dance Company's trainee program and later joined The Big Muddy Dance Company. While at The Big Muddy Dance Company, Randi performed works by Norbert De La Cruz, Thang Dao, Joshua Peugh, Marcus Willis, and Kirven Douthit-Boyd. She is honored to be returning for her third season with the Big Muddy Dance Company.

COMPANY DANCERS continued...



CARLY VANDERHEYDEN (She/Her, Green Bay, WI) graduated from the University of Iowa with honors, earning a BFA in Dance, BA in Health and Human Physiology, and Certificate in Arts Entrepreneurship. In 2017, Carly was featured in Martha Graham's "Helios: Acts of Light" restaged by Jesse Factor at The Martha Graham Dance Company's University Partners Showcase at The Joyce Theatre. Carly has trained in intensive programs including Orsolina28, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, DanceWorks Chicago, Martha Graham School, American Dance Festival, and Kirov Academy of Ballet. Carly is an ABT National Training Curriculum certified ballet teacher and 200-hr Registered Yoga Teacher. Carly relocated to St. Louis in 2017 for The Big Muddy's Trainee Program before joining the company in 2018. She has been featured in collaborations with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, and Jazz St. Louis. Carly is a freelance photographer, teaching artist, and rehearsal director at the Center of Creative Arts (COCA) and St. Louis Academy of Dance.



JESSIE YERO (She/Her, Chicago, IL) began her formal dance training with Salt Creek Ballet before attending the dance program at Butler University. While at Butler, Jessie performed corps, soloist and principal roles in main stage productions of the classics as well as numerous world premiers of contemporary works. During the summers, Jessie toured with Butler Ballet through Eastern Europe as well as participated in summer intensives at Alonzo King Lines Ballet, NorthWest Dance Project, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. After graduating with honors and a BA in Dance Pedagogy, she joined the Big Muddy Dance Company's Convergence Trainee Program before joining the company's ranks the following season. Jessie is thrilled to be returning to the company this season.

GUEST PERFORMERS



ANTONIO DOUTHIT-BOYD (He/Him) is Artistic Director of Dance at COCA, where he began his dance training at the age of sixteen under Lee Nolting's dance direction. He has trained at Alexandra School of Ballet, North Carolina School of the Arts, Joffrey Ballet School, San Francisco Ballet School, and Arthur Mitchell's Dance Theatre of Harlem School. Antonio joined Dance Theatre of Harlem Company in 2000 under the direction of Arthur Mitchell and appeared in featured roles choreographed by George Balanchine: *The Four Temperaments*, *Agon*, and *Serenade*. He became a Soloist with the company in 2003.

Antonio joined the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater in 2004, where he danced as a principal artist for twelve years. He has worked with world-renowned choreographers such as Alvin Ailey, Judith Jamison, Robert Battle, Wayne MacGregor, Jiri Kylian, and Paul Taylor. Featured roles include: Alvin Ailey's "I Wanna Be Ready" (a solo from *Revelation*); "Polish Pieces" by Hans van Manen; "Firebird" by Maurice Bejart; and "Episodes," "Bad Blood," and "Urban Folk Dance" by Ulysses Dove. He has performed for President and First Lady Barack and Michelle Obama, Queen Elizabeth II, Michael Jackson, and a list of high-profile patrons of the arts. Antonio is an ABT® Certified Teacher who has completed the ABT® Teacher Training Program for Pre-Primary-6/7 and Partnering through the ABT® National Training Curriculum. He teaches ballet as a Professor of Practice in Dance at Washington University in St. Louis in the collaborative MFA program between the University and COCA. In 2021, Antonio and his husband Kirven Douthit-Boyd received the Excellence in the Arts Award from the Arts and Education Council in St. Louis. Antonio earned his Master of Fine Arts in Dance from Hollins University.



ISAIAH VALENTIN (He/Him, Miami, FL) began his formal dance training when he was 15 years old at Showstopper Studio Miami and continued his dance education at New World School of the Arts/ University of Florida where he received his Bachelors in Fine Arts. Isaiah developed his skills in the marching arts with the FIU Winterguard (Florida International University) where he holds a WGI World Championship Gold medal, and has had the opportunity to choreograph for them as well for multiple seasons. He has had the opportunity to professionally perform numerous times throughout his dance career with Jbalvin at the Latin awards show Premio lo Nuestro. He has also had the chance to perform works by Francesca Harper, Jennifer Archibald, Paul Taylor, Robert Battle, and Eriberto Jimenez. Isaiah's most recent work includes dancing with Cuban Classical ballet of Miami from 2022-2023, and he is excited to continue his journey with The Big Muddy Dance Company.

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Picture Studies

Mar 16–17

Sat at 7:30pm, Sun at 3:00pm • Stifel Theatre

Stéphane Denève, conductor
The Big Muddy Dance Company
Kirven Douthit-Boyd, choreographer

Adam Schoenberg *Picture Studies*
Sergei Prokofiev *Romeo and Juliet Suite*

Dance courses through the veins of this program. Adam Schoenberg's *Picture Studies* brings disparate works of visual art to musical life, enhanced by dancers from The Big Muddy Dance Company in a new choreography by Artistic Director Kirven Douthit-Boyd.

Presented by the **Whitaker Foundation**



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Nov 17–19

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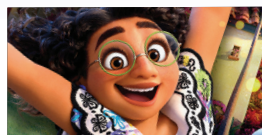
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New Year's Eve Celebration

Dec 31 Sun at 7:30pm
Stifel Theatre

Featuring conductor
Norman Huynh



Encanto In Concert

Mar 9–10 Sat & Sun at 2:00pm
Stifel Theatre

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- **Summer Intensive Programs (ages 10 and up)** - June/July
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- **Regional University Audition** - March 10
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- **Trainee Program** - Performance February 9 & Audition March 10



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